

Caribbean Countries Resource Guide



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Caribbean Island Information

Contents

Caribbean Region At-A-Glance Matrix

[Barbados](#)

[Bahamas](#)

[Cuba](#)

[Dominican Republic](#)

[Grenada](#)

[Guadeloupe](#)

[Haiti](#)

[Honduras](#)

[Jamaica](#)

[Puerto Rico](#)

[Nicaragua](#)

[Saint Lucia](#)

[Trinidad and Tobago](#)

Things to Consider	"wet season" June - November. Majority of citizens ride buses and do not own cars due to terrain and few operable roads.	summer is the wettest season	Tourist literature describes Cameroon as "Africa in miniature" because it exhibits all major climates and vegetation of the continent: coast, desert, mountains, rainforest, and savanna.	Rainy season May - November	Rainy season May-October.	Electric power service has been unreliable since the 60s, and as much as 75% of the equipment is that old. The country's antiquated power grid causes transmission losses that account for a large share of billed electricity from generators.	The climate is tropical: hot and humid in the rainy season and cooled by the trade winds in the dry season. Grenada, being on the southern edge of the hurricane belt, has suffered only three hurricanes in fifty years.	a dry season called "Lent" that goes from January to June; a wet season called "winter", which lasts from July to December.	one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. Honduras has the world's highest murder rate.	Occupies 3/8ths of the island it shares with Dominican Republic. Consistently ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world.	CCA Member			Rainy season April - November	Rainy season June-November.	Rainy season June-December. Trinidad and Tobago is one of the wealthiest and most developed nations in the Caribbean.
Language	English	English	French, English	Spanish	Spanish	Spanish	English	French / Antillean Creole	Spanish	French	english	spanish	spanish	spanish, english	English	English units
Culture	Blend of West African, Creole, Indian and British cultures present. Citizens officially called Barbadians.	Bahamians typically identify themselves simply as either black or white.	Music and dance are an integral part of Cameroonian ceremonies, festivals, social gatherings, and storytelling.	Often called the happiest country, Costa Rica rates 12th on the 2017 Happy Planet Index in the World Happiness Report by the UN; the country is, however, the happiest in Latin America. Reasons include the high level of social services, the caring nature of its inhabitants, long life expectancy and relatively low corruption	Cuban culture is influenced by its melting pot of cultures, primarily those of Spain and Africa. After the 1959 revolution, the government started a national literacy campaign, offered free education to all and established rigorous sports, ballet and music programs.	Culture and customs of the Dominican people have a European cultural basis in cuisine, architecture, family structure, religion, and music. Baseball a huge part of the culture.	Blend of French, African, and Indian cultures. Cricket is an intrinsic part of the culture.	The island is a region of France	The World Bank categorizes Honduras as a low middle-income nation.	Blend of French and African cultures with sizeable Spanish contributions.		Nicaraguan culture has strong folklore, music and religious traditions, deeply influenced by European culture but also including Native American sounds and flavors.			Saint Lucia has a strong indigenous folk music tradition. The island's cuisine is a unique blend of West African, European and East Indian cuisine.	Trinidad and Tobago is the birthplace of calypso music and the steelpan. Cricket is a popular sport of Trinidad and Tobago, with intense inter-island rivalry with its Caribbean neighbours.
History	Independent country since 1966. Functions as a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy modelled on the British Westminster system. The British and Barbadian monarch—Queen Elizabeth II—is head of state.	The Bahamas became an independent Commonwealth realm in 1973, retaining the British monarch, then and currently Queen Elizabeth II, as its head of state.	Declared independence from France in 1961.	Costa Rica has held 14 presidential elections, the latest in 2014. With uninterrupted democracy dating back to at least 1948, the country is the region's most stable.	The Republic of Cuba is one of the world's last remaining socialist countries following the Marxist-Leninist ideology.	Over the last two decades, the Dominican Republic has stood out as one of the fastest-growing economies in the Americas	As a Commonwealth realm, Queen Elizabeth II is Queen of Grenada and Head of State.	It is an overseas region consisting of a single overseas department.			Jamaica gained full independence in 1962.				In the mid-twentieth century, Saint Lucia joined the West Indies Federation (1958–1962) when the colony was dissolved. In 1967, Saint Lucia became one of the six members of the West Indies Associated States, with internal self-government.	Gained independence in 1962, Queen Elizabeth II remained head of state.
Government Structure	Parliamentary democracy under constitutional monarchy	Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy	Unitary dominant party, presidential republic.	Unitary presidential constitutional republic	Unitary Marxist-Leninist one-party socialist republic.	Unitary presidential republic (judicial, executive, and legislative branches)	Parliamentary democracy under constitutional monarchy	Overseas region of France	presidential republic	Unitary semi-presidential republic	Parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy. Queen Elizabeth II serves as the Jamaican monarch.	Unitary presidential constitutional republic	unitary presidential, constitutional republic	Commonwealth; unincorporated territory	Parliamentary democracy under constitutional monarchy (Queen Elizabeth II).	Unitary parliamentary, constitutional republic

COUNTRY: BARBADOS

STATISTICS

POPULATION: 285,006

LANGUAGE(S): ENGLISH

DEMONYM: BARBADIAN / BAJAN (COLLOQUIAL)

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY UNDER CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

CURRENCY: BARBADIAN DOLLAR (BBD)

CLIMATE: TROPICAL MONSOON CLIMATE. WET SEASON JUNE-NOVEMBER.

PRACTICING

PRACTICES IN COUNTRY: 7 FIRMS

NUMBER OF REGISTERED ARCHITECTS:

CERTIFICATION NEEDS:

REQUIREMENTS:

HUMANITIES

CULTURE: BLEND OF WEST AFRICAN, CREOLE, INDIAN, AND BRITISH CULTURE [RESENT.

HISTORY: INDEPENDENT SINCE 1966. BARBADIAN MONARCH - QUEEN ELIZABETH II - IS HEAD OF STATE.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

DRIVES ON THE: LEFT

ECONOMY: WELL DEVELOPED MIXED ECONOMY AND MODERATELY HIGH STANDARD OF LIVING.

CRIME: TOURISTS ARE MOST LIKELY TO BEFALL ROBBERY, PETTY THEFT, AND TAXI FRAUD.

TOURISM: 40% OF TOURISTS COME FROM UK, WITH US AND CANADA SECOND LARGEST FGROU.P.

Coordinates: 13°10′N 59°33′W﻿ / ﻿13.167°N 59.550°W﻿ / 13.167; -59.550

Barbados

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Barbados (/bɑːrˈbeɪdɒs/ or /bɑːrˈbeɪdoʊs/) is an island country in the Lesser Antilles, in the Caribbean region of North America. It is 34 kilometres (21 miles) in length and up to 23 km (14 mi) in width, covering an area of 432 km² (167 sq mi). It is situated in the western area of the North Atlantic and 100 km (62 mi) east of the Windward Islands and the Caribbean Sea;^[6] therein, it is about 168 km (104 mi) east of the islands of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and 400 km (250 mi) north-east of Trinidad and Tobago. Barbados is outside of the principal Atlantic hurricane belt. Its capital and largest city is Bridgetown.

Inhabited by Kalinago people since the 13th century, and prior to that by other Amerindians, Barbados was visited by Spanish navigators in the late 15th century and claimed for the Spanish Crown. It first appeared in a Spanish map in 1511.^{[7][8]} The Portuguese visited the island in 1536, but they left it unclaimed, with their only remnants being an introduction of wild hogs for a good supply of meat whenever the island was visited. An English ship, the *Olive Blossom*, arrived in Barbados in 1625; its men took possession of it in the name of King James I. In 1627, the first permanent settlers arrived from England, and it became an English and later British colony.^[9] As a wealthy sugar colony, it became an English centre of the African slave trade until that trade was outlawed in 1807, with final emancipation of slaves in Barbados occurring over a period of years from 1833.

In 1966, Barbados became an independent state and Commonwealth realm with the British Monarch (presently Queen Elizabeth II) as hereditary head of state.^[10] It has a population of 284,996^[11] people, predominantly of African descent. Despite being classified as an Atlantic island, Barbados is considered to be a part of the Caribbean, where it is ranked as a leading tourist destination. Forty percent of the tourists come from the UK, with the US and Canada making up the next large groups of visitors to the island. In 2014, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index ranked Barbados joint second in the Americas (after Canada, equal with the United States) and joint 17th globally (after Belgium and Japan, equal with the US, Hong Kong and Ireland).^[12]

Barbados



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: "Pride and Industry"

Anthem: *In Plenty and In Time of Need*

0:00

MENU

Royal anthem: God Save the Queen



Capital and largest city	Bridgetown 13°06′N 59°37′W﻿ / ﻿13.100°N 59.617°W﻿ / 13.100; -59.617
Official languages	English
Recognised regional languages	Bajan
Ethnic groups (2010 ^[1])	92.4% Black 3.1% Multiracial 2.7% White 1.3% Indian 0.4% Other/Unspecified
Religion	74.6% Christian 4.8% other

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 1627–1639
 - 2.1.1 Early English settlement
 - 2.2 1640–1790
 - 2.2.1 England's civil war
 - 2.2.2 Sugar cane
- 3 Geography and climate
 - 3.1 Geology
 - 3.2 Climate
 - 3.3 Environmental issues
 - 3.4 Wildlife
- 4 Government and politics
 - 4.1 Political culture
 - 4.2 Foreign relations
 - 4.2.1 World Trade Organisation, European Commission, CARIFORUM
 - 4.2.2 The Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty 1994
 - 4.2.3 European Nations
 - 4.3 Military
 - 4.4 Administrative divisions
 - 4.5 Human rights
- 5 Economy
- 6 Society
 - 6.1 Demographics
 - 6.2 Ethnic groups
 - 6.3 Languages
 - 6.4 Religion
 - 6.5 Health
 - 6.6 Education
 - 6.6.1 Educational testing
- 7 Culture
 - 7.1 Cuisine
 - 7.2 Music
 - 7.3 Public holidays
 - 7.4 Sports
- 8 Transport
- 9 See also
- 10 References
- 11 Further reading
 - 11.1 Videography
- 12 External links

	20.6% none / unspecified ^[1]
Demonym	Barbadian Bajan (colloquial)
Government	Parliamentary democracy under constitutional monarchy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monarch • Governor-General • Prime Minister 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elizabeth II Philip Greaves Freundel Stuart
Legislature	Parliament
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper house • Lower house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senate House of Assembly
Independence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from the United Kingdom 	30 November 1966
Area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Water (%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 439 km² (169 sq mi) (183rd) negligible
Population	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2010 census • Density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 277,821^[2] (181st) 660/km² (1,709.4/sq mi) (15th)
GDP (PPP)	2016 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$4.663 billion^[3] \$16,669^[3] (73rd)
GDP (nominal)	2016 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$4.385 billion^[3] \$15,677^[3]
HDI (2015)	— 0.795 ^[4] high · 54th
Currency	Barbadian dollar (\$) (BBD)
Time zone	Eastern Caribbean (UTC-4)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer (DST) 	not observed (UTC-4)
Drives on the	left ^[5]

Calling code	+1 -246
ISO 3166 code	BB
Internet TLD	.bb

Etymology

The name Barbados is either the Portuguese word *Os Barbados* or the Spanish equivalent *Los Barbados*, both meaning "the bearded ones". It is unclear whether "bearded" refers to the long, hanging roots of the bearded fig-tree (*Ficus citrifolia*), indigenous to the island, or to the allegedly bearded Caribs once inhabiting the island, or, more fancifully, to a visual impression of a beard formed by the sea foam that sprays over the outlying reefs. In 1519, a map produced by the Genoese mapmaker Visconte Maggiolo showed and named Barbados in its correct position. Furthermore, the island of Barbuda in the Leewards is very similar in name and was once named *Las Barbudas* by the Spanish.

It is uncertain which European nation arrived first in Barbados. One lesser known source points to earlier-revealed works predating contemporary sources indicating it could have been the Spanish. Others believe the Portuguese, en route to Brazil,^{[13][14]} were the first Europeans to come upon the island.

The original name for Barbados in the Pre-Columbian era was *Ichirouganaim* according to accounts by descendants of the indigenous Arawakan-speaking tribes in other regional areas, with possible translations including "Red land with white teeth",^[15] "Redstone island with teeth outside (reefs)",^[16] or simply "Teeth".^{[17][18][19]}

Colloquially Barbadians refer to their home island as "Bim" or other nicknames associated with Barbados includes "Bimshire". The origin is uncertain but several theories exist. The National Cultural Foundation of Barbados says that "Bim" was a word commonly used by slaves and that it derives from the Igbo term *bém* from *bé mụ* meaning 'my home, kindred, kind',^[20] the Igbo phoneme /e/ in the Igbo orthography is very close to [ɪ].^[21] The name could have arisen due to the relatively large percentage of enslaved Igbo people from modern-day southeastern Nigeria arriving in Barbados in the 18th century.^{[22][23]}

The words 'Bim' and 'Bimshire' are recorded in the *Oxford English Dictionary* and *Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionaries*. Another possible source for 'Bim' is reported to be in the *Agricultural Reporter* of 25 April 1868, where the Rev. N. Greenidge (father of one of the island's most famous scholars, Abel Hendy Jones Greenidge) suggested the listing of Bimshire as a county of England. Expressly named were "Wiltshire, Hampshire, Berkshire and Bimshire".^[20] Lastly, in the *Daily Argosy* (of Demerara, i.e. Guyana) of 1652 there is a reference to Bim as a possible corruption of 'Byam', the name of a Royalist leader against the Parliamentarians. That source suggested the followers of Byam became known as 'Bims' and that this became a word for all Barbadians.^[20]

History

Amerindian settlement of Barbados dates to about the 4th to 7th centuries AD, by a group known as the Saladoid-Barranoid.^[24] The Arawaks from South America became dominant around 800 AD, and maintained that status until around 1200. In the 13th century, the Kalinago (Island Caribs) arrived from South America.

The Spanish and Portuguese briefly claimed Barbados from the late 16th to the 17th centuries. The Arawaks are believed to have fled to neighbouring islands. Apart from possibly displacing the Caribs, the Spanish and Portuguese made little impact and left the island uninhabited. Some Arawaks migrated from British Guiana (modern-day Guyana) in the 19th century and continue to live in Barbados.^{[25][26]}



Statue of Bussa, Bridgetown. Bussa led the largest slave rebellion in Barbadian history.

In the very early years (1620–1640s) the majority of the labour was provided by European indentured servants, mainly English, Irish and Scottish, with African slaves and Amerindian slaves providing little of the workforce. During the Cromwellian era (1650s) this included a large number of prisoners-of-war, vagrants and people who were illicitly kidnapped, who were forcibly



Blue Ensign flag of the Colony of Barbados, used from 1870 to 1966.

transported to the island and sold as servants. These last two groups were predominately Irish, as several thousand were infamously rounded up by English merchants and sold into servitude in Barbados and other Caribbean islands during this period.^[27] Cultivation of tobacco, cotton, ginger and indigo was thus handled primarily by European indentured labour until the start of the sugar cane industry in the 1640s and the growing reliance and importation of enslaved Africans. Persecuted persons of Jewish faith during the inquisition also

settled to Barbados.^[28] From its English settlement and as Barbados' economy grew, Barbados maintained a relatively large measure of local autonomy first as a proprietary colony and later a crown colony. The House of Assembly began meeting in 1639. Among the island's earliest leading figures was the Anglo-Dutch Sir William Courten.

The 1780 hurricane killed over 4,000 people on Barbados. In 1854, a cholera epidemic killed over 20,000 inhabitants.^[29] At emancipation in 1833, the size of the slave population was approximately 83,000. Between 1946 and 1980, Barbados' rate of population growth was diminished by one-third because of emigration to Britain.^[30]

1627–1639

Early English settlement

The settlement was established as a proprietary colony and funded by Sir William Courten, a City of London merchant who acquired the title to Barbados and several other islands. So the first colonists were actually tenants and much of the profits of their labour returned to Courten and his company.^[31]

The first English ship, which had arrived on 14 May 1625, was captained by John Powell. The first settlement began on 17 February 1627, near what is now Holetown (formerly Jamestown),^[32] by a group led by John Powell's younger brother, Henry, consisting of 80 settlers and 10 English labourers. The latter were young

indentured labourers who according to some sources had been abducted, effectively making them slaves.^[33]

Courten's title was transferred to James Hay, 1st Earl of Carlisle, in what was called the "Great Barbados Robbery." Carlisle then chose as governor Henry Hawley, who established the House of Assembly in 1639, in an effort to appease the planters, who might otherwise have opposed his controversial appointment.

In the period 1640–60, the West Indies attracted over two-thirds of the total number of English emigrants to the Americas. By 1650 there were 44,000 settlers in the West Indies, as compared to 12,000 on the Chesapeake and 23,000 in New England. Most English arrivals were indentured. After five years of labour, they were given "freedom dues" of about £10, usually in goods. (Before the mid-1630s, they also received 5 to 10 acres of land, but after that time the island filled and there was no more free land.) Around the time of Cromwell a number of rebels and criminals were also transported there. Timothy Meads of Warwickshire was one of the rebels sent to Barbados at that time, before he received compensation for servitude of 1000 acres of land in North Carolina in 1666. Parish registers from the 1650s show, for the white population, four times as many deaths as marriages. The death rate was very high.

Before this, the mainstay of the infant colony's economy was the growth export of tobacco, but tobacco prices eventually fell in the 1630s, as Chesapeake production expanded.

1640–1790

England's civil war

Around the same time, fighting during the War of the Three Kingdoms and the Interregnum spilled over into Barbados and Barbadian territorial waters. The island was not involved in the war until after the execution of Charles I, when the island's government fell under the control of Royalists (ironically the Governor, Philip Bell, remaining loyal to Parliament while the Barbadian House of Assembly, under the influence of Humphrey Walrond, supported Charles II). To try to bring the recalcitrant colony to heel, the Commonwealth Parliament passed an act on 3 October 1650 prohibiting trade between England and Barbados, and because the island also traded with the Netherlands, further navigation acts were passed prohibiting any but English vessels trading with Dutch colonies. These acts were a precursor to the First Anglo-Dutch War. The Commonwealth of England sent an invasion force under the command of Sir George Ayscue, which arrived in October 1651. After some skirmishing, the Royalists in the House of Assembly led by Lord Willoughby surrendered. The conditions of the surrender were incorporated into the Charter of Barbados (Treaty of Oistins), which was signed at the Mermaid's Inn, Oistins, on 17 January 1652.^[34]

Sugar cane

The introduction of sugar cane from Dutch Brazil in 1640 completely transformed society and the economy. Barbados eventually had one of the world's biggest sugar industries.^[35] One group instrumental in ensuring the early success of the industry were the Sephardic Jews, who had originally been expelled from the Iberian peninsula, to end up in Dutch Brazil.^[35] As the effects of the new crop increased, so did the shift in the ethnic composition of Barbados and surrounding islands. The workable sugar plantation required a large investment and a great deal of heavy labour. At first, Dutch traders supplied the equipment, financing, and African slaves,

in addition to transporting most of the sugar to Europe. In 1644 the population of Barbados was estimated at 30,000, of which about 800 were of African descent, with the remainder mainly of English descent. These English smallholders were eventually bought out and the island filled up with large African slave-worked sugar plantations. By 1660 there was near parity with 27,000 blacks and 26,000 whites. By 1666 at least 12,000 white smallholders had been bought out, died, or left the island. Many of the remaining whites were increasingly poor. By 1680 there were 17 slaves for every indentured servant. By 1700, there were 15,000 free whites and 50,000 enslaved blacks.

Due to the increased implementation of slave codes, which created differential treatment between Africans and the white workers and ruling planter class, the island became increasingly unattractive to poor whites. Black or slave codes were implemented in 1661, 1676, 1682, and 1688. In response to these codes, several slave rebellions were attempted or planned during this time, but none succeeded. Nevertheless, poor whites who had or acquired the means to emigrate often did so. Planters expanded their importation of African slaves to cultivate sugar cane. One early advocate of slave rights in Barbados was the visiting Quaker preacher Alice Curwen in 1677: "For I am perswaded, that if they whom thou call'st thy Slaves, be Upright-hearted to God, the Lord God Almighty will set them Free in a way that thou knowest not; for there is none set free but in Christ Jesus, for all other Freedom will prove but a Bondage."^[36]

Geography and climate

Barbados is situated in the Atlantic Ocean, east of the other West Indies Islands. Barbados is the easternmost island in the Lesser Antilles. It is flat in comparison to its island neighbours to the west, the Windward Islands. The island rises gently to the central highland region, with the high point of the nation being Mount Hillaby in the geological Scotland District 340 m (1,120 ft) above sea level.

In the parish of Saint Michael lies Barbados' capital and main city, Bridgetown. Other major towns scattered across the island include Holetown, in the parish of Saint James; Oistins, in the parish of Christ Church; and Speightstown, in the parish of Saint Peter.

Geology

Barbados lies on the boundary of the South American and the Caribbean Plates.^[37] The subduction of the South American plate beneath the Caribbean plate scrapes sediment from the South American plate and deposits it above the subduction zone forming an accretionary prism. The rate of this depositing of material allows Barbados to rise at a rate of about 25 mm (1 in) per 1,000 years.^[38] This subduction means geologically the island is composed of coral roughly 90 m (300 ft) thick, where reefs formed above the sediment. The land slopes in a series of "terraces" in the west and goes into an incline in the east. A large proportion of the island is circled by coral reefs.



A map of Barbados

The erosion of limestone in the northeast of the island, in the Scotland District, has resulted in the formation of various caves and gullies, some of which have become popular tourist attractions such as Harrison's Cave and Welchman Hall Gully. On the Atlantic east coast of the island coastal landforms, including stacks, have been created due to the limestone composition of the area. Also notable in the island is the rocky cape known as Pico Tenerife^[39] or Pico de Tenerife, which is named after the fact that the island of Tenerife in Spain is the first land east of Barbados according to the belief of the locals.

Climate

The country generally experiences two seasons, one of which includes noticeably higher rainfall. Known as the "wet season", this period runs from June to November. By contrast, the "dry season" runs from December to May. Annual precipitation ranges between 1,000 and 2,300 mm (40 and 90 in). From December to May the average temperatures range from 21 to 31 °C (70 to 88 °F), while between June and November, they range from 23 to 31 °C (73 to 88 °F).^[40]

On the Köppen climate classification scale, much of Barbados is regarded as a tropical monsoon climate (Am). However, gentle breezes of 12 to 16 km/h (7 to 10 mph) abound throughout the year and give Barbados a climate which is moderately tropical.

Infrequent natural hazards include earthquakes, landslips and hurricanes. Barbados is often spared the worst effects of the region's tropical storms and hurricanes during the rainy season. Its location in the south-east of the Caribbean region puts the country just outside the principal hurricane strike zone. On average, a major hurricane strikes about once every 26 years. The last significant hit from a hurricane to cause severe damage to Barbados was Hurricane Janet in 1955; in 2010 the island was struck by Hurricane Tomas, but this caused only minor damage across the country.^[41]

Environmental issues

Barbados is susceptible to environmental pressures. As one of the world's most densely populated isles, the government worked during the 1990s^[42] to aggressively integrate the growing south coast of the island into the Bridgetown Sewage Treatment Plant to reduce contamination of offshore coral reefs.^{[43][44]} As of the first decade of the 21st century, a second treatment plant has been proposed along the island's west coast. Being so densely populated, Barbados has made great efforts to protect its underground aquifers.^[45]

As a coral-limestone island, Barbados is highly permeable to seepage of surface water into the earth. The government has placed great emphasis on protecting the catchment areas that lead directly into the huge network of underground aquifers and streams.^[45] On occasion illegal squatters have breached these areas, and the government has removed squatters to preserve the cleanliness of the underground springs which provide the island's drinking water.^[46]



Bathsheba on the east coast of the island.

The government has placed a huge emphasis on keeping Barbados clean with the aim of protecting the environment and preserving offshore coral reefs which surround the island. Many initiatives to mitigate human pressures on the coastal regions of Barbados and seas come from the Coastal Zone Management Unit (CZMU).^{[47][48]} Barbados has nearly 90 kilometres (56 miles) of coral reefs just offshore and two protected marine parks have been established off the west coast.^[49] Overfishing is another threat which faces Barbados.^[50]

Barbados is host to four species of nesting turtles (green turtles, loggerheads, hawksbill turtles, and leatherbacks) and has the second-largest hawksbill turtle breeding population in the Caribbean.^[51] The driving of vehicles on beaches can crush nests buried in the sand and such activity should be avoided in nesting areas.^[52]

Though on the opposite side of the Atlantic, and some 4,800 kilometres (3,000 miles) west of Africa, Barbados is one of many places in the American continent that experience heightened levels of mineral dust from the Sahara Desert.^[53] Some particularly intense dust episodes have been blamed partly for the impacts on the health of coral reefs^[54] surrounding Barbados or asthmatic episodes,^[55] but evidence has not wholly supported the former such claim.^[56]

Wildlife

Barbados is host to four species of nesting turtles (green turtles, loggerheads, hawksbill turtles, and leatherbacks) and has the second-largest hawksbill turtle breeding population in the Caribbean.

Barbados is also the host to the green monkey. The green monkey is found in West Africa from Senegal to the Volta River. It has been introduced to the Cape Verde islands off north-western Africa, and the West Indian islands of Saint Kitts, Nevis, Saint Martin, and Barbados. It was introduced to the West Indies in the late 17th century when slave trade ships travelled to the Caribbean from West Africa.

Government and politics

Barbados has been an independent country since 30 November 1966.^[57] It functions as a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy modelled on the British Westminster system. The British and Barbadian monarch—Queen Elizabeth II—is head of state and is represented locally by the Governor-General of Barbados—presently Elliott Belgrave. Both are advised on matters of the Barbadian state by the Prime Minister of Barbados, who is head of government. There are 30 representatives within the House of Assembly.



Barbados, seen from the International Space Station.

The Constitution of Barbados is the supreme law of the nation.^[58] The Attorney General heads the independent judiciary. New Acts are passed by the Barbadian Parliament and require royal assent by the governor-general to become law.

During the 1990s at the suggestion of Trinidad and Tobago's Patrick Manning, Barbados attempted a political union with Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana. The project stalled after the then prime minister of Barbados, Lloyd Erskine Sandiford, became ill and his Democratic Labour Party lost the next general election.^{[59][60]} Barbados continues to share close ties with Trinidad and Tobago and with Guyana, claiming the highest number of Guyanese immigrants after the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom.

Political culture

Barbados functions as a two-party system. The dominant political parties are the Democratic Labour Party and the opposition Barbados Labour Party. Since Independence the Barbados Labour Party (BLP) has governed from 1976 to 1986 and from September 1994 to 2008. The Democratic Labour Party (DLP) held office 1966 to 1976, from 1986 to 1994, and has formed the government from January 2008 to present.



The Barbados parliament building in Bridgetown.

Foreign relations

Barbados is a full and participating member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), and the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).^[61] Organization of American States (OAS), Commonwealth of Nations, and the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ). In 2005 the Parliament of Barbados voted on a measure replacing the UK's Judicial Committee of the Privy Council with the Caribbean Court of Justice based in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

World Trade Organisation, European Commission, CARIFORUM

Barbados is an original member (1995) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and participates actively in its work. It grants at least MFN treatment to all its trading partners. As of December 2007, Barbados is linked by an Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Commission. The pact involves the Caribbean Forum (CARIFORUM) subgroup of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). CARIFORUM is the only part of the wider ACP-bloc that has concluded the full regional trade-pact with the European Union.

Trade policy has also sought to protect a small number of domestic activities, mostly food production, from foreign competition, while recognising that most domestic needs are best met by imports.

The Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty 1994

On 6 July 1994, at the Sherbourne Conference Centre, St. Michael, Barbados, representatives of eight (8) countries signed the Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaties 1994. The countries which were represented were: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the

Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.^[62]

On 19 August 1994 a representative of the Government of Guyana signed a similar treaty.

European Nations

In 2013, CARICOM called for European nations to pay reparations for slavery and established an official reparations commission.^[63]

Military

The Barbados Defence Force has roughly 600 members. Within it, 12- to 18-year-olds make up the Barbados Cadet Corps. The defence preparations of the island nation are closely tied to defence treaties with the United Kingdom, the United States, and the People's Republic of China.^[64]

The Royal Barbados Police Force is the sole law enforcement agency on the island of Barbados.

Administrative divisions

Barbados is divided into 11 parishes:

1. Christ Church
2. Saint Andrew
3. Saint George
4. Saint James
5. Saint John
6. Saint Joseph
7. Saint Lucy
8. Saint Michael
9. Saint Peter
10. Saint Philip
11. Saint Thomas



St. George and St. Thomas are in the middle of the country and are the only parishes without coastlines.

Human rights

Barbados maintains the third largest stock exchange in the Caribbean region. As of 2009, officials at the stock exchange were investigating the possibility of augmenting the local exchange with an International Securities Market (ISM) venture.^[73]

Society

Demographics

The 2010 national census conducted by the Barbados Statistical Service reported a resident population of 277,821, of which 133,018 were male and 144,803 were female.^[74]

Ethnic groups

Close to 90% of all Barbadians (also known colloquially as "Bajan") are of Afro-Caribbean descent ("Afro-Bajans") and mixed-descent. The remainder of the population includes groups of Europeans ("Anglo-Bajans" / "Euro-Bajans") mainly from the United Kingdom and Ireland, along with Asians, predominantly Chinese and Indians (both Hindu and Muslim). Other groups in Barbados include people from the United Kingdom, United States and Canada. Barbadians who return after years of residence in the United States and children born in America to Bajan parents are called "Bajan Yankees", a term considered derogatory by some.^[75] Generally, Bajans recognise and accept all "children of the island" as Bajans, and refer to each other as such.

The biggest communities outside the Afro-Caribbean community are:

1. The Indo-Guyanese, an important part of the economy due to the increase of immigrants from partner country Guyana. There are reports of a growing Indo-Bajan diaspora originating from Guyana and India starting around 1990. Predominantly from southern India and Hindu states, they are growing in size but smaller than the equivalent communities in Trinidad and Guyana.^[76]
2. Euro-Bajans (4% of the population)^[1] have settled in Barbados since the 17th century, originating from England, Ireland and Scotland. In 1643, there were 37,200 whites in Barbados (86% of the population).^[77] More commonly they are known as "White Bajans". Euro-Bajans introduced folk music, such as Irish music and Highland music, and certain place names, such as "Scotland", a mountainous region. Among White Barbadians there exists an underclass known as Redlegs; mostly the descendants of Irish indentured labourers and prisoners imported to the island.^[78] Many additionally moved on to become the



A bus stop in Barbados.



People shopping in the capital Bridgetown.

earliest settlers of modern-day North and South Carolina in the United States.

- Chinese-Barbadians are a small portion of Barbados' Asian demographics. Most if not all first arrived in the 1940s during the Second World War. Many Chinese-Bajans have the surnames Chin, Chynn or Lee, although other surnames prevail in certain areas of the island. Chinese food and culture is becoming part of everyday Bajan culture.
- Lebanese and Syrians form the island's Arab Barbadian community, which is overwhelmingly Christian Arab. The Muslim Arab minority among Arab Barbadian make up a small percentage of the overall minority Muslim Barbadian population. The majority of the Lebanese and Syrians arrived in Barbados through trade opportunities. Their numbers are falling due to emigration to other countries.
- Jews arrived in Barbados just after the first settlers in 1627. Bridgetown is the home of Nidhe Israel Synagogue, the oldest Jewish synagogue in the Americas, dating from 1654, though the current structure was erected in 1833 replacing one ruined by the hurricane of 1831. Tombstones in the neighbouring cemetery date from the 1630s. Now under the care of the Barbados National Trust, the site was deserted in 1929 but was saved and restored by the Jewish community beginning in 1986.
- The Muslim Barbadians of Indian origin are largely of Gujarati ancestry. Many small businesses in Barbados are run and operated by Muslim-Indian Bajans.^{[79][80]}

Languages

English is the official language of Barbados, and is used for communications, administration, and public services all over the island. In its capacity as the official language of the country, the standard of English tends to conform to the vocabulary, pronunciations, spellings, and conventions akin to, but not exactly the same as, those of British English.

An English-based creole language, referred to locally as *Bajan*, is spoken by most Barbadians in everyday life, especially in informal settings. In its full-fledged form, Bajan sounds markedly different from the Standard English heard on the island. The degree of intelligibility between Bajan and general English, for the general English speaker, depends on the level of creolised vocabulary and idioms. A Bajan speaker may be completely unintelligible to an English speaker from another country.

Religion



St. Michael's Cathedral, Bridgetown.

Most Barbadians of African and European descent are Christians (95%), the largest denomination being Anglican (40%). Other Christian denominations with significant followings in Barbados are the Catholic Church (administered by Roman Catholic Diocese of Bridgetown), Pentecostals, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Seventh-day Adventist Church and Spiritual Baptists. The Church of England was the official state religion until its legal disestablishment by the Parliament of Barbados following independence.^[82]

Other religions in Barbados include Hinduism, Islam, Bahá'í,^[83] Judaism and Wicca.

Health

The life expectancy for Barbados residents as of 2011 is 74 years. The average life expectancy is 72 years for males and 77 years for females (2005).^[1] Barbados and Japan have the highest per capita occurrences of centenarians in the world.^[84]

The crude birth rate is 12.23 births per 1,000 people, and the crude death rate is 8.39 deaths per 1,000 people. The infant mortality rate is 11.63 infant deaths per 1,000 live births.

All Barbadian citizens are covered by national healthcare. Barbados has over twenty polyclinics throughout the country in addition to the main Queen Elizabeth Hospital (General Hospital) located in Bridgetown. In 2011, the Government of Barbados signed a memorandum of understanding to lease its 22-acre Saint Joseph Hospital site to the Denver, Colorado-based America World Clinics. Under the deal, the group will use Barbados as one of its main destinations for medical tourism at that facility. The government also announced it would begin constructing a new \$900 million state-of-the-art hospital to replace the QEH.

Education

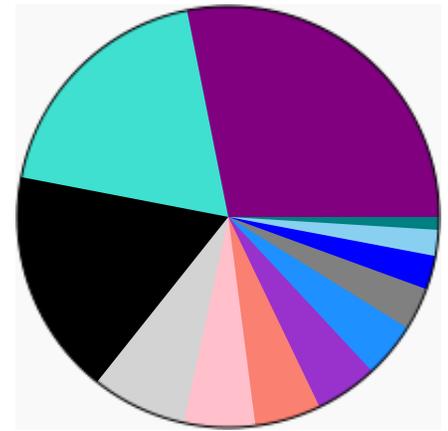
The Barbados literacy rate is ranked close to 100%.^[85] The mainstream public education system of Barbados is fashioned after the British model. The government of Barbados spends 6.7% of its GDP on education (2008).^[1]

All young people in the country must attend school until age 16. Barbados has over 70 primary schools and over 20 secondary schools throughout the island. There are a number of private schools, including Montessori and the International Baccalaureate. Student enrolment at these schools represents less than 5% of the total enrolment of the public schools.

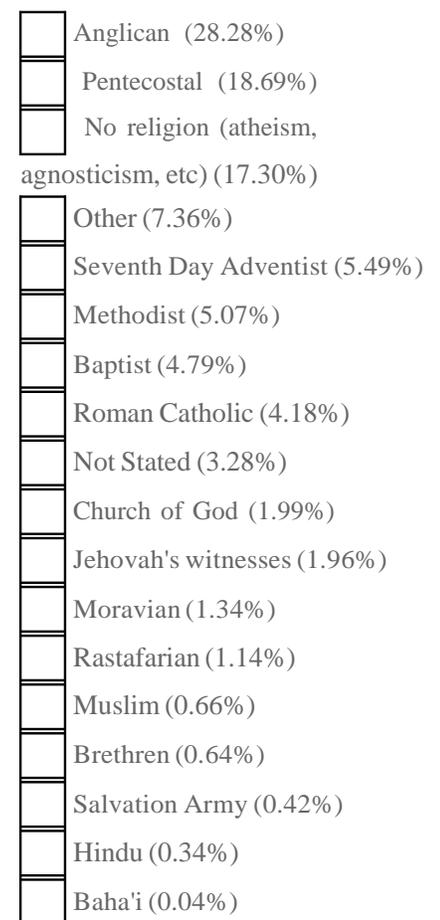
Degree-level education in the country is provided by the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, and the Cave Hill campus and Open Campus of the University of the West Indies. Barbados is also home to the American University of Integrative Sciences, School of Medicine.

Educational testing

Barbados Secondary School Entrance Examination: Children who are 11 years old but under 12 years old on 1 September in the year of the examination are required to write the examination as a means of allocation to secondary school.



Religion in Barbados (2000)^[81]



Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examinations are usually taken by students after five years of secondary school and mark the end of standard secondary education. The CSEC examinations are equivalent to the Ordinary Level (O-Levels) examinations and are targeted toward students 16 and older.

Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE) are taken by students who have completed their secondary education and wish to continue their studies. Students who sit for the CAPE usually possess CSEC or an equivalent certification. The CAPE is equivalent to the British Advanced Levels (A-Levels), voluntary qualifications that are intended for university entrance.^[86]

Culture

The **culture of Barbados** is a blend of West African, Creole, Indian and British cultures present in Barbados. Citizens are officially called Barbadians. The term "Bajan" (pronounced BAY-jun) may have come from a localised pronunciation of the word Barbadian, which at times can sound more like "Bar-bajan".

The largest carnival-like cultural event that takes place on the island is the Crop Over festival. As in many other Caribbean and Latin American countries, Crop Over is an important event for many people on the island, as well as the thousands of tourists that flock to there to participate in the annual events. The festival includes musical competitions and other traditional activities, and features the majority of the island's homegrown calypso and soca music for the year. The male and female Barbadians who harvested the most sugarcane are crowned as the King and Queen of the crop.^[87] Crop Over gets under way at the beginning of July and ends with the costumed parade on Kadooment Day, held on the first Monday of August.

Cuisine

Bajan cuisine is a mixture of African, Indian, Irish, Creole and British influences. A typical meal consists of a main dish of meat or fish, normally marinated with a mixture of herbs and spices, hot side dishes, and one or more salads. The meal is usually served with one or more sauces.^[88] The national dish of Barbados is Cou-Cou & Flying Fish with spicy gravy.^[89] Another traditional meal is "Pudding and Souse" a dish of pickled pork with spiced sweet potatoes.^[90] A wide variety of seafood and meats are also available.

The Mount Gay Rum visitors centre in Barbados claims to be the world's oldest remaining rum company, with earliest confirmed deed from 1703. Cockspur Rum and Malibu are also from the island. Barbados is home to the Banks Barbados Brewery, which brews Banks Beer, a pale lager, as well as Banks



Schoolchildren in Saint Philip, Barbados.



Mount Gay Rum visitors centre

Amber Ale.^[91] Banks also brews Tiger Malt, a non-alcoholic malted beverage. 10 Saints beer is brewed in Speightstown, St. Peter in Barbados and aged for 90 days in Mount Gay 'Special Reserve' Rum casks. It was first brewed in 2009 and is available in certain Caricom nations.^[92]

Music

In music, eight-time Grammy Award winner Robyn Rihanna Fenty (born in Saint Michael) is one of Barbados' best-known artists and one of the best selling music artists of all time, selling over 200 million records worldwide. In 2009 she was appointed as an Honorary Ambassador of Youth and Culture for Barbados by the late Prime Minister, David Thompson.^[93]

Singer-songwriter Shontelle, the band Cover Drive, musician Rupee and Mark Morrison, singer of Top 10 hit "Return of the Mack" also originate from Barbados. Grandmaster Flash (born Joseph Saddler in Bridgetown in 1958) is a hugely influential musician of Barbadian origin, pioneering hip-hop DJing, cutting, and mixing in 1970s New York. The Merry-men are a well known Calypso band based in Barbados, performing from the 1960s into the 2010s.

Public holidays



International pop star Rihanna, a native of Barbados.

Date	English name	Remarks
1 January	New Year's Day	
21 January	Errol Barrow Day	A day of recognition for Errol Barrow the Father of the Nation.
March or April	Good Friday	Friday, date varies
March or April	Easter Monday	Monday, date varies
28 April	National Heroes' Day	A day of recognition for Barbados' national heroes.
1–7 May	Labour Day	1st Monday in May, date varies
May or June	Whit Monday	Monday, date varies
1 August	Emancipation Day	The date on which slavery was abolished on the island.
1–7 August	Kadooment Day	1st Monday in August, date varies
30 November	Independence Day	The anniversary of Barbadian national independence, from the United Kingdom in 1966.
25 December	Christmas Day	
26 December.	Boxing Day	

Sports

As in other Caribbean countries of British colonial heritage, cricket is very popular on the island. The West Indies cricket team usually includes several Barbadian players. In addition to several warm-up matches and six "Super Eight" matches, the country hosted the final of the 2007 Cricket World Cup. Barbados has produced many great cricketers including Sir Garfield Sobers, Sir Frank Worrell, Sir Clyde Walcott, Sir Everton Weekes, Gordon Greenidge, Wes Hall, Charlie Griffith, Joel Garner, Desmond Haynes and Malcolm Marshall.

Rugby is also popular in Barbados as well.

Horse racing takes place at the Historic Garrison Savannah close to Bridgetown. Spectators can pay for admission to the stands, or else can watch races from the public "rail", which encompasses the track.

Obadele Thompson is a world-class sprinter from Barbados; he won a bronze medal at the Olympic Games of 2000 in the 100m sprint. Ryan Brathwaite, a hurdler, reached the 2008 Olympic semi-finals in Beijing. Brathwaite also earned Barbados its first ever medal at the world championships in Berlin, Germany on 20 August 2009, when he won the men's 110 meter hurdles title. The 21-year-old timed a national record of 13.14 seconds to win the Gold Medal.

Basketball is an increasingly popular sport, played at school or college. Barbados' national team has shown some unexpected results as in the past it beat many much larger countries.



Kensington Oval in Bridgetown hosted the 2007 Cricket World Cup final. Cricket is one of the most followed games in Barbados and Kensington Oval is often referred to as the "Mecca in Cricket" due to its significance and contributions to the sport.

Polo is very popular amongst the rich elite on the island and the "High-Goal" Apes Hill team is based at the St James's Club.^[94] It is also played at the private Holders Festival ground.

In golf, the Barbados Open, played at Royal Westmoreland Golf Club, was an annual stop on the European Seniors Tour from 2000 to 2009. In December 2006 the WGC-World Cup took place at the country's Sandy Lane resort on the Country Club course, an 18-hole course designed by Tom Fazio. The Barbados Golf Club is another course on the island. It has hosted the Barbados Open on several occasions.

Volleyball is also popular, though volleyball is mainly played indoors.

Tennis is gaining popularity and Barbados is home to Darian King, currently ranked 270th in the world and is the 2nd highest ranked player in the Caribbean.

Motorsports also play a role, with Rally Barbados occurring each summer and being listed on the FIA NACAM calendar. Also, the Bushy Park Circuit hosted the Race of Champions and Global RallyCross Championship in 2014.

The presence of the trade winds along with favourable swells make the southern tip of the island an ideal location for wave sailing (an extreme form of the sport of windsurfing).

Netball is also popular with women in Barbados.

Barbadian team The Flyin' Fish, are the 2009 Segway Polo World Champions.^[95]

Transport

Although Barbados is about 34 km (21 mi) across at its widest point, a car journey from Six Cross Roads in St. Philip (south-east) to North Point in St. Lucy (north-central) can take one and a half hours or longer due to road conditions. Barbados has half as many registered cars as citizens.

Transport on the island is relatively convenient with "route taxis" called "ZRs" (pronounced "Zed-Rs") travelling to most points on the island. These small buses can at times be crowded, as passengers are generally never turned down regardless of the number. They will usually take the more scenic routes to destinations. They generally depart from the capital Bridgetown or from Speightstown in the northern part of the island.

Including the ZRs, there are three bus systems running seven days a week (though less frequently on Sundays). There are ZRs, the yellow minibuses and the blue Transport Board buses. A ride on any of them costs BBD\$2.00. The smaller buses from the two privately owned systems ("ZRs" and "minibuses") can give change;



An ACME Hino Midibus in Speightstown, Barbados.

the larger blue buses from the government-operated Barbados Transport Board system cannot, but do give receipts. Children in school uniform ride for free on the government buses and for \$1.50 on the ZRs. Most routes require a connection in Bridgetown.

Some hotels also provide visitors with shuttles to points of interest on the island from outside the hotel lobby. There are several locally owned and operated vehicle rental agencies in Barbados but there are no multi-national companies.

The island's lone airport is the Grantley Adams International Airport. It receives daily flights by several major airlines from points around the globe, as well as several smaller regional commercial airlines and charters. The airport serves as the main air-transportation hub for the eastern Caribbean. In the first decade of the 21st century it underwent a US\$100 million upgrade and expansion.

There is also a helicopter shuttle service, which offers air taxi services to a number of sites around the island, mainly on the West Coast tourist belt. Air and maritime traffic is regulated by the Barbados Port Authority.

See also

- Outline of Barbados
- Index of Barbados-related articles

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COUNTRY: BAHAMAS

STATISTICS

POPULATION: 285,006

LANGUAGE(S): ENGLISH

DEMONYM: BAHAMIAN

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: UNITARY PARLIAMENTARY / CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

CURRENCY: BAHAMIAN DOLLAR / US DOLLAR WIDELY ACCEPTED

CLIMATE: TROPICAL SAVANNAH CLIMATE; SUMMER WETTEST SEASON.

PRACTICING

PRACTICES IN COUNTRY: 10 FIRMS

NUMBER OF REGISTERED ARCHITECTS: 129

CERTIFICATION NEEDS:

REQUIREMENTS:

HUMANITIES

CULTURE: CARIBBEAN, AFRICAN, AND EUROPEAN INFLUENCES.

HISTORY: INDEPENDENT SINCE 1973; QUEEN ELIZABETH II IS HEAD OF STATE.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

DRIVES ON THE: LEFT

ECONOMY: ONE OF THE RICHEST COUNTRIES IN THE AMERICAS.

CRIME: CRIME RATE QUITE HIGH AND TOURISTS OFTEN TARGETED.

TOURISM: MORE THAN 70% OF TOURISTS ARE CRUISE VISITORS. ACCOUNTS FOR 60% OF GDP.

The Bahamas

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Bahamas (/bəˈhɑːməz/), known officially as the **Commonwealth of The Bahamas**,^[11] is an archipelagic state within the Lucayan Archipelago. It consists of more than 700 islands, cays, and islets in the Atlantic Ocean and is located north of Cuba and Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic); northwest of the Turks and Caicos Islands; southeast of the US state of Florida and east of the Florida Keys. The capital is Nassau on the island of New Providence. The designation of "the Bahamas" can refer either to the country or to the larger island chain that it shares with the Turks and Caicos Islands. As stated in the mandate/manifesto of the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the Bahamas territory encompasses 470,000 km² (180,000 sq mi) of ocean space.

The Bahamas is the site of Columbus' first landfall in the New World in 1492. At that time, the islands were inhabited by the Lucayan, a branch of the Arawakan-speaking Taino people. Although the Spanish never colonised The Bahamas, they shipped the native Lucayans to slavery in Hispaniola. The islands were mostly deserted from 1513 until 1648, when English colonists from Bermuda settled on the island of Eleuthera.

The Bahamas became a British Crown colony in 1718, when the British clamped down on piracy. After the American War of Independence, the Crown resettled thousands of American Loyalists in the Bahamas; they brought their slaves with them and established plantations on land grants. Africans constituted the majority of the population from this period. The slave trade was abolished by the British in 1807; slavery in the Bahamas was abolished in 1834. The Bahamas became a haven for freed African slaves: the Royal Navy resettled Africans here liberated from illegal slave ships; American slaves and Seminoles escaped here from Florida; and the government freed American slaves carried on United States domestic ships that had reached the Bahamas due to weather. Today the descendants of slaves and free Africans make up nearly 90% of the population; issues related to the slavery years are part of society.

The Bahamas became an independent Commonwealth realm in 1973, retaining the British monarch, then and currently Queen Elizabeth II, as its head of state. In terms of gross domestic product per capita, The Bahamas is one of the richest countries in the Americas (following the United States and Canada), with an economy based on tourism and finance.^[12]

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 18th–19th centuries
 - 2.2 20th century
 - 2.3 Post-Second World War
- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
- 4 Geology
- 5 Government and politics

Commonwealth of The Bahamas



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: "Forward, Upward, Onward, Together"

Anthem: *March On, Bahamaland*

0:00

MENU

Royal anthem: *God Save the Queen*

0:00

MENU



Capital
and largest city

Nassau
25°4′N 77°20′W

Official languages

English

Recognised
regional languages

Bahamian Creole^[a]

Ethnic groups
(2016)

90.6% African
4.7% European
2.1% Mixed
1.9% other^{[1][2]}

Demonym

Bahamian

Government

Unitary parliamentary
constitutional monarchy^{[3][4]}

- Monarch Elizabeth II
- Governor-General Dame Marguerite Pindling
- Prime Minister Hubert Minnis

Legislature

Parliament

- Upper house Senate
- Lower house House of Assembly

Independence

- from the United Kingdom 10 July 1973^[5]

Area

- Total 13,878 km² (5,358 sq mi) (155th)

- 5.1 Political culture
 - 5.2 Foreign relations
 - 5.3 Armed forces
 - 5.4 Administrative divisions
 - 5.5 National flag
 - 5.6 Coat of arms
 - 5.7 National flower
- 6 Economy
 - 6.1 Tourism
 - 6.2 Financial services
 - 6.3 Agriculture
- 7 Demographics
 - 7.1 Racial and ethnic groups
 - 7.2 Languages
 - 7.3 Religion
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Sport
- 9 Education
- 10 Representation in other media
- 11 See also
- 12 References
- 13 Bibliography
- 14 Further reading
 - 14.1 General history
 - 14.2 Economic history
 - 14.3 Social history
- 15 External links

Etymology

The name *Bahamas* is mostly likely derived from either the Taíno *ba ha ma* ("big upper middle land"), which was a term for the region used by the indigenous Native Americans,^[13] or from the Spanish *baja mar* ("shallow water or sea" or "low tide") reflecting the shallow waters of the area. Alternatively, it may originate from *Guanahani*, a local name of unclear meaning.^[14]

A peculiarity of the name is that the word *The* is a formal part of the abbreviated name and is, therefore, capitalised. So in contrast to "the Congo" and "the United Kingdom", it is proper to write "The Bahamas".

History

Taino people moved into the uninhabited southern Bahamas from Hispaniola and Cuba around the 11th century, having migrated there from South America. They came to be known as the Lucayan people. An estimated 30,000 Lucayan inhabited the Bahamas at the time of Christopher Columbus' arrival in 1492.

Columbus's first landfall in the New World was on an island he named San Salvador (known to the Lucayan as *Guanahani*). Some researchers believe this site to be present-day San Salvador Island (formerly known as Watling's Island), situated in the southeastern Bahamas. An alternative theory holds that Columbus landed to the southeast on Samana Cay, according to calculations made in 1986 by *National Geographic* writer and editor Joseph Judge, based on Columbus's log. Evidence in support of this remains inconclusive. On the landfall island, Columbus made first contact with the Lucayan and exchanged goods with them.

 • Water (%)	28%
Population	
 • 2016 estimate	391,232 ^[6] (177th)
 • 2010 census	351,461
 • Density	25.21/km ² (65.3/sq mi) (181st)
GDP (PPP)	2017 estimate
 • Total	\$9.374 billion ^[7]
 • Per capita	\$25,173 ^[7]
GDP (nominal)	2017 estimate
 • Total	\$9.172 billion ^[7]
 • Per capita	\$24,630 ^[7]
Gini (2001)	57 ^[8] <div> high</div>
HDI (2014)	▲ 0.790 ^[9] <div> high · 55th</div>
Currency	Bahamian dollar (BSD) (US dollars widely accepted)
Time zone	EST (UTC−5)
 • Summer (DST)	EDT (UTC−4)
Drives on the	left
Calling code	+1 242
ISO 3166 code	BS
Internet TLD	.bs
<div><div><div><div><div><div></div></div></div><div><div><div></div></div></div><div><div><div></div></div></div></div></div></div> <div>a. [^] Also referred to as <i>Bahamian dialect</i> or <i>Bahamianese</i>^[10]</div>	



A depiction of Columbus' first landing, claiming possession of the New World for Spain in caravels; the *Niña* and the *Pinta*, on Watling Island, an island of The Bahamas that the natives called Guanahani and that he named *San Salvador*, on 12 October 1492.^[15]

The Spanish forced much of the Lucayan population to Hispaniola for use as forced labour. The slaves suffered from harsh conditions and most died from contracting diseases to which they had no immunity; half of the Taino died from smallpox alone.^[16] The population of the Bahamas was severely diminished.^[17]

In 1648, the Eleutherian Adventurers, led by William Sayle, migrated from Bermuda. These English Puritans established the first permanent European settlement on an island which they named Eleuthera—the name derives from the Greek word for freedom. They later settled New Providence, naming it Sayle's Island after one of their leaders. To survive, the settlers salvaged goods from wrecks.

In 1670 King Charles II granted the islands to the Lords Proprietors of the Carolinas in North America. They rented the islands from the king with rights of trading, tax, appointing governors, and administering the country.^[18] In 1684 Spanish corsair Juan de Alcon raided the capital, Charles Town (later renamed Nassau). In 1703 a joint Franco-Spanish expedition briefly occupied the Bahamian capital during the War of the Spanish Succession.

18th–19th centuries

During proprietary rule, the Bahamas became a haven for pirates, including the infamous Blackbeard (c.1680–1718). To put an end to the 'Pirates' republic' and restore orderly government, Britain made the Bahamas a crown colony in 1718 under the royal governorship of Woodes Rogers. After a difficult struggle, he succeeded in suppressing piracy.^[19] In 1720, Rogers led local militia to drive off a Spanish attack.

During the American War of Independence in the late 18th century, the islands became a target for American naval forces under the command of Commodore Esek Hopkins. US Marines occupied the capital of Nassau for a fortnight.

In 1782, following the British defeat at Yorktown, a Spanish fleet appeared off the coast of Nassau. The city surrendered without a fight. Spain returned possession of the Bahamas to Britain the following year, under the terms of the Treaty of Paris. Before the news was received, however, the islands were recaptured by a small British force led by Andrew Deveaux.

After American independence, the British resettled some 7,300 Loyalists with their slaves in the Bahamas, and granted land to the planters to help compensate for losses on the continent. These Loyalists, who included Deveaux, established plantations on several islands and became a political force in the capital. European Americans were outnumbered by the African-American slaves they brought with them, and ethnic Europeans remained a minority in the territory.

In 1807, the British abolished the slave trade, followed by the United States the next year. During the following decades, the Royal Navy intercepted the trade; they resettled in the Bahamas thousands of Africans liberated from slave ships.

In the 1820s during the period of the Seminole Wars in Florida, hundreds of American slaves and African Seminoles escaped from Cape Florida to the Bahamas. They settled mostly on northwest Andros Island, where they developed the village of Red Bays. From eyewitness accounts, 300 escaped in a mass flight in 1823, aided by Bahamians in 27 sloops, with others using canoes for the journey. This was commemorated in 2004 by a large sign at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park.^{[20][21]} Some of their descendants in Red Bays continue African Seminole traditions in basket making and grave marking.^[22]

The United States' National Park Service, which administers the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom, is working with the African Bahamian Museum and Research Center (ABAC) in Nassau on development to identify Red Bays as a site related to American slaves' search for freedom. The museum has researched and documented the African Seminoles' escape from southern



Sign at Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park commemorating hundreds of African-American slaves who escaped to freedom in the early 1820s in the Bahamas

Florida. It plans to develop interpretive programs at historical sites in Red Bay associated with the period of their settlement in the Bahamas.^[23]

In 1818,^[24] the Home Office in London had ruled that "any slave brought to the Bahamas from outside the British West Indies would be manumitted." This led to a total of nearly 300 slaves owned by US nationals being freed from 1830 to 1835.^[25] The American slave ships *Comet* and *Encomium* used in the United States domestic coastwise slave trade, were wrecked off Abaco Island in December 1830 and February 1834, respectively. When wreckers took the masters, passengers and slaves into Nassau, customs officers seized the slaves and British colonial officials freed them, over the protests of the Americans. There were 165 slaves on the *Comet* and 48 on the *Encomium*. Britain finally paid an indemnity to the United States in those two cases in 1855, under the Treaty of Claims of 1853, which settled several compensation cases between the two nations.^{[26][27]}

Slavery was abolished in the British Empire on 1 August 1834. After that British colonial officials freed 78 American slaves from the *Enterprise*, which went into Bermuda in 1835; and 38 from the *Hermosa*, which wrecked off Abaco Island in 1840.^[28] The most notable case was that of the *Creole* in 1841: as a result of a slave revolt on board, the leaders ordered the American brig to Nassau. It was carrying 135 slaves from Virginia destined for sale in New Orleans. The Bahamian officials freed the 128 slaves who chose to stay in the islands. The *Creole* case has been described as the "most successful slave revolt in U.S. history".^[29]

These incidents, in which a total of 447 slaves belonging to US nationals were freed from 1830 to 1842, increased tension between the United States and Great Britain. They had been co-operating in patrols to suppress the international slave trade. But, worried about the stability of its large domestic slave trade and its value, the United States argued that Britain should not treat its domestic ships that came to its colonial ports under duress, as part of the international trade. The United States worried that the success of the *Creole* slaves in gaining freedom would encourage more slave revolts on merchant ships.

20th century



Edward VIII, the Duke of Windsor and Governor of the Bahamas from 1940 to 1945

In August 1940, after his abdication of the British throne, the Duke of Windsor was installed as Governor of the Bahamas, arriving with his wife, the Duchess. Although disheartened at the condition of Government House, they "tried to make the best of a bad situation".^[30] He did not enjoy the position, and referred to the islands as "a third-class British colony".^[31]

He opened the small local parliament on 29 October 1940. The couple visited the "Out Islands" that November, on Axel Wenner-Gren's yacht, which caused controversy;^[32] the British Foreign Office strenuously objected because they had been advised (mistakenly) by United States intelligence that Wenner-Gren was a close friend of the Luftwaffe commander Hermann Göring of Nazi Germany.^{[32][33]}

The Duke was praised at the time for his efforts to combat poverty on the islands. A 1991 biography by Philip Ziegler, however, described him as contemptuous of the Bahamians and other non-European peoples of the Empire. He was praised for his resolution of civil unrest over low wages in Nassau in June 1942, when there was a "full-scale riot".^[34] Ziegler said that the Duke blamed the trouble on "mischief makers – communists" and "men of Central European Jewish descent, who had secured jobs as a pretext for obtaining a deferment of draft".^[35]

The Duke resigned the post on 16 March 1945.^{[36][37]}

Post-Second World War

Modern political development began after the Second World War. The first political parties were formed in the 1950s. The British Parliament authorised the islands as internally self-governing in 1964, with Sir Roland Symonette, of the United Bahamian Party, as the first Premier.

A new constitution granting the Bahamas internal autonomy went into effect on 7 January 1964.^[38] In 1967, Lynden Pindling of the Progressive Liberal Party, became the first native born Premier of the majority native Bahamian colony; in 1968 the title of the position was changed to Prime Minister. In 1968, Pindling announced that the Bahamas would seek full independence.^[39] A new constitution giving the Bahamas increased control over its own affairs was adopted in 1968.^[40]

The British House of Lords voted to give the Bahamas its independence on 22 June 1973.^[41] Prince Charles delivered the official documents to Prime Minister Lynden Pindling, officially declaring the Bahamas a fully independent nation on 10 July 1973.^[42] It joined the Commonwealth of Nations on the same day.^[43] Sir Milo Butler was appointed the first Governor-General of the Bahamas (the official representative of Queen Elizabeth II) shortly after independence. The Bahamas joined the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on 22 August 1973,^[44] and it joined the United Nations on 18 September 1973.^[45]

Based on the twin pillars of tourism and offshore finance, the Bahamian economy has prospered since the 1950s. Significant challenges in areas such as education, health care, housing, international narcotics trafficking and illegal immigration from Haiti continue to be issues.

The University of The Bahamas (UB) is the national higher education/tertiary system. Offering baccalaureate, masters and associate degrees, UB has three campuses, and teaching and research centres throughout the Bahamas. The University of the Bahamas was chartered on November 10, 2016

Geography

The country lies between latitudes 20° and 28°N, and longitudes 72° and 80°W.

In 1864, the Governor of the Bahamas reported that there were 29 islands, 661 cays, and 2,387 rocks in the colony.^[46]

The closest island to the United States is Bimini, which is also known as the gateway to the Bahamas. The island of Abaco is to the east of Grand Bahama. The southeasternmost island is Inagua. The largest island is Andros Island. Other inhabited islands include Eleuthera, Cat Island, Rum Cay, Long Island, San Salvador Island, Ragged Island, Acklins, Crooked Island, Exuma, Berry Islands and Mayaguana. Nassau, capital city of the Bahamas, lies on the island of New Providence.

All the islands are low and flat, with ridges that usually rise no more than 15 to 20 m (49 to 66 ft). The highest point in the country is Mount Alvernia (formerly Como Hill) on Cat Island. It has an elevation of 63 metres (207 ft).

To the southeast, the Turks and Caicos Islands, and three more extensive submarine features called Mouchoir Bank, Silver Bank and Navidad Bank, are geographically a continuation of the Bahamas.

Climate

The climate of the Bahamas is tropical savannah climate or *Aw* according to Köppen climate classification. The low latitude, warm tropical Gulf Stream, and low elevation give the Bahamas a warm and winterless climate. As such, there has never been a frost or freeze reported in the Bahamas, although every few decades low temperatures can fall below 10 °C (50 °F) for a few hours when a severe cold outbreak comes off the North American mainland. There is only an 8 °C difference between the warmest month and



Sign at the entrance of the Sir Roland Symonette Park in North Eleuthera district commemorating Sir Roland Theodore Symonette, the Bahamas' first Premier



The Bahamas from space. NASA Aqua satellite image, 2009

coolest month in most of the Bahama islands. As with most tropical climates, seasonal rainfall follows the sun, and summer is the wettest season. The Bahamas are often sunny and dry for long periods of time, and average more than 3,000 hours or 340 days^[47] of sunlight annually.

Tropical storms and hurricanes can on occasion impact the Bahamas. In 1992, Hurricane Andrew passed over the northern portions of the islands, and Hurricane Floyd passed near the eastern portions of the islands in 1999.



Damaged homes in the Bahamas in the aftermath of Hurricane Wilma in 2005

Climate data for Nassau													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average high °C (°F)	25.4 (77.7)	25.5 (77.9)	26.6 (79.9)	27.9 (82.2)	29.7 (85.5)	31.0 (87.8)	32.0 (89.6)	32.1 (89.8)	31.6 (88.9)	29.9 (85.8)	27.8 (82)	26.2 (79.2)	28.8 (83.9)
Daily mean °C (°F)	21.4 (70.5)	21.4 (70.5)	22.3 (72.1)	23.8 (74.8)	25.6 (78.1)	27.2 (81)	28.0 (82.4)	28.1 (82.6)	27.7 (81.9)	26.2 (79.2)	24.2 (75.6)	22.3 (72.1)	24.85 (76.73)
Average low °C (°F)	17.3 (63.1)	17.3 (63.1)	17.9 (64.2)	19.6 (67.3)	21.4 (70.5)	23.3 (73.9)	24.0 (75.2)	24.0 (75.2)	23.7 (74.7)	22.5 (72.5)	20.6 (69.1)	18.3 (64.9)	20.8 (69.5)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	39.4 (1.551)	49.5 (1.949)	54.4 (2.142)	69.3 (2.728)	105.9 (4.169)	218.2 (8.591)	160.8 (6.331)	235.7 (9.28)	164.1 (6.461)	161.8 (6.37)	80.5 (3.169)	49.8 (1.961)	1,389.4 (54.701)
Average precipitation days	8	6	7	8	10	15	17	19	17	15	10	8	140
Mean monthly sunshine hours	220.1	220.4	257.3	276.0	269.7	231.0	272.8	266.6	213.0	223.2	222.0	213.9	2,886
Source: World Meteorological Organization (UN), ^[48] Hong Kong Observatory (sun only) ^[49]													

Average Sea Temperature

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
23 °C	23 °C	24 °C	26 °C	27 °C	28 °C	28 °C	28 °C	28 °C	27 °C	26 °C	24 °C
73 °F	73 °F	75 °F	79 °F	81 °F	82 °F	82 °F	82 °F	82 °F	81 °F	79 °F	75 °F

Geology

The Bahamas Platform, which includes the Bahamas, Southern Florida, Northern Cuba, the Turks and Caicos, and the Blake Plateau, formed about 150 Ma, not long after the formation of the North Atlantic. The 6.4 km thick limestones, which predominately make up The Bahamas, date back to the Cretaceous. These limestones would have been deposited in shallow seas, assumed to be a stretched and thinned portion of the North American continental crust. Sediments were forming at about the same rate as the crust below was sinking due to the added weight. Thus, the entire area consisted of a large marine plain with some islands. Then, at about 80 Ma, the area became flooded by the Gulf Stream. The resulted in the drowning of the Blake Plateau, the separation of The Bahamas from

Cuba and Florida, the separation of the southeastern Bahamas into separate banks, the creation of the Cay Sal Bank, plus the Little and Great Bahama Banks. Sedimentation from the "carbonate factory" of each bank, or atoll, continues today at the rate of about 2 cm per kyr. Coral reefs form the "retaining walls" of these atolls, within which oolites and pellets form.^[50]

Coral growth was greater through the Tertiary, until the start of the Ice Ages, and hence those deposits are more abundant below a depth of 36 m. In fact, an ancient extinct reef exists half a km seaward of the present one, 30 m below sea level. Oolites form when oceanic water penetrate the shallow banks, increasing the temperature about 3 °C and the salinity by 0.5 per cent. Cemented ooids are referred to as grapestone. Additionally, giant stromatolites are found off the Exuma Cays.^{[50]:22,29–30}

Sea level changes resulted in a drop in sea level, causing wind blown oolite to form sand dunes with distinct cross-bedding. Overlapping dunes form oolitic ridges, which become rapidly lithified through the action of rainwater. Most islands have ridges ranging from 30 to 45 m, though Cat Island has a ridge 60 m in height. The land between ridges is conducive to the formation of lakes and swamps.^{[50]:41–59,61–64}

Solution weathering of the limestone results in a "Bahamian Karst" topography. This includes potholes, Blue holes such as Dean's Blue Hole, sinkholes, beachrock such as the Bimini Road ("pavements of Atlantis"), limestone crust, caves due to the lack of rivers, and sea caves. Several blue holes are aligned along the South Andros Fault line. Tidal flats and tidal creeks are common, but the more impressive drainage patterns are formed by troughs and canyons such as Great Bahama Canyon with the evidence of turbidity currents and turbidite deposition.^{[50]:33–40,65,72–84,86}

Government and politics

The Bahamas is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy headed by Queen Elizabeth II in her role as Queen of the Bahamas. Political and legal traditions closely follow those of the United Kingdom and the Westminster system. The Bahamas is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations as a Commonwealth realm, retaining the Queen as head of state (represented by a Governor-General).



The Bahamian Parliament, located in Nassau.

Legislative power is vested in a bicameral parliament, which consists of a 38-member House of Assembly (the lower house), with members elected from single-member districts, and a 16-member Senate, with members appointed by the Governor-General, including nine on the advice of the Prime Minister, four on the advice of the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, and three on the advice of the Prime Minister after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition. The House of Assembly carries out all major legislative functions. As under the Westminster system, the Prime Minister may dissolve Parliament and call a general election at any time within a five-year term.^[51]

The Prime Minister is the head of government and is the leader of the party with the most seats in the House of Assembly. Executive power is exercised by the Cabinet, selected by the Prime Minister and drawn from his supporters in the House of Assembly. The current Governor-General is Dame Marguerite Pindling, and the current Prime Minister is The Rt. Hon. Hubert Minnis M.P..

Constitutional safeguards include freedom of speech, press, worship, movement and association. The Judiciary of the Bahamas is independent of the executive and the legislature. Jurisprudence is based on English law.

Political culture

The Bahamas has a two-party system dominated by the centre-left Progressive Liberal Party and the centre-right Free National Movement. A handful of splinter parties have been unable to win election to parliament. These parties have included the Bahamas Democratic Movement, the Coalition for Democratic Reform, Bahamian Nationalist Party and the Democratic National Alliance.

Foreign relations

The Bahamas has strong bilateral relationships with the United States and the United Kingdom, represented by an ambassador in Washington and High Commissioner in London. The Bahamas also associates closely with other nations of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Armed forces



HMBS Nassau (P-61)

Its military is the Royal Bahamas Defence Force (the RBDF), the navy of the Bahamas which includes a land unit called Commando Squadron (Regiment) and an Air Wing (Air Force). Under the Defence Act, the RBDF has been mandated, in the name of the Queen, to defend the Bahamas, protect its territorial integrity, patrol its waters, provide assistance and relief in times of disaster, maintain order in conjunction with the law enforcement agencies of the Bahamas, and carry out any such duties as determined by the National Security Council. The Defence Force is also a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)'s Regional Security Task Force.

The RBDF came into existence on 31 March 1980. Their duties include defending the Bahamas, stopping drug smuggling, illegal immigration and poaching, and providing assistance to mariners. The Defence Force has a fleet of 26 coastal and inshore patrol craft along with 3 aircraft and over 1,100 personnel including 65 officers and 74 women.

Administrative divisions

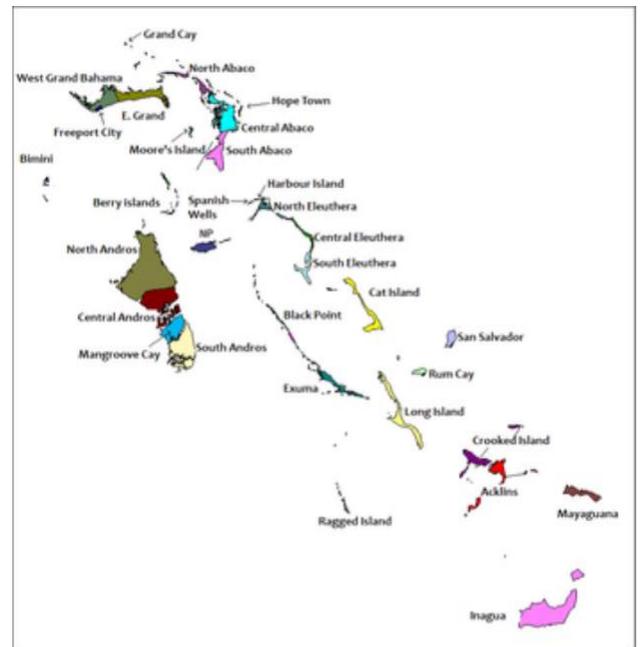
The districts of the Bahamas provide a system of local government everywhere except New Providence (which holds 70% of the national population), whose affairs are handled directly by the central government. In 1996, the Bahamian Parliament passed the "Local Government Act" to facilitate the establishment of Family Island Administrators, Local Government Districts, Local District Councillors and Local Town Committees for the various island communities. The overall goal of this act is to allow the various elected leaders to govern and oversee the affairs of their respective districts without the interference of Central Government. In total, there are 32 districts, with elections being held every five years. There are 110 Councillors and 281 Town Committee members are elected to represent the various districts.^[52]

Each Councillor or Town Committee member is responsible for the proper use of public funds for the maintenance and development of their constituency.

The Bahamas uses drive-on-the-Left traffic rules throughout the Commonwealth.

The districts other than New Providence are:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Acklins | 17. Long Island |
| 2. Berry Islands | 18. Mangrove Cay, Andros |
| 3. Bimini | 19. Mayaguana |
| 4. Black Point, Exuma | 20. Moore's Island, Abaco |
| 5. Cat Island | 21. North Abaco |
| 6. Central Abaco | 22. North Andros |
| 7. Central Andros | 23. North Eleuthera |
| 8. Central Eleuthera | 24. Ragged Island |
| 9. City of Freeport, Grand Bahama | 25. Rum Cay |
| | 26. San Salvador |



Districts of the Bahamas.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 10. Crooked Island | 27. South Abaco |
| 11. East Grand Bahama | 28. South Andros |
| 12. Exuma | 29. South Eleuthera |
| 13. Grand Cay, Abaco | 30. Spanish Wells, Eleuthera |
| 14. Harbour Island, Eleuthera | 31. West Grand Bahama |
| 15. Hope Town, Abaco | |
| 16. Inagua | |

National flag

The colours embodied in the design of the Bahamian flag symbolise the strength of the Bahamian people; the design reflects aspects of the natural environment (sun and sea) and the economic and social development. The flag is a black equilateral triangle against the mast, superimposed on a horizontal background made up of two colours on three equal stripes of aquamarine, gold and aquamarine.



National flag of the Bahamas

Coat of arms

The coat of arms of the Bahamas contains a shield with the national symbols as its focal point. The shield is supported by a marlin and a flamingo, which are the national animals of the Bahamas. The flamingo is located on the land, and the marlin on the sea, indicating the geography of the islands.

On top of the shield is a conch shell, which represents the varied marine life of the island chain. The conch shell rests on a helmet. Below this is the actual shield, the main symbol of which is a ship representing the *Santa María* of Christopher Columbus, shown sailing beneath the sun. Along the bottom, below the shield appears a banner upon which is the national motto:^[53]



Bahamian Coat of Arms

"Forward, Upward, Onward Together."

National flower

The yellow elder was chosen as the national flower of the Bahamas because it is native to the Bahama islands, and it blooms throughout the year.

Selection of the yellow elder over many other flowers was made through the combined popular vote of members of all four of New Providence's garden clubs of the 1970s—the Nassau Garden Club, the Carver Garden Club, the International Garden Club and the Y.W.C.A. Garden Club.

They reasoned that other flowers grown there—such as the bougainvillea, hibiscus and poinciana—had already been chosen as the national flowers of other countries. The yellow elder, on the other hand, was unclaimed by other countries (although it is now also the national flower of the United States Virgin Islands) and also the yellow elder is native to the family islands.^[54]

Economy

By the terms of GDP per capita, the Bahamas is one of the richest countries in the Americas.^[55] It was revealed in the Panama Papers that The Bahamas is the jurisdiction with the most offshore entities or companies.^[56]

Tourism

The Bahamas relies on tourism to generate most of its economic activity. Tourism as an industry not only accounts for over 60% of the Bahamian GDP, but provides jobs for more than half the country's workforce.^[57] The Bahamas attracted 5.8 million visitors in 2012, more than 70% of whom were cruise visitors.

Financial services

After tourism, the next most important economic sector is banking and international financial services, accounting for some 15% of GDP.

The government has adopted incentives to encourage foreign financial business, and further banking and finance reforms are in progress. The government plans to merge the regulatory functions of key financial institutions, including the Central Bank of the Bahamas (CBB) and the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Central Bank administers restrictions and controls on capital and money market instruments. The Bahamas International Securities Exchange consists of 19 listed public companies. Reflecting the relative soundness of the banking system (mostly populated by Canadian banks), the impact of the global financial crisis on the financial sector has been limited.

The economy has a very competitive tax regime. The government derives its revenue from import tariffs, VAT, licence fees, property and stamp taxes, but there is no income tax, corporate tax, capital gains tax, or wealth tax. Payroll taxes fund social insurance benefits and amount to 3.9% paid by the employee and 5.9% paid by the employer.^[58] In 2010, overall tax revenue as a percentage of GDP was 17.2%.^[1]

Agriculture

Agriculture is the third largest sector of the Bahamian economy, representing 5–7% of total GDP. An estimated 80% of the Bahamian food supply is imported. Major crops include onions, okra, tomatoes, oranges, grapefruit, cucumbers, sugar cane, lemons, limes, and sweet potatoes.

Demographics

The Bahamas has an estimated population of 391,232, of which 25.9% are under 14, 67.2% 15 to 64 and 6.9% over 65. It has a population growth rate of 0.925% (2010), with a birth rate of 17.81/1,000 population, death rate of 9.35/1,000, and net migration rate of −2.13 migrant(s)/1,000 population.^[59] The infant mortality rate is 23.21 deaths/1,000 live births. Residents have a life expectancy at birth of 69.87 years: 73.49 years for females, 66.32 years for males. The total fertility rate is 2.0 children born/woman (2010).^[1]

The most populous islands are New Providence, where Nassau, the capital and largest city, is located;^[60] and Grand Bahama, home to the second largest city of Freeport.^[61]

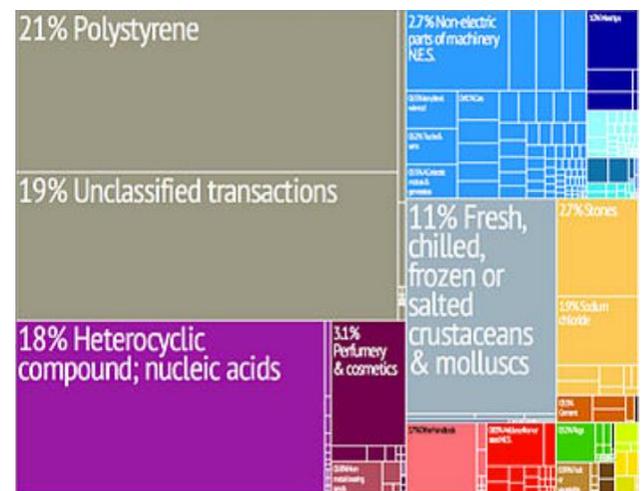
Racial and ethnic groups

According to the 99% response rate obtained from the race question on the 2010 Census questionnaire, 90.6% of the population identified themselves as being Black, 4.7% White and 2.1% of a mixed race (Black and White).^[1] according to the CIA Handbook. Other sources indicate whites number up to 12 to 15%, The Bahamas Guide, World Population Review. Three centuries prior, in 1722 when the first official census of the Bahamas was taken, 74% of the population was White and 26% Black.^[62]

Since the colonial era of plantations, Africans or Afro-Bahamians have been the largest ethnic group in the Bahamas, whose primary ancestry was based in West Africa. The first Africans to arrive to the Bahamas were freed slaves from Bermuda; they arrived with the Eleutheran Adventurers looking for new lives.



Cruise ships in Nassau Harbour



A proportional representation of the Bahamas exports.

The Haitian community in the Bahamas is also largely of African descent and numbers about 80,000. Due to an extremely high immigration of Haitians to the Bahamas, the Bahamian government started deporting illegal Haitian immigrants to their homeland in late 2014.^[63]



Afro-Bahamian children at a local school

The White Bahamian population are mainly the descendants of the English Puritans looking to flee religious persecution in England and American Loyalists escaping the American Revolution who arrived in 1649 and 1783, respectively.^[64] Many Southern Loyalists went to the Abaco Islands, half of whose population was of European descent as of 1985.^[65] The term *white* is usually used to identify Bahamians with Anglo ancestry, as well as "light-skinned" Afro-Bahamians. Sometimes Bahamians use the term *Conchy Joe* to describe people of Anglo descent.^[66]

A small portion of the Euro-Bahamian population is descended from Greek labourers who came to help develop the sponging industry in the 1900s. They make up less than 1% of the nation's population, but have still preserved their distinct Greek Bahamian culture.

Bahamians typically identify themselves simply as either *black* or *white*.^[66]

Languages

The official language of the Bahamas is English. Many Bahamians also speak an English-based creole language commonly referred to as *Bahamian dialect* (known simply as "dialect") or as "Bahamianese."^[67] James Catalyn, a Bahamian writer and actor was the first to coin the latter name in a poem and has since promoted its usage.^{[68][69]} Both are used as autoglossonyms.^[70] Haitian Creole, a French-based creole language is spoken by Haitians and their descendants, who make up of about 25% of the total population. It is known simply as *Creole*^[1] to differentiate languages.^[71]

Religion

According to International Religious Freedom Report 2008 prepared by United States Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, the islands' population is predominantly Christian. Protestant denominations are widespread and collectively account for more than 70% of the population, with Baptists representing 35% of the population, Anglicans 15%, Pentecostals 8%, Church of God 5%, Seventh-day Adventists 5% and Methodists 4%. There is also a significant Roman Catholic community accounting for about 14%.^[72] There are also smaller communities of Jews, Muslims, Baha'is, Hindus, Rastafarians and practitioners of Obeah.

Culture

In the less developed outer islands (or Family Islands), handicrafts include basketry made from palm fronds. This material, commonly called "straw", is plaited into hats and bags that are popular tourist items. Another use is for so-called "Voodoo dolls", even though such dolls are the result of the American imagination and not based on historic fact.^[73]

A form of folk magic (obeah) is practiced by some Bahamians, mainly in the Family Islands (out-islands) of the Bahamas.^[74] The practice of obeah is illegal in the Bahamas and punishable by law.^[75]

Junkanoo is a traditional Afro-Bahamian street parade of 'rushing', music, dance and art held in Nassau (and a few other settlements) every Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Junkanoo is also used to celebrate other holidays and events such as Emancipation Day.

Regattas are important social events in many family island settlements. They usually feature one or more days of sailing by old-fashioned work boats, as well as an onshore festival.



Junkanoo celebration in Nassau

Many dishes are associated with Bahamian cuisine, which reflects Caribbean, African and European influences. Some settlements have festivals associated with the traditional crop or food of that area, such as the "Pineapple Fest" in Gregory Town, Eleuthera or the "Crab Fest" on Andros. Other significant traditions include story telling.

Bahamians have created a rich literature of poetry, short stories, plays and short fictional works. Common themes in these works are (1) an awareness of change, (2) a striving for sophistication, (3) a search for identity, (4) nostalgia for the old ways and (5) an appreciation of beauty. Some contributing writers are Susan Wallace, Percival Miller, Robert Johnson, Raymond Brown, O.M. Smith, William Johnson, Eddie Minnis and Winston Saunders.^{[76][77]}

Bahamas culture is rich with beliefs, traditions, folklore and legend. The most well-known folklore and legends in the Bahamas includes Lusca in Andros Bahamas, Pretty Molly on Exuma Bahamas, the Chickcharnies of Andro Bahamas, and the Lost City of Atlantis on Bimini Bahamas.

Sport

Sport is a significant part of Bahamian culture. The national sport is Cricket. Cricket has been played in the Bahamas from 1846.^[78] It is the oldest sport being played in the country today. The Bahamas Cricket Association was formed in 1936 as an organised body. From the 1940s to the 1970s, cricket was played amongst many Bahamians. Bahamas is not a part of the West Indies Cricket Board, so players are not eligible to play for the West Indies cricket team. The late 1970s saw the game begin to decline in the country as teachers, who had previously come from the United Kingdom with a passion for cricket were replaced by teachers who had been trained in the United States. The Bahamian Physical education teachers had no knowledge of the game and instead taught track & field, basketball, baseball, softball,^[79] volleyball^[80] and football^[81] where primary and high schools compete against each other. Today cricket is still enjoyed by a few locals and immigrants in the country usually from Jamaica, Guyana, Haiti and Barbados. Cricket is played on Saturdays and Sundays at Windsor Park and Haynes Oval.

The only other sporting event that began before cricket was horse racing, which started in 1796. The most popular spectator sports are those imported from United States, such as basketball,^[82] American football^[83] and baseball^[84] rather than Great Britain due to the country's close proximity to the United States. Unlike their other Caribbean counterparts, cricket, rugby, and netball have proven to be more popular.

Dexter Cambridge, Rick Fox, Ian Lockhart and Buddy Hield are a few Bahamians who joined Bahamian Mychal Thompson of the Los Angeles Lakers in the NBA ranks,^{[85][86]} Over the years American football has become much more popular than association football, though not implemented in the high school system yet. Leagues for teens and adults have been developed by the Bahamas American Football Federation.^[87] However association football, commonly known as 'soccer' in the country, is still a very popular sport amongst high school pupils. Leagues are governed by the Bahamas Football Association. Recently the Bahamian government has been working closely with Tottenham Hotspur of London to promote the sport in the country as well as promoting the Bahamas in the European market. In 2013 'Spurs' became the first Premier League club to play an exhibition match in the Bahamas to face the Jamaica national football team. Joe Lewis, the owner of the Tottenham Hotspur club, is based in the Bahamas.^[88]

Other popular sports are swimming,^[89] tennis^[90] and boxing^[91] where Bahamians have enjoyed some degree of success at the international level. Other sports such as golf,^[92] rugby league,^[93] rugby union^[94] beach soccer^[95] and netball are considered growing sports. Athletics commonly known as track and field in the country is the most successful sport by far amongst Bahamians. Bahamians have a strong tradition in the sprints and jumps. Track and field is probably the most popular spectator sport in the country next to basketball due to their success over the years. Triathlons are gaining popularity in Nassau and the Family Islands.

Bahamians have gone on to win numerous track and field medals at the Olympic Games, IAAF World Championships in Athletics, Commonwealth Games and Pan American Games. Frank Rutherford is the first athletics olympic medalist for the country. He won a bronze medal for triple jump during the 1992 Summer Olympics.^[96] Pauline Davis-Thompson, Debbie Ferguson, Chandra Sturup, Savatheda Fynes and Eldece Clarke-Lewis teamed up for the first athletics Olympic Gold medal for the country when they won the 4 × 100 m relay at the 2000 Summer Olympics. They are affectionately known as the "Golden Girls".^[97] Tonique Williams-Darling

became the first athletics individual Olympic gold medalist when she won the 400m sprint in 2004 Summer Olympics.^[98] In 2007, with the disqualification of Marion Jones, Pauline Davis-Thompson was advanced to the gold medal position in the 200 metres at the 2000 Olympics, predating William-Darling.

The Bahamas were hosts of the first men's senior FIFA tournament to be staged in the Caribbean, the 2017 FIFA Beach Soccer World Cup.^[99]

Education

According to 1995 estimates 98.2% of the adult population is literate.

Representation in other media

- Scenes from the final *Jaws* movie (*Jaws: The Revenge*) were filmed on a New Providence Island beach now known as "Jaws Beach".
- The fourth official James Bond film, *Thunderball* (1965), was partly filmed in Nassau, where much of the story is set. Eon Productions were to return for filming underwater sequences in the famously clear waters, even when a Bond film's story was set elsewhere; for example, for *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1977).
- The unofficial remake of *Thunderball*, *Never Say Never Again* (1983), was similarly partly filmed in the islands, though this version of the story was not as extensively set there.
- The twenty-first official James Bond film, *Casino Royale* (2006), was in part set and filmed in the islands.
- The Beatles' film *Help!* was filmed in part on New Providence Island and Paradise Island also in 1965.
- Nassau is featured in the 2013 video game *Assassin's Creed IV: Black Flag* as a pirate haven, housing the main protagonists. Historical pirates are encountered there such as Benjamin Hornigold, Edward Teach/Blackbeard, Charles Vane, "Calico" Jack Rackham, Anne Bonney and Mary Read.

See also

-  *Bahamas* – Wikipedia book
- Outline of the Bahamas
- Index of Bahamas-related articles
- Bibliography of the Bahamas

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COUNTRY: CUBA

STATISTICS

POPULATION: 11,239,224

LANGUAGE(S): SPANISH

DEMONYM: CUBAN

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: UNITARY MARXIST-LENINIST ONE-PARTY SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

CURRENCY: PESO

CLIMATE: TROPICAL; RAINY SEASON MAY - OCTOBER

PRACTICING

PRACTICES IN COUNTRY:

NUMBER OF REGISTERED ARCHITECTS:

CERTIFICATION NEEDS:

REQUIREMENTS:

HUMANITIES

CULTURE: INFLUENCED BY A MELTING POT OF CULTURES, PRIMARILY SPAIN AND AFRICA.

HISTORY: ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING SOCIALIST COUNTRIES FOLLOWING MARXIST-LENINIST IDEAS.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

DRIVES ON THE: RIGHT

ECONOMY: MEANS OF PRODUCTION ARE OWNED AND RUN BY GOVERNMENT AND MOST OF THE LABOR FORCE EMPLOYED BY THE STATE.

CRIME: CRIME REPORTS RISING BUT GUN CRIME VIRTUALLY NONEXISTENT; MURDER RATES LOW.

TOURISM: MARKET SHARE OF CARIBBEAN TOURISM HAS TRIPLED IN THE LAST DECADE.

Cuba

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Coordinates: 22°00′N 80°00′W﻿ / ﻿22°00′N 80°00′W﻿ / 22; -80

Cuba (Spanish pronunciation: [ˈkuβa]), officially the **Republic of Cuba** (Spanish: *República de Cuba*), is a country comprising the island of Cuba as well as Isla de la Juventud and several minor archipelagos. Cuba is located in the northern Caribbean where the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Atlantic Ocean meet. It is south of both the U.S. state of Florida and the Bahamas, west of Haiti, and north of Jamaica. Havana is the largest city and capital; other major cities include Santiago de Cuba and Camagüey. Cuba is the largest island in the Caribbean, with an area of 109,884 square kilometres (42,426 sq mi), and the second-most populous after Hispaniola, with over 11 million inhabitants.^[13]

Prior to Spanish colonization in the late 15th century, Cuba was inhabited by Amerindian tribes. It remained a colony of Spain until the Spanish–American War of 1898, which led to nominal independence as a *de facto* United States protectorate in 1902. As a fragile republic, Cuba attempted to strengthen its democratic system, but mounting political radicalization and social strife culminated in the dictatorship of Fulgencio Batista in 1952.^[14] Further unrest and instability led to Batista's ousting in January 1959 by the July 26 Movement, which afterwards established a dictatorship under the leadership of Fidel Castro.^{[15][16][17]} Since 1965, the state has been governed by the Communist Party of Cuba. A point of contention during the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States, a nuclear war nearly broke out during the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. Cuba is one of the few remaining Marxist–Leninist socialist states, where the role of the vanguard Communist Party is enshrined in the Constitution. Independent observers have accused the Cuban government of numerous human rights abuses, including arbitrary imprisonment.

Culturally, Cuba is considered part of Latin America.^[18] It is a multiethnic country whose people, culture and customs derive from diverse origins, including the aboriginal Taíno and Ciboney peoples, the long period of Spanish colonialism, the introduction of African slaves, and a close relationship with the Soviet Union in the Cold War.

Republic of Cuba

República de Cuba (Spanish)



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto:

"¡Patria o Muerte, Venceremos!" (Spanish)

"Homeland or Death, we shall overcome!"^[1]

"¡Trabajadores del mundo, únanse!"

"Workers of the world, unite!"

Anthem: *La Bayamesa*

Bayamo Song ^[2]

0:00

MENU



Location of Cuba (green)

Capital and largest city	Havana 23°8′N 82°23′W
Official languages	Spanish
Ethnic groups (2012 ^[3])	64.1% white 26.6% mulatto, mestizo, zambo,

Cuba is one of the world's last planned economies and its economy is dominated by the exports of sugar, tobacco, coffee and skilled labor. According to the Human Development Index, Cuba has high human development and is ranked the eighth highest in North America, though 67th in the world.^[19] It also ranks highly in some metrics of national performance, including health care and education,^{[20][21]} and is the only country in the world to receive WWF's definition of sustainable development.^[22]

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 Pre-Columbian era
 - 2.2 Spanish colonization and rule (1492–1898)
 - 2.3 Independence movements
 - 2.4 Republic (1902–59)
 - 2.4.1 First years (1902–1925)
 - 2.4.2 Revolution of 1933–1940
 - 2.4.3 Constitution of 1940
 - 2.5 Revolution and Communist party rule (1959–present)
- 3 Government and politics
 - 3.1 Administrative divisions
 - 3.2 Human rights
 - 3.3 Foreign relations
 - 3.4 Crime and law enforcement
 - 3.5 Military
- 4 Economy
 - 4.1 Resources
 - 4.2 Tourism
- 5 Geography
 - 5.1 Climate
 - 5.2 Biodiversity
- 6 Demographics
 - 6.1 Ethnoracial groups
 - 6.2 Immigration and emigration
 - 6.3 Religion
 - 6.4 Languages
 - 6.5 Largest cities
- 7 Media
 - 7.1 Press
 - 7.2 Television

	or pardo 9.3% black
Demonym	Cuban
Government	Unitary Marxist–Leninist one-party socialist republic ^[4]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • Vice President • Prime Minister • President of the National Assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raúl Castro Miguel Díaz-Canel^[5] Raúl Castro Esteban Lazo Hernández
Legislature	National Assembly of People's Power
Independence	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of Independence • War of Independence • Recognized (handed over from Spain to the United States) • Republic declared (independence from United States) • Cuban Revolution • Current constitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 10, 1868 February 24, 1895 December 10, 1898 May 20, 1902 July 26, 1953 – January 1, 1959 February 24, 1976
Area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Water (%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 109,884 km² (42,426 sq mi) (104th) 0.94
Population	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2016 census • Density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 11,239,224^[6] (81st) 102.3/km² (265.0/sq mi) (106th)
GDP (PPP)	2014 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total • Per capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> US\$ 132,900 billion^[7] (75th) US\$ 11,600 (2014)^[8]

- 7.3 Internet
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Music
 - 8.2 Cuisine
 - 8.3 Literature
 - 8.4 Dance
 - 8.5 Sports
- 9 Education
- 10 Health
- 11 See also
- 12 References
- 13 Bibliography
- 14 External links

Etymology

Historians believe the name *Cuba* comes from the Taíno language, however "its exact derivation [is] unknown".^[23] The exact meaning of the name is unclear but it may be translated either as 'where fertile land is abundant' (*cubao*),^[24] or 'great place' (*coabana*).^[25] Authors who believe that Christopher Columbus was Portuguese state that *Cuba* was named by Columbus for the town of Cuba in the district of Beja in Portugal.^{[26][27]}

History

Pre-Columbian era

Before the arrival of the Spanish, Cuba was inhabited by three distinct tribes of indigenous peoples of the Americas. The Taíno (an Arawak people), the Guanajatabey, and the Ciboney people.

The ancestors of the Ciboney migrated from the mainland of South America, with the earliest sites dated to 5,000 BP.^[28]

The Taíno arrived from Hispanola sometime in the 3rd century A.D. When Columbus arrived they were the dominant culture in Cuba, having an estimated population of 150,000.^[28]

The Taíno were farmers, while the Ciboney were farmers as well as fishers and hunter-gatherers.

Spanish colonization and rule (1492–1898)

	(104th)
GDP (nominal)	2015 estimate
• Total	US\$ 87.205 billion ^[9] (65th)
• Per capita	US\$ 7,657 ^[10] (80th)
Gini (2000)	38.0 ^[11] medium
HDI (2015)	▲ 0.775 ^[12] high · 68th
Currency	Peso (CUP) Convertible peso ^a (CUC)
Time zone	CST (UTC−5)
• Summer (DST)	CDT (UTC−4)
Drives on the	right
Calling code	+53
ISO 3166 code	CU
Internet TLD	.cu
	Website www.cubagob.cu (http://www.cubagob.cu)
	a. From 1993 to 2004, the United States dollar was used alongside the peso until the dollar was replaced by the convertible peso.

After first landing on an island then called Guanahani, Bahamas, on October 12, 1492,^[29] Christopher Columbus commanded his three ships: *La Pinta*, *La Niña* and the *Santa María*, to land on Cuba's northeastern coast on October 28, 1492.^[30] (This was near what is now Bariay, Holguín Province.) Columbus claimed the island for the new Kingdom of Spain^[31] and named it *Isla Juana* after Juan, Prince of Asturias.^[32]

In 1511, the first Spanish settlement was founded by Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar at Baracoa. Other towns soon followed, including San Cristobal de la Habana, founded in 1515, which later became the capital. The native Taíno were forced to work under the encomienda system,^[33] which resembled a feudal system in Medieval Europe.^[34] Within a century the indigenous people were virtually wiped out due to multiple factors, primarily Eurasian infectious diseases, to which they had no natural resistance (immunity), aggravated by harsh conditions of the repressive colonial subjugation.^[35] In 1529, a measles outbreak in Cuba killed two-thirds of those few natives who had previously survived smallpox.^{[36][37]}



Monument of Hatuey, an early Taíno chief of Cuba

On May 18, 1539, Conquistador Hernando de Soto departed from Havana at the head of some 600 followers into a vast expedition through the Southeastern United States, starting at La Florida, in search of gold, treasure, fame and power.^[38] On September 1, 1548, Dr. Gonzalo Perez de Angulo was appointed governor of Cuba. He arrived in Santiago, Cuba on November 4, 1549 and immediately declared the liberty of all natives.^[39] He became Cuba's first permanent governor to reside in Havana instead of Santiago, and he built Havana's first church made of masonry.^[40] After the French took Havana in 1555, the governor's son, Francisco de Angulo, went to Mexico.^[41]



Diego Velázquez de Cuéllar, conquistador of Cuba



British map of Cuba 1680

Cuba developed slowly and, unlike the plantation islands of the Caribbean, had a diversified agriculture. But what was most important was that the colony developed as an urbanized society that primarily supported the Spanish colonial empire. By the mid-18th century, its colonists held 50,000 slaves, compared to 60,000 in Barbados; 300,000 in Virginia, both British colonies; and 450,000 in French Saint-Domingue, which had large-scale sugar cane plantations.^[42]

The Seven Years' War, which erupted in 1754 across three continents, eventually arrived in the Spanish Caribbean. Spain's alliance with the French pitched them into direct conflict with the British, and in 1762 a British expedition of five warships and 4,000 troops set

out from Portsmouth to capture Cuba. The British arrived on June 6, and by August had Havana under siege.^[43] When Havana surrendered, the admiral of the British fleet, George Keppel, the 3rd Earl of Albemarle, entered the city as a conquering new governor and took control of the whole western part of the island. The British immediately opened up trade with their North American and Caribbean colonies, causing a rapid transformation of Cuban society. They imported food, horses and other goods into the city, as well as thousands of slaves from West Africa to work on the under developed sugar plantations.^[43]

Though Havana, which had become the third-largest city in the Americas, was to enter an era of sustained development and increasing ties with North America during this period, the British occupation of the city proved short-lived. Pressure from London sugar merchants, fearing a decline in sugar prices, forced negotiations with the Spanish over colonial territories. Less than a year after Britain seized Havana, it signed the Peace of Paris together with France and Spain, ending the Seven Years' War. The treaty gave Britain Florida in exchange for Cuba. The French had recommended this to Spain, advising that declining to give up Florida could result in Spain instead losing Mexico and much of the South American mainland to the British.^[43] Many in Britain were disappointed, believing that Florida was a poor return for Cuba and Britain's other gains in the war.

The real engine for the growth of Cuba's commerce in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was the Haitian Revolution. When the enslaved peoples of what had been the Caribbean's richest colony freed themselves through violent revolt, Cuban planters perceived the region's changing circumstances with both a sense of fear and opportunity. They were afraid because of the prospect that slaves might revolt in Cuba, too, and numerous prohibitions during the 1790s on the sale of slaves in Cuba that had previously been slaves in French colonies underscored this anxiety. The planters saw opportunity, however, because they thought that they could exploit the situation by transforming Cuba into the slave society and sugar-producing "pearl of the Antilles" that Haiti had been before the revolution.^[44] As the historian Ada Ferrer has written, "At a basic level, liberation in Saint-Domingue helped entrench its denial in Cuba. As slavery and colonialism collapsed in the French colony, the Spanish island underwent transformations that were almost the mirror image of Haiti's."^[45] Estimates suggest that between 1790 and 1820 some 325,000 Africans were imported to Cuba as slaves, which was four times the amount that had arrived between 1760 and 1790.^[46]

Although a smaller proportion of the population of Cuba was enslaved, at times slaves arose in revolt. In 1812 the Aponte Slave Rebellion took place but it was suppressed.^[47]



Map of Cuba by Cornelius van Wytfliet in 1597 (National Library of Sweden)



The British invasion and occupation of Havana in 1762

The population of Cuba in 1817 was 630,980, of which 291,021 were white, 115,691 free people of color (mixed-race), and 224,268 black slaves.^[48] This was a much higher proportion of free blacks to slaves than in Virginia, for instance, or the other Caribbean islands. Historians such as Swedish Magnus Mörner, who studied slavery in Latin America, found that manumissions increased when slave economies were in decline, as in 18th-century Cuba and early 19th-century Maryland of the United States.^{[42][49]}



Slaves in Cuba unloading ice from Maine, c. 1832

In part due to Cuban slaves working primarily in urbanized settings, by the 19th century, there had developed the practice of *coartacion*, or "buying oneself out of slavery", a "uniquely Cuban development", according to historian Herbert S. Klein.^[50] Due to a shortage of white labor, blacks dominated urban industries "to such an extent that when whites in large numbers came to Cuba in the middle of the nineteenth century, they were unable to displace Negro workers."^[42] A system of diversified agriculture, with small farms and fewer slaves, served to supply the cities with produce and other goods.^[42]

In the 1820s, when the rest of Spain's empire in Latin America rebelled and formed independent states, Cuba remained loyal. Its economy was based on serving the empire. By 1860, Cuba had 213,167 free people of color, 39% of its non-White population of 550,000.^[42] By contrast, Virginia with about the same number of blacks, had only 58,042 or 11% who were free; the rest were enslaved.^[42] In the antebellum years, Virginia discouraged manumissions after the Nat Turner's Slave Rebellion of 1831 and strengthened restrictions against free blacks, as did other southern states. In addition, there was a high demand for slaves, and Virginia planters sold many in the internal domestic slave trade, to be shipped or taken overland to the Deep South, which had greatly expanded its cotton production.

Independence movements

Full independence from Spain was the goal of a rebellion in 1868 led by planter Carlos Manuel de Céspedes. De Céspedes, a sugar planter, freed his slaves to fight with him for an independent Cuba. On December 27, 1868, he issued a decree condemning slavery in theory but accepting it in practice and declaring free any slaves whose masters present them for military service.^[51] The 1868 rebellion resulted in a prolonged conflict known as the Ten Years' War. Two thousand Cuban Chinese joined the rebels. Chinese had been imported as indentured laborers. A monument in Havana honours the Cuban Chinese who fell in the war.^[52]

The United States declined to recognize the new Cuban government, although many European and Latin American nations did so.^[53] In 1878, the Pact of Zanjón ended the conflict, with Spain promising greater autonomy to Cuba. In 1879–1880, Cuban patriot Calixto García attempted to start another war known as the Little War but did not receive enough support.^[54] Slavery in Cuba was abolished in 1875 but the process was completed only in 1886.^{[55][56]}

An exiled dissident named José Martí founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party in New York in 1892. The aim of the party was to achieve Cuban independence from Spain.^[57] In January 1895 Martí traveled to Montecristi and Santo Domingo to join the efforts of Máximo Gómez.^[57] Martí recorded his political views in the *Manifiesto of*

Montecristi.^[58] Fighting against the Spanish army began in Cuba on February 24, 1895, but Martí was unable to reach Cuba until April 11, 1895.^[57] Martí was killed in the battle of Dos Rios on May 19, 1895.^[57] His death immortalized him as Cuba's national hero.^[58]

Around 200,000 Spanish troops outnumbered the much smaller rebel army, which relied mostly on guerrilla and sabotage tactics. The Spaniards began a campaign of suppression. General Valeriano Weyler, military governor of Cuba, herded the rural population into what he called *reconcentrados*, described by international observers as "fortified towns". These are often considered the prototype for 20th-century concentration camps.^[59] Between 200,000 and 400,000 Cuban civilians died from starvation and disease in the camps, numbers verified by the Red Cross and United States Senator Redfield Proctor, a former Secretary of War. American and European protests against Spanish conduct on the island followed.^[60]

The U.S. battleship *Maine* was sent to protect U.S. interests, but soon after arrival, it exploded in Havana harbor and sank quickly, killing nearly three quarters of the crew. The cause and responsibility for the sinking of the ship remained unclear after a board of inquiry. Popular opinion in the U.S., fueled by an active press, concluded that the Spanish were to blame and demanded action.^[61] Spain and the United States declared war on each other in late April 1898.

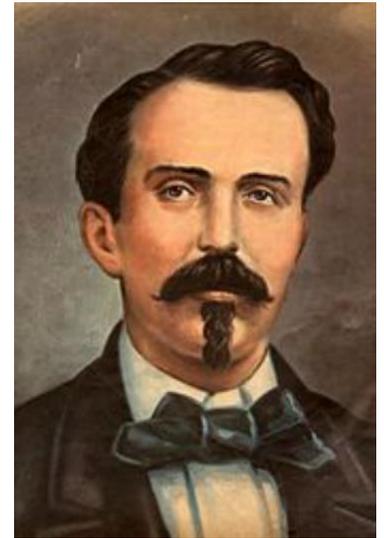
Over the previous decades, five U.S. presidents—Polk, Pierce, Buchanan, Grant, and McKinley—had tried to buy the island of Cuba from Spain.^{[62][63]}

Republic (1902–59)

First years (1902–1925)

After the Spanish–American War, Spain and the United States signed the Treaty of Paris (1898), by which Spain ceded Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam to the United States for the sum of US\$20 million.^[64] Cuba gained formal independence from the U.S. on May 20, 1902, as the Republic of Cuba.^[65] Under Cuba's new constitution, the U.S. retained the right to intervene in Cuban affairs and to supervise its finances and foreign relations. Under the Platt Amendment, the U.S. leased the Guantánamo Bay naval base from Cuba.

Following disputed elections in 1906, the first president, Tomás Estrada Palma, faced an armed revolt by independence war veterans who defeated the meager government forces.^[66] The U.S. intervened by occupying Cuba and named Charles Edward Magoon as Governor for three years. Cuban historians have characterized



Carlos Manuel de Céspedes is known as *Father of the Homeland* in Cuba, having declared the nation's independence from Spain in 1868.



Calixto García, a general of Cuban separatist rebels, (right) with U.S. Brigadier General William Ludlow (Cuba, 1898)



Raising the Cuban flag on the Governor General's Palace at noon on May 20, 1902

Magoon's governorship as having introduced political and social corruption.^[67] In 1908, self-government was restored when José Miguel Gómez was elected President, but the U.S. continued intervening in Cuban affairs. In 1912, the Partido Independiente de Color attempted to establish a separate black republic in Oriente Province,^[68] but was suppressed by General Monteagudo with considerable bloodshed.

In 1924, Gerardo Machado was elected president.^[69] During his administration, tourism increased markedly, and American-owned hotels and restaurants were built to accommodate the influx of tourists.^[69] The tourist boom led to increases in gambling and prostitution in Cuba.^[69] The Wall Street Crash of 1929 led to a collapse in the price of sugar, political unrest, and repression.^[70] Protesting students, known as the

Generation of 1930, turned to violence in opposition to the increasingly unpopular Machado.^[70] A general strike (in which the Communist Party sided with Machado),^[71] uprisings among sugar workers, and an army revolt forced Machado into exile in August 1933. He was replaced by Carlos Manuel de Céspedes y Quesada.^[70]

Revolution of 1933–1940

In September 1933, the Sergeants' Revolt, led by Sergeant Fulgencio Batista, overthrew Céspedes.^[72] A five-member executive committee (the Pentarchy of 1933) was chosen to head a provisional government.^[73] Ramón Grau San Martín was then appointed as provisional president.^[73] Grau resigned in 1934, leaving the way clear for Batista, who dominated Cuban politics for the next 25 years, at first through a series of puppet-presidents.^[72] The period from 1933 to 1937 was a time of "virtually unremitting social and political warfare".^[74] On balance, during this period 1933–1940 Cuba is supported by a fragile politic reality that materialize in the decision making of three presidents in two years (1935–1936), as well as in the militaristic and repressive policies of Batista as Head of the Army.



The Pentarchy of 1933. Fulgencio Batista, who controlled the armed forces, appears at far right

Constitution of 1940

A new constitution was adopted in 1940, which engineered radical progressive ideas, including the right to labour and health care.^[75] Batista was elected president in the same year, holding the post until 1944.^[76] He is so far the only non-white Cuban to win the nation's highest political office.^{[77][78][79]} His government carried out major social reforms. Several members of the Communist Party held office under his administration.^[80] Cuban armed forces were not greatly involved in combat during World War II, although president Batista suggested a joint U.S.-Latin American assault on Francoist Spain in order to overthrow its authoritarian regime.^[81]

Batista adhered to the 1940 constitution's strictures preventing his re-election.^[82] Ramon Grau San Martin was the winner of the next election, in 1944.^[76] Grau further corroded the base of the already teetering legitimacy of the Cuban political system, in particular by undermining the deeply flawed, though not entirely ineffectual, Congress and Supreme Court.^[83] Carlos Prío Socarrás, a protégé of Grau, became president in 1948.^[76] The two terms of the Auténtico Party saw an influx of investment which fueled a boom and raised living standards for all segments of society and created a prosperous middle class in most urban areas.^[84]

After finishing his term in 1944 Batista lived in Florida, returning to Cuba to run for president in 1952. Facing certain electoral defeat, he led a military coup that preempted the election^[85]. Back in power, and receiving financial, military, and logistical support from the United States government,^[86] Batista suspended the 1940 Constitution and revoked most political liberties, including the right to strike. He then aligned with the wealthiest landowners who owned the largest sugar plantations, and presided over a stagnating economy that widened the gap between rich and poor Cubans.^[87] Batista outlawed the Cuban Communist Party in 1952.^[88] After the coup, Cuba had Latin America's highest per capita consumption rates of meat, vegetables, cereals, automobiles, telephones and radios, though about one third of the population was considered poor and enjoyed relatively little of this consumption.^[89]



Slum (*bohio*) dwellings in Havana, Cuba in 1954, just outside Havana baseball stadium. In the background is advertising for a nearby casino.

In 1958, Cuba was a relatively well-advanced country by Latin American standards, and in some cases by world standards.^[90] On the other hand, Cuba was affected by perhaps the largest labor union privileges in Latin America, including bans on dismissals and mechanization. They were obtained in large measure "at the cost of the unemployed and the peasants", leading to disparities.^[91] Between 1933 and 1958, Cuba extended economic regulations enormously, causing economic problems.^{[77][92]} Unemployment became a problem as graduates entering the workforce could not find jobs.^[77] The middle class, which was comparable to that of the United States, became increasingly dissatisfied with unemployment and political persecution. The labor unions supported Batista until the very end.^{[77][78]} Batista stayed in power until he was forced into exile in December 1958.^[93]

Revolution and Communist party rule (1959–present)

In the 1950s, various organizations, including some advocating armed uprising, competed for public support in bringing about political change.^[94] In 1956, Fidel Castro and about 80 supporters landed from the yacht *Granma* in an attempt to start a rebellion against the Batista government.^[94] It was not until 1958 that Castro's July 26th Movement emerged as the leading revolutionary group.^[94]

By late 1958 the rebels had broken out of the Sierra Maestra and launched a general popular insurrection. After Castro's fighters captured Santa Clara, Batista fled with his family to the Dominican Republic on January 1, 1959. Later he went into exile on the Portuguese island of Madeira and finally settled in Estoril, near Lisbon.

Fidel Castro's forces entered the capital on January 8, 1959. The liberal Manuel Urrutia Lleó became the provisional president.^[95]

From 1959 to 1966 Cuban insurgents fought a six-year rebellion in the Escambray Mountains against the Castro government. The government's vastly superior numbers eventually crushed the insurgency. The rebellion lasted longer and involved more soldiers than the Cuban Revolution.^{[96][97]} The U.S. State Department has estimated that 3,200 people were executed from 1959 to 1962.^[98] According to Amnesty International, death sentences from 1959–87 numbered 237 of which all but 21 were actually carried out.^[99] Other estimates for the total



Che Guevara and Fidel Castro, photographed by Alberto Korda in 1961

number of political executions range from 4,000 to 33,000.^{[100][101][102]} The vast majority of those executed following the 1959 revolution were policemen, politicians, and informers of the Batista regime accused of crimes such as torture and murder, and their public trials and executions had widespread popular support among the Cuban population.^[103]

The United States government initially reacted favorably to the Cuban revolution, seeing it as part of a movement to bring democracy to Latin America.^[105] Castro's legalization of the Communist party and the hundreds of executions that followed caused a deterioration in the relationship between the two countries.^[105] The promulgation of the Agrarian Reform Law, expropriating thousands of acres



Since 1959, Cuba has regarded the U.S. presence in Guantánamo Bay as illegal.^[104]

of farmland (including from large U.S. landholders), further worsened relations.^{[105][106]} In response, between 1960 and 1964 the U.S imposed a range of sanctions, eventually including a total ban on trade between the countries and a freeze on all Cuban-owned assets in the U.S.^[107] In February 1960, Castro signed a commercial agreement with Soviet Vice-Premier Anastas Mikoyan.^[105]

In March 1960, Eisenhower gave his approval to a CIA plan to arm and train a group of Cuban refugees to overthrow the Castro regime.^[108] The invasion (known as the Bay of Pigs Invasion) took place on April 14, 1961.^[106] About 1,400 Cuban exiles disembarked at the Bay of Pigs, but failed in their attempt to overthrow Castro.^[106]

In January 1962, Cuba was suspended from the Organization of American States (OAS), and later the same year the OAS started to impose sanctions against Cuba of similar nature to the US sanctions.^[109] The Cuban Missile Crisis occurred in October 1962. By 1963, Cuba was moving towards a full-fledged Communist system modeled on the USSR.^[110]

During the 1970s, Fidel Castro dispatched tens of thousands of troops in support of Soviet-supported wars in Africa. He supported the MPLA in Angola and Mengistu Haile Mariam in Ethiopia.^[111]

The standard of living in the 1970s was "extremely spartan" and discontent was rife.^[112] Fidel Castro admitted the failures of economic policies in a 1970 speech.^[112] In 1975 the OAS lifted its sanctions against Cuba, with the approval of 16 member states, including the U.S. The U.S., however, maintained its own sanctions.^[109]

Castro's rule was severely tested in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse in 1991 (known in Cuba as the Special Period). The country faced a severe economic downturn following the withdrawal of Soviet subsidies worth \$4 billion to \$6 billion annually, resulting in effects such as food and fuel shortages.^{[113][114]} The government did not accept American donations of food, medicines, and cash until 1993.^[113] On August 5, 1994, state security dispersed protesters in a spontaneous protest in Havana.^[115]



Fidel Castro with South African president Thabo Mbeki and the Swedish prime minister Göran Persson, 2005

Cuba has since found a new source of aid and support in the People's Republic of China. In addition, Hugo Chávez, former President of Venezuela, and Evo Morales, President of Bolivia, became allies and both countries are major oil and gas exporters. In 2003, the government arrested and imprisoned a large number of civil activists, a period known as the "Black Spring".^{[116][117]}

In February 2008, Fidel Castro announced his resignation as President of Cuba.^[118] On February 24 his brother, Raúl Castro, was declared the new President.^[119] In his inauguration speech, Raúl promised that some of the restrictions on freedom in Cuba would be removed.^[120] In March 2009, Raúl Castro removed some of his brother's appointees.^[121]

On June 3, 2009, the Organization of American States adopted a resolution to end the 47-year ban on Cuban membership of the group.^[122] The resolution stated, however, that full membership would be delayed until Cuba was "in conformity with the practices, purposes, and principles of the OAS".^[109] Fidel Castro restated his position that he was not interested in joining after the OAS resolution had been announced.^[123]

Effective January 14, 2013, Cuba ended the requirement established in 1961, that any citizens who wish to travel abroad were required to obtain an expensive government permit and a letter of invitation.^{[124][125][126]} In 1961 the Cuban government had imposed broad restrictions on travel to prevent the mass emigration of people after the 1959 revolution;^[127] it approved exit visas only on rare occasions.^[128] Requirements were simplified: Cubans need only a passport and a national ID card to leave; and they are allowed to take their young children with them for the first time.^[129] However, a passport costs on average five months' salary. Observers expect that Cubans with paying relatives abroad are most likely to be able to take advantage of the new policy.^[130] In the first year of the program, over 180,000 left Cuba and returned.^[131]



Fidel Castro and members of the East German Politburo in 1972

As of December 2014, talks with Cuban officials and American officials including President Barack Obama have resulted in the exchange of releasing Alan Gross, fifty-two political prisoners, and an unnamed non-citizen agent of the United States in return for the release of three Cuban agents currently imprisoned in the United States. Additionally, while the embargo between the United States and Cuba will not be immediately lifted, it will be relaxed to allow import, export, and certain commerce within a limit between the two.^[132]

Government and politics

The Republic of Cuba is one of the world's last remaining socialist countries following the Marxist–Leninist ideology. The Constitution of 1976, which defined Cuba as a socialist republic, was replaced by the Constitution of 1992, which is "guided by the ideas of José Martí and the political and social ideas of Marx, Engels and Lenin".^[4] The constitution describes the Communist Party of Cuba as the "leading force of society and of the state".^[4]

The First Secretary of the Communist Party is concurrently President of the Council of State (President of Cuba) and President of the Council of Ministers (sometimes referred to as Premier of Cuba).^[133] Members of both councils are elected by the National Assembly of People's Power.^[4] The President of Cuba, who is also elected by the Assembly, serves for five years and there is no limit to the number of terms of office.^[4]

The People's Supreme Court serves as Cuba's highest judicial branch of government. It is also the court of last resort for all appeals against the decisions of provincial courts.

Cuba's national legislature, the National Assembly of People's Power (*Asamblea Nacional de Poder Popular*), is the supreme organ of power; 609 members serve five-year terms.^[4] The assembly meets twice a year; between sessions legislative power is held by the 31 member Council of Ministers. Candidates for the Assembly are approved by public referendum. All Cuban citizens over 16 who have not been convicted of a criminal offense can vote.^[134] Article 131 of the Constitution states that voting shall be "through free, equal and secret vote".^[4] Article 136 states: "In order for deputies or delegates to be considered elected they must get more than half the number of valid votes cast in the electoral districts".^[4]



Raúl Castro meets with U.S. President Barack Obama in Panama, April 11, 2015



Sign promoting the 2008 parliamentary election



The headquarters of the Communist Party

No political party is permitted to nominate candidates or campaign on the island, including the Communist Party.^[135] The Communist Party of Cuba has held six party congress meetings since 1975. In 2011, the party stated that there were 800,000 members, and representatives generally constitute at least half of the Councils of state and the National Assembly. The remaining positions are filled by candidates nominally without party affiliation. Other political parties campaign and raise finances internationally, while activity within Cuba by opposition groups is minimal.

In February 2013, Raúl Castro, current Cuban President, announced his resignation for 2018, that will end his current 5-year term, and hopes to implement permanent term limits for future Cuban Presidents, including age limits.^[136]

After the death of Fidel Castro on November 25, 2016 the Cuban government put in place a nine-day mourning period. During the mourning period Cuban citizens were prohibited from playing loud music, partying, and drinking alcohol.^[137]

Administrative divisions

The country is subdivided into 15 provinces and one special municipality (Isla de la Juventud). These were formerly part of six larger historical provinces: Pinar del Río, Habana, Matanzas, Las Villas, Camagüey and Oriente. The present subdivisions closely resemble those of the Spanish military provinces during the Cuban Wars of Independence, when the most troublesome areas were subdivided. The provinces are divided into municipalities.



Provinces of Cuba

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Pinar del Río | 9. Ciego de Ávila |
| 2. Artemisa | 10. Camagüey |
| 3. Havana | 11. Las Tunas |
| 4. Mayabeque | 12. Granma |
| 5. Matanzas | 13. Holguín |
| 6. Cienfuegos | 14. Santiago de Cuba |
| 7. Villa Clara | 15. Guantánamo |
| 8. Sancti Spíritus | 16. Isla de la Juventud |

Human rights



Ladies in White demonstration in Havana (April 2012)

The Cuban government has been accused of numerous human rights abuses including torture, arbitrary imprisonment, unfair trials, and extrajudicial executions (also known as "*El Paredón*").^{[138][139]} Human Rights Watch has stated that the government "represses nearly all forms of political dissent" and that "Cubans are systematically denied basic rights to free expression, association, assembly, privacy, movement, and due process of law".^[140]

In 2003, the European Union (EU) accused the Cuban government of "continuing flagrant violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms".^[141] It has continued to call regularly for social and economic reform in Cuba, along with the unconditional release of all political prisoners.^[142] The United States continues an embargo against Cuba "so long as it continues to refuse to move toward democratization and greater respect for human rights",^[143] though the UN General Assembly has, since 1992, passed a resolution every year condemning the ongoing impact of the embargo and claiming it to be in violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.^[144] Cuba considers the embargo itself to be in violation of human rights.^[145] On December 17, 2014, United States President Barack Obama announced the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba, pushing for Congress to put an end to the embargo.^[146]

Cuba had the second-highest number of imprisoned journalists of any nation in 2008 (China had the highest) according to various sources, including the Committee to Protect Journalists and Human Rights Watch.^{[147][148]}

Cuban dissidents face arrest and imprisonment. In the 1990s, Human Rights Watch reported that Cuba's extensive prison system, one of the largest in Latin America, consists of 40 maximum-security prisons, 30 minimum-security prisons, and over 200 work camps.^[149] According to Human Rights Watch, Cuba's prison population is confined in "substandard and unhealthy conditions, where prisoners face physical and sexual abuse".^[149]

In July 2010, the unofficial Cuban Human Rights Commission said there were 167 political prisoners in Cuba, a fall from 201 at the start of the year. The head of the commission stated that long prison sentences were being replaced by harassment and intimidation.^[150] During the entire period of Castro's rule over the island, an estimated 200,000 people had been imprisoned or deprived of their freedoms for political reasons.^[16]

Foreign relations

Cuba under Castro was heavily involved in wars in Africa, Central America and Asia.

Cuba supported Algeria in 1961–1965.^[151] Cuba sent tens of thousands of troops to Angola during the Angolan Civil War.^[152] Other countries that featured Cuban involvement include Ethiopia,^{[153][154]} Guinea,^[155] Guinea-Bissau,^[156] Mozambique,^[157] and Yemen.^[158]

Cuba has conducted a foreign policy that is uncharacteristic of such a minor, developing country.^{[159][160]} Lesser known actions include the 1959 missions to the Dominican Republic.^[161] The expedition failed, but a prominent monument to its members was erected in their memory in Santo Domingo by the Dominican government, and they feature prominently at the country's Memorial Museum of the Resistance.^[162]

Cuba is a founding member of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas.^[163] At the end of 2012, tens of thousands of Cuban medical personnel worked abroad,^[164] with as many as 30,000 doctors in Venezuela alone via the two countries' oil-for-doctors programme.^[165]

In 1996, the United States, then under President Bill Clinton, brought in the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, better known as the Helms–Burton Act.^[166]

In 2008, the EU and Cuba agreed to resume full relations and cooperation activities.^[167] United States President Barack Obama stated on April 17, 2009, in Trinidad and Tobago that "the United States seeks a new beginning with Cuba",^[168] and reversed the Bush Administration's prohibition on travel and remittances by Cuban-Americans from the United States to Cuba.^[169]

On December 17, 2014, an agreement between the United States and Cuba, popularly called "The Cuban Thaw", brokered in part by Canada and Pope Francis, began the process of restoring international relations between Cuba and the United States. Cuba and the US agreed to release political prisoners and the United States began the process of creating an embassy in Havana.^{[170][171][172][173][174]}

On April 14, 2015, the White House announced President Obama will remove Cuba from the American government's list of nations which sponsor terrorism.^{[175][176]} The Cuban government has reportedly welcomed the decision as "fair".^[177]

On June 30, 2015, Cuba and the U.S. reached a deal to reopen embassies in their respective capitals on July 20, 2015^[178] and reestablish diplomatic relations.^[179]

Crime and law enforcement



Propaganda sign in front of the United States Interests Section in Havana



Raúl Castro with Mongolian President Elbegdorj during the Moscow Victory Day Parade, May 9, 2015

All law enforcement agencies are maintained under Cuba's Ministry of the Interior which is supervised by the Revolutionary Armed Forces. In Cuba, citizens can receive police assistance by dialing "106" on their telephones.^[180] The police force, which is referred to as "Policía Nacional Revolucionaria" or PNR is then expected to provide help. The Cuban government also has an agency called the Intelligence Directorate that conducts intelligence operations and maintains close ties with the Russian Federal Security Service.

Military

As of 2009, Cuba spent about US\$91.8 million on its armed forces.^[181] In 1985, Cuba devoted more than 10% of its GDP to military expenditures.^[182] In response to perceived American aggression, such as the Bay of Pigs Invasion, Cuba built up one of the largest armed forces in Latin America, second only to that of Brazil.^[183]

From 1975 until the late 1980s, Soviet military assistance enabled Cuba to upgrade its military capabilities. After the loss of Soviet subsidies, Cuba scaled down the numbers of military personnel, from 235,000 in 1994 to about 60,000 in 2003.^[184]

Economy

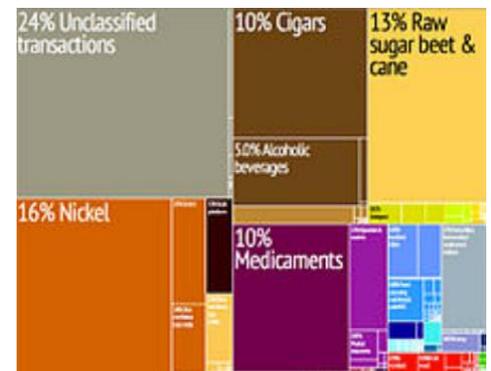
The Cuban state claims to adhere to socialist principles in organizing its largely state-controlled planned economy. Most of the means of production are owned and run by the government and most of the labor force is employed by the state. Recent years have seen a trend toward more private sector employment. By 2006, public sector employment was 78% and private sector 22%, compared to 91.8% to 8.2% in 1981.^[185] Government spending is 78.1% of GDP.^[186] Any firm wishing to hire a Cuban must pay the Cuban government, which in turn will pay the employee in Cuban pesos.^[187] The average monthly wage as of July 2013 is 466 Cuban pesos, which are worth about US\$19.^[188]

Cuba has a dual currency system, whereby most wages and prices are set in Cuban pesos (CUP), while the tourist economy operates with Convertible pesos (CUC), set at par with the US dollar.^[188] Every Cuban household has a ration book (known as libreta) entitling it to a monthly supply of food and other staples, which are provided at nominal cost.^[189]

Before Fidel Castro's 1959 revolution, Cuba was one of the most advanced and successful countries in Latin America.^[190] Cuba's capital, Havana, was a "glittering and dynamic city".^[190] The country's economy in the early part of the century, fuelled by the sale of sugar to the United States, had grown wealthy. Cuba ranked 5th in the hemisphere in per capita income, 3rd in life expectancy, 2nd in per capita ownership of automobiles and telephones, and 1st in the number of television sets per inhabitant. Cuba's literacy rate, 76%, was the fourth



A Lada Riva police car in Holguín



Cuban export composition, 2009

highest in Latin America. Cuba also ranked 11th in the world in the number of doctors per capita. Several private clinics and hospitals provided services for the poor. Cuba's income distribution compared favorably with that of other Latin American societies. However, income inequality was profound between city and countryside, especially between whites and blacks. Cubans lived in abysmal poverty in the countryside. According to PBS, a thriving middle class held the promise of prosperity and social mobility.^[190] According to Cuba historian Louis Perez of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, "Havana was then what Las Vegas has become."^[191] In 2016, the Miami Herald wrote, "... about 27 percent of Cubans earn under \$50 per month; 34 percent earn the equivalent of \$50 to \$100 per month; and 20 percent earn \$101 to \$200. Twelve percent reported earning \$201 to \$500 a month; and almost 4 percent said their monthly earnings topped \$500, including 1.5 percent who said they earned more than \$1,000."^[192]



People waiting in line at a libreta store in Havana



Cigar production in Santiago de Cuba

After the Cuban revolution and before the collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba depended on Moscow for substantial aid and sheltered markets for its exports. The loss of these subsidies sent the Cuban economy into a rapid depression known in Cuba as the Special Period. Cuba took limited free market-oriented measures to alleviate severe shortages of food, consumer goods, and services. These steps included allowing some self-employment in certain retail and light manufacturing sectors, the legalization of the use of the US dollar in business, and the encouragement of tourism. Cuba has developed a unique urban farm system called *organopónicos* to compensate for the end of food imports from the Soviet Union. The U.S. embargo against Cuba was instituted in response to nationalization of U.S.-citizen-held property and was maintained at the premise of perceived human rights violations. It is widely viewed that the embargo hurt the Cuban economy. In 2009, the Cuban Government estimated this loss at \$685 million annually.^[193]

Cuba's leadership has called for reforms in the country's agricultural system. In 2008, Raúl Castro began enacting agrarian reforms to boost food production, as at that time 80% of food was imported. The reforms aim to expand land use and increase efficiency.^[194] Venezuela supplies Cuba with an estimated 110,000 barrels (17,000 m³) of oil per day in exchange for money and the services of some 44,000 Cubans, most of them medical personnel, in Venezuela.^{[195][196]}

In 2005, Cuba had exports of US\$2.4 billion, ranking 114 of 226 world countries, and imports of US\$6.9 billion, ranking 87 of 226 countries.^[197] Its major export partners are Canada 17.7%, China 16.9%, Venezuela 12.5%, Netherlands 9%, and Spain 5.9% (2012).^[198] Cuba's major exports are sugar, nickel, tobacco, fish, medical products, citrus fruits, and coffee;^[198] imports include food, fuel, clothing, and machinery. Cuba presently holds debt in an amount estimated to be \$13 billion,^[199] approximately 38% of GDP.^[200] According to the Heritage Foundation, Cuba is dependent on credit accounts that rotate from country to country.^[201]

Cuba's prior 35% supply of the world's export market for sugar has declined to 10% due to a variety of factors, including a global sugar commodity price drop that made Cuba less competitive on world markets.^[202] It was announced in 2008 that wage caps would be abandoned to improve the nation's productivity.^[203]

In 2010, Cubans were allowed to build their own houses. According to Raúl Castro, they could now improve their houses, but the government would not endorse these new houses or improvements.^[204] There is virtually no homelessness in Cuba, and 85% of Cubans own their homes and pay no property taxes or mortgage interest. Mortgage payments may not exceed 10% of a household's combined income.^{[193][205]}

On August 2, 2011, *The New York Times* reported that Cuba reaffirmed its intent to legalize "buying and selling" of private property before the year's end. According to experts, the private sale of property could "transform Cuba more than any of the economic reforms announced by President Raúl Castro's government".^[206] It would cut more than one million state jobs, including party bureaucrats who resist the changes.^[207] The reforms created what some call "New Cuban Economy".^{[208][209]} In October 2013, Raúl said he intended to merge the two currencies, but as of August 2016, the dual currency system remains in force.



Cubans are now permitted to own small businesses in certain sectors.

In August 2012, a specialist of the "Cubaenergia Company" announced the opening of Cuba's first Solar Power Plant. As a member of the Cubasolar Group, there was also a mention of 10 additional plants in 2013.^[210]

Resources

Cuba's natural resources include sugar, tobacco, fish, citrus fruits, coffee, beans, rice, potatoes, and livestock.^[211] The output of Cuba's nickel mines that year was 71,000 tons, approaching 4% of world production.^[212] As of 2013 its reserves were estimated at 5.5 million tons, over 7% of the world total.^[212] Sherritt International of Canada operates a large nickel mining facility in Moa. Cuba is also a major producer of refined cobalt, a by-product of nickel mining.^[213]

Oil exploration in 2005 by the US Geological Survey revealed that the North Cuba Basin could produce about 4.6 billion barrels (730,000,000 m³) to 9.3 billion barrels (1.48 × 10⁹ m³) of oil. In 2006, Cuba started to test-drill these locations for possible exploitation.^[214]

Tourism

Tourism was initially restricted to enclave resorts where tourists would be segregated from Cuban society, referred to as "enclave tourism" and "tourism apartheid".^[215] Contact between foreign visitors and ordinary Cubans were *de facto* illegal between 1992 and 1997.^[216] The rapid growth of tourism during the Special

Period had widespread social and economic repercussions in Cuba, and led to speculation about the emergence of a two-tier economy.^[217]

Cuba has tripled its market share of Caribbean tourism in the last decade; as a result of significant investment in tourism infrastructure, this growth rate is predicted to continue.^[218] 1.9 million tourists visited Cuba in 2003, predominantly from Canada and the European Union, generating revenue of US\$2.1 billion.^[219] Cuba recorded 2,688,000 international tourists in 2011, the third-highest figure in the Caribbean (behind the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico).^[220]

The medical tourism sector caters to thousands of European, Latin American, Canadian, and American consumers every year.

Allegations of widespread sex tourism are downplayed by the Cuban Justice minister.^[221] According to a Government of Canada travel advice website, "Cuba is actively working to prevent child sex tourism, and a number of tourists, including Canadians, have been convicted of offences related to the corruption of minors aged 16 and under. Prison sentences range from 7 to 25 years."^[222]

Some tourist facilities were extensively damaged on September 8, 2017 when Hurricane Irma hit the island. The storm made landfall in the Camagüey Archipelago; the worst damage was in the keys north of the main island, however, and not in the most significant tourist areas.^[223]

Geography

Cuba is an archipelago of islands located in the northern Caribbean Sea at the confluence with the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. It lies between latitudes 19° and 24°N, and longitudes 74° and 85°W. The United States lies 150 kilometers (93 miles) across the Straits of Florida to the north and northwest (to the closest tip of Key West, Florida), and the Bahamas 21 km (13 mi) to the north. Mexico lies 210 kilometers (130 miles) across the Yucatán Channel to the west (to the closest tip of Cabo Catoche in the State of Quintana Roo).

Haiti is 77 km (48 mi) to the east, Jamaica (140 km/87 mi) and the Cayman Islands to the south. Cuba is the principal island, surrounded by four smaller groups of islands: the Colorados Archipelago on the northwestern coast, the Sabana-Camagüey Archipelago on the north-central Atlantic coast, the Jardines de la Reina on the south-central coast and the Canarreos Archipelago on the southwestern coast.

The main island, named Cuba, is 1,250 km (780 mi) long, constituting most of the nation's land area (104,556 km² (40,369 sq mi)) and is the largest island in the Caribbean and 17th-largest island in the world by land area. The main island consists mostly of flat to rolling plains apart from the Sierra Maestra mountains in the southeast, whose highest point is Pico Turquino (1,974 m (6,476 ft)).



Varadero beach



A general map of Cuba

The second-largest island is Isla de la Juventud (Isle of Youth) in the Canarreos archipelago, with an area of 2,200 km² (849 sq mi). Cuba has an official area (land area) of 109,884 km² (42,426 sq mi). Its area is 110,860 km² (42,803 sq mi) including coastal and territorial waters.

Climate

With the entire island south of the Tropic of Cancer, the local climate is tropical, moderated by northeasterly trade winds that blow year-round. The temperature is also shaped by the Caribbean current, which brings in warm water from the equator. This makes the climate of Cuba warmer than that of Hong Kong, which is at around the same latitude as Cuba but has a subtropical rather than a tropical climate. In general (with local variations), there is a drier season from November to April, and a rainier season from May to October. The average temperature is 21 °C (69.8 °F) in January and 27 °C (80.6 °F) in July. The warm temperatures of the Caribbean Sea and the fact that Cuba sits across the entrance to the Gulf of Mexico combine to make the country prone to frequent hurricanes. These are most common in September and October.

Hurricane Irma hit the island on September 8, 2017, with winds of 260 kilometres per hour,^[224] at the Camagüey Archipelago; the storm reached Ciego de Avila province around midnight and continued to pound Cuba the next day.^[225] The worst damage was in the keys north of the main island. Hospitals, warehouses and factories were damaged; much of the north coast was without electricity. By that time, nearly a million people, including tourists, had been evacuated.^[226] The Varadero resort area also reported widespread damage; the government believed that repairs could be completed before the start of the main tourist season.^[227] Subsequent reports indicated that 10 people had been killed during the storm, including seven in Havana, most during building collapses. Sections of the capital had been flooded.^[228] Hurricane Jose was not expected to strike Cuba.^[229]

Biodiversity

Cuba signed the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity on June 12, 1992, and became a party to the convention on March 8, 1994.^[230] It has subsequently produced a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with one revision which was received by the convention on January 24, 2008.^[231]

The revision comprises an action plan with time limits for each item, and an indication of the governmental body responsible for delivery. That document contains virtually no information about biodiversity. However, the country's fourth national report to the CBD contains a detailed breakdown of the numbers of species of each kingdom of life recorded from Cuba, the main groups being: animals (17,801 species), bacteria (270), chromista (707), fungi, including lichen-forming species (5844), plants (9107) and protozoa (1440).^[232]



Sierra Maestra



Viñales Valley

As elsewhere in the world, vertebrate animals and flowering plants are well documented, so the recorded numbers of species are probably close to the true numbers. For most or all other groups, the true numbers of species occurring in Cuba are likely to exceed, often considerably, the numbers recorded so far.

Demographics

According to the official census of 2010, Cuba's population was 11,241,161, comprising 5,628,996 men and 5,612,165 women.^[233] Its birth rate (9.88 births per thousand population in 2006)^[234] is one of the lowest in the Western Hemisphere.

Although the country's population has grown by about four million people since 1961, the rate of growth slowed during that period, and the population began to decline in 2006, due in the country's low fertility rate (1.43 children per woman) coupled with emigration.^[235]

Indeed, this drop in fertility is among the largest in the Western Hemisphere,^[236] and is attributed largely to unrestricted access to legal abortion: Cuba's abortion rate was 58.6 per 1000 pregnancies in 1996, compared to an average of 35 in the Caribbean, 27 in Latin America overall, and 48 in Europe. Similarly, the use of contraceptives is also widespread, estimated at 79% of the female population (in the upper third of countries in the Western Hemisphere).^[237]

Ethnoracial groups

Cuba's population is multiethnic, reflecting its complex colonial origins. Intermarriage between diverse groups is widespread, and consequently there is some discrepancy in reports of the country's racial composition: whereas the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies at the University of Miami determined that 62% of Cubans are black,^[238] the 2002 Cuban census found that a similar proportion of the population, 65.05%, was white.

In fact, the Minority Rights Group International determined that "An objective assessment of the situation of Afro-Cubans remains problematic due to scant records and a paucity of systematic studies both pre- and post-revolution. Estimates of the percentage of people of African descent in the Cuban population vary enormously, ranging from 34% to 62%".^[239]

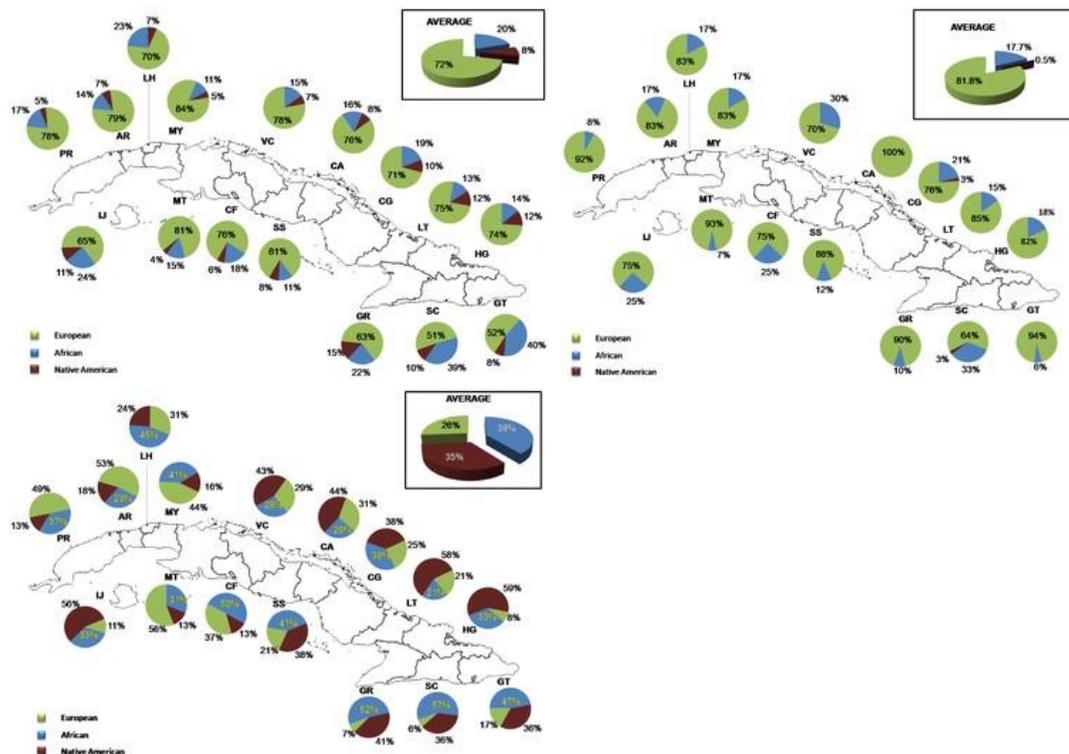
A study from 2014 found the autosomal genetic ancestry in Cuba to be 72% European, 20% African and 8% Native American;^[240] 35% of maternal lineages derived from Cuban Native Americans, compared to 39% from Africa and 26% from Europe, but male lineages were European (82%) and African (18%), indicating the historical bias towards mating between foreign men and native women rather than the inverse.^[240]

Self-identified race (2012 Census)^[3]

Race		
White		64.1%
Mulatto, Mestizo, Zambo, or Pardo		27.6%
Black		9.3%
Asian		0.1%



Students of the Escuela Lenin



Asians make up about 1% of the population, and are largely of Chinese ancestry, followed by Filipinos, Japanese^{[241][242]} and Vietnamese. Many are descendants of farm laborers brought to the island by Spanish and American contractors during the 19th and early 20th century.^[243] The currently recorded number of Cubans with Chinese ancestry is 114,240.^[244]

Afro-Cubans are descended primarily from the Yoruba people, as well as several thousand North African refugees, most notably the Sahrawi Arabs of Western Sahara.^[245]

Immigration and emigration

Immigration and emigration have played a prominent part in Cuba's demographic profile. Between the 18th and early 20th century, large waves of Canarian, Catalan, Andalusian, Galician, and other Spanish people immigrated to Cuba. Between 1899–1930 alone, close to a million Spaniards entered the country, though many would eventually return to Spain.^[246] Other prominent immigrant groups included French,^[247] Portuguese, Italian, Russian, Dutch, Greek, British, and Irish, as well as small number of descendants of U.S. citizens who arrived in Cuba in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Post-revolution Cuba has been characterized by significant levels of emigration, which has led to a large and influential diaspora community. During the three decades after January 1959, more than one million Cubans of all social classes — constituting 10% of the total population — emigrated to the United States, a proportion that matches the extent of emigration to the U.S. from the Caribbean as a whole during that period.^{[248][249][250][251][252]} Other common destinations include Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada, Mexico,

and Sweden, among others. Those who left the country typically did so by sea, in small boats and fragile rafts. On September 9, 1994, the U.S. and Cuban governments agreed that the U.S. would grant at least 20,000 visas annually in exchange for Cuba's pledge to prevent further unlawful departures on boats.^[253]

Religion

In 2010, the religious affiliation of the country was estimated by the Pew Forum to be 65% Christian (60% Roman Catholic or about 6.9 million in 2016, 5% Protestant or about 575,000 in 2016), 23% unaffiliated, 17% folk religion (such as *santería*), and the remaining 0.4% consisting of other religions.^[254]

Cuba is officially a secular state. Religious freedom increased through the 1980s,^[255] with the government amending the constitution in 1992 to drop the state's characterization as atheistic.^[256]



Havana Cathedral

Roman Catholicism is the largest religion, with its origins in Spanish colonization. Despite less than half of the population identifying as Catholics in 2006, it nonetheless remains the dominant faith.^[201] Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI visited Cuba in 1998 and 2011, respectively, and Pope Francis visited Cuba in September 2015.^{[257][258]} Prior to each papal visit, the Cuban government pardoned prisoners as a humanitarian gesture.^{[259][260]}

The government's relaxation of restrictions on house churches in the 1990s led to an explosion of Pentecostalism, with some groups claiming as many as 100,000 members. However, Evangelical Protestant sects, organized into the umbrella Cuban Council of Churches, remain much more powerful.^[261]

The religious landscape of Cuba is also strongly defined by syncretisms of various kinds. Christianity is often practiced in tandem with *Santería*, a mixture of Catholicism and mostly African faiths, which include a number of cults. *La Virgen de la Caridad del Cobre* (the Virgin of *Cobre*) is the Catholic patroness of Cuba, and a symbol of Cuban culture. In *Santería*, she has been syncretized with the goddess Oshun.

Cuba also hosts small communities of Jews (500 in 2012), Muslims, and members of the Bahá'í Faith.^[262]

Several well-known Cuban religious figures have operated outside the island, including the humanitarian and author Jorge Armando Pérez.

Languages

The official language of Cuba is Spanish and the vast majority of Cubans speak it. Spanish as spoken in Cuba is known as Cuban Spanish and is a form of Caribbean Spanish. *Lucumí*, a dialect of the West African language Yoruba, is also used as a liturgical language by practitioners of *Santería*,^[263] and so only as a second language.^[264] Haitian Creole is the second most spoken language in Cuba, and is spoken by Haitian immigrants and their descendants.^[265] Other languages spoken by immigrants include Galician and Corsican.^[266]

Largest cities

Media

The Cuban government and Communist Party of Cuba control almost all media in Cuba.

Press

- *Granma* brings:

Reflections of Fidel Castro (<http://www.granma.cu/idiomas/ingles/reflections-i/reflections-i.html>)

Speeches of Raúl Castro

Television

Five Communist controlled national channels:

- Cubavisión
- Tele Rebelde
- Canal Educativo
- Canal Educativo 2
- Multivisión

Internet

Internet in Cuba has some of the lowest penetration rates in the Western hemisphere, and all content is subject to review by the Department of Revolutionary Orientation.^[267] ETECSA operates 118 cybercafes in the country.^[267] The government of Cuba provides an online encyclopedia website called EcuRed that operates in a "wiki" format.^[268] Internet access is limited.^[269] The sale of computer equipment is strictly regulated. Internet access is controlled, and e-mail is closely monitored.^[270]

Culture

Cuban culture is influenced by its melting pot of cultures, primarily those of Spain and Africa. After the 1959 revolution, the government started a national literacy campaign, offered free education to all and established rigorous sports, ballet and music programs.^[271]

Music

Cuban music is very rich and is the most commonly known expression of Cuban culture. The central form of this music is Son, which has been the basis of many other musical styles like "Danzón de nuevo ritmo", mambo, cha-cha-chá and salsa music. Rumba ("de cajón o de solar") music originated in the early Afro-Cuban culture,



A local musical house, Casa de la Trova in Santiago de Cuba

mixed with Hispanic elements of style.^[272] The Tres was invented in Cuba from Hispanic cordophone instruments models (the instrument is actually a fusion of elements from the Spanish guitar and lute). Other traditional Cuban instruments are of African origin, Taíno origin, or both, such as the maracas, güiro, marímbula and various wooden drums including the mayohuacán.



Gloria Estefan and Celia Cruz

Popular Cuban music of all styles has been enjoyed and praised widely across the world. Cuban classical music, which includes music with strong African and European influences, and features symphonic works as well as music for soloists, has received international acclaim thanks to composers like Ernesto Lecuona. Havana was the heart of the rap scene in Cuba when it began in the 1990s.

During that time, reggaetón was growing in popularity. In 2011, the Cuban state denounced reggaeton as degenerate, directed reduced "low-profile" airplay of the genre (but did not ban it entirely) and banned the megahit *Chupi Chupi* by Osmani García, characterizing its description of sex as "the sort which a prostitute would carry out".^[273] In December 2012, the Cuban government officially banned sexually explicit reggaeton songs and music videos from radio and television.^{[274][275]} As well as pop, classical and rock are very popular in Cuba.

Cuisine

Cuban cuisine is a fusion of Spanish and Caribbean cuisines. Cuban recipes share spices and techniques with Spanish cooking, with some Caribbean influence in spice and flavor. Food rationing, which has been the norm in Cuba for the last four decades, restricts the common availability of these dishes.^[276] The traditional Cuban meal is not served in courses; all food items are served at the same time.

The typical meal could consist of plantains, black beans and rice, *ropa vieja* (shredded beef), Cuban bread, pork with onions, and tropical fruits. Black beans and rice, referred to as *moros y cristianos* (or *moros* for short), and plantains are staples of the Cuban diet. Many of the meat dishes are cooked slowly with light sauces. Garlic, cumin, oregano, and bay leaves are the dominant spices.



A traditional meal of *ropa vieja* (shredded flank steak in a tomato sauce base), black beans, yellow rice, plantains and fried yuca with beer

Literature

Cuban literature began to find its voice in the early 19th century. Dominant themes of independence and freedom were exemplified by José Martí, who led the Modernist movement in Cuban literature. Writers such as Nicolás Guillén and José Z. Tallet focused on literature as social protest. The poetry and novels of Dulce María Loynaz and José Lezama Lima have been influential. Romanticist Miguel Barnet, who wrote *Everyone Dreamed of Cuba*, reflects a more melancholy Cuba.^[277]

Alejo Carpentier was important in the Magic realism movement. Writers such as Reinaldo Arenas, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and more recently Daína Chaviano, Pedro Juan Gutiérrez, Zoé Valdés, Guillermo Rosales and Leonardo Padura have earned international recognition in the post-revolutionary era, though many of these writers have felt compelled to continue their work in exile due to ideological control of media by the Cuban authorities.



Cuban-style tamales

Dance

Dance holds a privileged position in Cuban culture. Popular dance is considered an essential part of life, and concert dance is supported by the government and includes internationally renowned companies such as the Ballet Nacional de Cuba.^[278]

Sports



Cuban former boxer Teófilo Stevenson, widely considered to be one of the greatest boxers of all-time

Due to historical associations with the United States, many Cubans participate in sports which are popular in North America, rather than sports traditionally promoted in other Latin American nations. Baseball is by far the most popular; other sports and pastimes include football, basketball, volleyball, cricket, and athletics. Cuba is a dominant force in amateur boxing, consistently achieving high medal tallies in major international competitions. Cuba also provides a national team that competes in the Olympic Games.^[279]

Education

The University of Havana was founded in 1728 and there are a number of other well-established colleges and universities. In 1957, just before Castro came to power, the literacy rate was fourth in the region at almost 80% according to the United Nations, higher than in Spain.^{[90][280]} Castro created an entirely state-operated system and banned private institutions. School attendance is compulsory from ages six to the end of basic secondary education (normally at age 15), and all students, regardless of age or gender, wear school uniforms with the color denoting grade level. Primary education lasts for six years,

secondary education is divided into basic and pre-university education.^[281] Cuba's literacy rate of 99.8 percent^{[198][282]} is the tenth-highest globally, due largely to the provision of free education at every level.^[283] Cuba's high school graduation rate is 94 percent.^[284]

Higher education is provided by universities, higher institutes, higher pedagogical institutes, and higher polytechnic institutes. The Cuban Ministry of Higher Education operates a scheme of distance education which provides regular afternoon and evening courses in rural areas for agricultural workers. Education has a strong political and ideological emphasis, and students progressing to higher education are expected to have a commitment to the goals of Cuba.^[281] Cuba has provided state subsidized education to a limited number of foreign nationals at the Latin American School of Medicine.^{[285][286]}

According to the Webometrics Ranking of World Universities, the top-ranking universities in the country are Universidad de la Habana (1680th worldwide), Instituto Superior Politécnico José Antonio Echeverría (2893rd) and the University of Santiago de Cuba (3831st).^[287]

Health

Cuba's life expectancy at birth is 78.3 years (76.2 for males and 80.4 for females).^[198] This ranks Cuba 55th in the world and 5th in the Americas, behind Canada, Chile, Costa Rica and the United States. Infant mortality declined from 32 infant deaths per 1,000 live births in 1957, to 10 in 1990–95,^[288] 6.1 in 2000–2005 and 5.13 in 2009.^{[282][198]} Historically, Cuba has ranked high in numbers of medical personnel and has made significant contributions to world health since the 19th century.^[90] Today, Cuba has universal health care and despite persistent shortages of medical supplies, there is no shortage of medical personnel.^[289] Primary care is available throughout the island and infant and maternal mortality rates compare favorably with those in developed nations.^[289]

Disease and infant mortality increased in the 1960s immediately after the revolution, when half of Cuba's 6,000 doctors left the country.^[290] Recovery occurred by the 1980s,^[78] and the country's health care has been widely praised.^[291] The Communist government asserted that universal health care was a priority of state planning and progress was made in rural areas.^[292] Like the rest of the Cuban economy, medical care suffered from severe material shortages following the end of Soviet subsidies in 1991, and a tightening of the U.S. embargo in 1992.^[293]

Challenges include low salaries for doctors,^[294] poor facilities, poor provision of equipment, and the frequent absence of essential drugs.^[295] Cuba has the highest doctor-to-population ratio in the world and has sent thousands of doctors to more than 40 countries around the world.^[296] According to the World Health Organization, Cuba is "known the world over for its ability to train excellent doctors and nurses who can then



University of Havana, founded in 1728

go out to help other countries in need". As of September 2014, there are around 50,000 Cuban-trained health care workers aiding 66 nations.^[297] Cuban physicians have played a leading role in combating the Ebola virus epidemic in West Africa.^[298]

Import and export of pharmaceutical drugs is done by the Quimefa Pharmaceutical Business Group (FARMACUBA) under the Ministry of Basic Industry (MINBAS). This group also provides technical information for the production of these drugs.^[299] Isolated from the West by the US embargo, Cuba developed the successful lung cancer vaccine, Cimavax, which is now available to US researchers for the first time, along with other novel Cuban cancer treatments. The vaccine has been available for free to the Cuban population since 2011.^[300] According to Roswell Park Cancer Institute CEO Candace Johnson: "They've had to do more with less, so they've had to be even more innovative with how they approach things. For over 40 years, they have had a preeminent immunology community."^[301]

In 2015, Cuba became the first country to eradicate mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis,^[302] a milestone hailed by the World Health Organization as "one of the greatest public health achievements possible".^[303]

See also

- Index of Cuba-related articles
-
-
- List of Cubans
- List of places in Cuba
- Outline of Cuba

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External links

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- "Cuba" (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cu.html>). *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency.
- Key Development Forecasts for Cuba (http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=CU) from International Futures
- Cuba (<https://dmoztools.net/Regional/Caribbean/Cuba>) at DMOZ
-  Wikimedia Atlas of Cuba

Retrieved from "<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cuba&oldid=801789640>"

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COUNTRY: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

STATISTICS

POPULATION: 10,800,857

LANGUAGE(S): SPANISH

DEMONYM: DOMINICAN

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: UNITARY PRESIDENTIAL REPUBLIC

CURRENCY: PESO / US DOLLAR ACCEPTED

CLIMATE: TROPICAL RAINFOREST CLIMATE; WET SEASON NOVEMBER - JANUARY

PRACTICING

PRACTICES IN COUNTRY: 10 FIRMS

NUMBER OF REGISTERED ARCHITECTS:

CERTIFICATION NEEDS:

REQUIREMENTS:

HUMANITIES

CULTURE: CUSTOMS HAVE A EUROPEAN BASIS IN FOOD, ARCHITECTURE, MUSIC AND FAMILY STRUCTURE

HISTORY: OVER THE LAST TWO DECADES THE DR IS ONE OF THE FASTEST GROWING ECONOMIES

THINGS TO CONSIDER

DRIVES ON THE: RIGHT

ECONOMY: LARGEST ECONOMY IN THE CARIBBEAN; 75% OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IS FROM THE 70S AND UNRELIABLE.

CRIME: HAS BECOME A TRANS-SHIPMENT POINT FOR COLUMBIAN DRUGS.

TOURISM: MOST POPULAR TOURIST DESTINATION IN THE CARIBBEAN.

Dominican Republic

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Coordinates: 19°00′N 70°40′W﻿ / ﻿19°00′N 70°40′W﻿ / 19; -70

The **Dominican Republic** (Spanish: *República Dominicana* [reˈpuβliˈka ðoˈminiˈkana]) is a country located in the island of Hispaniola, in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean region. It occupies the eastern five-eighths of the island, which it shares with the nation of Haiti,^{[11][12]} making Hispaniola one of two Caribbean islands, along with Saint Martin, that are shared by two countries. The Dominican Republic is the second-largest Caribbean nation by area (after Cuba) at 48,445 square kilometers (18,705 sq mi), and third by population with approximately 10 million people, of which approximately three million live in the metropolitan area of Santo Domingo, the capital city.^{[13][14]}

Christopher Columbus landed on the island on December 5, 1492, which the native Taíno people had inhabited since the 7th century. The colony of Santo Domingo became the site of the first permanent European settlement in the Americas, the oldest continuously inhabited city, and the first seat of the Spanish colonial rule in the New World. After more than three hundred years of Spanish rule the Dominican people declared independence in November 1821. The leader of the independence movement José Núñez de Cáceres, intended the Dominican nation to unite with the country of Gran Colombia, but no longer under Spain's custody the newly independent Dominicans were forcefully annexed by Haiti in February 1822. Independence came 22 years later after victory in the Dominican War of Independence in 1844. Over the next 72 years the Dominican Republic experienced mostly internal conflicts and a brief return to colonial status before permanently ousting Spanish rule during the Dominican War of Restoration of 1865.^{[15][16][17]} A United States occupation lasted eight years between 1916 and 1924, and a subsequent calm and prosperous six-year period under Horacio Vásquez Lajara was followed by the dictatorship of Rafael Leónidas Trujillo until 1961. A civil war in 1965, the country's last, was ended by U.S. military occupation and was followed by the authoritarian rule of Joaquín Balaguer, 1966–1978. Since then, the Dominican Republic has moved toward representative democracy^[5] and has been led by Leonel Fernández for most of the time since 1996. Danilo Medina, the Dominican Republic's current president, succeeded Fernandez in 2012, winning 51% of the electoral vote over his opponent ex-president Hipólito Mejía.^[18]

Dominican Republic

República Dominicana (Spanish)



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: "Dios, Patria, Libertad" (Spanish)
"God, Homeland, Freedom"

Anthem: *Quisqueyanos Valientes*
Valiant Quisqueyans

0:00

MENU



Capital
and largest city

Santo Domingo
19°00′N

Official languages

Spanish

Ethnic groups
(1960^{[1]a})

72.9% Mixed
16.1% White^b
10.9% Black
0.1% Yellow

Demonym

Dominican

Government

Unitary presidential
republic

The Dominican Republic has the ninth-largest economy in Latin America and is the largest economy in the Caribbean and Central American region.^{[19][20]} Over the last two decades, the Dominican Republic has stood out as one of the fastest-growing economies in the Americas – with an average real GDP growth rate of 5.4% between 1992 and 2014.^[21] GDP growth in 2014 and 2015 reached 7.3 and 7.0%, respectively, the highest in the Western Hemisphere.^[21] In the first half of 2016 the Dominican economy grew 7.4% continuing its trend of rapid economic growth.^[22] Recent growth has been driven by construction, manufacturing, tourism, and mining. Private consumption has been strong, as a result of low inflation (under 1% on average in 2015), job creation, as well as high level of remittances.

The Dominican Republic is the most visited destination in the Caribbean. The year-round golf courses are major attractions.^[23] A geographically diverse nation, the Dominican Republic is home to both the Caribbean's tallest mountain peak, Pico Duarte, and the Caribbean's largest lake and point of lowest elevation, Lake Enriquillo.^[24] The island has an average temperature of 26 °C (78.8 °F) and great climatic and biological diversity.^[23] The country is also the site of the first cathedral, castle, monastery, and fortress built in the Americas, located in Santo Domingo's Colonial Zone, a World Heritage Site.^{[25][26]} Music and sport are of great importance in the Dominican culture, with Merengue and Bachata as the national dance and music, and baseball as the favorite sport.^[2]

Contents

- 1 Names and etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 Pre-European history
 - 2.2 European colonization
 - 2.3 French rule (1795–1809)
 - 2.4 Reversion to Spain (1809–1821)
 - 2.5 Independence from Spain (1821)
 - 2.6 Unification of Hispaniola (1822–44)
 - 2.7 Independence from Haiti (1844)
 - 2.8 Restoration republic
 - 2.9 20th century (1900–30)
 - 2.10 Trujillo rule (1930–61)

• President	Danilo Medina
• Vice President	Margarita Cedeño de Fernández
Legislature	Congress
• Upper house	Senate
• Lower house	Chamber of Deputies
Independence	
• from Spain (ephemeral)	December 1, 1821 ^[2]
• from Haiti (official)	February 27, 1844 ^[2] (not recognized by Haiti until November 9, 1874) ^{c[3]}
• from Spain (restoration)	August 16, 1863 ^[2] (recognized on March 3, 1865)
• from the United States (occupation)	July 12, 1924 ^[4]
Area	
• Total	48,315 km ² (18,655 sq mi) (128th)
• Water (%)	0.7 ^[5]
Population	
• 2017 estimate	10,800,857 ^[6] (86th)
• 2010 census	9,478,612 ^[7]
• Density	224/km ² (580.2/sq mi) (65th)
GDP (PPP)	2017 estimate
• Total	\$174.180 billion ^[8] (72nd)
• Per capita	\$17,096 ^[8] (76th)
GDP (nominal)	2017 estimate
• Total	\$76.850 billion ^[8] (67th)
• Per capita	\$7,543 ^[8] (74th)
Gini (2012)	▼ 47.1 ^[9] high
HDI (2015)	▲ 0.732 ^[10] high · 99th

- 2.11 Post-Trujillo (1961–2000)
 - 2.12 21st century
- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
- 4 Government and politics
 - 4.1 Political culture
 - 4.2 Foreign relations
 - 4.3 Military
 - 4.4 Administrative divisions
- 5 Economy
 - 5.1 Currency
 - 5.2 Tourism
- 6 Infrastructure
 - 6.1 Transportation
 - 6.2 Bus service
 - 6.3 Santo Domingo Metro
 - 6.4 Communications
 - 6.5 Electricity
 - 6.6 Water supply and sanitation
- 7 Society
 - 7.1 Demographics
 - 7.2 Ethnic groups
 - 7.3 Languages
 - 7.4 Population centres
 - 7.5 Religion
 - 7.6 20th century immigration
 - 7.6.1 Haitian immigration
 - 7.7 Emigration
 - 7.8 Health
 - 7.9 Education
 - 7.10 Crime
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Architecture
 - 8.2 Cuisine
 - 8.3 Music and dance
 - 8.4 Fashion
 - 8.5 National symbols
 - 8.6 Sports
- 9 See also
- 10 Notes and references
 - 10.1 Bibliography
- 11 Further reading
- 12 External links

Currency	Peso ^[2] (DOP)
Time zone	Standard Time Caribbean (UTC −4:00 ^[5])
Drives on the	right
Calling code	+1-809, +1-829, +1-849
ISO 3166 code	DO
Internet TLD	.do ^[5]
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Race was dropped from the census after 1960. b. Including Arabs as well. c. A covenant was signed between two commissions from both countries on July 26, 1867, but it did not enter into force because it was not approved by the Senate of Haiti.
	<p>Sources for area, capital, coat of arms, coordinates, flag, language, motto and names: [2]</p> <p>For an alternate area figure of 48,730 km², calling code 809 and Internet TLD: [5]</p>

Names and etymology

For most of its history, up until independence, the country was known as **Santo Domingo**^[27]—the name of its present capital and patron saint, Saint Dominic—and continued to be commonly known as such in English until the early 20th century.^[28] The residents were called *Dominicanos* (Dominicans), which is the adjective form of "Domingo", and the revolutionaries named their newly independent country *La República Dominicana*.

In the national anthem of the Dominican Republic (Himno Nacional) the term "Dominican" does not appear. The author of its lyrics, Emilio Prud'Homme, consistently uses the poetic term *Quisqueyanos*, that is, "Quisqueyans". The word "Quisqueya" derives from a native tongue of the Taino Indians and means "Mother of all Lands". It is often used in songs as another name for the country. The name of the country is often shortened to "the D.R."^[29]

History

Pre-European history

The Arawakan-speaking Taíno moved into Hispaniola from the north east region of what is now known as South America, displacing earlier inhabitants,^[30] c. AD 650. They engaged in farming and fishing^[31] and hunting and gathering.^[30] The fierce Caribs drove the Taíno to the northeastern Caribbean during much of the 15th century.^[32] The estimates of Hispaniola's population in 1492 vary widely, including one hundred thousand,^[33] three hundred thousand,^[30] and four hundred thousand to two million.^[34] Determining precisely how many people lived on the island in pre-Columbian times is next to impossible, as no accurate records exist.^[35] By 1492 the island was divided into five Taíno chiefdoms.^{[36][37]} The Taíno name for the entire island was either *Ayiti* or *Quisqueya*.^[38]



The five caciquedoms of Hispaniola

The Spaniards arrived in 1492. After initially friendly relationships, the Taínos resisted the conquest, led by the female Chief Anacaona of Xaragua and her ex-husband Chief Caonabo of Maguana, as well as Chiefs Guacanagaríx, Guamá, Hatuey, and Enriquillo. The latter's successes gained his people an autonomous enclave for a time on the island. Within a few years after 1492 the population of Taínos had declined drastically, due to smallpox,^[39] measles, and other diseases that arrived with the Europeans,^[40] and from other causes discussed below.

The first recorded smallpox outbreak in the Americas occurred on Hispaniola in 1507.^[40] The last record of pure Taínos in the country was from 1864. Still, Taíno biological heritage survived to an important extent, due to intermixing. Census records from 1514 reveal that 40% of Spanish men in Santo Domingo were married to

Taino women,^[41] and some present-day Dominicans have Taíno ancestry.^{[42][43]} Remnants of the Taino culture include their cave paintings,^[44] as well as pottery designs which are still used in the small artisan village of Higüerito, Moca.^[45]

European colonization

Christopher Columbus arrived on Hispaniola on December 5, 1492, during the first of his four voyages to America. He claimed the land for Spain and named it *La Española*, because the diverse climate and terrain reminded him of the country.^[46] In 1496 Bartholomew Columbus, Christopher's brother, built the city of Santo Domingo, Western Europe's first permanent settlement in the "New World." The Spaniards created a plantation economy on the island.^[33] The colony was the springboard for the further Spanish conquest of America and for decades the headquarters of Spanish power in the hemisphere.

The Taínos nearly disappeared, above all, from European infectious diseases to which they had no immunity.^[47] Other causes were abuse, suicide, the breakup of family, starvation,^[30] the *encomienda* system,^[48] which resembled a feudal system in Medieval Europe,^[49] war with the Spaniards, changes in lifestyle, and mixing with other peoples. Laws passed for the Indians' protection (beginning with the Laws of Burgos, 1512–1513)^[50] were never truly enforced.

After its conquest of the Aztecs and Incas, Spain neglected its Caribbean holdings. English and French buccaneers settled in northwestern Hispaniola coast and, after years of struggles with the French, Spain ceded the western coast of the island to France with the 1697 Treaty of Ryswick, whilst the Central Plateau remained under Spanish domain. France created a wealthy colony Saint-Domingue there, while the Spanish colony suffered an economic decline.^[51]

The colony of Santo Domingo saw a spectacular population increase during the 17th century, as it rose from some 6,000 in 1637 to about 91,272 in 1750. Of this number approximately 38,272 were white landowners, 38,000 were free mixed people of color, and some 15,000 were slaves. This contrasted sharply with the population of the French colony of Saint-Domingue (present day Haiti) – which had a population that was 90% enslaved and overall seven times as numerous as the Spanish colony of Santo Domingo.^[51]



The Pomier Caves are a series of 55 caves located north of San Cristobal in the Dominican Republic. They contain the largest collection of 2,000-year-old rock art in the Caribbean.



The Alcázar of Colón, located in Santo Domingo, is the oldest Viceregal residence in all of the Americas.

French rule (1795–1809)

France came to own Hispaniola in 1795 when by the Peace of Basel Spain ceded Santo Domingo as a consequence of the French Revolutionary Wars. The recently freed Africans led by Toussaint Louverture in 1801, took over Santo Domingo in the east, thus gaining control of the entire island. In 1802 an army sent by Napoleon captured Toussaint Louverture and sent him to France as prisoner. Toussaint Louverture's lieutenants and the spread of yellow fever succeeded in driving the French again from Saint-Domingue, which in 1804 the rebels made independent as the Republic of Haiti. Eastwards, France continued to rule Spanish Santo Domingo.

In 1805, Haitian troops of general Henri Christophe invaded Santo Domingo and sacked the towns of Santiago de los Caballeros and Moca, killing most of their residents and helping to lay the foundation for two centuries of animosity between the two countries.

In 1808, following Napoleon's invasion of Spain, the *criollos* of Santo Domingo revolted against French rule and, with the aid of the United Kingdom (Spain's ally) returned Santo Domingo to Spanish control.^[52]

Reversion to Spain (1809–1821)

See *España Boba*.

Independence from Spain (1821)

After a dozen years of discontent and failed independence plots by various opposing groups, Santo Domingo's former Lieutenant-Governor (top administrator), José Núñez de Cáceres, declared the colony's independence from the Spanish crown as Spanish Haiti, on November 30, 1821. This period is also known as the Ephemeral independence.^[53]

Unification of Hispaniola (1822–44)

The newly independent republic ended two months later under the Haitian government led by Jean-Pierre Boyer.^[54]

As Toussaint Louverture had done two decades earlier, the Haitians abolished slavery. In order to raise funds for the huge indemnity of 150 million francs that Haiti agreed to pay the former French colonists, and which was subsequently lowered to 60 million francs, the Haitian government imposed heavy taxes on the Dominicans. Since Haiti was unable to adequately provision its army, the occupying forces largely survived by commandeering or confiscating food and supplies at gunpoint. Attempts to redistribute land conflicted with the system of communal land tenure (*terrenos comuneros*), which had arisen with the ranching economy, and some people resented being forced to grow cash crops under Boyer and Joseph Balthazar Inginac's *Code Rural*.^[55] In the rural and rugged mountainous areas, the Haitian administration was usually too inefficient to enforce its own laws. It was in the city of Santo Domingo that the effects of the occupation were most acutely felt, and it was there that the movement for independence originated.

Haiti's constitution forbade white elites from owning land, and Dominican major landowning families were forcibly deprived of their properties. Many emigrated to Cuba, Puerto Rico (these two being Spanish possessions at the time), or Gran Colombia, usually with the encouragement of Haitian officials who acquired their lands. The Haitians associated the Roman Catholic Church with the French slave-masters who had exploited them before independence and confiscated all church property, deported all foreign clergy, and severed the ties of the remaining clergy to the Vatican.

All levels of education collapsed; the university was shut down, as it was starved both of resources and students, with young Dominican men from 16 to 25 years old being drafted into the Haitian army. Boyer's occupation troops, who were largely Dominicans, were unpaid and had to "forage and sack" from Dominican civilians. Haiti imposed a "heavy tribute" on the Dominican people.^{[56]:page number needed}

Many whites fled Santo Domingo for Puerto Rico and Cuba (both still under Spanish rule), Venezuela, and elsewhere. In the end the economy faltered and taxation became more onerous. Rebellions occurred even by Dominican freedmen, while Dominicans and Haitians worked together to oust Boyer from power. Anti-Haitian movements of several kinds – pro-independence, pro-Spanish, pro-French, pro-British, pro-United States – gathered force following the overthrow of Boyer in 1843.^{[56]:page number needed}

Independence from Haiti (1844)

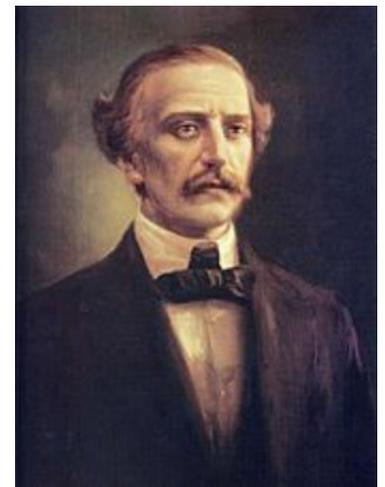
In 1838 Juan Pablo Duarte founded a secret society called La Trinitaria, which sought the complete independence of Santo Domingo without any foreign intervention.^{[57]:p147–149} Matías Ramón Mella and Francisco del Rosario Sánchez, despite not being among the founding members of La Trinitaria, were decisive in the fight for independence. Duarte, Mella, and Sánchez are considered the three Founding Fathers of the Dominican Republic.^[58]

On February 27, 1844, the *Trinitarios* (the members of La Trinitaria), declared the independence from Haiti. They were backed by Pedro Santana, a wealthy cattle rancher from El Seibo, who became general of the army of the nascent republic. The Dominican Republic's first Constitution was adopted on November 6, 1844, and was modeled after the United States Constitution.^[31]

The decades that followed were filled with tyranny, factionalism, economic difficulties, rapid changes of government, and exile for political opponents. Threatening the nation's independence were renewed Haitian invasions occurring in 1844, 1845–49, 1849–55, and 1855–56.^{[56]:page number needed} Haiti did not recognize the Dominican Republic until 1874.^{[3][59]}



Jean-Pierre Boyer the mulatto ruler of Haiti



Juan Pablo Duarte, founding father of the Dominican Republic.

Meanwhile, archrivals Santana and Buenaventura Báez held power most of the time, both ruling arbitrarily. They promoted competing plans to annex the new nation to another power: Santana favored Spain, and Báez the United States.

Restoration republic

In 1861, after imprisoning, silencing, exiling, and executing many of his opponents and due to political and economic reasons, Santana signed a pact with the Spanish Crown and reverted the Dominican nation to colonial status, the only Latin American country to do so. His ostensible aim was to protect the nation from another Haitian annexation.^[60] Opponents launched the War of Restoration in 1863, led by Santiago Rodríguez, Benito Monción, and Gregorio Luperón, among others. Haiti, fearful of the re-establishment of Spain as colonial power on its border, gave refuge and supplies to the revolutionaries.^[60] The United States, then fighting its own Civil War, vigorously protested the Spanish action. After two years of fighting, Spain abandoned the island in 1865.^[60]

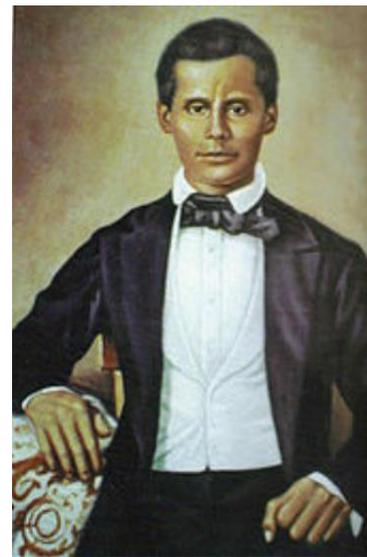
Political strife again prevailed in the following years; warlords ruled, military revolts were extremely common, and the nation amassed debt. It was now Báez's turn to act on his plan of annexing the country to the United States, where two successive presidents were supportive.^{[31][54][61]} U.S. President Grant desired a naval base at Samaná and also a place for resettling newly freed Blacks.^[62] The treaty, which included U.S. payment of \$1.5 million for Dominican debt repayment, was defeated in the United States Senate in 1870^[54] on a vote of 28–28, two-thirds being required.^{[63][64][65]}

Báez was toppled in 1874, returned, and was toppled for good in 1878. A new generation was thence in charge, with the passing of Santana (he died in 1864) and Báez from the scene. Relative peace came to the country in the 1880s, which saw the coming to power of General Ulises Heureaux.^[66]

"Lilís," as the new president was nicknamed, enjoyed a period of popularity. He was, however, "a consummate dissembler," who put the nation deep into debt while using much of the proceeds for his personal use and to maintain his police state.

Heureaux became rampantly despotic and unpopular.^{[66][67]} In 1899 he was assassinated. However, the relative calm over which he presided allowed improvement in the Dominican economy. The sugar industry was modernized,^{[68]:p10} and the country attracted foreign workers and immigrants.

20th century (1900–30)



Francisco del Rosario Sánchez.



General Gregorio Luperón, Restoration hero and later President of the Republic.

From 1902 on, short-lived governments were again the norm, with their power usurped by *caudillos* in parts of the country. Furthermore, the national government was bankrupt and, unable to pay Heureaux's debts, faced the threat of military intervention by France and other European creditor powers.^[69]

United States President Theodore Roosevelt sought to prevent European intervention, largely to protect the routes to the future Panama Canal, as the canal was already under construction. He made a small military intervention to ward off European powers, to proclaim his famous Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, and also to obtain his 1905 Dominican agreement for U.S. administration of Dominican customs, which was the chief source of income for the Dominican government. A 1906 agreement provided for the arrangement to last 50 years. The United States agreed to use part of the customs proceeds to reduce the immense foreign debt of the Dominican Republic and assumed responsibility for the Dominican debt.^{[31][69]}

After six years in power, President Ramón Cáceres (who had himself assassinated Heureaux)^[66] was assassinated in 1911. The result was several years of great political instability and civil war. U.S. mediation by the William Howard Taft and Woodrow Wilson administrations achieved only a short respite each time. A political deadlock in 1914 was broken after an ultimatum by Wilson telling the Dominicans to choose a president or see the U.S. impose one. A provisional president was chosen, and later the same year relatively free elections put former president (1899–1902) Juan Isidro Jimenes Pereyra back in power. To achieve a more broadly supported government, Jimenes named opposition individuals to his cabinet. But this brought no peace and, with his former Secretary of War Desiderio Arias maneuvering to depose him and despite a U.S. offer of military aid against Arias, Jimenes resigned on May 7, 1916.^[70]

In response, Wilson ordered the U.S. occupation of the Dominican Republic. U.S. Marines landed on May 16, 1916, and had control of the country two months later. The military government established by the U.S., led by Vice Admiral Harry Shepard Knapp, was widely repudiated by the Dominicans, with many factions within the country leading guerrilla campaigns against U.S. forces.^[70] The occupation regime kept most Dominican laws and institutions and largely pacified the general population. The occupying government also revived the Dominican economy, reduced the nation's debt, built a road network that at last interconnected all regions of the country, and created a professional National Guard to replace the warring partisan units.^[70]

Vigorous opposition to the occupation continued, nevertheless, and after World War I it increased in the U.S. as well. There, President Warren G. Harding (1921–23), Wilson's successor, worked to put an end to the occupation, as he had promised to do during his campaign. The U.S. government's rule ended in October 1922, and elections were held in March 1924.^[70]



Ulises 'Lilís' Heureaux,
President of the Republic
1882–84, 1886–99



President Alejandro Woss y Gil taking
office in 1903.

The victor was former president (1902–03) Horacio Vásquez Lajara, who had cooperated with the U.S. He was inaugurated on July 13, and the last U.S. forces left in September. Vásquez gave the country six years of stable governance, in which political and civil rights were respected and the economy grew strongly, in a relatively peaceful atmosphere.^{[70][71]}



Ramón Cáceres.

During the government of Horacio Vásquez, Rafael Trujillo held the rank of lieutenant colonel and was chief of police. This position helped him launch his plans to overthrow the government of Vásquez. Trujillo had the support of Carlos Rosario Peña, who formed the Civic Movement, which had as its main objective to overthrow the government of Vásquez.

In February 1930, when Vásquez attempted to win another term, his opponents rebelled in secret alliance with the commander of the National Army (the former National Guard), General Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina. Trujillo secretly cut a deal with rebel leader Rafael Estrella Ureña; in return for letting Ureña take power, Trujillo would be allowed to run for president in new elections. As the rebels marched toward Santo Domingo, Vásquez ordered Trujillo to suppress them. However, feigning "neutrality," Trujillo kept his men in barracks, allowing Ureña's rebels to take the capital virtually uncontested. On March 3, Ureña was proclaimed acting president with Trujillo confirmed as head of the police and the army.



Horacio Vásquez Lajara

As per their agreement, Trujillo became the presidential nominee of the newly formed Patriotic Coalition of Citizens (Spanish: *Coalición patriótica de los ciudadanos*), with Ureña as his running mate. During the election campaign, Trujillo used the army to unleash a campaign of political repression that forced his opponents to withdraw from the race. In May Trujillo was elected president virtually unopposed after a violent campaign against his opponents, ascending to power in August 16, 1930.

Trujillo rule (1930–61)

There was considerable economic growth during Rafael Trujillo's long and iron-fisted regime, although a great deal of the wealth was taken by the dictator and other regime elements. There was progress in healthcare, education, and transportation, with the building of hospitals and clinics, schools, and roads and harbors. Trujillo also carried out an important housing construction program and instituted a pension plan. He finally negotiated an undisputed border with Haiti in 1935 and achieved the end of the 50-year customs agreement in 1941, instead of 1956. He made the country debt-free in 1947.^[31]

This was accompanied by absolute repression and the copious use of murder, torture, and terrorist methods against the opposition. Trujillo renamed Santo Domingo to "Ciudad Trujillo" (Trujillo City),^[31] the nation's – and the Caribbean's – highest mountain *La Pelona Grande* (Spanish for: The Great Bald) to "Pico Trujillo" (Spanish for: Trujillo Peak), and many towns and a province. Some other places he renamed after members of

his family. By the end of his first term in 1934 he was the country's wealthiest person,^{[57]:p360} and one of the wealthiest in the world by the early 1950s;^[72] near the end of his regime his fortune was an estimated \$800 million.^{[68]:p111}



Rafael Trujillo in 1952

Although one-quarter Haitian, Trujillo promoted propaganda against them.^[73] In 1937, he ordered what became known as the Parsley Massacre or, in the Dominican Republic, as *El Corte* (The Cutting),^[74] directing the army to kill Haitians living on the Dominican side of the border. The army killed up to 12,000^[75] Haitians over six days, from the night of October 2, 1937, through October 8, 1937. To avoid leaving evidence of the army's involvement, the soldiers used machetes rather than bullets.^{[54][73][76]} The soldiers were said to have interrogated anyone with dark skin, using the shibboleth *perejil* (parsley) to distinguish Haitians from Afro-Dominicans when necessary; the 'r' of *perejil* was of difficult pronunciation for Haitians.^[74] As a result of the massacre, the Dominican Republic agreed to pay Haiti US\$750,000, later reduced to US\$525,000.^{[60][71]}

On November 25, 1960, Trujillo killed three of the four Mirabal sisters, nicknamed *Las Mariposas* (The Butterflies). The victims were Patria Mercedes Mirabal (born on February 27, 1924), Argentina Minerva Mirabal (born on March 12, 1926), and Antonia María Teresa Mirabal (born on October 15, 1935). Along with their husbands, the sisters were conspiring to overthrow Trujillo in a violent revolt. The Mirabals had communist ideological leanings as did their husbands. The sisters have received many honors posthumously and have many memorials in various cities in the Dominican Republic. Salcedo, their home province, changed its name to Provincia Hermanas Mirabal (Mirabal Sisters Province). The International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women is observed on the anniversary of their deaths.

For a long time, the U.S. and the Dominican elite supported the Trujillo government. This support persisted despite the assassinations of political opposition, the massacre of Haitians, and Trujillo's plots against other countries. The U.S. believed Trujillo was the lesser of two or more evils.^[74] The U.S. finally broke with Trujillo in 1960, after Trujillo's agents attempted to assassinate the Venezuelan president, Rómulo Betancourt, a fierce critic of Trujillo.^{[71][77]}

Post-Trujillo (1961–2000)

Trujillo was assassinated on May 30, 1961.^[71] In February 1963, a democratically elected government under leftist Juan Bosch took office but it was overthrown in September. In April 1965, after 19 months of military rule, a pro-Bosch revolt broke out.^[78]

Days later U.S. President Lyndon Johnson, concerned that Communists might take over the revolt and create a "second Cuba," sent the Marines, followed immediately by the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division and other elements of the XVIIIth Airborne Corps, in Operation Powerpack. "We don't propose to sit here in a rocking

chair with our hands folded and let the Communist set up any government in the western hemisphere," Johnson said.^[79] The forces were soon joined by comparatively small contingents from the Organization of American States.^[80]

All these remained in the country for over a year and left after supervising elections in 1966 won by Joaquín Balaguer. He had been Trujillo's last puppet-president.^{[31][80]}

Balaguer remained in power as president for 12 years. His tenure was a period of repression of human rights and civil liberties, ostensibly to keep pro-Castro or pro-communist parties out of power; 11,000 persons were killed.^{[81][82]} His rule was criticized for a growing disparity between rich and poor. It was, however, praised for an ambitious infrastructure program, which included construction of large housing projects, sports complexes, theaters, museums, aqueducts, roads, highways, and the massive Columbus Lighthouse, completed in 1992 during a later tenure.

In 1978, Balaguer was succeeded in the presidency by opposition candidate Antonio Guzmán Fernández, of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD). Another PRD win in 1982 followed, under Salvador Jorge Blanco. Under the PRD presidents, the Dominican Republic enjoyed a period of relative freedom and basic human rights.

Balaguer regained the presidency in 1986 and was re-elected in 1990 and 1994, this last time just defeating PRD candidate José Francisco Peña Gómez, a former mayor of Santo Domingo. The 1994 elections were flawed, bringing on international pressure, to which Balaguer responded by scheduling another presidential contest in 1996.^[5]

That year Leonel Fernández achieved the first-ever win for the Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), which Bosch had founded in 1973 after leaving the PRD (which he also had founded). Fernández oversaw a fast-growing economy: growth averaged 7.7% per year, unemployment fell, and there were stable exchange and inflation rates.^[83]

21st century

In 2000 the PRD's Hipólito Mejía won the election. This was a time of economic troubles.^[83] Mejía was defeated in his re-election effort in 2004 by Leonel Fernández of the PLD. In 2008, Fernández was elected for a third term.^[84] Fernández and the PLD are credited with initiatives that have moved the country forward technologically, such as the construction of the Metro Railway ("El Metro"). On the other hand, his administrations have been accused of corruption.^[83]

Danilo Medina, of the PLD, was elected president in 2012 and re-elected in 2016. He campaigned on a platform of investing more in social programs and education and less in infrastructure.



President Danilo Medina in the swearing-in of new government cabinet.

Geography

The Dominican Republic is situated on the eastern part of the second largest island in the Greater Antilles, Hispaniola. It shares the island roughly at a 2:1 ratio with Haiti. The country's area is reported variously as 48,442 km² (18,704 sq mi) (by the embassy in the United States)^[2] and 48,730 km² (18,815 sq mi),^[5] making it the second largest country in the Antilles, after Cuba. The Dominican Republic's capital and largest metropolitan area Santo Domingo is on the southern coast.

There are many small offshore islands and cays that are part of the Dominican territory. The two largest islands near shore are Saona, in the southeast, and Beata, in the southwest. To the north, at distances of 100–200 kilometres (62–124 mi), are three extensive, largely submerged banks, which geographically are a southeast continuation of the Bahamas: Navidad Bank, Silver Bank, and Mouchoir Bank. Navidad Bank and Silver Bank have been officially claimed by the Dominican Republic.

The Dominican Republic has four important mountain ranges. The most northerly is the *Cordillera Septentrional* ("Northern Mountain Range"), which extends from the northwestern coastal town of Monte Cristi, near the Haitian border, to the Samaná Peninsula in the east, running parallel to the Atlantic coast. The highest range in the Dominican Republic – indeed, in the whole of the West Indies – is the *Cordillera Central* ("Central Mountain Range"). It gradually bends southwards and finishes near the town of Azua, on the Caribbean coast.

In the Cordillera Central are the four highest peaks in the Caribbean: Pico Duarte (3,098 metres or 10,164 feet above sea level), La Pelona (3,094 metres or 10,151 feet), La Rucilla (3,049 metres or 10,003 feet), and Pico Yaque (2,760 metres or 9,055 feet). In the southwest corner of the country, south of the Cordillera Central, there are two other ranges. The more northerly of the two is the *Sierra de Neiba*, while



A map of the Dominican Republic.



The Dominican Republic's topography.

in the south the *Sierra de Bahoruco* is a continuation of the Massif de la Selle in Haiti. There are other, minor mountain ranges, such as the *Cordillera Oriental* ("Eastern Mountain Range"), *Sierra Martín García*, *Sierra de Yamasá*, and *Sierra de Samaná*.

Between the Central and Northern mountain ranges lies the rich and fertile Cibao valley. This major valley is home to the cities of Santiago and La Vega and most of the farming areas in the nation. Rather less productive are the semi-arid San Juan Valley, south of the Central Cordillera, and the Neiba Valley, tucked between the Sierra de Neiba and the Sierra de Bahoruco. Much of the land in the Enriquillo Basin is below sea level, with a hot, arid, desert-like environment. There are other smaller valleys in the mountains, such as the Constanza, Jarabacoa, Villa Altagracia, and Bonaó valleys.



Constanza valley.

The *Llano Costero del Caribe* ("Caribbean Coastal Plain") is the largest of the plains in the Dominican Republic. Stretching north and east of Santo Domingo, it contains many sugar plantations in the savannahs that are common there. West of Santo Domingo its width is reduced to 10 kilometres (6.2 mi) as it hugs the coast, finishing at the mouth of the Ocoa River. Another large plain is the *Plena de Azua* ("Azua Plain"), a very arid region in Azua Province. A few other small coastal plains are in the northern coast and in the Pedernales Peninsula.

Four major rivers drain the numerous mountains of the Dominican Republic. The Yaque del Norte is the longest and most important Dominican river. It carries excess water down from the Cibao Valley and empties into Monte Cristi Bay, in the northwest. Likewise, the Yuna River serves the Vega Real and empties into Samaná Bay, in the northeast. Drainage of the San Juan Valley is provided by the San Juan River, tributary of the Yaque del Sur, which empties into the Caribbean, in the south. The Artibonito is the longest river of Hispaniola and flows westward into Haiti.

There are many lakes and coastal lagoons. The largest lake is Enriquillo, a salt lake at 45 metres (148 ft) below sea level, the lowest point in the Caribbean. Other important lakes are Laguna de Rincón or Cabral, with fresh water, and Laguna de Oviedo, a lagoon with brackish water.

Dominican Republic is located near fault action in the Caribbean. In 1946 it suffered a magnitude 8.1 earthquake off the northeast coast. This triggered a tsunami that killed about 1,800, mostly in coastal communities. The wave was also recorded at Daytona Beach, Florida, and Atlantic City, New Jersey. The area remains at risk. Caribbean countries and the United States have collaborated to create tsunami warning systems and are mapping risk in low-lying areas.

Climate

The Dominican Republic has a tropical rainforest climate in the coastal and lowland areas. Due to its diverse topography, Dominican Republic's climate shows considerable variation over short distances and is the most varied of all the Antilles. The annual average temperature is 25 °C (77 °F). At higher elevations the temperature

averages 18 °C (64.4 °F) while near sea level the average temperature is 28 °C (82.4 °F). Low temperatures of 0 °C (32 °F) are possible in the mountains while high temperatures of 40 °C (104 °F) are possible in protected valleys. January and February are the coolest months of the year while August is the hottest month. Snowfall can be seen in rare occasions on the summit of Pico Duarte.^[85]

The wet season along the northern coast lasts from November through January. Elsewhere the wet season stretches from May through November, with May being the wettest month. Average annual rainfall is 1,500 millimetres (59.1 in) countrywide, with individual locations in the Valle de Neiba seeing averages as low as 350 millimetres (13.8 in) while the Cordillera Oriental averages 2,740 millimetres (107.9 in). The driest part of the country lies in the west.^[85]

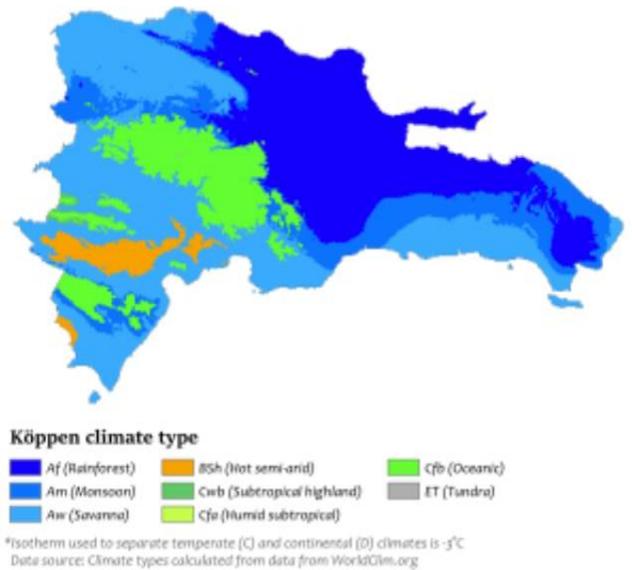
Tropical cyclones strike the Dominican Republic every couple of years, with 65% of the impacts along the southern coast. Hurricanes are most likely between August and October.^[85] The last major hurricane that struck the country was Hurricane Georges in 1998.^[86]

Government and politics

The Dominican Republic is a representative democracy or democratic republic,^{[2][5][84]} with three branches of power: executive, legislative, and judicial. The president of the Dominican Republic heads the executive branch and executes laws passed by the congress, appoints the cabinet, and is commander in chief of the armed forces. The president and vice-president run for office on the same ticket and are elected by direct vote for 4-year terms. The national legislature is bicameral, composed of a senate, which has 32 members, and the Chamber of Deputies, with 178 members.^[84]

Judicial authority rests with the Supreme Court of Justice's 16 members. They are appointed by a council composed of the president, the leaders of both houses of congress, the President of the Supreme Court, and an opposition or non-governing-party member. The court "alone hears actions against the president, designated members of his Cabinet, and members of Congress when the legislature is in session."^[84]

Köppen climate types of the Dominican Republic



Köppen climate types of the Dominican Republic



The National Palace in Santo Domingo.

The Dominican Republic has a multi-party political system. Elections are held every two years, alternating between the presidential elections, which are held in years evenly divisible by four, and the congressional and municipal elections, which are held in even-numbered years not divisible by four. "International observers have found that presidential and congressional elections since 1996 have been generally free and fair."^[84] The Central Elections Board (JCE) of nine members supervises elections, and its decisions are unappealable.^[84] Starting from 2016, elections will be held jointly, after a constitutional reform.^[87]

Political culture

The three major parties are the conservative Social Christian Reformist Party (Spanish: *Partido Reformista Social Cristiano (PRSC)*), in power 1966–78 and 1986–96; the social democratic Dominican Revolutionary Party (Spanish: *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD)*), in power in 1963, 1978–86, and 2000–04; and the centrist liberal and reformist Dominican Liberation Party (Spanish: *Partido de la Liberación Dominicana (PLD)*), in power 1996–2000 and since 2004.

The presidential elections of 2008 were held on May 16, 2008, with incumbent Leonel Fernández winning 53% of the vote.^[88] He defeated Miguel Vargas Maldonado, of the PRD, who achieved a 40.48% share of the vote. Amable Aristy, of the PRSC, achieved 4.59% of the vote. Other minority candidates, which included former Attorney General Guillermo Moreno from the Movement for Independence, Unity and Change (Spanish: *Movimiento Independencia, Unidad y Cambio (MIUCA)*), and PRSC former presidential candidate and defector Eduardo Estrella, obtained less than 1% of the vote.

In the 2012 presidential elections the incumbent president Leonel Fernández (PLD) declined his aspirations^[89] and instead the PLD elected Danilo Medina as its candidate. This time the PRD presented ex-president Hipolito Mejia as its choice. The contest was won by Medina with 51.21% of the vote, against 46.95% in favor of Mejia. Candidate Guillermo Moreno obtained 1.37% of the votes.^[90]

In 2014 the Modern Revolutionary Party (Spanish: *Partido revolucionario Moderno*) was created^[91] by a faction of leaders from the PRD and has since become the predominant opposition party, polling in second place for the upcoming May 2016 general elections.^[92]

Foreign relations

The Dominican Republic has a close relationship with the United States and with the other states of the Inter-American system. The Dominican Republic has very strong ties and relations with Puerto Rico.

The Dominican Republic's relationship with neighbouring Haiti is strained over mass Haitian migration to the Dominican Republic, with citizens of the Dominican Republic blaming the Haitians for increased crime and other social problems.^[93] The Dominican Republic is a regular member of the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie.

The Dominican Republic has a Free Trade Agreement with the United States, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua via the Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement.^[94] And an Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union and the Caribbean Community via the

Caribbean Forum.^[95]

Military

Congress authorizes a combined military force of 44,000 active duty personnel. Actual active duty strength is approximately 32,000. Approximately 50% of those are used for non-military activities such as security providers for government-owned non-military facilities, highway toll stations, prisons, forestry work, state enterprises, and private businesses. The commander in chief of the military is the president.

The army is larger than the other services combined with approximately 20,000 active duty personnel, consisting of six infantry brigades, a combat support brigade, and a combat service support brigade. The air force operates two main bases, one in the southern region near Santo Domingo and one in the northern region near Puerto Plata. The navy operates two major naval bases, one in Santo Domingo and one in Las Calderas on the southwestern coast, and maintains 12 operational vessels. The Dominican Republic has the second largest military in the Caribbean region after Cuba.^[84]

The armed forces have organized a Specialized Airport Security Corps (CESA) and a Specialized Port Security Corps (CESEP) to meet international security needs in these areas. The secretary of the armed forces has also announced plans to form a specialized border corps (CESEF). The armed forces provide 75% of personnel to the National Investigations Directorate (DNI) and the Counter-Drug Directorate (DNCD).^[84]

The Dominican National Police force contains 32,000 agents. The police are not part of the Dominican armed forces but share some overlapping security functions. Sixty-three percent of the force serve in areas outside traditional police functions, similar to the situation of their military counterparts.^[84]

Administrative divisions

The Dominican Republic is divided into 31 provinces. Santo Domingo, the capital, is designated Distrito Nacional (National District). The provinces are divided into municipalities (*municipios*; singular *municipio*). They are the second-level political and administrative subdivisions of the country. The president appoints the governors of the 31 provinces. Mayors and municipal councils administer the 124 municipal districts and the National District (Santo Domingo). They are elected at the same time as congressional representatives.^[84]

Economy



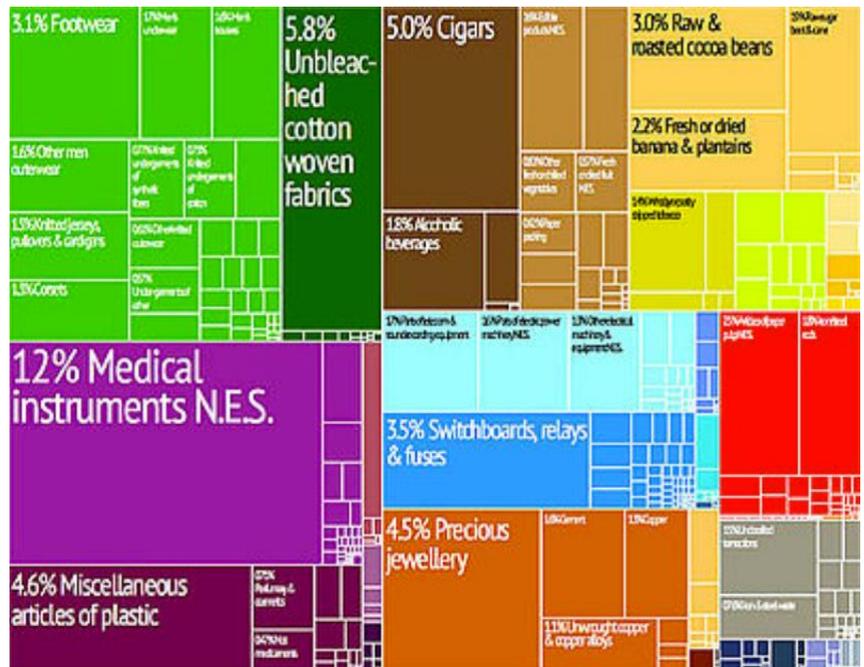
Dominican soldiers training in Santo Domingo.

The Dominican Republic is the largest economy^[19] (according to the U.S. State Department and the World Bank)^{[84][96]} in the Caribbean and Central American region. It is an upper middle-income developing country,^[97] with a 2015 GDP per capita of \$14,770, in PPP terms. Over the last two decades, the Dominican Republic have been standing out as one of the fastest-growing economies in the Americas – with an average real GDP growth rate of 5.4% between 1992 and 2014.^[96] GDP growth in 2014 and 2015 reached 7.3 and 7.0%, respectively, the highest in the Western Hemisphere.^[21] In the first half of 2016 the Dominican economy grew 7.4%.^[22] As of 2015, the average wage in nominal terms is 392 USD per month (\$17,829 DOP).^[98]

During the last three decades, the Dominican economy, formerly dependent on the export of agricultural commodities (mainly sugar, cocoa and coffee), has transitioned to a diversified mix of services, manufacturing, agriculture, mining, and trade. The service sector accounts for almost 60% of GDP; manufacturing, for 22%; tourism, telecommunications and finance are the main components of the service sector; however, none of them accounts for more than 10% of the whole.^[99] The Dominican Republic has a stock market, Bolsa de Valores de la Republica Dominicana (BVRD).^[100] and advanced telecommunication system and transportation infrastructure.^[23] Nevertheless, ^[5] government corruption, and inconsistent electric service remain major problems. The country also has "marked income inequality."^[5] International migration affects the Dominican Republic greatly, as it receives and sends large flows of migrants. Mass illegal Haitian immigration and the integration of Dominicans of Haitian descent are major issues.^[101] A large Dominican diaspora exists, mostly in the United States,^[102] contributes to development, sending billions of dollars to Dominican families in remittances.^{[5][84]}

Remittances in Dominican Republic increased to 4571.30 million USD in 2014 from 3333 million USD in 2013 (according to data reported by the Inter-American Development Bank). Economic growth takes place in spite of a chronic energy shortage,^[103] which causes frequent blackouts and very high prices. Despite a widening merchandise trade deficit, tourism earnings and remittances have helped build foreign exchange reserves. Following economic turmoil in the late 1980s and 1990, during which the gross domestic product (GDP) fell by up to 5% and consumer price inflation reached an unprecedented 100%, the Dominican Republic entered a period of growth and declining inflation until 2002, after which the economy entered a recession.^[84]

This recession followed the collapse of the second-largest commercial bank in the country, Baninter, linked to a major incident of fraud valued at \$3.5 billion. The Baninter fraud had a devastating effect on the Dominican



A proportional representation of the Dominican Republic's exports.

economy, with GDP dropping by 1% in 2003 as inflation ballooned by over 27%. All defendants, including the star of the trial, Ramón Báez Figueroa (the great-grandson of President Buenaventura Báez),^[104] were convicted.

According to the 2005 Annual Report of the United Nations Subcommittee on Human Development in the Dominican Republic, the country is ranked No. 71 in the world for resource availability, No. 79 for human development, and No. 14 in the world for resource mismanagement. These statistics emphasize national government corruption, foreign economic interference in the country, and the rift between the rich and poor.

The Dominican Republic has a noted problem of child labor in its coffee, rice, sugarcane, and tomato industries.^[105] The labor injustices in the sugarcane industry extend to forced labor according to the U.S. Department of Labor. Three large groups own 75% of the land: the State Sugar Council (Consejo Estatal del Azúcar, CEA), Grupo Vicini, and Central Romana Corporation.^[106]



A panoramic view of the National District.

Currency

The Dominican peso (DOP, or RD\$)^[107] is the national currency, with the United States dollar (USD), the Canadian dollar (CAD), the Swiss franc (CHF), and euros (EUR) also accepted at most tourist sites. The exchange rate to the U.S. dollar, liberalized by 1985, stood at 2.70 pesos per dollar in August 1986,^{[57]:p417, 428} 14.00 pesos in 1993, and 16.00 pesos in 2000. Having jumped to 53.00 pesos per dollar in 2003, the rate was back down to around 31.00 pesos per dollar in 2004. As of November 2010 the rate was 37.00 pesos per dollar. In February 2015 the rate was 44.67 pesos per dollar.^[107] As of February 2017 the rate was 46.72 pesos per dollar.^[108]

Tourism

Tourism is one of the fueling factors in the Dominican Republic's economic growth. The Dominican Republic is the most popular tourist destination in the Caribbean. With the construction of projects like Cap Cana, San Souci Port in Santo Domingo, Casa De Campo and the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino (ancient Moon Palace Resort) in Punta Cana, the Dominican Republic expects increased tourism activity in the upcoming years.

Ecotourism has also been a topic increasingly important in this nation, with towns like Jarabacoa and neighboring Constanza, and locations like the Pico Duarte, Bahía de las Águilas, and others becoming more significant in efforts to increase direct benefits from tourism. Most residents from other countries are required to get a tourist card, depending on the country they live in.

Infrastructure

Transportation

The country has three national trunk highways, which connect every major town. These are DR-1, DR-2, and DR-3, which depart from Santo Domingo toward the northern (Cibao), southwestern (Sur), and eastern (El Este) parts of the country respectively. These highways have been consistently improved with the expansion and reconstruction of many sections. Two other national highways serve as spur (DR-5) or alternate routes (DR-4).

In addition to the national highways, the government has embarked on an expansive reconstruction of spur secondary routes, which connect smaller towns to the trunk routes. In the last few years the government constructed a 106-kilometer toll road that connects Santo Domingo with the country's northeastern peninsula. Travelers may now arrive in the Samaná Peninsula in less than two hours. Other additions are the reconstruction of the DR-28 (Jarabacoa – Constanza) and DR-12 (Constanza – Bonao). Despite these efforts, many secondary routes still remain either unpaved or in need of maintenance. There is currently a nationwide program to pave these and other commonly used routes. Also, the Santiago light rail system is in planning stages but currently on hold.



El Malecón av. in Santo Domingo.

Bus service

There are two main bus transportation services in the Dominican Republic: one controlled by the government, through the Oficina Técnica de Tránsito Terrestre (OTTT) and the Oficina Metropolitana de Servicios de Autobuses (OMSA), and the other controlled by private business, among them, Federación Nacional de Transporte La Nueva Opción (FENATRANO) and the Confederación Nacional de Transporte (CONATRA). The government transportation system covers large routes in metropolitan areas such as Santo Domingo and Santiago.

There are many privately owned bus companies, such as Metro Servicios Turísticos and Caribe Tours, that run daily routes.

Santo Domingo Metro

The Dominican Republic has a rapid transit system in Santo Domingo, the country's capital. It is the most extensive metro system in the insular Caribbean and Central American region by length and number of stations. The Santo Domingo Metro is part of a major "National Master Plan" to improve transportation in Santo Domingo as well as the rest of the nation. The first line was planned to relieve traffic congestion in the Máximo Gómez and Hermanas Mirabal Avenue. The second line, which opened in April 2013, is meant to relieve the congestion along the Duarte-Kennedy-Centenario Corridor in the city from west to east. The current length of the Metro, with the sections of the two lines open as of August 2013, is 27.35 kilometres (16.99 mi). Before the opening of the second line, 30,856,515 passengers rode the Santo Domingo Metro in 2012.^[109] With both lines opened, ridership increased to 61,270,054 passengers in 2014.



A pair of 9000 series are tested on the Santo Domingo Metro.

Communications

The Dominican Republic has a well developed telecommunications infrastructure, with extensive mobile phone and landline services. Cable Internet and DSL are available in most parts of the country, and many Internet service providers offer 3G wireless internet service. The Dominican Republic became the second country in Latin America to have 4G LTE wireless service. The reported speeds are from 256 kbit/s or 128 kbit/s for residential services, up to 5 Mbit/s or 1 Mbit/s for residential service.

For commercial service there are speeds from 256 kbit/s up to 154 Mbit/s. (Each set of numbers denotes downstream/upstream speed; that is, to the user/from the user.) Projects to extend Wi-Fi hot spots have been made in Santo Domingo. The country's commercial radio stations and television stations are in the process of transferring to the digital spectrum, via HD Radio and HDTV after officially adopting ATSC as the digital medium in the country with a switch-off of analog transmission by September 2015. The telecommunications regulator in the country is INDOTEL (*Instituto Dominicano de Telecomunicaciones*).

The largest telecommunications company is Claro – part of Carlos Slim's América Móvil – which provides wireless, landline, broadband, and IPTV services. In June 2009 there were more than 8 million phone line subscribers (land and cell users) in the D.R., representing 81% of the country's population and a fivefold increase since the year 2000, when there were 1.6 million. The communications sector generates about 3.0% of the GDP.^[110] There were 2,439,997 Internet users in March 2009.^[111]

In November 2009, the Dominican Republic became the first Latin American country to pledge to include a "gender perspective" in every information and communications technology (ICT) initiative and policy developed by the government.^[112] This is part of the regional eLAC2010 plan. The tool the Dominicans have chosen to design and evaluate all the public policies is the APC Gender Evaluation Methodology (GEM).

Electricity

Electric power service has been unreliable since the Trujillo era, and as much as 75% of the equipment is that old. The country's antiquated power grid causes transmission losses that account for a large share of billed electricity from generators. The privatization of the sector started under a previous administration of Leonel Fernández.^[83] The recent investment in a "Santo Domingo–Santiago Electrical Highway" to carry 345 kW power,^[113] with reduced losses in transmission, is being heralded as a major capital improvement to the national grid since the mid-1960s.

During the Trujillo regime electrical service was introduced to many cities. Almost 95% of usage was not billed at all. Around half of the Dominican Republic's 2.1 million houses have no meters and most do not pay or pay a fixed monthly rate for their electric service.^[114]

Household and general electrical service is delivered at 110 volts alternating at 60 Hz. Electrically powered items from the United States work with no modifications. The majority of the Dominican Republic has access to electricity. Tourist areas tend to have more reliable power, as do business, travel, healthcare, and vital infrastructure.^[115] Concentrated efforts were announced to increase efficiency of delivery to places where the collection rate reached 70%.^[116] The electricity sector is highly politicized. Some generating companies are undercapitalized and at times unable to purchase adequate fuel supplies.^[84]

Water supply and sanitation

The Dominican Republic has achieved impressive increases in access to water supply and sanitation over the past two decades. However, the quality of water supply and sanitation services remains poor, despite the country's high economic growth during the 1990s. Although the coverage of improved water sources and improved sanitation is with 86% respectively 83% relatively high, there are substantial regional differences. Poor households exhibit lower levels of access: only 56% of poor households are connected to water house connections as opposed to 80% of non-poor households. Just 20% of poor households have access to sewers, as opposed to 50% for the non-poor.^[117]

Society

Demographics

The Dominican Republic's population was 10,648,791 in 2016.^[118] In 2010 31.2% of the population was under 15 years of age, with 6% of the population over 65 years of age.^[119] There were 103 males for every 100 females in 2007.^[5] The annual population growth rate for 2006–2007 was 1.5%, with the projected population for the year 2015 being 10,121,000.^[120]

The population density in 2007 was 192 per km² (498 per sq mi), and 63% of the population lived in urban areas.^[121] The southern coastal plains and the Cibao Valley are the most densely populated areas of the country. The capital city Santo Domingo had a population of 2,907,100 in 2010.^[122]

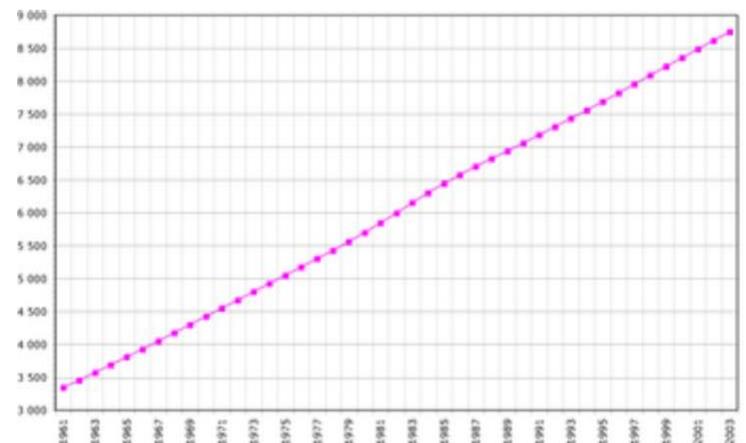
Other important cities are: Santiago de los Caballeros (pop. 745,293), La Romana (pop. 214,109), San Pedro de Macorís (pop. 185,255), Higüey (153,174), San Francisco de Macorís (pop. 132,725), Puerto Plata (pop. 118,282), and La Vega (pop. 104,536). Per the United Nations, the urban population growth rate for 2000–2005 was 2.3%.^[122]

Ethnic groups

The Dominican Republic's population is 73% of racially mixed origin, 16% White, and 11% Black.^[5] Ethnic immigrant groups in the country include West Asians—mostly Lebanese, Syrians, and Palestinians.^[123]

Numerous immigrants have come from other Caribbean countries, as the country has offered economic opportunities. There are about 32,000 Jamaicans living in the Dominican Republic.^[124] There is an increasing number of Puerto Rican immigrants, especially in and around Santo Domingo; they are believed to number around 10,000.^{[125][126]} There are over 700,000 people of Haitian descent, including a generation born in the Dominican Republic.

East Asians, primarily ethnic Chinese and Japanese, can also be found.^[123] Europeans are represented mostly by Spanish whites but also with smaller populations of German Jews, Italians, Portuguese, British, Dutch, Danes, and Hungarians.^{[123][127][128]} Some converted Sephardic Jews from Spain were part of early expeditions; only Catholics were allowed to come to the New World.^[129] Later there were Jewish migrants coming from Iberia and Europe in the 1700s.^[130] Some managed to reach the Caribbean as refugees during and after the Second World War.^{[131][132][133]} Some Sephardic Jews reside in Sosúa while others are dispersed throughout the country. Self-identified Jews number about 3,000; other Dominicans may have some Jewish ancestry because of marriages among converted Jewish Catholics and other Dominicans since the colonial years. Some Dominicans born in the United States now reside in the Dominican Republic, creating a kind of expatriate community.^[134]



The Dominican Republic's population (1961–2003).



Dominican Republic people in the town of Moca.

Languages

The population of the Dominican Republic is mostly Spanish-speaking. The local variant of Spanish is called Dominican Spanish, which closely resembles other Spanish vernaculars in the Caribbean and the Canarian Spanish. In addition, it borrowed words from indigenous Caribbean languages particular to the island of Hispaniola.^{[135][136]} Schools are based on a Spanish educational model; English and French are mandatory foreign languages in both private and public schools,^[137] although the quality of foreign languages teaching is poor.^[138] Some private educational institutes provide teaching on other languages, notably Italian, Japanese, and Mandarin.^{[139][140]}

Haitian Creole is the largest minority language in the Dominican Republic and is spoken by Haitian immigrants and their descendants.^[141] There is a community of a few thousand people whose ancestors spoke Samaná English in the Samaná Peninsula. They are the descendants of formerly enslaved African Americans who arrived in the nineteenth century, but only a few elders speak the language today.^[142] Tourism, American pop culture, the influence of Dominican Americans, and the country's economic ties with the United States motivate other Dominicans to learn English. The Dominican Republic is ranked 2nd in Latin America and 23rd in the World on English proficiency.^{[143][144]}

Mother tongue of the Dominican population, 1950
Census^[145]

Language	Total %	Urban %	Rural %
Spanish	98.00	97.82	98.06
French	1.19	0.39	1.44
English	0.57	0.96	0.45
Arabic	0.09	0.35	0.01
Italian	0.03	0.10	0.006
Other language	0.12	0.35	0.04

Population centres

Religion

95.0% Christians

2.6% No religion

2.2% Other religions ^[147]

As of 2014, 57% of the population (5.7 million) identified themselves as Roman Catholics and 23% (2.3 million) as Protestants (in Latin American countries, Protestants are often called *Evangelicos* because they emphasize personal and public evangelising and many are Evangelical Protestant or of a Pentecostal group). From 1896 to 1907 missionaries from the Episcopal, Free Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist and Moravians churches began work in the Dominican Republic.^{[148][149]} ^[150] 3.0% of the 10.63 million Dominican Republic population are Seventh-day Adventists.^[151] Recent immigration as well as proselytizing efforts have brought in

other religious groups, with the following shares of the population: Spiritist: 2.2%,^[152] The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: 1.1%,^[153] Buddhist: 0.1%, Bahá'í: 0.1%,^[152] Chinese Folk Religion: 0.1%,^[152] Islam: 0.02%, Judaism: 0.01%.

The Catholic Church began to lose its strong dominance in the late 19th century. This was due to a lack of funding, priests, and support programs. During the same time, Protestant Evangelicalism began to gain a wider support "with their emphasis on personal responsibility and family rejuvenation, economic entrepreneurship, and biblical fundamentalism".^[154] The Dominican Republic has two Catholic patroness saints: *Nuestra Señora de la Altagracia* (Our Lady Of High Grace) and *Nuestra Señora de las Mercedes* (Our Lady Of Mercy).

The Dominican Republic has historically granted extensive religious freedom. According to the United States Department of State, "The constitution specifies that there is no state church and provides for freedom of religion and belief. A concordat with the Vatican designates Catholicism as the official religion and extends special privileges to the Catholic Church not granted to other religious groups. These include the legal recognition of church law, use of public funds to underwrite some church expenses, and complete exoneration from customs duties."^[155] In the 1950s restrictions were placed upon churches by the government of Trujillo. Letters of protest were sent against the mass arrests of government adversaries. Trujillo began a campaign against the Catholic Church and planned to arrest priests and bishops who preached against the government. This campaign ended before it was put into place, with his assassination.



The Cathedral of Santa María la Menor, Santo Domingo, the first cathedral in the Americas, built 1512–1540.

During World War II a group of Jews escaping Nazi Germany fled to the Dominican Republic and founded the city of Sosúa. It has remained the center of the Jewish population since.^[156]

20th century immigration

In the 20th century, many Arabs (from Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine),^[157] Japanese, and, to a lesser degree, Koreans settled in the country as agricultural laborers and merchants. The Chinese companies found business in telecom, mining, and railroads. The Arab community is rising at an increasing rate and is estimated at 80,000.^[157]

In addition, there are descendants of immigrants who came from other Caribbean islands, including St. Kitts and Nevis, Antigua, St. Vincent, Montserrat, Tortola, St. Croix, St. Thomas, and Guadeloupe. They worked on sugarcane plantations and docks and settled mainly in the cities of San Pedro de Macorís and Puerto Plata. Puerto Rican, and to a lesser extent, Cuban immigrants fled to the Dominican Republic from the mid-1800s until about 1940 due to a poor economy and social unrest in their respective home countries. Many Puerto

Rican immigrants settled in Higüey, among other cities, and quickly assimilated due to similar culture. Before and during World War II, 800 Jewish refugees moved to the Dominican Republic.^[128]

Haitian immigration

Haiti is the neighboring nation to the Dominican Republic and is considerably poorer, less developed and is additionally the least developed country in the western hemisphere. In 2003, 80% of all Haitians were poor (54% living in abject poverty) and 47.1% were illiterate. The country of nine million people also has a fast growing population, but over two-thirds of the labor force lack formal jobs. Haiti's per capita GDP (PPP) was \$1,300 in 2008, or less than one-sixth of the Dominican figure.^{[5][158]}

As a result, hundreds of thousands of Haitians have migrated to the Dominican Republic, with some estimates of 800,000 Haitians in the country,^[101] while others put the Haitian-born population as high as one million.^[159] They usually work at low-paying and unskilled jobs in building construction and house cleaning and in sugar plantations.^[160] There have been accusations that some Haitian immigrants work in slavery-like conditions and are severely exploited.^[161]

Due to the lack of basic amenities and medical facilities in Haiti a large number of Haitian women, often arriving with several health problems, cross the border to Dominican soil. They deliberately come during their last weeks of pregnancy to obtain medical attention for childbirth, since Dominican public hospitals do not refuse medical services based on nationality or legal status. Statistics from a hospital in Santo Domingo report that over 22% of childbirths are by Haitian mothers.^[162]

Haiti also suffers from severe environmental degradation. Deforestation is rampant in Haiti; today less than 4 percent of Haiti's forests remain, and in many places the soil has eroded right down to the bedrock.^[163] Haitians burn wood charcoal for 60% of their domestic energy production. Because of Haiti running out of plant material to burn, Haitians have created an illegal market for coal on the Dominican side. Conservative estimates calculate the illegal movement of 115 tons of charcoal per week from the Dominican Republic to Haiti. Dominican officials estimate that at least 10 trucks per week are crossing the border loaded with charcoal.^[164]



Family of Japanese descent in Constanza's neighbourhood of Colonia Japonesa



A satellite image of the border between the denuded landscape of Haiti (left) and the Dominican Republic (right), highlighting the deforestation on the Haitian side.

In 2005, Dominican President Leonel Fernández criticized collective expulsions of Haitians as having taken place "in an abusive and inhuman way."^[165] After a UN delegation issued a preliminary report stating that it found a profound problem of racism and discrimination against people of Haitian origin, Dominican Foreign Minister Carlos Morales Troncoso issued a formal statement denouncing it, asserting that "our border with Haiti has its problems[;] this is our reality and it must be understood. It is important not to confuse national sovereignty with indifference, and not to confuse security with xenophobia."^[166]

Children of Haitian immigrants are often stateless and denied services, as their parents are denied Dominican nationality, being deemed transient residents due to their illegal or undocumented status; the children, though often eligible for Haitian nationality,^[167] are denied it by Haiti because of a lack of proper documents or witnesses.^{[168][169][170][171]}

Emigration

The first of three late-20th century emigration waves began in 1961 after the assassination of dictator Trujillo,^[172] due to fear of retaliation by Trujillo's allies and political uncertainty in general. In 1965 the United States began a military occupation of the Dominican Republic to end a civil war. Upon this, the U.S. eased travel restrictions, making it easier for Dominicans to obtain U.S. visas.^[173] From 1966 to 1978, the exodus continued, fueled by high unemployment and political repression. Communities established by the first wave of immigrants to the U.S. created a network that assisted subsequent arrivals.^[174]

In the early 1980s, underemployment, inflation, and the rise in value of the dollar all contributed to a third wave of emigration from the Dominican Republic. Today, emigration from the Dominican Republic remains high.^[174] In 2012 there were approximately 1.7 million people of Dominican descent in the U.S., counting both native- and foreign-born.^[175] There was also a growing Dominican immigration to Puerto Rico, with nearly 70,000 Dominicans living there as of 2010. Although that number is slowly decreasing and immigration trends have reversed because of Puerto Rico's economic crisis as of 2016.

Health



Dominicans and Haitians lined up to attend medical providers from the U.S. Army Reserve



Dominican Day Parade in New York City, 2014.

In 2007 the Dominican Republic had a birth rate of 22.91 per 1000 and a death rate of 5.32 per 1000.^[5] Youth in the Dominican Republic is the healthiest age group.

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Dominican Republic in 2011 stood at approximately 0.7%, which is relatively low by Caribbean standards, with an estimated 62,000 HIV/AIDS-positive Dominicans.^[176] In contrast neighboring Haiti has an HIV/AIDS rate more than double that of the Dominican Republic. A mission based in the United States has been helping to combat AIDS in the country.^[177] Dengue fever has become endemic to the republic, cases of malaria, and Zika virus.^{[178][179]}

The practice of abortion is illegal in all cases in the Dominican Republic, a ban that includes conceptions following rape, incest, and situations where the health of the mother is in danger, even if life-threatening.^[180] This ban was reiterated by the Dominican government in a September 2009 provision of a constitutional reform bill.^[181]

Education

Primary education is regulated by the Ministry of Education, with education being a right of all citizens and youth in the Dominican Republic.^[182]

Preschool education is organized in different cycles and serves the 2–4 age group and the 4–6 age group. Preschool education is not mandatory except for the last year. Basic education is compulsory and serves the population of the 6–14 age group. Secondary education is not compulsory, although it is the duty of the state to offer it for free. It caters to the 14–18 age group and is organized in a common core of four years and three modes of two years of study that are offered in three different options: general or academic, vocational (industrial, agricultural, and services), and artistic.



Kids taking classes

The higher education system consists of institutes and universities. The institutes offer courses of a higher technical level. The universities offer technical careers, undergraduate and graduate; these are regulated by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology.^[183]

Crime

In 2012 the Dominican Republic had a murder rate of 22.1 per 100,000 population.^[184] There was a total of 2,268 murders in the Dominican Republic in 2012.^[184]

The Dominican Republic has become a trans-shipment point for Colombian drugs destined for Europe as well as the United States and Canada.^{[5][185]} Money-laundering via the Dominican Republic is favored by Colombian drug cartels for the ease of illicit financial transactions.^[5] In 2004 it was estimated that 8% of all

cocaine smuggled into the United States had come through the Dominican Republic.^[186] The Dominican Republic responded with increased efforts to seize drug shipments, arrest and extradite those involved, and combat money-laundering.

The often light treatment of violent criminals has been a continuous source of local controversy. In April 2010, five teenagers, aged 15 to 17, shot and killed two taxi drivers and killed another five by forcing them to drink drain-cleaning acid. On September 24, 2010, the teens were sentenced to prison terms of three to five years, despite the protests of the taxi drivers' families.^[187]

Culture

Culture and customs of the Dominican people have a European cultural basis, influenced by both African and native Taíno elements;^[188] culturally the Dominican Republic is among the most-European countries in Spanish America, alongside Puerto Rico, Cuba, Central Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay.^[188]

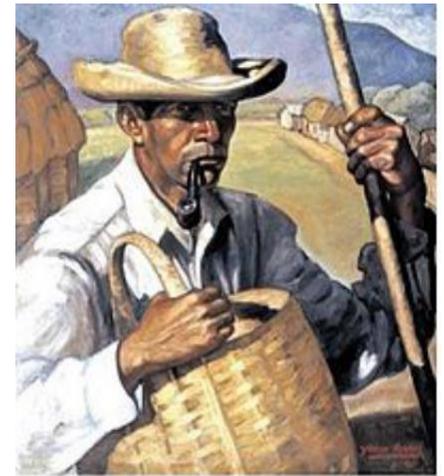
European, African, and Taíno cultural elements are evident in cuisine, architecture, language, family structure, religion, and music.

Architecture

The architecture in the Dominican Republic represents a complex blend of diverse cultures. The deep influence of the European colonists is the most evident throughout the country. Characterized by ornate designs and baroque structures, the style can best be seen in the capital city of Santo Domingo, which is home to the first cathedral, castle, monastery, and fortress in all of the Americas, located in the city's Colonial Zone, an area declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO.^{[189][190]} The designs carry over into the villas and buildings throughout the country. It can also be observed on buildings that contain stucco exteriors, arched doors and windows, and red tiled roofs.

The indigenous peoples of the Dominican Republic have also had a significant influence on the architecture of the country. The Taíno people relied heavily on the mahogany and guano (dried palm tree leaf) to put together crafts, artwork, furniture, and houses. Utilizing mud, thatched roofs, and mahogany trees, they gave buildings and the furniture inside a natural look, seamlessly blending in with the island's surroundings.

Lately, with the rise in tourism and increasing popularity as a Caribbean vacation destination, architects in the Dominican Republic have now begun to incorporate cutting-edge designs that emphasize luxury. In many ways an architectural playground, villas and hotels implement new styles, while offering new takes on the old. This new style is characterized by simplified, angular corners and large windows that blend outdoor and indoor spaces. As with the culture as a whole, contemporary architects embrace the Dominican Republic's rich history and various cultures to create something new. Surveying modern villas, one can find any combination of the three major styles: a villa may contain angular, modernist building construction, Spanish Colonial-style arched windows, and a traditional Taino hammock in the bedroom balcony.



Campeſino cibaeño, 1941 (Museo de Arte Moderno, Santo Domingo).



A *bohío* near Santo Domingo, 1922. Most Dominicans, particularly those in rural areas, used to live in *bohíos* until well into the mid-20th century, like the native Taínos.^[191]

Cuisine

Dominican cuisine is predominantly Spanish, Taíno, and African. The typical cuisine is quite similar to what can be found in other Latin American countries, but many of the names of dishes are different. One breakfast dish consists of eggs and *mangú* (mashed, boiled plantain). Heartier

versions of *mangú* are accompanied by deep-fried meat (Dominican salami, typically), cheese, or both. Lunch, generally the largest and most important meal of the day, usually consists of rice, meat, beans, and salad. "La Bandera" (literally "The Flag") is the most popular lunch dish; it consists of meat and red beans on white rice. *Sancocho* is a stew often made with seven varieties of meat.

Meals tend to favor meats and starches over dairy products and vegetables. Many dishes are made with *sofrito*, which is a mix of local herbs used as a wet rub for meats and sautéed to bring out all of a dish's flavors.

Throughout the south-central coast, bulgur, or whole wheat, is a main ingredient in *qipipes* or *tipili* (bulgur salad). Other favorite Dominican foods include *chicharrón*, *yuca*, *casabe*, *pastelitos* (empanadas), *batata*, yam, *pasteles en hoja*, *chimichurris*, and *tostones*.

Some treats Dominicans enjoy are *arroz con leche* (or *arroz con dulce*), *bizcocho dominicano* (lit. Dominican cake), *habichuelas con dulce*, flan, *frío frío* (snow cones), dulce de leche, and *caña* (sugarcane). The beverages Dominicans enjoy are *Morir Soñando*, rum, beer, *Mama Juana*,^[192] *batida* (smoothie), jugos naturales (freshly squeezed fruit juices), *mabí*, coffee, and *chaca* (also called *maiz caqueao/casqueado*, *maiz con dulce* and *maiz con leche*), the last item being found only in the southern provinces of the country such as San Juan.

Music and dance

Musically, the Dominican Republic is known for the world popular musical style and genre called *merengue*,^{[193]:376–7} a type of lively, fast-paced rhythm and dance music consisting of a tempo of about 120 to 160 beats per minute (though it varies) based on musical elements like drums, brass, chorded instruments, and accordion, as well as some elements unique to the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, such as the *tambora* and *güira*.



Chicharrón mixto



Tostones, a fried plantain dish.

Its syncopated beats use Latin percussion, brass instruments, bass, and piano or keyboard. Between 1937 and 1950 merengue music was promoted internationally by Dominican groups like Billo's Caracas Boys, Chapuseaux and Damiron "Los Reyes del Merengue," Joseito Mateo, and others. Radio, television, and international media popularized it further. Some well known merengue performers are Wilfrido Vargas, Johnny Ventura, singer-songwriter Los Hermanos Rosario, Juan Luis Guerra, Fernando Villalona, Eddy Herrera, Sergio Vargas, Toño Rosario, Milly Quezada, and Chichí Peralta.

Merengue became popular in the United States, mostly on the East Coast, during the 1980s and 1990s,^{[193]:375} when many Dominican artists residing in the U.S. (particularly New York) started performing in the Latin club scene and gained radio airplay. They included Victor Roque y La Gran Manzana, Henry Hierro, Zacarias Ferreira, Aventura, and Milly Jocelyn Y Los Vecinos. The emergence of *bachata*, along with an increase in the number of Dominicans living among other Latino groups in New York, New Jersey, and Florida, has contributed to Dominican music's overall growth in popularity.^{[193]:378}



Merengue dance.

Bachata, a form of music and dance that originated in the countryside and rural marginal neighborhoods of the Dominican Republic, has become quite popular in recent years. Its subjects are often romantic; especially prevalent are tales of heartbreak and sadness. In fact, the original name for the genre was *amargue* ("bitterness," or "bitter music," or blues music), until the rather ambiguous (and mood-neutral) term *bachata* became popular. Bachata grew out of, and is still closely related to, the pan-Latin American romantic style called *bolero*. Over time, it has been influenced by merengue and by a variety of Latin American guitar styles.

Palo is an Afro-Dominican sacred music that can be found throughout the island. The drum and human voice are the principal instruments. Palo is played at religious ceremonies—usually coinciding with saints' religious feast days—as well as for secular parties and special occasions. Its roots are in the Congo region of central-west Africa, but it is mixed with European influences in the melodies.^[194]



Dominican singer Juan Luis Guerra in concert, 2010

Salsa music has had a great deal of popularity in the country. During the late 1960s Dominican musicians like Johnny Pacheco, creator of the Fania All Stars, played a significant role in the development and popularization of the genre.

Dominican rock is also popular. Many, if not the majority, of its performers are based in Santo Domingo and Santiago.

Fashion

The country boasts one of the ten most important design schools in the region, La Escuela de Diseño de Altos de Chavón, which is making the country a key player in the world of fashion and design.

Noted fashion designer Oscar de la Renta was born in the Dominican Republic in 1932, and became a US citizen in 1971. He studied under the leading Spaniard designer Cristóbal Balenciaga and then worked with the house of Lanvin in Paris. By 1963, he had designs bearing his own label. After establishing himself in the US, de la Renta opened boutiques across the country. His work blends French and Spaniard fashion with American styles.^{[195][196]} Although he settled in New York, de la Renta also marketed his work in Latin America, where it became very popular, and remained active in his native Dominican Republic, where his charitable activities and personal achievements earned him the Juan Pablo Duarte Order of Merit and the Order of Cristóbal Colón.^[196] De la Renta died of complications from cancer on October 20, 2014.

National symbols

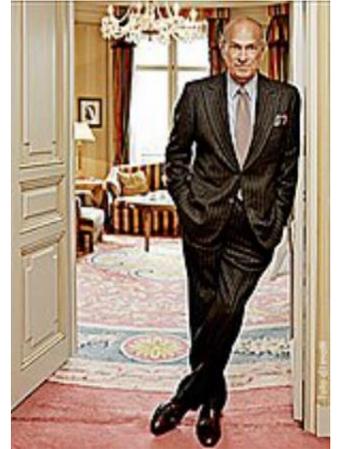
Some of the Dominican Republic's important symbols are the flag, the coat of arms, and the national anthem, titled *Himno Nacional*. The flag has a large white cross that divides it into four quarters. Two quarters are red and two are blue. Red represents the blood shed by the liberators. Blue expresses God's protection over the nation. The white cross symbolizes the struggle of the liberators to bequeath future generations a free nation. An alternate interpretation is that blue represents the ideals of progress and liberty, whereas white symbolizes peace and unity among Dominicans.^[197]

In the center of the cross is the Dominican coat of arms, in the same colors as the national flag. The coat of arms pictures a red, white, and blue flag-draped shield with a Bible, a gold cross, and arrows; the shield is surrounded by an olive branch (on the left) and a palm branch (on the right). The Bible traditionally represents the truth and the light. The gold cross symbolizes the redemption from slavery, and the arrows symbolize the noble soldiers and their proud military. A blue ribbon above the shield reads, "Dios, Patria, Libertad" (meaning "God, Fatherland, Liberty"). A red ribbon under the shield reads, "República Dominicana" (meaning "Dominican Republic"). Out of all the flags in the world, the depiction of a Bible is unique to the Dominican flag.

The national flower is the Bayahibe Rose and the national tree is the West Indian Mahogany.^[198] The national bird is the *Cigua Palmera* or Palmchat ("Dulus dominicus").^[199]

The Dominican Republic celebrates Dia de la Altagracia on January 21 in honor of its patroness, Duarte's Day on January 26 in honor of one of its founding fathers, Independence Day on February 27, Restoration Day on August 16, *Virgen de las Mercedes* on September 24, and Constitution Day on November 6.

Sports



Dominican native, fashion designer and perfume maker Oscar de la Renta.



Bayahibe Rose.

Baseball is by far the most popular sport in the Dominican Republic.^{[193]:59} The country has a baseball league of six teams. Its season usually begins in October and ends in January. After the United States, the Dominican Republic has the second highest number of Major League Baseball (MLB) players. Ozzie Virgil, Sr. became the first Dominican-born player in the MLB on September 23, 1956. Juan Marichal and Pedro Martínez are the only Dominican-born players in the Baseball Hall of Fame.^[200] Other notable baseball players born in the Dominican Republic are: Adrián Beltré, Robinson Canó, Rico Carty, Starling Marte, Vladimir Guerrero, George Bell, Julian Javier, Francisco Liriano, Manny Ramírez, José Bautista, Edwin Encarnación, Hanley Ramírez, David Ortiz, Albert Pujols, Nelson Cruz, Ubaldo Jiménez, José Reyes, Plácido Polanco, and Sammy Sosa. Felipe Alou has also enjoyed success as a manager^[201] and Omar Minaya as a general manager. In 2013, the Dominican team went undefeated *en route* to winning the World Baseball Classic.



Dominican native and Major League Baseball player Albert Pujols.

In boxing, the country has produced scores of world-class fighters and several world champions,^[202] such as Carlos Cruz, his brother Leo, Juan Guzman, and Joan Guzman. Basketball also enjoys a relatively high level of popularity. Tito Horford, his son Al, Felipe Lopez, and Francisco Garcia are among the Dominican-born players currently or formerly in the National Basketball Association (NBA). Olympic gold medalist and world champion hurdler Félix Sánchez hails from the Dominican Republic, as does NFL defensive end Luis Castillo.^[203]

Other important sports are volleyball, introduced in 1916 by U.S. Marines and controlled by the Dominican Volleyball Federation, taekwondo, in which Gabriel Mercedes won an Olympic silver medal in 2008, and judo.^[204]

See also

- Index of Dominican Republic-related articles
- Outline of the Dominican Republic

Notes and references

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COUNTRY: GRENADA

STATISTICS

POPULATION: 107,317

LANGUAGE(S): ENGLISH

DEMONYM: GRENADIAN

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY UNDER CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY

CURRENCY: EAST CARIBBEAN DOLLAR (XCD)

CLIMATE: TROPICAL; HOT AND HUMID IN RAINY SEASON AND COOLED BY TRADE WINDS IN DRY SEASON

PRACTICING

PRACTICES IN COUNTRY: 3 FIRMS

NUMBER OF REGISTERED ARCHITECTS:

CERTIFICATION NEEDS:

REQUIREMENTS:

HUMANITIES

CULTURE: BLEND OF FRENCH, AFRICAN, AND INDIAN CULTURES. CRICKET AN INTRINSIC PART.

HISTORY: AS A COMMONWEALTH REALM, QUEEN ELIZABETH II IS QUEEN OF GRENADA AND HOS

THINGS TO CONSIDER

DRIVES ON THE: LEFT

ECONOMY: SHORT-TERM CONCERNS ARE THE RISING FISCAL DEFICIT AND DETERIORATION IN THE EXTERNAL ACCOUNT BALANCE.

CRIME: MOST INCIDENTS PETTY IN NATURE; LOCAL VENDORS HAVE FORMED NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH.

TOURISM: GRENADA'S MAIN ECONOMIC FORCE, LARGELY FOCUSED IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION.

Grenada

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Coordinates: 12°07′N 61°40′W﻿ / ﻿12.117°N 61.667°W﻿ / 12.117; -61.667

Grenada (/ɡrɪˈneɪdə/; French: *La Grenade*) is an island country in the southeastern Caribbean Sea consisting of the island of Grenada and six smaller islands at the southern end of the Grenadines island chain. It is located northwest of Trinidad and Tobago, northeast of Venezuela and southwest of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Its size is 344 square kilometres (133 sq mi), and it had an estimated population of 107,317^[4] in 2016. Its capital is St. George's. Grenada is also known as the "Island of Spice" due to its production of nutmeg and mace crops, of which it is one of the world's largest exporters. The national bird of Grenada is the critically endangered Grenada dove.

Before the arrival of Europeans to the Americas, Grenada was inhabited by the indigenous Arawaks and later by the Island Caribs. Christopher Columbus sighted Grenada in 1498 during his third voyage to the Americas. Although it was deemed the property of the King of Spain, there are no records to suggest the Spanish ever landed or settled on the island. Following several unsuccessful attempts by Europeans to colonise the island due to resistance from the Island Caribs, French settlement and colonisation began in 1650 and continued for the next century. On 10 February 1763 Grenada was ceded to the British under the Treaty of Paris. British rule continued, except for a period of French rule between 1779 and 1783, until 1974. From 1958 to 1962 Grenada was part of the Federation of the West Indies, a short-lived federation of British West Indian colonies. On 3 March 1967, Grenada was granted full autonomy over its internal affairs as an Associated State. Herbert Blaize was the first Premier of the Associated State of Grenada from March to August 1967. Eric Gairy served as Premier from August 1967 until February 1974.

Independence was granted on 7 February 1974, under the leadership of Eric Gairy, who became the first Prime Minister of Grenada. In March 1979, the Marxist–Leninist New Jewel Movement overthrew Gairy's government in a coup d'état and established the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), headed by Maurice Bishop as Prime Minister. On 19 October 1983 hard-line Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard and his wife Phyllis, backed by the Grenadian Army, led a coup against the government of Maurice Bishop and placed Bishop under house arrest. Bishop was later freed by popular demonstration and attempted to resume

Grenada

La Grenade (French)



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: "Ever Conscious of God We Aspire, Build and Advance as One People"^[1]

Anthem: *Hail Grenada*

0:00

MENU

Royal anthem: *God Save the Queen*



Map indicating the location of Grenada in the Lesser Antilles

Capital <div>and largest city</div>	St. George's <div>12°03′N 61°45′W﻿ / ﻿12.050°N 61.750°W﻿ / 12.050; -61.750</div>
Official languages	English
Recognised regional languages	Grenadian Creole English <div>Grenadian Creole French</div>
Ethnic groups <div>(2001^[2])</div>	89.4% African <div>8.2% Mixed</div> <div>1.6% Indian</div> <div>0.9% other</div> <div>(includes indigenous)</div>
Demonym	Grenadian ^[3]
Government	Parliamentary democracy under constitutional

power, but was captured and executed by soldiers. On 25 October 1983 forces from the Barbados-based Regional Security System (RSS) and the United States invaded Grenada in an operation code-named *Operation Urgent Fury*. The invasion was highly criticised by the governments of Britain, Trinidad and Tobago and Canada, along with the United Nations General Assembly. Elections were held in December 1984 and were won by the Grenada National Party under Herbert Blaize who served as prime minister until his death in December 1989.

On 7 September 2004, after being hurricane-free for 49 years, the island was directly hit by Hurricane Ivan, which damaged or destroyed 90% of the island's homes. On 14 July 2005 Hurricane Emily struck the northern part of the island, causing an estimated USD \$110 million (EC\$297 million) worth of damage.

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 French colony (1649–1763)
 - 2.2 British colony (1763–1974)
 - 2.3 Toward independence (1950–1974)
 - 2.4 Post-independence coups (1974–1983)
 - 2.5 Invasion by the United States (1983)
 - 2.5.1 Coup and execution of Maurice Bishop
 - 2.5.2 US and allied response and reaction
 - 2.5.3 Post-invasion arrests
 - 2.6 Grenada since 1983
- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
- 4 Politics
 - 4.1 Foreign relations
 - 4.1.1 Organisation of American States (OAS)
 - 4.1.2 Summits of the Americas
 - 4.1.3 Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty
 - 4.1.4 FATCA
 - 4.2 Military
 - 4.3 Administrative divisions
- 5 Economy
 - 5.1 Agriculture and exports
 - 5.1.1 Recent cocoa industry financing plans
 - 5.2 Tourism

	monarchy
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monarch • Governor-General • Prime Minister </div>	Elizabeth II <p>Cécile La Grenade</p> <p>Keith Mitchell</p>
Legislature	Parliament
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Upper house • Lower house </div>	Senate <p>House of Representatives</p>
Formation	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Associated State • Independence from the United Kingdom • Grenadian Revolution • Constitution Restoration </div>	March 3, 1967 <p>February 7, 1974</p> <p>March 13, 1979</p> <p>December 4, 1984</p>
Area	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total • Water (%) </div>	348.5 km ² (134.6 sq mi) (185th) <p>1.6</p>
Population	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2016 estimate • Density </div>	107,317 ^[4] (185th) <p>318.58/km² (825.1/sq mi) (45th)</p>
GDP (PPP)	2016 estimate
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total • Per capita </div>	\$1.457 billion ^[5] <p>\$13,599^[5]</p>
GDP (nominal)	2016 estimate
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total • Per capita </div>	\$1 billion ^[5] <p>\$9,332^[5]</p>
HDI (2014)	▲ 0.750 ^[6] <p>high · 79th</p>
Currency	East Caribbean dollar (XCD)
Time zone	(UTC−4)
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summer (DST) </div>	(UTC−4)
Drives on the	left
Calling code	+1-473

- 5.2.1 Natural and historical places
 - 5.3 Education
 - 5.4 Transport
- 6 Demographics
 - 6.1 Religion
- 7 Language
- 8 Culture
- 9 Sports
 - 9.1 Olympics
 - 9.2 Cricket
- 10 See also
- 11 Notes
- 12 References
- 13 External links

ISO 3166 code	GD
Internet TLD	.gd
a. Plus trace of Arawak / Carib.	

Etymology

The origin of the name "Grenada" is obscure, but it is likely that Spanish sailors renamed the island for the city of Granada.^[7] By the beginning of the 18th century, the name "Grenada", or "la Grenade" in French, was in common use.^[8]

On his third voyage to the region in 1498, Christopher Columbus sighted Grenada and named it "La Concepción" in honour of the Virgin Mary. It is said that he may have actually named it "Assumpción", but it is uncertain, as he is said to have sighted what are now Grenada and Tobago from a distance and named them both at the same time. However, history has accepted that it was Tobago he named "Assumpción" and Grenada he named "La Concepción".^[7]

In 1499, the Italian explorer Amerigo Vespucci travelled through the region with the Spanish explorer Alonso de Ojeda and mapmaker Juan de la Cosa. Vespucci is reported to have renamed the island "Mayo", which is how it appeared on maps for around the next 20 years.

In the 1520s the Spanish named the islands to the north of Mayo as Los Granadillos (Little Granadas), presumably after the mainland Spanish town. Shortly after this, Mayo disappeared from Spanish maps and an island called "Granada" took its place. Although it was deemed the property of the King of Spain, there are no records to suggest the Spanish ever landed or settled on the island.^[9]

After French settlement and colonisation in 1650, the French named their colony "La Grenade". On 10 February 1763 the island of La Grenade was ceded to the British under the Treaty of Paris. The British renamed it "Grenada", one of many place name anglicisations they carried out on the island during this time.^[10]

History

About 2 million years ago, Grenada was formed as an underwater volcano. Before the arrival of Europeans, Grenada was inhabited by Arawaks and, subsequently, Island Caribs. Christopher Columbus sighted Grenada in 1498 during his third voyage to the new world.

French colony (1649–1763)

In 1649 a French expedition of 203 men from Martinique led by Jacques du Parquet founded a permanent settlement on Grenada. Within months this led to conflict with the local islanders which lasted until 1654 when the island was completely subjugated by the French.^[11] The indigenous islanders who survived either left for neighbouring islands or retreated to remoter parts of Grenada where they were marginalised—the last distinct communities disappeared during the 1700s.

Warfare continued during the 1600s between the French on Grenada and the Caribs of present-day Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The French named their new colony La Grenade, and the economy was initially based on sugar cane and indigo. The French established a capital known as Fort Royal (later St. George). To shelter from hurricanes the French navy would often take refuge in the capital's natural harbour, as no nearby French islands had a natural harbour to compare with that of Fort Royal. The British captured Grenada during the Seven Years' War in 1762.

British colony (1763–1974)

Grenada was formally ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. The French re-captured the island during the American Revolutionary War, after Comte d'Estaing won the bloody land and naval Battle of Grenada in July 1779. However the island was restored to Britain with the Treaty of Versailles in 1783. Britain was hard pressed to overcome a pro-French revolt in 1795–96 led by Julien Fedon.

Nutmeg was introduced to Grenada in 1843 when a merchant ship called in on its way to England from the East Indies. The ship had a small quantity of nutmeg trees on board which they left in Grenada, and this was the beginning of Grenada's nutmeg industry that now supplies nearly 40% of the world's annual crop.^[12]

In 1877 Grenada was made a Crown colony. Theophilus A. Marryshow founded the Representative Government Association (RGA) in 1917 to agitate for a new and participative constitutional dispensation for the Grenadian people. Partly as a result of Marryshow's lobbying, the Wood Commission of 1921–22 concluded that Grenada was ready for constitutional reform in the form of a modified Crown colony government. This modification granted Grenadians the right to elect five of the 15 members of the Legislative Council, on a restricted property franchise enabling the wealthiest 4% of adult Grenadians to vote.^[13]

Toward independence (1950–1974)

In 1950 Eric Gairy founded the Grenada United Labour Party, initially as a trades union, which led the 1951 general strike for better working conditions. This sparked great unrest—so many buildings were set ablaze that the disturbances became known as the "red sky" days—and the British authorities had to call in military

reinforcements to help regain control of the situation. On October 10, 1951, Grenada held its first general elections on the basis of universal adult suffrage,^[14] with Gairy's party winning six of the eight seats contested.^[14] From 1958 to 1962 Grenada was part of the Federation of the West Indies.

On March 3, 1967, Grenada was granted full autonomy over its internal affairs as an Associated State. Herbert Blaize was the first Premier of the Associated State of Grenada from March to August 1967. Eric Gairy served as Premier from August 1967 until February 1974.

Post-independence coups (1974–1983)

Independence was granted on February 7, 1974, under the leadership of Eric Gairy, who became the first Prime Minister of Grenada.

Civil conflict gradually broke out between Eric Gairy's government and some opposition parties including the Marxist New Jewel Movement (NJM). Gairy's party won elections in 1976. The opposition did not accept the result, accusing it of fraud.

In March 1979, the New Jewel Movement launched a coup which removed Gairy, suspended the constitution, and established a People's Revolutionary Government (PRG), headed by Maurice Bishop who declared himself prime minister. His Marxist–Leninist government established close ties with Cuba, Nicaragua, and other communist bloc countries. All political parties except for the New Jewel Movement were banned and no elections were held during the four years of PRG rule.

Invasion by the United States (1983)

Coup and execution of Maurice Bishop

Some years later a dispute developed between Bishop and certain high-ranking members of the NJM. Though Bishop cooperated with Cuba and the USSR on various trade and foreign policy issues, he sought to maintain a "non-aligned" status. Bishop had been taking his time making Grenada wholly socialist, encouraging private-sector development in an attempt to make the island a popular tourist destination. Hardline Marxist party members, including communist Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard, deemed Bishop insufficiently revolutionary and demanded that he either step down or enter into a power-sharing arrangement.



St. George's, Grenada's capital



Maurice Bishop visiting East Germany, 1982

On October 19, 1983, Bernard Coard and his wife Phyllis, backed by the Grenadian Army, led a coup against the government of Maurice Bishop and placed Bishop under house arrest. These actions led to street demonstrations in various parts of the island. Bishop had enough support from the population that he was eventually freed after a demonstration in the capital. When Bishop attempted to resume power, he was captured and executed by soldiers along with seven others, including government cabinet ministers. The Coard regime then put the island under martial law.

After the execution of Bishop, the People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) formed a military government with General Hudson Austin as chairman. The army declared a four-day total curfew, during which (it said) anyone leaving their home without approval would be shot on sight.^[15]

US and allied response and reaction

The overthrow of a moderate government by one which was strongly pro-communist worried the administration of US President Ronald Reagan. Particularly worrying was the presence of Cuban construction workers and military personnel who were building a 10,000-foot (3,000 m) airstrip on Grenada.^[16]

Bishop had stated the purpose of the airstrip was to allow commercial jets to land, but US military analysts argued that the only reason for constructing such a long and reinforced runway was so that it could be used by heavy military transport planes. The contractors, American and European companies, and the EEC, which provided partial funding, all claimed the airstrip did not have military capabilities.^[16] Reagan was worried that Cuba – under the direction of the Soviet Union – would use Grenada as a refuelling stop for Cuban and Soviet aeroplanes loaded with weapons destined for Central American communist insurgents.^[17]

On October 25, 1983, combined forces from the United States and from the Regional Security System (RSS) based in Barbados invaded Grenada in an operation codenamed *Operation Urgent Fury*. The US stated this was done at the behest of Prime Minister Eugenia Charles of Dominica.

While the Governor-General of Grenada, Sir Paul Scoon, later stated that he had also requested the invasion,^[18] it was highly criticised by the governments of Britain, Trinidad and Tobago, and Canada. The United Nations General Assembly condemned it as "a flagrant violation of international law" by a vote of 108 in favour to 9, with 27 abstentions.^{[19][20]} The United Nations Security Council considered a similar resolution, which was supported by 11 nations and opposed by only one — the United States, which vetoed the motion.^[21]



Members of the Eastern Caribbean Defence Force during the 1983 invasion of Grenada



M102 howitzers of 320th Field Artillery Regiment firing during the 1983 invasion of Grenada

Post-invasion arrests

After the invasion of the island nation, the pre-revolutionary Grenadian constitution came into operation once again. Eighteen members of the PRG and the PRA (army) were arrested after the invasion on charges related to the murder of Maurice Bishop and seven others. The eighteen included the top political leadership of Grenada at the time of the execution as well as the entire military chain of command directly responsible for the operation that led to the executions. Fourteen were sentenced to death, one was found not guilty and three were sentenced to 45 years in prison. The death sentences were eventually commuted to terms of imprisonment. Those in prison have become known as the Grenada 17.

Grenada since 1983

When US troops withdrew from Grenada in December 1983, Nicholas Brathwaite of the National Democratic Congress was appointed prime minister of an interim administration by Scoon until elections could be organised. The first democratic elections since 1976 were held in December 1984 and were won by the Grenada National Party under Herbert Blaize who served as prime minister until his death in December 1989.

Ben Jones succeeded Blaize as prime minister and served until the March 1990 election, which was won by the National Democratic Congress under Nicholas Brathwaite who returned as prime minister for a second time until he resigned in February 1995. He was succeeded by George Brizan who served until the June 1995 election which was won by the New National Party under Keith Mitchell who went on to win the 1999 and 2003 elections and served for a record 13 years until 2008.

In 2000–02, much of the controversy of the late 1970s and early 1980s was once again brought into the public consciousness with the opening of the truth and reconciliation commission. The commission was chaired by a Roman Catholic priest, Father Mark Haynes, and was tasked with uncovering injustices arising from the PRA, Bishop's regime, and before. It held a number of hearings around the country. Brother Robert Fanovich, head of Presentation Brothers' College (PBC) in St. George's tasked some of his senior students with conducting a research project into the era and specifically into the fact that Maurice Bishop's body was never discovered.^[22] Paterson also uncovered that there was still a lot of resentment in Grenadian society resulting from the era and a feeling that there were many injustices still unaddressed.

On September 7, 2004, after being hurricane-free for 49 years, the island was directly hit by Hurricane Ivan. Ivan struck as a Category 3 hurricane and damaged or destroyed 90% of the island's homes. On July 14, 2005, Hurricane Emily, a Category 1 hurricane at the time, struck the northern part of the island with 80-knot (150 km/h; 92 mph) winds, causing an estimated USD \$110 million (EC\$297 million) worth of damage. By December 2005, 96% of all hotel rooms were open for business and to have been upgraded in facilities and strengthened to an improved building code. The agricultural industry and in particular the nutmeg industry suffered serious losses, but that event has begun changes in crop management and it is hoped that as new nutmeg trees gradually mature, the industry will return to its pre-Ivan position as a major supplier in the Western world.

In April 2007, Grenada jointly hosted (along with several other Caribbean nations) the 2007 Cricket World Cup. The Island's Prime Minister was the CARICOM representative on cricket and was instrumental in having the World Cup games brought to the region. After Hurricane Ivan, the government of the People's Republic of

China (PRC) paid for the new \$40 million national stadium and provided the aid of over 300 labourers to build and repair it.^[23] During the opening ceremony, the anthem of the Republic of China (ROC, Taiwan) was accidentally played instead of the PRC's anthem, leading to the firing of top officials.^{[24][25]}

The 2008 election was won by the National Democratic Congress under Tillman Thomas. The 2013 election was won by the New National Party under Keith Mitchell winning all 15 seats.

Geography

The island of Carriacou is the largest island in the Grenadines. Smaller islands are Petit Martinique, Ronde Island, Caille Island, Diamond Island, Large Island, Saline Island, and Frigate Island. Most of the population lives on Grenada, and major towns there include the capital, St. George's, Grenville and Gouyave. The largest settlement on the other islands is Hillsborough on Carriacou.

The islands are of volcanic origin with extremely rich soil. Grenada's interior is very mountainous with Mount St. Catherine being the highest at 840 m (2,760 ft). Several small rivers with beautiful waterfalls flow into the sea from these mountains.

Climate

The climate is tropical: hot and humid in the rainy season and cooled by the trade winds in the dry season. Grenada, being on the southern edge of the hurricane belt, has suffered only three hurricanes in fifty years.

Hurricane Janet passed over Grenada on September 23, 1955, with winds of 185 km/h (115 mph), causing severe damage. The most recent storms to hit have been Hurricane Ivan on September 7, 2004, causing severe damage and thirty-nine deaths and Hurricane Emily on July 14, 2005, causing serious damage in Carriacou and in the north of Grenada which had been relatively lightly affected by Hurricane Ivan.

Politics



A map of Grenada

As a Commonwealth realm, Queen Elizabeth II is Queen of Grenada and Head of State. The Crown is represented by a Governor-General, currently Cécile La Grenade. Day-to-day executive power lies with the Head of Government, the Prime Minister. Although appointed by the Governor-General, the Prime Minister is usually the leader of the largest party in the Parliament.

The Parliament consists of a Senate (thirteen members) and a House of Representatives (fifteen members). The senators are appointed by the government and the opposition, while the representatives are elected by the population for five-year terms.

On February 19, 2013, Prime Minister Keith Claudius Mitchell, 65, led the New National Party (NNP) to victory with a clean sweep of 15 seats. Mitchell is Grenada's ninth prime minister since it attained political independence from Britain in 1974.

Foreign relations

Grenada is a full and participating member of both the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).

Organisation of American States (OAS)

Grenada is one of the thirty five (35) states which has ratified the OAS charter and is a member of the Organisation.^[26] The Charter of the Organisation of American States was signed in Bogota in 1948 and was amended by several protocols which were agreed to in different countries. The naming convention which is used with respect to the naming of the protocols is name of the city and the year in which the Protocol was signed, being included in the Protocol, such as Cartagena de Indias in 1985, Managua 1993, according to the website of the OAS.^[27]

Grenada entered into the Inter-American system in 1975 according to the OAS's website.^[28]

Summits of the Americas

The last Summit of the Americas, the seventh, was held in Panama City, Panama in 2015 with the eight summit being held in Lima, Peru in 2018 according to the website of the Summits of Americas ^[29] Since Grenada is a member of the OAS, in light of changes in the global economy, discoveries in the Oil and Gas sector in Guyana, possible exploration for Oil and Gas which is in the discussion stage in Grenada, representations on behalf of Grenada are likely to be made at that Summit.

Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty



An aerial photo of the capital St George's

On July 6, 1994 at Sherbourne Conference Centre, St. Michael, Barbados, George Brizan signed the Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty on behalf of the Government of Grenada.^[30]

Seven other countries signed the Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty on that day. These countries were: Antigua & Barbuda, Belize, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, with another country Guyana signing the agreement on August 18, 1994. This treaty covered concepts such as taxes, residence, tax jurisdictions, capital gains, business profits, interest, dividends, royalties and other areas.

FATCA

On June 30, 2014, Grenada signed a Model 1 agreement with the United States of America in relation to Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA).^[31]

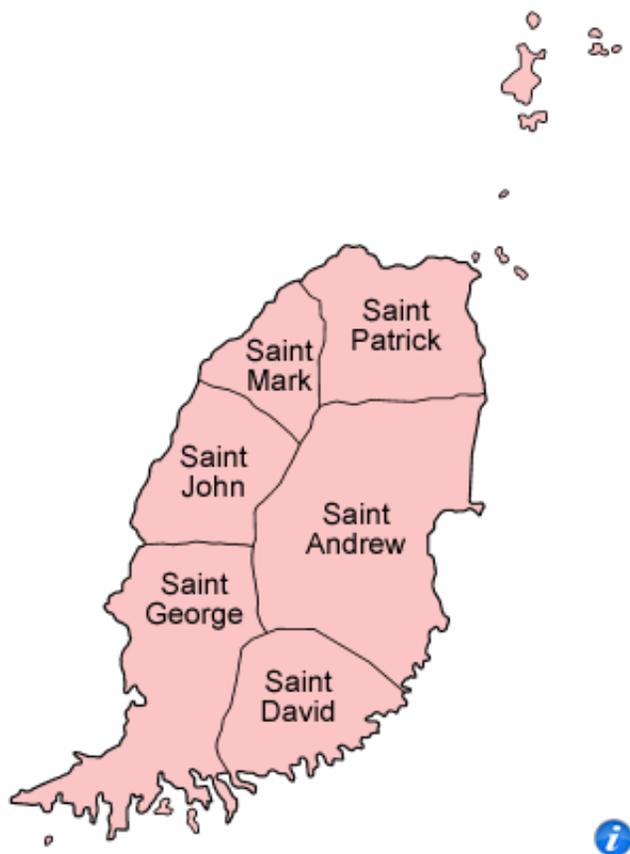
Military

Grenada's military has two branches:

- Royal Grenada Police Force, which includes a Special Service Unit.
- Coast Guard of Grenada.

Administrative divisions

Grenada is divided into six parishes:



Carriacou and Petite Martinique, two of the Grenadines, have the status of dependency.

Economy

Economic progress in fiscal reforms and prudent macroeconomic management have boosted annual growth to 5%–6% in 1998–99; the increase in economic activity has been led by construction and trade. Tourist facilities are being expanded; tourism is the leading foreign exchange earner. Major short-term concerns are the rising fiscal deficit and the deterioration in the external account balance. Grenada shares a common central bank and a common currency (the East Caribbean dollar) with seven other members of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).^[32]

Agriculture and exports

Grenada is a leading producer of several different spices. Cinnamon, cloves, ginger, mace, allspice, orange/citrus peels, wild coffee used by the locals, and especially



Nutmeg fruit in mace

nutmeg, providing 20% of the world supply, are all important exports. Grenada is the world's second largest producer of nutmeg (after Indonesia), with nutmeg depicted on the Grenadian flag.

The Grenada Chocolate Company has pioneered the cultivation of organic cocoa, which is also processed into finished bars.

In 2017, the Pure Chocolate Festival will be celebrating its fourth year of existence as a formal festival.^{[33][34]} Some of the activities which have taken place according to the website Grenada Chocolate Festival are visits to the cocoa farms which have been in existence for approximately one hundred (100) years and which are located in rainforests which are ecologically sensitive; dance the cocoa which is a traditional way to separate the skins from the seed of the cocoa or sample cocoa infused cuisine which may have been developed as part of the culture of the country.

Recent cocoa industry financing plans

In a Facebook Post of November/December 2016, there was a request for crowdfunding to replace damaged chocolate grinders for the Crayfish Bay Organic Farm.^[35] This is an innovative way to market online funding for socially conscious ventures which can mean income generation for families in tough times.

Tourism

Tourism is Grenada's main economic force. Conventional beach and water-sports tourism is largely focused in the southwest region around St George, the airport and the coastal strip. Ecotourism is growing in significance. Most small ecofriendly guesthouses are located in the Saint David and Saint John parishes. The tourism industry is increasing dramatically with the construction of a large cruise ship pier and esplanade. Up to four cruise ships per day were visiting St. Georges in 2007–2008 during the cruise ship season.

Tourism is concentrated in the southwest of the island, around St. George, Grand Anse, Lance Aux Epines, and Point Salines. Grenada has many idyllic beaches around its coastline including the 3 km (1.9 mi) long Grand Anse Beach in St George which is considered to be one of the finest beaches in the world and often appears in countdowns of the world's top ten beaches.^[36] Besides these excellent beaches, tourists' favourite points of interest yet in Grenada are the waterfalls. The nearest to St. George's is the Annandale Waterfalls, but other notable ones like Mt. Carmel, Concord, Seven Sisters and Tufton Hall are also within easy reach.^[37]



Grand Anse Beach, St. George

Natural and historical places

According to its website, True Blue Bay Boutique Resort is one the resorts which has engaged in environmentally friendly activities, some of which are listed on its site. Their efforts with respect to "environmental activities are audited each year" and the resort is "Green Globe Certified".^[38]

Another eco friendly place is Crayfish Bay Organic Farm, which is a "two hundred (200) year old, fifteen (15) acre estate" and has been termed a "back to basics" and "off the beaten track" location.^[39] Formerly a "French Molasses factory" in the seventeenth (17th) century, there are artifacts which are still visible according to its website.

In 2017 the Carriacou Maroon & String Band Music Festival enters its seventh year.^[40] In 2017, occurring in April, the event lasts for three days, occurs in three venues, however it is classified as one festival according to the pure Grenada website.^[41] The concept of String Bands is historical in nature.

In 2017 the Annual Budget Marine Spice Island BillFish Tournament (48) will be entering its 48th year of existence. The Tournament lasts for four days and in 2017 it starts on Jan 21.^[42]

Island Water World Sailing Week, as its name suggests,^[43] is an event which lasts for a week and in 2017 will be held towards the end of January into February. This event is similar to the America Cup which is hosted upon agreement or calling out.

Many of these events stimulate the economy as they attract boats and persons who may need repairs to their boats or who may need to learn new routes to shelter their boats during hurricanes or Inter Tropical Convergence Zones (ITCZs) which are weather systems which affect this part of the world for almost half of the year every year.

The Grenada Sailing Festival Work Boat Regatta starts in January and lasts for a few days. From the photos on the website Grenada Sailing Festival, it appears that the style of the race is similar to that event in which CARICOM national, Andrew Lewis raced at the 2016 Summer Olympics.

Education

St. Georges University has rapidly expanded in recent years, and has a major economic impact, particularly in southern portions of the island. While some of its approximately 5,000 students are from Grenada, including many undergraduates, and many medical students serve rotations off of the island, the majority of students are from other countries and bring substantial revenue to the island while studying there. St. Georges University is among the island's largest employers, and students patronise many off-campus landlords and other businesses.

St. Georges University is one of the Organisation of American States (OAS) Consortium of Universities according to the OAS webpage.^[44]

Transport

Flights at the Maurice Bishop International Airport connect with other Caribbean islands, the United States, Canada, and Europe. There is a daily fast ferry service between St. George and Hillsborough.

Demographics

A majority of Grenadine citizens (82%^[2]) are descendants of the African slaves brought by the English and French; few of the indigenous Carib and Arawak population survived the French purge at Sauteurs. A small percentage of descendants of indentured workers from India were brought to Grenada mainly from the North Indian states of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh between May 1, 1857 – January 10, 1885. Today, Grenadians of Indian descent comprise the second largest ethnic group. There is also a small community of French and English descendants. The rest of the population is of mixed descent (13%^[2]).

Grenada, like many of the Caribbean islands is subject to a large amount of migration, with a large number of young people wanting to leave the island to seek life elsewhere. With estimated 107,317 people living in Grenada, estimates and census data suggest that there are at least that number of Grenadian-born people in other parts of the Caribbean (such as Barbados and Trinidad) and at least that number again in First World countries. Popular migration points for Grenadians further north include New York City, Toronto, the United Kingdom (in particular, London and Yorkshire; see Grenadians in the UK) and sometimes Montreal, or as far south as Australia. This means that probably around a third of those born in Grenada still live there.

The official language, English, is used in the government, but Grenadian Creole is considered the lingua franca of the island. French Patois (Antillean Creole) is also spoken by about 10%–20% the population. Some Hindi/Bhojpuri terms are still spoken amongst the Indian descendants, mostly those pertaining to the kitchen; such as *aloo*, *geera*, *karela*, *seim*, *chownkay*, and *baylay*. The term *bhai*, which means "brother" in Urdu and Hindi, is a common form of greeting amongst Indo-Grenadians males of equal status.

Religion

The following statistics are from The World Factbook ^[45]

- Roman Catholic 44.6%
- Protestant 43.5%
 - Anglican 11.5%
 - Pentecostal 11.3%
 - Seventh Day Adventist 10.5%
 - Baptist 2.9%
 - Church of God 2.6%
 - Methodist 1.8%
 - Evangelical 1.6%
- Other 6.2%
- Jehovah's Witness 1.1%



A view of Carriacou, with other Grenadine islands visible in the distance

- Rastafarian 1.1%
- None 3.6%

Language

English is the country's official language, but the main spoken language is either of two creole languages (Grenadian Creole English and Grenadian Creole French) which reflects the African, European, and native Indian heritage of the nation. The creoles contain elements from a variety of African languages; Grenadian Creole, however, is also influenced by French.

Grenadian Creole French is mainly spoken in smaller rural areas, but today it can only be heard in a few small pockets of the society. Grenadian Creole French is mainly known as Patois or Creole.

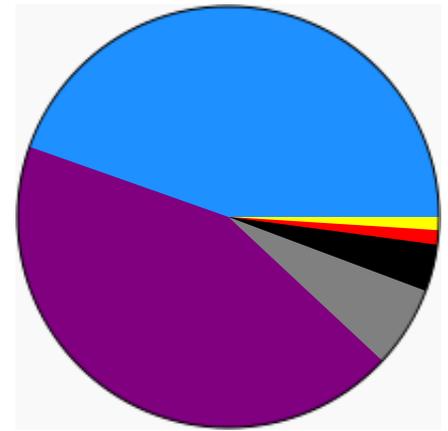
The indigenous languages were Iñeri and Karina (Carib).

Culture

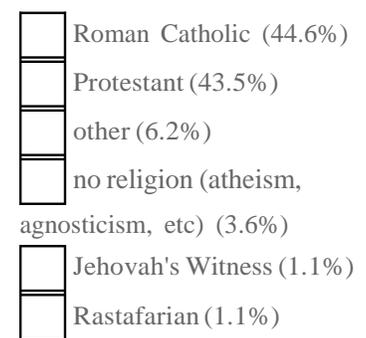
Although French influence on Grenadian culture is much less visible than on other Caribbean islands, surnames and place names in French remain, and the everyday language is laced with French words and the local dialect, or Patois. Stronger French influence is found in the well seasoned spicy food and styles of cooking similar to those found in New Orleans, and some French architecture has survived from the 1700s. Island culture is heavily influenced by the African roots of most of the Grenadians, but Indian and Carib Amerindian influence is also seen with dhal puri, rotis, Indian sweets, cassava and curries in the cuisine.

The "oildown" is considered to be the national dish. The name refers to a dish cooked in coconut milk until all the milk is absorbed, leaving a bit of coconut oil in the bottom of the pot. Early recipes call for a mixture of salted pigtail, pig's feet (trotters), salt beef and chicken, dumplings made from flour, and provision like breadfruit, green banana, yam and potatoes. Callaloo leaves are sometimes used to retain the steam and for extra flavour.^[46]

Soca, calypso, and reggae set the mood for Grenada's annual Carnival activities. Over the years rap music became famous among Grenadian youths, and there have been numerous young rappers emerging in the island's underground rap scene. Zouk is also being slowly introduced onto the island. The islanders' African and Carib Amerindian heritage plays an influential role in many aspects of Grenada's culture.



Religion in Grenada (2015)^[45]



1965 carnival

As with other islands from the Caribbean, cricket is the national and most popular sport and is an intrinsic part of Grenadian culture. The Grenada national cricket team forms a part of the Windward Islands cricket team in regional domestic cricket, however it plays as a separate entity in minor regional matches,^[47] as well having previously played Twenty20 cricket in the Stanford 20/20.^[48]

An important aspect of the Grenadian culture is the tradition of story telling, with folk tales bearing both African and French influences. The character, *Anancy*, a spider who is a trickster, originated in West Africa and is prevalent on other islands as well. French influence can be seen in *La Diabliesse*, a well-dressed she-devil, and *Ligaroo* (from Loup Garoux), a werewolf.

Sports

Olympics

Grenada has competed in every Summer Olympics since the 1984 Summer Olympics in Los Angeles. Kirani James won the first Olympic gold medal for Grenada in the men's 400 meters at the 2012 Summer Olympics.

Cricket

Cricket is one of the most popular sports of Grenada, with intense inter-island rivalry with its Caribbean neighbours. Grenada National Cricket Stadium of St. George's hosts domestic and international cricket matches. Devon Smith, West Indies record holder to win the List-A West Indian domestic competition for the second time, was born in a small town of Hermitage.

See also

- Outline of Grenada
- Index of Grenada-related articles

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External links

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- Chief of State and Cabinet Members (<https://web.archive.org/web/20081210073815/https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-g/grenada.html>)
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COUNTRY: GUADELOUPE

STATISTICS

POPULATION: 400,132

LANGUAGE(S): FRENCH

DEMONYM: GUADELOUPEAN

GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE: OVERSEAS REGION OF FRANCE

CURRENCY: EURO

CLIMATE: A DRY SEASON CALLED LENT GOES FROM JAN - JUNE; "WINTER" IS A WET SEASON JULY - DEC

PRACTICING

PRACTICES IN COUNTRY: 1 FIRM

NUMBER OF REGISTERED ARCHITECTS:

CERTIFICATION NEEDS:

REQUIREMENTS:

HUMANITIES

CULTURE: BEST KNOWN FOR ITS LITERACY ACHIEVEMENTS.

HISTORY: A LONG HISTORY OF COLONIALIZATION FROM FRANCE WITH RESISTANCE OF EUROPEAN DOMIN

THINGS TO CONSIDER

DRIVES ON THE: RIGHT

ECONOMY: DEPENDENT UPON MAINLAND FRANCE FOR LARGE SUBSIDIES AND IMPORTS;

CRIME: ONE OF THE SAFEST ISLANDS IN THE CARIBBEAN; MOST VIOLENCE CAUSED BY DRUG TRADE.

TOURISM: 83.3% OF TOURISTS VISIT FROM FRANCE, 10.8% COMING FROM REST OF EUROPE.

Guadeloupe

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

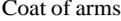
Guadeloupe (/ɡwɑːdəˈluːp/; French pronunciation: [ɡwadəlup]; Antillean Creole: *Gwadoloup*) is an insular region of France located in the Leeward Islands, part of the Lesser Antilles in the Caribbean. Administratively, it is an overseas region consisting of a single overseas department. With a land area of 1,628 square kilometres (629 square miles) and an estimated population of 400,132 as of January 2015, it is the largest and most populous European Union territory in North America.^[3]^[note 1]

Guadeloupe's two main islands are Basse-Terre to the west and Grande-Terre to the east, which are separated by a narrow strait that is crossed with bridges. They are often referred to as a single island. The department also includes the Dependencies of Guadeloupe, which include the smaller islands of Marie-Galante and La Désirade, and the Îles des Saintes.

Guadeloupe, like the other overseas departments, is an integral part of France. As a constituent territory of the European Union and the Eurozone, the euro^[4] is its official currency and any European Union citizen is free to settle and work there indefinitely. As an overseas department, however, it is not part of the Schengen Area. The prefecture (regional capital) of Guadeloupe is the city of Basse-Terre, which lies on the island of the same name. The official language is French and Antillean Creole is spoken virtually by the entire population except recent arrivals from metropolitan France.

Contents

- 1 Origin of the name
- 2 History
 - 2.1 20th century
 - 2.2 21st century
- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Volcanoes
 - 3.2 Hurricanes
 - 3.3 Climate
- 4 Demographics
 - 4.1 Religion
 - 4.2 Major urban areas
 - 4.3 Health
- 5 Administration
- 6 Economy
 - 6.1 Tourism
 - 6.2 Agriculture
 - 6.3 Light industry
- 7 Culture
 - 7.1 Language

	
Guadeloupe	
Overseas region and department of France	
<div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div>  </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div>  </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div>  </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div> <div>  </div> </div> </div> </div> </div> </div>	

- 7.2 High culture
- 7.3 Music
- 7.4 Crime
- 8 Sport
- 9 Transport
- 10 See also
- 11 Notes
- 12 References
- 13 External links

NUTS Region	FRA
Website	www.guadeloupe.pref.gouv.fr (http://www.guadeloupe.pref.gouv.fr) www.cr-guadeloupe.fr (http://www.cr-guadeloupe.fr) www.cg971.fr (http://www.cg971.fr)

Origin of the name

Christopher Columbus named the island *Santa María de Guadalupe* in 1493 after the Virgin Mary, venerated in the Spanish town of Guadalupe, in Extremadura. Upon becoming a French colony, the Spanish name was retained though altered to French orthography and phonology.

History

The island was called "Karukera" (or "The Island of Beautiful Waters") by the Arawak people, who settled on there in 300 AD/CE. During the 8th century, the Caribs came and killed the existing population of Amerindians on the island.

During his second trip to the Americas, in November 1493, Christopher Columbus became the first European to land on Guadeloupe, while seeking fresh water. He called it *Santa María de Guadalupe de Extremadura*, after the image of the Virgin Mary venerated at the Spanish monastery of Villuercas, in Guadalupe, Extremadura. The expedition set ashore just south of Capesterre, but left no settlers behind.

Columbus is credited with discovering the pineapple on the island of Guadeloupe in 1493, although the fruit had long been grown in South America. He called it *piña de Indias*, which can be correctly translated as "pine cone of the Indies."^[5]^[6]^[7]^[8]

During the 17th century, the Caribs fought against the Spanish settlers and repelled them.

After successful settlement on the island of St. Christophe (St. Kitts), the French Company of the American Islands delegated Charles Lienard (Liénard de L'Olive) and Jean Duplessis Ossonville, Lord of Ossonville to colonize one or any of the region's islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique, or Dominica.

Due to Martinique's inhospitable nature, the duo resolved to settle in Guadeloupe in 1635, took possession of the island, and wiped out many of the Carib Amerindians. It was annexed to the kingdom of France in 1674.



Guadeloupe – Location Map – UNOCHA



The Battle of the Saintes fought near Guadeloupe between France and Britain, 1782.

Over the next century, the British seized the island several times. The economy benefited from the lucrative sugar trade, which commenced during the closing decades of the 17th century. Guadeloupe produced more sugar than all the British islands combined, worth about £6 million a year. The British captured Guadeloupe in 1759. The British government decided that Canada was strategically more important and kept Canada while returning Guadeloupe to France in the Treaty of Paris (1763) that ended the Seven Years War.^[9]

In 1790, following the outbreak of the French Revolution, the monarchists of Guadeloupe refused to obey the new laws of equal rights for the free people of color and attempted to declare independence. The ensuing conflict with the republicans, who were faithful to revolutionary France, caused a fire to break out in Pointe-à-Pitre that devastated a third of the town. The monarchists ultimately overcame the republicans and declared independence in 1791. The monarchists then refused to receive the new governor that Paris had appointed in 1792. In 1793, a slave rebellion broke out, which made the upper classes turn to the British and ask them to occupy the island.

In an effort to take advantage of the chaos ensuing from the French Revolution, Britain seized Guadeloupe in 1794, holding control from 21 April until December 1794, when republican governor Victor Hugues obliged the British general to surrender.^[10] Hugues succeeded in freeing the slaves, who then turned on the slave owners who controlled the sugar plantations.

In 1802, Napoleon Bonaparte issued the Law of 20 May 1802. It restored slavery to all colonies the British had captured during the French Revolutionary Wars—but did not apply to certain French overseas possessions, such as Guadeloupe, Guyane, and Saint-Domingue. Napoleon sent an expeditionary force to recapture the island from the rebellious slaves.

Louis Delgrès and a group of revolutionary soldiers killed themselves on the slopes of the Matouba volcano when it became obvious that the invading troops would take control of the island. The occupation force killed approximately 10,000 Guadeloupeans.

On 4 February 1810 the British once again seized the island and continued to occupy it until 1816. By the Anglo-Swedish alliance of 3 March 1813, Britain ceded it to Sweden for a brief period of 15 months. During this time, the British administration remained in place and British governors continued to govern the island.^[11]

In the Treaty of Paris of 1814, Sweden ceded Guadeloupe once more to France. An ensuing settlement between Sweden and the British gave rise to the Guadeloupe Fund. The Treaty of Vienna in 1815 definitively acknowledged French control of Guadeloupe.

Slavery was finally abolished on the island (and in all French possessions) on 28 May 1848 at the initiative of Victor Schoelcher.

Guadeloupe lost 12,000 of its 150,000 residents in the cholera epidemic of 1865–66.^[12]

The colonial history of Guadeloupe has been addressed in research publications.^[13]

20th century



A bust of French abolitionist Victor Schoelcher.

In 1925, after the trial of Henry Sidambarom (Justice of the Peace and defender of the cause of Indian workers), Raymond Poincaré decided to grant French nationality and the right to vote to Indian citizens.^[14]

In 1946, the colony of Guadeloupe became an overseas department of France. Then in 1974, it became an administrative center. Its deputies sit in the French National Assembly in Paris.

In 1967, rallies became riots, and repression backed by the prefect Pierre Bolotte caused dozens of deaths.

21st century

In 2007 the island communes of Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy were officially detached from Guadeloupe and became two separate French overseas collectivities with their own local administration.^[15] Their combined population was 35,930 and their combined land area was 74.2 km² (28.6 sq mi) as of the 1999 census.

In January 2009, an umbrella group of approximately fifty labour union and other associations (known in the local Antillean Creole as the Liyannaj Kont Pwofitasyon (LKP), led by Élie Domota) called for a €200 (\$260 USD) monthly pay increase for the island's low income workers. The protesters have proposed that authorities "lower business taxes as a top up to company finances" to pay for the €200 pay raises. Employers and business leaders in Guadeloupe have said that they cannot afford the salary increase. The strike lasted 44 days, ending with an accord reached on 5 March 2009. Tourism suffered greatly during this time and affected the 2010 tourist season as well.

The 2009 French Caribbean general strikes exposed deep ethnic, racial, and class tensions and disparities within Guadeloupe.^[16]

Geography

Located as the southernmost of the Leeward Islands in the eastern Caribbean Sea, Guadeloupe comprises two main islands: Basse-Terre Island and Grande-Terre, which are separated by a narrow sea channel called Salt River. The adjacent French islands of La Désirade, Les Saintes, and Marie-Galante are under jurisdiction of Guadeloupe.

Western Basse-Terre has a rough volcanic relief while eastern Grande-Terre features rolling hills and flat plains. La Grande Soufrière is the highest mountain peak in the Lesser Antilles, with an elevation of 1,467 metres (4,813 feet).

Further to the north, Saint-Barthélemy and the northern French part of Saint Martin were previously under the jurisdiction of Guadeloupe but on 7 December 2003, both of these areas voted to become overseas territorial collectivities separate from Guadeloupe, a decision that took effect on 22 February 2007.^[17]



"Guadeloupean woman", c. 1911.



A satellite photo of Guadeloupe.

Volcanoes

There is an active volcano in Guadeloupe called "La Soufrière," located in the South of Basse-Terre. La Soufrière is actually a part of a volcanic complex that is composed of the Carmichael volcanoes, the Nez Cassé, the Echelle, the Cistern and the Madeleine. It is one of the nine active volcanoes of the Lesser Antilles. Its last eruption was in 1976. This eruption led to the evacuation of the southern part of Basse-Terre. 73,600 people were displaced over a course of three and a half months following the eruption.



A beach at Feuillère.

Hurricanes

The island was devastated by several hurricanes in modern times:

- On 12 September 1928, the Okeechobee hurricane caused extensive damage and killed thousands of people.
- On 22 August 1964, Guadeloupe was ravaged by Hurricane Cleo, which killed 14 people.
- On 27 September 1966, Category 3 Hurricane Inez caused extensive damage, mostly in Grande-Terre and north Basse-Terre Island, killing 33 people. Charles De Gaulle visited the islands after the hurricanes and declared them a disaster area.
- On 17 September 1989, Category 4 Hurricane Hugo caused extensive damage, destroyed 10,000 homes leaving more than 35,000 homeless. It destroyed 100 percent of the banana crop, and 60 percent of the sugar cane crop.^[18]
- From late August to mid September 1995, the island was in the path of three successive cyclones: Tropical Storm Iris on 28 August caused minor damages; Hurricane Luis on 5 September caused moderate damage on the north coast of Grande-Terre; and Hurricane Marilyn on 15 September caused moderate damage in Basse-Terre.
- On 21 September 1998, Hurricane Georges pounded the islands, causing moderate damage and destroying 90% of the banana crop.
- On 5 September 2017, Hurricane Irma caused relatively minor damage while producing significant destruction on other islands, such as Saint Martin.^[19] In fact, the island is a base for relief efforts on St. Martin (Collectivity of Saint Martin) and St. Barts (Saint Barthélemy); France's President Emmanuel Macron arrived at Pointe-a-Pitre airport on 12 September to begin his tour of those devastated islands and the distribution of relief supplies.^[20]
- On 19 September 2017, Hurricane Maria battered Guadeloupe overnight as a category 4 or category 5 hurricane, causing flooding and intense winds, with the eye passing near Basse-Terre.^{[21][22][23]} Shortly after the hurricane hit, authorities reported at least one death and two reported missing after the sinking of their boat, serious flooding, and widespread damage to buildings in certain areas, with roofs blown off buildings and lack of power in 80,000 homes.^[24]

Climate

Guadeloupe has a tropical climate tempered by maritime influences and the Trade Winds. We distinguish two seasons in Guadeloupe and nearby islands:

- a dry season called "Lent" that goes from January to June;
- a wet season called "winter", which lasts from July to December.

Climate data for Guadeloupe													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average high °C (°F)	29.1 (84.4)	29.1 (84.4)	29.4 (84.9)	30.1 (86.2)	30.7 (87.3)	31.3 (88.3)	31.5 (88.7)	31.6 (88.9)	31.5 (88.7)	31.2 (88.2)	30.5 (86.9)	29.6 (85.3)	30.5 (86.9)
Daily mean °C (°F)	24.5 (76.1)	24.5 (76.1)	24.9 (76.8)	25.9 (78.6)	26.9 (80.4)	27.5 (81.5)	27.6 (81.7)	27.7 (81.9)	27.4 (81.3)	27.0 (80.6)	26.3 (79.3)	25.2 (77.4)	26.3 (79.3)
Average low °C (°F)	19.9 (67.8)	19.9 (67.8)	20.4 (68.7)	21.7 (71.1)	23.1 (73.6)	23.8 (74.8)	23.8 (74.8)	23.7 (74.7)	23.3 (73.9)	22.9 (73.2)	22.1 (71.8)	20.9 (69.6)	22.1 (71.8)
Average precipitation mm (inches)	84 (3.31)	64 (2.52)	73 (2.87)	123 (4.84)	148 (5.83)	118 (4.65)	150 (5.91)	198 (7.8)	236 (9.29)	228 (8.98)	220 (8.66)	137 (5.39)	1,779 (70.04)
Average precipitation days	15.0	11.5	11.5	11.6	13.6	12.8	15.4	16.2	16.6	18.1	16.6	15.7	174.6
Mean monthly sunshine hours	235.6	229.1	232.5	240.0	244.9	237.0	244.9	248.0	216.0	217.0	207.0	223.2	2,775.2
Source: Hong Kong Observatory ^[25]													

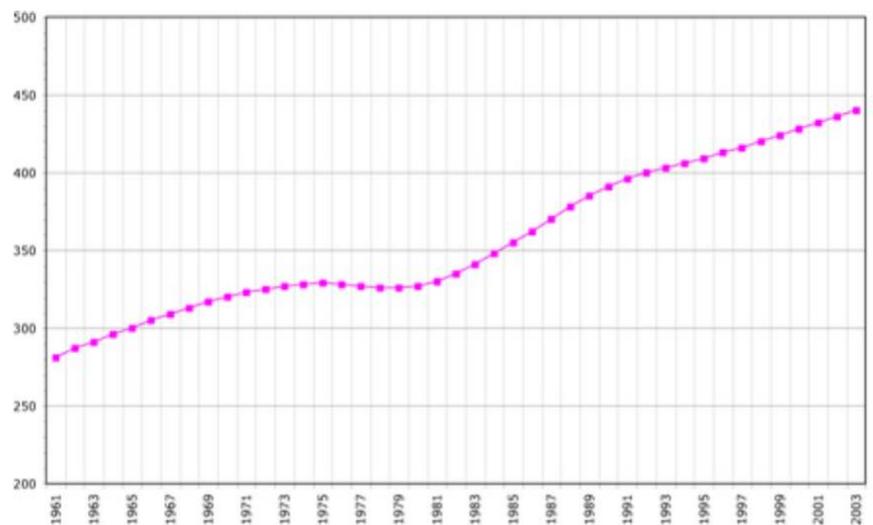
Demographics

Guadeloupe recorded a population of 402,119 in the 2013 census.^[1]

The population of Guadeloupe is mainly of African or mixed descent of Europeans, Indians, Lebanese, Syrians, Chinese, and Carib Amerindians (remnants of the original pre-European population). The archipelago of Îles des Saintes is mostly populated by the descendants of colonists from Brittany and Normandy. It is largely Roman Catholic, speaking French and a Creole (Antillean Creole).^[26]

The population of Guadeloupe has been stable recently, with a net increase of only 335 people between the 2008 and 2013 censuses.^[27]

In 2012 the average population density in Guadeloupe was 247.7 inhabitants for every square kilometre, which is very high in comparison to the whole France's 116.5 inhabitants for every square kilometre. One third of the land is devoted to agriculture and all mountains are uninhabitable. This lack of space and shelter makes the population density even higher.



Guadeloupe's population, 1961-2003.

Because Guadeloupe is a wealthy country in comparison to the surrounding Caribbean islands, immigration is popular. People immigrate to Guadeloupe because of its stronger political stability and greater agricultural job opportunities. However, just because foreigners immigrate to Guadeloupe for its opportunities does not mean the country is economically stable; rather, it is stable in comparison to the surrounding regions/islands.

Religion

Over 80% of the population are Roman Catholic. Guadeloupe is in the diocese of Basse-Terre (et Pointe-à-Pitre).^{[28][29]}

Evangelical Protestants concentrated in newly arriving denominations from the United States are also present in Guadeloupe.

Major urban areas

Rank	Urban Area	Pop. (08)	Pop. (99)	Δ Pop	Activities	Island
1	Pointe-à-Pitre	132,884	132,751	▲ +0.10 %	<i>economic center</i>	<i>Grande-Terre and Basse-Terre</i>
2	Basse-Terre	37,455	36,126	▲ +3.68 %	<i>administrative center</i>	<i>Basse-Terre</i>
3	Sainte-Anne	23,457	20,410	▲ +14.9 %	<i>tourism</i>	<i>Grande-Terre</i>
4	Petit-Bourg	22,171	20,528	▲ +8.00 %	<i>agriculture</i>	<i>Basse-Terre</i>
5	Le Moule	21,347	20,827	▲ +2.50 %	<i>agriculture</i>	<i>Grande-Terre</i>

Health

In 2011, life expectancy at birth was recorded at 77.0 years for males and 83.5 for females.^[30]

Medical centers in Guadeloupe include:

A University Hospital Center (CHU) in Pointe-à-Pitre

A Regional Hospital Center (CHR) in Basse-Terre

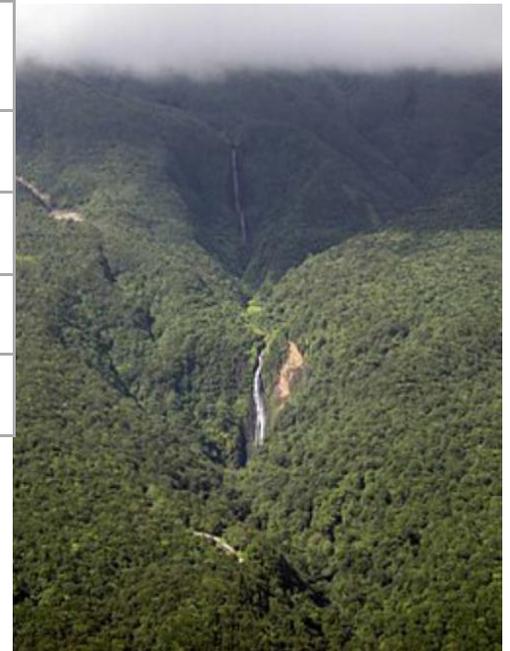
Four hospitals located in Capesterre-Belle-Eau, Pointe-Noire, Bouillante and Saint-Claude^[31]

The *Institut Pasteur de la Guadeloupe*, which is located in Pointe-à-Pitre and is responsible for researching environmental hygiene, vaccinations, and the spread of tuberculosis and mycobacteria^[32]

Administration



Pointe-à-Pitre church



Carbet Falls, a popular tourist site in Guadeloupe, with approximately 400,000 visitors annually.

Guadeloupe sends four deputies to the French National Assembly and three senators to the French Senate.

Guadeloupe is divided into two arrondissements (Basse-Terre and Pointe-à-Pitre), 21 cantons and 32 communes.

Formerly called the Regional Council of Guadeloupe, following the local elections of March 2015 the administering Assembly now bears the name of the Departmental Council of Guadeloupe.

Economy

In 2006, the GDP per capita of Guadeloupe at market exchange rates, not at PPP, was €17,338 (US\$21,780).^[33]

The economy of Guadeloupe depends on tourism, agriculture, light industry and services. It is dependent upon mainland France for large subsidies and imports. Unemployment is especially high among the youth.

Tourism

Tourism is a key industry, with 83.3% of tourists visiting from metropolitan France, 10.8% coming from the rest of Europe, 3.4% coming from the United States, 1.5% coming from Canada, 0.4% coming from South America, and 0.6% coming from the rest of the world.^[34] An increasingly large number of cruise ships visit the islands.

Agriculture

The traditional sugar cane crop is slowly being replaced by other crops, such as bananas (which now supply about 50% of export earnings), eggplant, guinnep, noni, sapotilla, paroka, pikinga, giraumon squash, yam, gourd, plantain, christophine, monbin, prunecafé, cocoa, jackfruit, pomegranate, and many varieties of flowers. Other vegetables and root crops are cultivated for local consumption, although Guadeloupe is dependent upon imported food, mainly from rest of France.

Light industry

Light industry features sugar and rum, solar energy, and many industrial products. Most manufactured goods and fuel are imported.

Culture

Language

As it is a region of France, Guadeloupe's sole official language is French, which is spoken by nearly all of the population. In addition, most of the population can also speak Guadeloupean Creole (GC),^[35] a variety of Antillean Creole French. Throughout the island's colonial history, GC was the language of local community, of resistance to European domination, of ethno-racial identity. Consequently, when from the early 1970s to the mid 1980s, Guadeloupe saw the rise and fall of an at-times violent movement for (greater) political independence from France,^{[36][37]} GC was claimed as key to local cultural pride and unity. In the 1990s, in the wake of the independence movement's demise, GC retained its de-stigmatized status as a symbol of local culture, albeit without de jure support from the state and without de facto being practiced with equal competence in all strata and age groups of society.^{[38][39]} The third millennium, however, brought

greater acceptance of GC on the part of France, such that it was introduced as an elective in public schools. Today, the question as to whether French and GC are stable in Guadeloupe, i.e. whether both languages are practised widely and competently throughout society, remains a subject of active research.^[40]

High culture

Guadeloupe's culture is probably best known for the islanders' literary achievements, particularly the poetry of Saint-John Perse, the pseudonym used by Alexis Léger. Perse won the 1960 Nobel Prize in Literature "for the soaring flight and the evocative images of his poetry, which, in a visionary fashion, reflects the conditions of our time."

Guadeloupe has always had a rich literary output, continued today by many living writers, poets, novelists, essayists and journalists, among them Mesdames Maryse Condé and Simone Schwarz-Bart, Ernest Pépin.

French writer Gisèle Pineau, who currently lives in Marie-Galante, has Guadeloupean parentage.

Music

Music and dance are also very popular, and the widely accepted interaction of African, French and Indian^[41] cultures has given birth to some original new forms specific to the archipelago. Since the 1970s, Guadeloupean music increasingly claimed the local language, Guadeloupean Creole as the preferred language of popular music. Islanders enjoy many local dance styles including zouk, zouk-love, kompa, as well as the modern international dances such as hip hop, etc.

One of his most famous artists was Henri Debs (1932-2013) a musician and producer of French, origin of Lebanese parents, who made many Caribbean rhythms like Zouk (Soca in Spanish) and Belé heard throughout the Antilles, North, Central, Suramerica and France.

Traditional Guadeloupean music includes *la biguine*, *kadans*, cadence-lypso, zouk, and gwo ka such as Anzala and Ti Celeste. Popular music artists and bands such as Experience 7, Francky Vincent, Kassav' (which included Patrick St-Eloi), and Gilles Floro embody the traditional music style of the island and the new generation of music, while some other musical artists, like Tom Frager (who grew up in Guadeloupe), perform colorful reggae music that defines the Guadeloupe island as paradise-like. Many international festivals take place in Guadeloupe, like the Creole Blues Festival, hosted in Marie-Galante. All the Euro-French forms of art are also ubiquitous. The melting pot is emphasized by other communities (from Brazil, Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Lebanon, Syria), who live on the island and share their cultures.

Another element of Guadeloupean culture is its dress. A few women (particularly of the older generation) wear a unique style of traditional dress, with many layers of colourful fabric, now only worn on special occasions. On festive occasions they also wore a madras (originally a "kerchief" from South India) head scarf tied in many different symbolic ways, each with a different name. The headdress could be tied in the "bat" style, or the "firefighter" style, as well as the "Guadeloupean woman". Jewelry, mainly gold, is also important in the Guadeloupean lady's dress, a product of European, African and Indian inspiration.



Maryse Condé, author of historical fiction.



Carnival of Guadeloupe.

French born dancers, choreographers, comedians Laurent and Larry Bourgeois (known as Les Twins) are also of Guadeloupean descent. Noted for their fresh take on hip-hop dance, this twin duo made an impression on the dance world while touring with Cirque du Soleil on the Michael Jackson: The Immortal World Tour, and with Beyoncé on The Mrs. Carter Show World Tour, as well as the On the Run Tour.

Crime

Guadeloupe is the most violent overseas French department.^[42] The high level of unemployment combined with the legacy of slavery caused violence and crime to rise especially in 2009 and 2010, the years following a great worldwide recession.^[43] Since the population is so small, the murder rate is slightly more than that of Paris, but with a murder rate of 8.2 per 100,000, Guadeloupe is one of the safest islands in the Caribbean.^[44] Most of this violence is caused by the drug trade or domestic disputes, and the residents of Guadeloupe describe the island as a place with not a lot of everyday crime.^[44]

Sport

Football (soccer) is popular in Guadeloupe, and several notable footballers are of Guadeloupean origin:

- Thierry Henry, a star of the French national team and MLS club New York Red Bulls, often visits, as his father Antoine was originally from the island.
- Anthony Martial, Manchester United star is of Guadeloupean descent.
- William Gallas (Guadeloupean parentage).
- Lilian Thuram, defender for France and most notably FC Barcelona, was born in Guadeloupe.
- Alexandre Lacazette, striker for Arsenal and France, has Guadeloupean parentage.
- Thomas Lemar, midfielder for Monaco and France, was born in Baie-Mahault.
- The former Manchester United, Everton and France striker Louis Saha.
- Newcastle United F.C. striker Yoan Gouffran.
- Kettering Town goalkeeper Willy Gueret.
- Pascal Chimbona, footballer. Chimbona was born in Guadeloupe.
- Inter Milan star Jonathan Biabiany.
- Stéphane Auvray currently plays for New York Red Bulls in Major League Soccer.
- Ronald Zubar and his younger brother Stéphane, who are both footballers, were born in Guadeloupe.
- Miguel Comminges, who currently plays as a defender for English side Stevenage F.C..
- Dimitri Foulquier, who plays as a defender at Granada CF.
- Teddy Riner, Riner became the youngest world champion in the history of judo when he won the world title in 2007 aged 18 years and five months.
- Jocelyn Angloma, defender, who played for Paris Saint-Germain, Olympique de Marseille, and Inter Milan, among other clubs, and for the French national team and the Guadeloupean national football team, was born in Les Abymes.



Christine Arron, the world's fifth-fastest female 100-metre (330-foot) sprinter (10.73 sec), of all time.

The national football team experienced success in 2007, advancing all the way to the 2007 CONCACAF Gold Cup semi-finals, where they were defeated 1–0 by CONCACAF powerhouse Mexico.

NFL, *Jacques Chery was undrafted by the Dallas Cowboys and later traded to the Buffalo Bills based in New York, and he also played in the British American Football League for Manchester Titans, Yorkshire Rams and Doncaster Mustangs.

Basketball is also popular. Best known players are the NBA players Mickaël Piétrus, Johan Petro, Rodrigue Beaubois, and Mickael Gelabale (now playing in Russia), who were born on the island. Utah Jazz star centre Rudy Gobert is also of half guadeloupean descent. Also known is trainer and former player Paul Chonchon, after whom a basketball stadium in Pointe-à-Pitre is named.^[45]

Many fine track and field athletes, such as Marie-José Pérec, Patricia Girard-Léno, Christine Arron, and Wilhem Belocian, are also Guadeloupe natives. Triple Olympic champion Marie-José Pérec, fourth-fastest 100-metre (330-foot) runner Christine Arron, and fencing champion Laura Flessel were all born and raised in Guadeloupe.

Even though Guadeloupe is part of France, it has its own sports teams. Rugby union is a small but rapidly growing sport in Guadeloupe. France international and RC Toulon centre Mathieu Bastareaud (cousin of footballer William Gallas) was born in Guadeloupe.

The island is also internationally best known for hosting the Karujet Race – Jet Ski World Championship since 1998. This nine-stage, four-day event attracts competitors from around the world (mostly Caribbeans, Americans, and Europeans). The Karujet, generally made up of seven races around the island, has an established reputation as one of the most difficult championships in which to compete.

The Route du Rhum is one of the most prominent nautical French sporting events, occurring every four years.

Bodybuilder Serge Nubret was born in Anse-Bertrand, Grande-Terre, representing the French state in various bodybuilding competitions throughout the 1960s and 1970s including the IFBB's Mr. Olympia contest, taking 3rd place every year from 1972 to 1974, and 2nd place in 1975.^[46] Bodybuilder Marie-Laure Mahabir also hails from Guadeloupe.



France's all-time top scorer, half Guadeloupean Thierry Henry.

Guadeloupe also has some less conventional sporting groups and associations, which include The Skywalkers Parkour Team and Rollers forward, both based in Sainte Anne. The country has also a passion for cycling. It hosted the French Cycling Championships in 2009 and continues to host the Tour de Guadeloupe every year. Guadeloupe also continues to host the Orange Open Guadeloupe tennis tournament (since 2011) and the Tour of Guadeloupe sailing, which was founded in 1981.

Transport

On 9 September 2013 the county government voted in favour of a constructing a tramway in Pointe-à-Pitre. The first phase will link northern Abymes to downtown Pointe-à-Pitre by 2019. The second phase, scheduled for completion in 2023, will extend the line to serve the university.^[47]

See also

- Bibliography of Guadeloupe
- Index of Guadeloupe-related articles
- 2009 French Caribbean general strikes
- Slavery in the British and French Caribbean
- List of colonial and departmental heads of Guadeloupe
- Leeward Islands
- List of Guadeloupe-related topics
- All pages beginning with "Guadeloupe"
- Overseas departments and territories of France

Notes

1. Figure without the territories of Saint-Martin and Saint-Barthélemy detached from Guadeloupe on 22 February 2007.

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Haiti

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Haiti (/ˈheɪti/; French: *Hàïti* [a.iti]; Haitian Creole: *Ayiti* [ajiti]), officially the **Republic of Haiti** (French: *République d'Haïti*; Haitian Creole: *Repiblik Ayiti*)^[8] and formerly called **Hayti**,^[note 1] is a country located on the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean Sea. It occupies the western three-eighths of the island, which it shares with the Dominican Republic.^{[11][12]} Haiti is 27,750 square kilometres (10,714 sq mi) in size and has an estimated 10.8 million people,^[3] making it the most populous country in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the second-most populous country in the Caribbean as a whole.

The region was originally inhabited by the indigenous Taíno people. Spain discovered the island on 5 December 1492 during the first voyage of Christopher Columbus across the Atlantic. When Columbus initially landed in Haiti, he had thought he had found India or Asia.^[13] On Christmas Day 1492, Columbus' flagship the *Santa Maria* ran aground north of what is now Limonade.^{[14][15][16][17]} As a consequence, Columbus ordered his men to salvage what they could from the ship, and he created the first European settlement in the Americas, naming it La Navidad after the day the ship was destroyed.

The island was named *La Española* and claimed by Spain, which ruled until the early 17th century. Competing claims and settlements by the French led to the western portion of the island being ceded to France, which named it *Saint-Domingue*. Sugarcane plantations, worked by slaves brought from Africa, were established by colonists.

In the midst of the French Revolution (1789–1799), slaves and free people of colour revolted in the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), culminating in the abolition of slavery and the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte's army at the Battle of Vertières. Afterward the sovereign nation of Haiti was established on 1 January 1804 – the first independent nation of Latin America and the Caribbean, the second republic in the Americas, the only nation in the western hemisphere to have defeated three European superpowers (France, Spain, and the UK), and the only nation in the world established as a result of a successful slave

Republic of Haiti

République d'Haïti (French)

Repiblik Ayiti (Haitian Creole)



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto:

"Liberté, égalité, fraternité" (French)^[1]

"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"

Motto on traditional coat of arms:

"L'union fait la force" (French)

"Union makes strength"

Anthem: *La Dessalinienne* (French)

"The Dessalines Song"

0:00

MENU



revolt.^{[18][19]} The rebellion that began in 1791 was led by a former slave and the first black general of the French Army, Toussaint Louverture, whose military genius and political acumen transformed an entire society of slaves into an independent country. Upon his death in a prison in France, he was succeeded by his lieutenant, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who declared Haiti's sovereignty and later became the first Emperor of Haiti, *Jacques I*.^{[20][21][22][23]} The Haitian Revolution lasted just over a dozen years; and apart from Alexandre Pétion, the first President of the Republic, all the first leaders of government were former slaves.^[24] The Citadelle Laferrière is the largest fortress in the Americas. Henri Christophe – former slave and first king of Haiti, *Henri I* – built it to withstand a possible foreign attack.^{[25][26]}

It is a founding member of the United Nations, Organization of American States (OAS),^[27] Association of Caribbean States,^[28] and the International Francophonie Organisation. In addition to CARICOM, it is a member of the International Monetary Fund,^[29] World Trade Organization,^[30] and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. It has the lowest Human Development Index in the Americas. Most recently, in February 2004, a *coup d'état* originating in the north of the country forced the resignation and exile of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. A provisional government took control with security provided by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 Pre-Columbian history
 - 2.2 Spanish rule (1492–1625)
 - 2.3 French rule (1625–1804)
 - 2.4 Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)
 - 2.5 First Empire (1804–1806)
 - 2.6 State of Haiti, Kingdom of Haiti and the Republic (1806–1820)
 - 2.7 Haitian unification (1821–1844)
 - 2.8 Second Empire (1849–1859)
 - 2.9 Early 20th century
 - 2.10 Duvalier dynasty (1957–1986)
 - 2.11 Contemporary history



Capital and largest city	Port-au-Prince 18°32′N
Official languages	French Haitian Creole
Ethnic groups	95% Black 5% mulatto and white ^[2]
Demonym	Haitian
Government	Unitary semi-presidential republic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • Prime Minister 	Jovenel Moïse Jack Guy Lafontant
Legislature	Parliament
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper house • Lower house 	Senate Chamber of Deputies
Independence from France	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declared • Recognized • First Empire • Southern Republic • Northern State • Kingdom • Unification of Hispaniola • Dissolution • Second Empire • Republic • Current constitution 	1 January 1804 17 April 1825 22 September 1804 9 March 1806 17 October 1806 28 March 1811 9 February 1822 27 February 1844 26 August 1849 15 January 1859 29 March 1987

- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
 - 3.2 Geology
 - 3.3 Environment
- 4 Government and politics
 - 4.1 Cabinet
 - 4.2 Military
 - 4.3 Law enforcement and crime
 - 4.4 Administrative divisions
- 5 Economy
 - 5.1 Foreign aid
 - 5.2 Trade
 - 5.3 Energy
 - 5.4 Personal income
 - 5.5 Real estate
 - 5.6 Agriculture
 - 5.7 Currency
 - 5.8 Tourism
 - 5.9 Caracol Industrial Park
- 6 Infrastructure
 - 6.1 Transportation
 - 6.2 Airports
 - 6.3 Bus service
 - 6.4 Communications
 - 6.5 Water supply and sanitation
- 7 Demographics
 - 7.1 Population genetics
 - 7.1.1 Autosomal DNA
 - 7.1.2 Y-chromosome and Mitochondrial DNA
 - 7.1.3 Duffy antigens
 - 7.2 Casta discrimination
 - 7.3 Religion
 - 7.4 Languages
 - 7.5 Emigration
 - 7.6 Largest cities
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Art
 - 8.2 Music and dance
 - 8.3 Literature
 - 8.4 Cuisine
 - 8.5 Architecture
 - 8.6 Museums
 - 8.7 Folklore and mythology
 - 8.8 National holidays and festivals
 - 8.9 Sports
- 9 Notable natives and residents

Area	
• Total	27,750 km ² (10,710 sq mi) (143rd)
• Water (%)	0.7
Population	
• 2016 estimate	10,847,334 ^[3] (85th)
• Density	382/km ² (989.4/sq mi) (32nd)
GDP (PPP)	2017 estimate
• Total	\$19.979 billion ^[4]
• Per capita	\$1,819 ^[4]
GDP (nominal)	2017 estimate
• Total	\$7.897 billion ^[4]
• Per capita	\$719 ^[4]
Gini (2012)	60.8 ^[5] very high
HDI (2015)	▲ 0.493 ^[6] low · 163rd
Currency	Haitian gourde (G) (HTG)
Time zone	EST (UTC−5)
• Summer (DST)	EDT (UTC−4)
Drives on the	right
Calling code	+509
ISO 3166 code	HT
Internet TLD	.ht .gouv.ht .edu.ht ^[7]

- 10 Education
- 11 Health
- 12 See also
- 13 Notes
- 14 References
- 15 Further reading
- 16 External links

Etymology

The name Haiti (or *Hayti*) comes from the indigenous Taíno language which was the native name^[note 2] given to the entire island of Hispaniola to mean, "land of high mountains."^[34] The *h* is silent in French and the *ï* in *Haïti*, is a diacritical mark used to show that the second vowel is pronounced separately, as in the word *naïve*.^[35] In English, this rule for the pronunciation is often disregarded, thus the spelling *Haiti* is used. There are different anglicizations for its pronunciation such as HIGH-ti, high-EE-ti and haa-EE-ti, which are still in use, but *HAY-ti* is the most widespread and established.^[36]

The name was restored by Haitian revolutionary Jean-Jacques Dessalines as the official name of independent Saint-Domingue, as a tribute to the Amerindian predecessors.^[37]

In French, Haiti's nickname is the *Pearl of the Antilles* (*La Perle des Antilles*) because of both its natural beauty,^[38] and the amount of wealth it accumulated for the Kingdom of France, as it was considered the richest colony owned by any of the European powers at the time.^[39]

History

Pre-Columbian history

At the time of European encounter, the island of Hispaniola, of which Haiti occupies the western three-eighths,^{[11][12]} was one of many Caribbean islands inhabited by the Taíno Indians, speakers of an Arawakan language called Taino, which has been preserved in the Haitian Creole language. The Taíno name for the entire island was *Haiti*. The people had migrated over centuries into the Caribbean islands from South America. Genetic studies show they were related to the Yanomami of the Amazon Basin. They also originated in Central and South America. After migrating to Caribbean



The five caciquedoms of Hispaniola at the time of the arrival of Christopher Columbus

islands, in the 15th century, the Taíno were pushed into the northeast Caribbean islands by the Caribs.^[40]

In the Taíno societies of the Caribbean islands, the largest unit of political organization was led by a *cacique*, or chief, as the Europeans understood them. The island of Haiti was divided among five Caciquats: the Magua in the north east, the Marien in the north west, the Xaragua in the south west, the Maguana in the center region of Cibao and the Higüey in the south east.^{[41][42]} The caciquedoms were tributary kingdoms, with payment consisting of harvests.

Taíno cultural artifacts include cave paintings in several locations in the country. These have become national symbols of Haiti and tourist attractions. Modern-day Léogane started as a French colonial town in the southwest, is beside the former capital of the caciquedom of *Xaragua*.^[40]

Spanish rule (1492–1625)



Christopher Columbus landing on Hispaniola

Navigator Christopher Columbus landed in Haiti on 5 December 1492, in an area that he named *Môle Saint-Nicolas*,^[43] and claimed the island for the Crown of Castile. Nineteen days later, his ship the *Santa María* ran aground near the present site of Cap-Haïtien. Columbus left 39 men on the island, who founded the settlement of La Navidad.



1510 Taíno pictograph telling a story of missionaries arriving in Hispaniola

The sailors carried endemic Eurasian infectious diseases. The natives lacked immunity to these new diseases and died in great numbers in epidemics.^{[44][45]} The first recorded smallpox epidemic in the Americas erupted on Hispaniola in 1507.^[46] The *encomienda* system forced natives to work in gold mines and plantations.^[47]

The Spanish passed the Laws of Burgos, 1512–13, which forbade the maltreatment of natives, endorsed their conversion to Catholicism,^[48] and gave legal framework to *encomiendas*. The natives were brought to these sites to work in specific plantations or industries.^[49]

As a gateway to the Caribbean, Hispaniola became a haven for pirates during the early colonial period. The western part of the island was settled by French buccaneers. Among them was Bertrand d'Ogeron, who succeeded in growing tobacco. He recruited many French colonial families from Martinique and Guadeloupe. European nations were competing for control in the New World, in the Caribbean as well as in North America. France and Spain settled their hostilities on the island, by way of the Treaty of Ryswick of 1697, and divided Hispaniola between them.

French rule (1625–1804)

France received the western third and subsequently named it Saint-Domingue, the French equivalent of *Santo Domingo*, the Spanish colony of Hispaniola and the name of its patron saint, Saint Dominic.^[50]

To develop it into sugarcane plantations, the French imported thousands of slaves from Africa. Sugar was a lucrative commodity crop throughout the 18th century. By 1789, approximately 40,000 white colonists lived in Saint-Domingue. In contrast, by 1763 the white population of French Canada, a vast territory, had numbered 65,000.^[51] The whites were vastly outnumbered by the tens of thousands of African slaves they had imported to work on their plantations, which were primarily devoted to the production of sugarcane. In the north of the island, slaves were able to retain many ties to African cultures, religion and language; these ties were continually being renewed by newly imported Africans. Blacks outnumbered whites by about ten to one.

The French-enacted *Code Noir* ("Black Code"), prepared by Jean-Baptiste Colbert and ratified by Louis XIV, had established rules on slave treatment and permissible freedoms. Saint-Domingue has been described as one of the most brutally efficient slave colonies; one-third of newly imported Africans died within a few years.^[52] Many slaves died from diseases such as smallpox and typhoid fever.^[53] They had low birth rates, and there is evidence that some women aborted fetuses rather than give birth to children within the bonds of slavery.

As in its Louisiana colony, the French colonial government allowed some rights to free people of color: the mixed-race descendants of white male colonists and black female slaves (and later, mixed-race women). Over time, many were released from slavery. They established a separate social class. White French Creole fathers frequently sent their mixed-race sons to France for their education. Some men of color were admitted into the military. More of the free people of color lived in the south of the island, near Port-au-Prince, and many intermarried within their community. They frequently worked as artisans and tradesmen, and began to own some property. Some became slave holders. The free people of color petitioned the colonial government to expand their rights.

Slaves that made it to Haiti from the trans-Atlantic journey and slaves born in Haiti were first documented in Haiti's archives and transferred to France's Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As of 2015, these records are in The National Archives of France. According to the 1788 Census, Haiti's population consisted of nearly 25,000 whites, 22,000 free coloureds and 700,000 slaves.

Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)

Inspired by the French Revolution of 1789 and principles of the rights of man, free people of color and slaves in Saint-Domingue and the French West Indies pressed for freedom and more civil rights. Most important was the revolution of the slaves in Saint-Domingue, starting in the northern plains in 1791, where Africans greatly outnumbered the whites.

In 1792, the French government sent three commissioners with troops to re-establish control. To build an alliance with the *gens de couleur* and slaves, the French commissioners Sonthonax and Polverel abolished



Burning of the town of Cap-Français, c. 1815

slavery in the colony. Six months later, the National Convention, led by Robespierre and the Jacobins, endorsed abolition and extended it to all the French colonies.^[54]

Political leaders in the United States, which was a new republic itself, reacted with ambivalence, at times providing aid to enable planters to put down the revolt. Later in the revolution, the US provided support to black Haitian military forces, with the goal of reducing French influence in North America and the Caribbean.^[55]

Toussaint Louverture, a former slave and leader in the slave revolt, drove out the Spanish (from Santo Domingo) and the British invaders who threatened the colony. In the uncertain years of revolution, the United States played both sides off against each other, with its traders supplying both the French and the rebels.^[56] The struggle within Haiti between the free people of color led by André Rigaud and the black Haitians led by Louverture devolved into the War of the Knives in 1799 and 1800.^{[57][58]} Many surviving free people of color left the island as refugees.



General Toussaint Louverture

After Louverture created a separatist constitution, Napoléon Bonaparte in 1802 sent an expedition of 20,000 soldiers and as many sailors^[59] under the command of his brother-in-law, General Charles Leclerc, to retake the island. The French achieved some victories, but within a few months, most of the French had died from yellow fever.^[60] More than 50,000 French troops died in an attempt to retake the colony, including 18 generals.^[61] The French captured Louverture, transporting him to France for trial. He was imprisoned at Fort de Joux, where he died in 1803 of exposure and possibly tuberculosis.^[52]



Battle between Polish troops in French service and the Haitian rebels

The slaves, along with free *gens de couleur* and allies, continued their fight for independence. Jean-Jacques Dessalines defeated French troops at the Battle of Vertières on 18 November 1803, leading the first ever successful slave army revolution. In late 1803, France withdrew its remaining 7,000 troops from the island and Napoleon gave up his idea of re-establishing a North American empire. With the war going badly, he sold Louisiana (New France) to the United States, in the Louisiana Purchase.

First Empire (1804–1806)

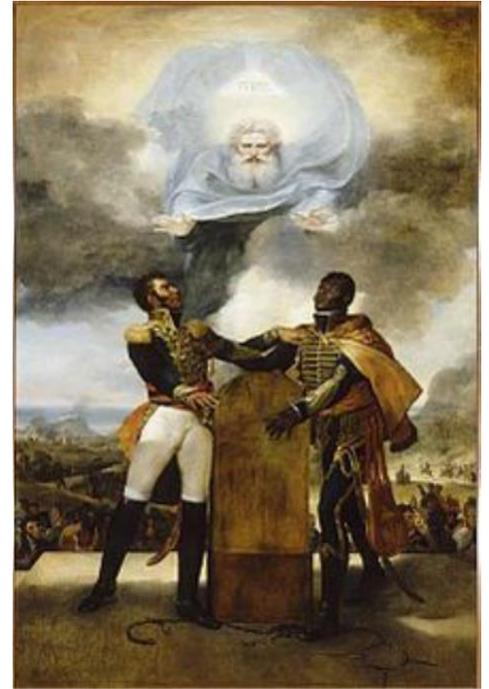
The independence of Saint-Domingue was proclaimed by Dessalines on 1 January 1804.^[62] The exact number of deaths due to the Haitian Revolution is unknown.

Dessalines was proclaimed "Emperor for Life" by his troops.^[63] Dessalines at first offered protection to the white planters and others.^[64] Once in power, he ordered the massacre of most whites. Without regard to age or gender, those who did not swear allegiance to him were slain.^[65] In the continuing competition for power, he was assassinated by rivals on 17 October 1806.^[66]

Only three categories of white people were selected out as exceptions and spared: the Polish soldiers, the majority of whom deserted from the French army and fought alongside the Haitian rebels; the little group of German colonists invited to the north-west region; and a group of medical doctors and professionals.^[67] Reportedly, people with connections to officers in the Haitian army were also spared, as well as the women who agreed to marry non-white men.^[68]

Fearful of the influence of the slaves' revolution, U.S. President Thomas Jefferson refused to recognize the new republic, as did most European nations. The U.S. did not officially recognize Haiti for decades, until after the American Civil War.^[69]

The revolution led to a wave of emigration.^[70] In 1809, nearly 10,000 refugees from Saint-Domingue settled *en masse* in New Orleans.^[71] They doubled the city's population. In addition, the newly arrived slaves added to the city's African population.^[72]



Pétion and Dessalines swearing allegiance to each other before God; painting by Guillon-Lethière

State of Haiti, Kingdom of Haiti and the Republic (1806–1820)



Citadelle Laferrière is the largest fortress in the Americas, and is considered locally to be the eighth wonder of the world.^[26]

Saint-Domingue was divided between the Kingdom of Haiti in the north, directed by Henri Christophe, who declared himself Henri I, and a republic in the south, directed by Alexandre Pétion, an *homme de couleur*. Henri Christophe established a semi-feudal *corvée* system, with a rigid education and economic code.^[73]

President Pétion gave military and financial assistance to the revolutionary leader Simón Bolívar, which were critical in enabling him to liberate the Viceroyalty of New Granada.^[74] He was instrumental in aiding countries in South America achieve independence from Spain.

Haitian unification (1821–1844)

Beginning in 1821, President Jean-Pierre Boyer, also an *homme de couleur* and successor to Pétion, reunified the two parts of Haiti and extended control over the entire western portion of the island.^[75] In addition, after Santo Domingo declared its independence from Spain on 30

November 1821, Boyer sent forces in to take control. Boyer ruled the entire island with iron rule, ending slavery in Santo Domingo.^[76] After Santo Domingo achieved independence from Haiti, it established a separate national identity.

Struggling to revive the agricultural economy to produce commodity crops, Boyer passed the Code Rural, which denied peasant laborers the right to leave the land, enter the towns, or start farms or shops of their own. Following the Revolution, many peasants wanted to have their own farms rather than work on plantations.^{[77][78]}

The American Colonization Society (ACS) encouraged free blacks in the United States to emigrate to Haiti. Starting in September 1824, more than 6,000 African Americans migrated to Haiti, with transportation paid by the ACS.^[79] Many found the conditions too harsh and returned to the United States.

In July 1825, King Charles X of France, during a period of restoration of the monarchy, sent a fleet to reconquer the island. Under pressure, President Boyer agreed to a treaty by which France formally recognized the independence of the nation in exchange for a payment of 150 million francs (reduced to 90 million in 1838). The Haitian president would have had little choice as the country, unknowingly to him, would have been blockaded by French ships if the exchange did not go the French way. After losing the support of Haiti's elite, Boyer was ousted in 1843. A long succession of coups followed his departure to exile.^[80]

The enforced payment to France reduced Haiti's economy for years. Western nations did not give Haiti formal diplomatic recognition. Both of these problems kept the Haitian economy and society isolated. Expatriates bankrolled and armed opposing groups.^[81]

Second Empire (1849–1859)

Early 20th century

In 1892, the German government supported suppression of the reform movement of Anténor Firmin and in 1897 the Germans used gunboat diplomacy to intimidate and then humiliate the Haitian government during the Luders Affair.

In the first decades of the 20th century Haiti experienced great political instability and was heavily in debt to France, Germany and the United States. Fearing possible foreign intervention, President Woodrow Wilson sent U.S. Marines into Haiti in December 1914, just after the outbreak of World War I. They removed \$500,000 from the Haitian National Bank for "safe-keeping" (sic) in New York, thus giving the United States control of the bank.^[82]



Jean-Pierre Boyer the mulatto ruler of Haiti.



German Captain Thiele of the *Charlotte* handing over the German Ultimatum on 6 December 1897 during the Luders Affair

In an expression of the Theodore Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, the United States occupied the island in July 1915 after the assassination of Haiti's president, Vilbrun Guillaume Sam. The pro-American President had been dragged from the French legation and killed in the street by local insurgents after he had ordered 167 political prisoners killed. USS *Washington*,



US Marines and guide in search of bandits, c. 1919

under Rear Admiral Caperton, arrived in Port-au-Prince to try to restore order and protect American interests. This began a nearly 20-year occupation by U.S. forces. Within days, the Marines had taken control of the capital city and its banks and customs house which controlled all the finances of the island nation. The Marines declared martial law and severely censored the press. Within weeks a new pro-American President, Philippe Sudré Dartiguenave, had been installed and a new constitution written that was favorable to the interests of the United States. The new constitution included a clause that allowed, for the first time, foreign ownership of land in Haiti, which was bitterly opposed by the Haitian legislature and citizenry.

The next 5 years witnessed numerous cases of intimidation, arson, torture and murder of the Haitian population by U.S. Marines and their local enforcers, the Gendarmerie d'Haiti. The U.S. Marines were instilled with a special brand of paternalism allowing them to behave this way. Mary Renda writes that "paternalism was an assertion of authority, superiority, and control expressed in the metaphor of a father's relationship with his children."^[83] This mindset allowed the marines to act highly authoritatively in Haiti and carry out atrocious acts. It has been estimated that up to 15,000 Haitians lost their lives at the hands of the occupying forces, either through armed opposition or through the 'corvee' system of forced labor. This system allowed the occupying forces to take people from their homes and farms, at gunpoint if necessary, to build roads, bridges, etc. Many resisted and were killed on the spot while others died working or due to disease and malnutrition while living in squalid work camps.^[84]

This chapter in the two nations' histories reflects the oppressive foreign policy of the United States toward its neighbors in Central America and the Caribbean that is often characterized as "gunboat diplomacy" or one of many "Banana Wars" that plagued the region in the early 20th century. U.S. Marines were stationed in the country until 1934, a period of nineteen years, and were finally ordered from the island by Franklin D. Roosevelt as a demonstration of his "Good Neighbor Policy". However, the United States controlled the economy of the island and heavily influenced elections in Haiti up through the 1980s.

Sisal was introduced to Haiti, and sugarcane and cotton became significant exports.^[85] Haitian traditionalists, based in rural areas, were highly resistant to American-backed changes, while the urban elites wanted more control. Together they helped secure an end to the occupation in 1934.^[86] The debts were still outstanding and

the American financial advisor-general receiver handled the budget until 1941.^[87]

Recognition of the distinctive traditionalism of the Haitian people had an influence on United States writers, including Eugene O'Neill, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston and Orson Welles.^[88]

After US forces left in 1934, Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo used anti-Haitian sentiment as a nationalist tool. In an event that became known as the Parsley massacre, he ordered his Army to kill Haitians living on the Dominican side of the border.^{[89][90]} Between 10,000 and 20,000 Haitians were killed.^[89] Though he was one-quarter Haitian himself, Trujillo continued policies against the neighboring population for some time.

On 27 September 1945,^[91] Haiti became a founding member of the United Nations (successor to the League of Nations, in which Haiti was also a founding member).^{[92][93]} In the 1950s, American and European tourists started to visit Haiti.^[94]

The waterfront area of Port-au-Prince was redeveloped to allow cruise ship passengers to walk from the docks to cultural attractions. Among these attractions were the Moorish-styled *Iron Market*, where fine Haitian art and mahogany were sold. In the evenings entrepreneurs provided dancing, casino gambling and Voodoo shows. Truman Capote and Noël Coward visited the Hotel Oloffson, a 19th-century Gothic gingerbread mansion set in a tropical garden, which was even portrayed in the Graham Greene novel, *The Comedians*.^[95]

Duvalier dynasty (1957–1986)

After a period of disorder, in September 1957 Dr. François Duvalier was elected President of Haiti. Known as "Papa Doc" and initially popular, Duvalier was President until his death in 1971. He advanced black interests in the public sector, where over time people of color had predominated as the educated urban elite.^[96] He stayed in power by enlisting an organization known as *Tontons Macoutes* ("Bogeymen"), which maintained order by terrorizing the populace and political opponents.^[97]

Haiti's brief tourism boom was wiped out by the rule of François "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his unstable government. When his son Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier succeeded him as *President for Life*, tourism returned in the 1970s.^[95] *Vive la différence* has long been Haiti's national tourism slogan^[98] and its proximity to the United States made Haiti a hot attraction until the Duvalier regime was ousted in 1986.^[95]



"Papa Doc" Duvalier in 1968

Contemporary history

Papa Doc's son Jean-Claude Duvalier – also known as "Baby Doc" – led the country from 1971 until his ouster in 1986, when protests led him to seek exile in France. Army leader General Henri Namphy headed a new National Governing Council.^[99] General elections in November were aborted after dozens of inhabitants were shot in the capital by soldiers and Tontons Macoutes. Fraudulent elections followed. The elected President,

Leslie Manigat, was overthrown some months later in the June 1988 Haitian coup d'état. The September 1988 Haitian coup d'état, which followed the St Jean Bosco massacre, revealed the increasing prominence of former Tontons Macoutes. General Prosper Avril led a military regime until March 1990.

In December 1990, a former Catholic priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was elected President in the Haitian general election. In September of the following year, Aristide was overthrown by the military in the 1991 Haitian coup d'état. In 1994, an American team negotiated the departure of Haiti's military leaders and the peaceful entry of U.S. forces under Operation Uphold Democracy. This enabled the restoration of the democratically elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president.^[100] In October 1994, Aristide returned to Haiti to complete his term in office.^[101] Aristide vacated the presidency in February 1996. In the 1995 election, René Préval was elected as president for a five-year term, winning 88% of the popular vote.

In November 1994, Hurricane Gordon brushed Haiti, dumping heavy rain and creating flash flooding that triggered mudslides. Gordon killed an estimated 1,122 people, although some estimates go as high as 2,200.^{[102][103]}

The November 2000 election returned Aristide to the presidency with 92% of the vote.^[104] The election had been boycotted by the opposition, then organized into the Convergence Démocratique, over a dispute in the May legislative elections. In subsequent years, there was increasing violence and human rights abuses. Aristide supporters attacked the opposition.^[105] Aristide spent years negotiating with the Convergence Démocratique on new elections, but the Convergence's inability to develop a sufficient electoral base made elections unattractive.

In 2004, a revolt began in northern Haiti. The rebellion eventually reached the capital, and Aristide was forced into exile, after which the United Nations stationed peacekeepers in Haiti. Some, including Aristide and his bodyguard, Franz Gabriel, stated that he was the victim of a "new coup d'état or modern kidnapping" by U.S. forces. Mrs. Aristide stated that the kidnappers wore U.S. Special Forces uniforms, but changed into civilian clothes upon boarding the aircraft that was used to remove Aristide from Haiti.^{[106][107]} The United Nations Stabilisation Mission (MINUSTAH) was established after the 2004 coup d'état and remains in the country to the present day. Boniface Alexandre assumed interim authority. René Préval was elected President in February 2006, following elections marked by uncertainties and popular demonstrations.



The National Palace following the 2010 Haiti earthquake

In 2004, Tropical Storm Jeanne skimmed the north coast of Haiti, leaving 3,006 people dead in flooding and mudslides, mostly in the city of Gonaïves.^[108] In 2008 Haiti was again struck by tropical storms; Tropical Storm Fay, Hurricane Gustav, Hurricane Hanna and Hurricane Ike all produced heavy winds and rain. There were 331 dead and about 800,000 in need of humanitarian aid.^[109] The state of affairs produced by these storms was intensified by already high food and fuel prices that had caused a food crisis and political unrest in April 2008.^[110]

On 12 January 2010, at 4:53pm local time, Haiti was struck by a magnitude-7.0 earthquake. This was the country's most severe earthquake in over 200 years.^[111] The 2010 Haiti earthquake was reported to have left up to 316,000 people dead and 1.6 million homeless,^[112] though later reports found these numbers to have been grossly inflated, and put the death toll between 46,000 and 85,000.^[113] The country has yet to recover from the 2010 earthquake and a subsequent and massive Haiti cholera outbreak that was triggered when cholera-infected waste from a MINUSTAH peacekeeping station contaminated the country's main river, the Artibonite.^[114] The country has yet to fully recover, due to both the severity of the damage Haiti endured in 2010, as well as a government that was ineffective well before the earthquake.^[115]

General elections had been planned for January 2010 but were postponed due to the earthquake. The elections were held on 28 November 2010 for the senate, the parliament and the first round of the presidential elections. The run-off between Michel Martelly and Mirlande Manigat took place on 20 March 2011, and preliminary results, released on 4 April, named Michel Martelly the winner.^[116] On 7 February 2016, Michel Martelly stepped down as president without a successor, but only after a deal was reached for a provisional government and leaving Prime Minister Evans Paul in power "until an interim president is chosen by both chambers of Parliament."^[117]

In 2013, Haiti called for European nations to pay reparations for slavery and establish an official commission for the settlement of past wrongdoings. The *Economist* wrote, "Any assistance to the region should be carefully targeted; and should surely stem from today's needs, not the wrongs of the past."^[118] The topic, however, has more than a passing reference to a country that, as Lord Anthony Gifford wrote, "was forced to pay compensation to the government of France."^[119]

On 4 October 2016, Hurricane Matthew made landfall near Les Anglais, making it the worst hurricane to strike the nation since Hurricane Cleo in 1964. The storm brought deadly winds and rain which left Haiti with a large amount of damage to be repaired. With all of the resources in the country destroyed, Haiti received aid from the United Nations of around US\$120 million. The death total was approximately 3,000. Thousands of people were displaced due to damage to infrastructure. Also, the cholera outbreak has been growing since the storm hit Haiti. With additional flooding after the storm, cholera continued to spread beyond the control of officials. The storm also caused damage to hospitals and roads which created a larger problem in helping victims and moving resources. The devastation and damage that Hurricane Matthew caused was unpredictable and left Haiti in a state of emergency.

Geography

Haiti is on the western part of Hispaniola, the second largest island in the Greater Antilles. Haiti is the third largest country in the Caribbean behind Cuba and the Dominican Republic (the latter shares a 360-kilometre (224 mi) border with Haiti). Haiti at its closest point is about 45 nautical miles (83 km; 52 mi) away from Cuba and comprises the *horseshoe*-shape peninsula and because of this, it has a disproportionately long coastline and is *second* in length (1,771 km or 1,100 mi) behind Cuba in the Greater Antilles.^{[120][121]}

Haiti is the most mountainous nation in the Caribbean and its terrain consists mainly of them interspersed with small coastal plains and river valleys. The climate is tropical, with some variation depending on altitude. The highest point is Pic la Selle, at 2,680 metres (8,793 ft).^[13]

The northern region consists of the *Massif du Nord* (Northern Massif) and the *Plaine du Nord* (Northern Plain). The *Massif du Nord* is an extension of the *Cordillera Central* in the Dominican Republic. It begins at Haiti's eastern border, north of the Guayamouc River, and extends to the northwest through the northern peninsula. The lowlands of the *Plaine du Nord* lie along the northern border with the Dominican Republic, between the *Massif du Nord* and the North Atlantic Ocean.

The central region consists of two plains and two sets of mountain ranges. The *Plateau Central* (Central Plateau) extends along both sides of the Guayamouc River, south of the *Massif du Nord*. It runs from the southeast to the northwest. To the southwest of the *Plateau Central* are the *Montagnes Noires*, whose most northwestern part merges with the *Massif du Nord*. Its westernmost point is known as Cap Carcasse.

The southern region consists of the *Plaine du Cul-de-Sac* (the southeast) and the mountainous southern peninsula (also known as the Tiburon Peninsula). The *Plaine du Cul-de-Sac* is a natural depression that harbors the country's saline lakes, such as Trou Caïman and Haiti's largest lake, Étang Saumatre. The *Chaîne de la Selle* mountain range – an extension of the southern mountain chain of the Dominican Republic (the Sierra de Baoruco) – extends from the *Massif de la Selle* in the east to the *Massif de la Hotte* in the west. This mountain range harbors Pic la Selle, the highest point in Haiti at 2,680 metres (8,793 ft).^[122]

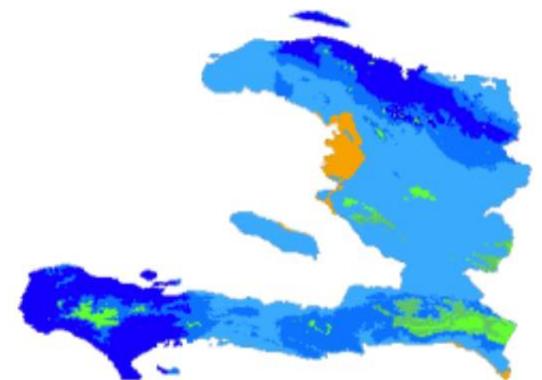
Haiti's most important valley in terms of crops is the *Plaine de l'Artibonite*, which is oriented south of the *Montagnes Noires*. This region supports the country's (also Hispaniola's) longest river, the *Rivière l'Artibonite*, which begins in the western region of the Dominican Republic and continues most of its length through central Haiti and onward where it empties into the *Golfe de la Gonâve*. The eastern and central region of the island is a large elevated plateau.

Haiti also includes various offshore islands. The island of Tortuga (*Île de la Tortue*) is located off the coast of northern Haiti. The *arrondissement* of La Gonâve is located on the island of the same name, in the *Golfe de la Gonâve*. Gonâve Island is moderately populated by rural villagers. *Île à Vache* (Cow



A map of Haiti

Köppen climate types of Haiti



Köppen climate type

■ Af (Rainforest) ■ Am (Monsoon) ■ Cwb (Subtropical highland)
■ BSh (Hot semi-arid) ■ Cfb (Oceanic)

*Northern used to separate temperate (T) and continental (D) climates is -2°C
Data source: Climate types calculated from data from WorldClim.org

Köppen climate types of Haiti

Island), a lush island with many beautiful sights, is located off the tip of southwestern Haiti. Also part of Haiti are the Cayemites and Île d' Anacaona. La Navasse located 40 nautical miles (46 mi; 74 km) west of Jérémie on the south west peninsula of Haiti,^[123] is subject to an ongoing territorial dispute with the United States.

Climate

Haiti's climate is tropical with some variation depending on altitude. Port-au-Prince ranges in January from an average minimum of 23 °C (73.4 °F) to an average maximum of 31 °C (87.8 °F); in July, from 25–35 °C (77–95 °F). The rainfall pattern is varied, with rain heavier in some of the lowlands and the northern and eastern slopes of the mountains. Haiti's dry season occurs from November to January.

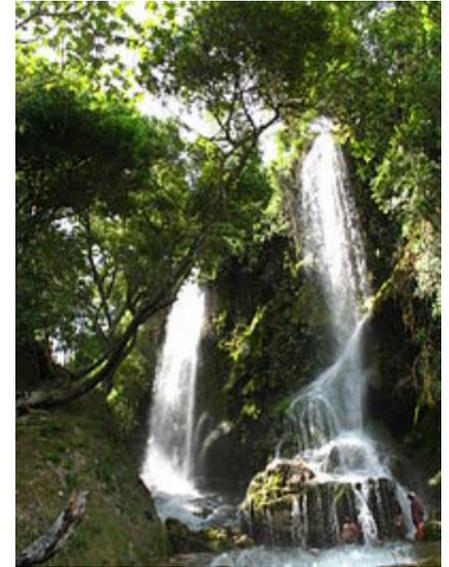
Port-au-Prince receives an average annual rainfall of 1,370 mm (53.9 in). There are two rainy seasons, April–June and October–November. Haiti is subject to periodic droughts and floods, made more severe by deforestation. Hurricanes are also a menace. In summary, Haiti is generally a hot and humid tropical climate.

Geology

There are blind thrust faults associated with the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault system over which Haiti lies.^[124] After the earthquake of 2010, there was no evidence of surface rupture and based on seismological, geological and ground deformation data.^[125]

The northern boundary of the fault is where the Caribbean tectonic plate shifts eastwards by about 20 mm (0.79 inches) per year in relation to the North American plate. The strike-slip fault system in the region has two branches in Haiti, the Septentrional-Oriente fault in the north and the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault in the south.

A 2007 earthquake hazard study, noted that the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault zone could be at the end of its seismic cycle and concluded that a worst-case forecast would involve a 7.2 M_w earthquake, similar in size to the 1692 Jamaica earthquake.^[126] A study team presented a hazard assessment of the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault system to the 18th Caribbean Geologic Conference in March 2008, noting the large strain. The team recommended "high priority" historical geologic rupture studies, as the fault was fully locked and had recorded few earthquakes in the preceding 40 years.^[127] An article published in Haiti's *Le Matin* newspaper in September 2008 cited comments by geologist Patrick Charles to the effect that there was a high risk of major seismic activity in Port-au-Prince.^[128]



Saut-d'Eau



Labadee beach and village

Haiti also has rare elements such as Gold, which can be found at The Mont Organisé gold mine.^[129]

Environment

The soil erosion released from the upper catchments and deforestation have caused periodic and severe flooding in Haiti, as experienced, for example, on 17 September 2004. Earlier in May that year, floods had killed over 3,000 people on Haiti's southern border with the Dominican Republic.^[130]

Haiti's forests covered 60 percent of the country as recently as fifty years ago, but today, according to more in-depth environmental analysis, the country yields approximately 30 percent tree cover, a stark difference from the often cited 2 percent which has been widely circulated in discourse concerning Haiti.^[131]

Scientists at the Columbia University's Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) and the United Nations Environment Programme are working on the Haiti Regenerative Initiative an initiative aiming to reduce poverty and natural disaster vulnerability in Haiti through ecosystem restoration and sustainable resource management.^[132]



Haiti's topography

Government and politics

The government of Haiti is a semi-presidential republic, a multiparty system wherein the President of Haiti is head of state elected directly by popular elections.^[133] The Prime Minister acts as head of government and is appointed by the President, chosen from the majority party in the National Assembly. Executive power is exercised by the President and Prime Minister who together constitute the government. In 2013, the annual budget was US\$1 billion.^[134]

Legislative power is vested in both the government and the two chambers of the National Assembly of Haiti. The government is organized unitarily, thus the central government *delegates* powers to the departments without a constitutional need for consent. The current structure of Haiti's political system was set forth in the Constitution of Haiti on 29 March 1987.

Haitian politics have been contentious: since independence, Haiti has suffered 32 coups.^[135] Haiti is the only country in the Western Hemisphere to undergo a successful slave revolution, but a long history of oppression by dictators – including François Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude Duvalier – has markedly affected the nation. France, the United States and other Western countries have repeatedly intervened in Haitian politics since the country's founding, sometimes at the request of one party or another. Along with international financial

institutions, they have imposed large quantities of debt – so much that foreign debt payments have rivaled the available government budget for social sector spending. There have been criticisms of financial institutions for enforcing trade policies on Haiti that are considered by some to be detrimental to local industry.^[136]

According to a Corruption Perceptions Index report in 2006, there is a strong correlation between corruption and poverty and Haiti ranked first of all countries surveyed for of levels of perceived domestic corruption.^[137] The International Red Cross reports that seven out of ten Haitians live on less than US\$2 a day, however, stated below "such statistical estimations should be looked upon very skeptically because of the fact that the average Haitian and Haitian family has to and does spend a lot more than that daily. The disconnect likely lies in the fact that these are estimates based on surveys conducted by asking individuals what their incomes are; in the Haitian culture it is very unlikely that one will receive a truthful and accurate answer to such a personal question. For various reasons individuals will not tell the truth on such a private matter. For some it is because "it's none of your business," for others, they will simply exaggerate their poor situation in hopes that some type of financial aide will be gained or rendered to them".^[138]

Cité Soleil in Port-au-Prince, one of the biggest slums in the Northern Hemisphere, has been called "the most dangerous place on Earth" by the United Nations.^[139] Many residents are supporters of former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide,^[140] who, according to the BBC, "accused the US of forcing him out – an accusation the US rejected as 'absurd'".^[141]

Jean-Bertrand Aristide was initially denied access to Haiti by Haitian immigration authorities, despite issuing appeals for entrance to his supporters and international observers. The world's most prominent governments did not overtly oppose such appeals, nor did they support them; an unnamed analyst "close to the Haitian government" quoted in several media sources – including *The New York Times* – is reported to have said: "Aristide could have 15 passports and he's still not going to come back to Haiti ... France and the United States are standing in the way." However, Aristide finally returned to Haiti on 18 March 2011, days before the 2011 presidential election.^[142]

The first round of the 2010 general election was held in December. Mirlande Manigat and Jude Celestin qualified for the second round of the presidential election, but its results were contested. Some people said that the first round was a fraud and that Michel Martelly should replace Jude Celestin, René Prével's chosen successor. There was some violence between the contending parties.^[143] On 4 April 2011, the Provisional Electoral Council announced preliminary results indicating that Martelly had won the presidential election.^[144]



Haiti's border with the Dominican Republic in 2002 (right) shows the amount of deforestation on the Haitian side.



Voting in the 2006 elections in Port-au-Prince

After the U.S. funded \$33 million^[145] to legislative and presidential elections in August and October 2015, a special verification panel – implemented by interim President Joceline Privert – declared the results "tainted by significant fraud".^[146] Jovenel Moïse, the supposed winner of the October 25, 2015 election, had been hand-picked by former President Michel Martelly. The month-long examination in May 2016 was created after the elections were condemned as fraudulent to restore credibility to the process.^[147] The commission recommended completely redoing the vote after auditing a random sample of about 13,000 ballots.^[146]

In February 2012, Haiti signaled it would seek to upgrade its observer status to full associate member status of the African Union (AU).^[148] The AU was reported to be planning to upgrade Haiti's status from observer to associate at its June 2013 summit^[149] but the application had still not been ratified by May 2016.^[150]

In 2010, the Haitian National Police force numbered 7,000.^[151] The legal system for torts is based on a version of the Napoleonic Code.^[152]

The Institute for the Protection of National Heritage has preserved 33 historical monuments and the historic center of Cap-Haïtien.^[153]

Cabinet

The executive function is divided into ministries, each led by a Minister appointed by the Prime Minister and confirmed by Parliament.^{[154][155][156]}



US Marines patrol the streets of Port-au-Prince on 14 April 2004

Ministry	Minister	Address
Ministry of Planning and External Cooperation	Yves Germain Joseph	347, Ave John Brown (Bourdon), Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of the Environment	Jean-Marie Claude Germain	Delmas 31, Rue Jacques 1 # 11, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Defense, Foreign Affairs and Worship	Lener Renauld	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Commerce and Industry	Hervey Day	6 Rue Legitimate, Port-au-Prince, Haiti HT-00116
Ministry of Education and Professionals	Nesmy Manigat	5, Ave Jean-Paul II, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Economy and Finance	Marie Carmelle Jean-Marie	22 Avenue Charles Summer, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Justice and Public Security	Pierre Richard Casmir	19 Charles Sumner Avenue, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Communication	Rotchild François Jr.	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Tourism	Stéphanie Villedrouin	8, Rue Legitimate (Champs-de-Mars), Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development	Fresner Dorcin	Route Nationale No. 1, Damien, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor	Victor Benoit	
Ministry of Interior and Territorial Communities	Ariel Henry	Palais des Ministeres, Champs de Mars, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Health	Florence Duperval Guillaume	111, Rue Saint-Honore, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Duly Brutus	Boulevard Harry Truman, Cité de l'Exposition, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Communications (Haiti)	Jacques Rousseau	Palais des Ministeres, Rue Monseigneur Guilloux, B.P. 2002, Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of The Youth & of Sports	Jimmy Albert	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Culture	Dithny Joan Raton	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of the Feminine Condition & the rights of Women	Yves Rose Morquette	Port-au-Prince, Haiti
Ministry of Haitians Living as Foreigners	Robert Labrousse	Rue Prosper No. 8, Bourdon, Musseau, Port-au-Prince, Haiti, HT6140
Minister Delegated to the Prime Minister in charge of social programs and projects of the Government	Edouard Jules	Port-au-Prince, Haiti

Military

Haiti's Ministry of Defense is the main body of their armed forces.^[157] The former Haitian Armed Forces were demobilized in 1995, however, efforts to reconstitute it are currently underway.^[158] The current defense force for Haiti is the Haitian National Police, which has a highly trained SWAT team, and works alongside the Haitian Coast Guard.

Law enforcement and crime

Haiti has consistently ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world on the Corruption Perceptions Index.^[160] It is estimated that President "Baby Doc" Duvalier, his wife Michelle, and their agents stole US \$504 million from the country's treasury between 1971 and 1986.^[161] Similarly, after the Haitian Army folded in 1995, the Haitian National Police (HNP) gained sole power of authority on the Haitian citizens. Many Haitians as well as observers of the Haitian society believe that this monopolized power could have given way to a corrupt police force.^[162]

Similarly, some media outlets alleged that millions were stolen by former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide.^{[163][164][165][166]} In March 2004, at the time of Aristide's being kidnapped, a BBC article wrote that the Bush administration State Department stated that Aristide had been involved in drug trafficking.^[167] The BBC also described pyramid schemes, in which Haitians lost hundreds of millions in 2002, as the "only real economic initiative" of the Aristide years.^[168]

Conversely, according to the 2013 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report, murder rates in Haiti (10.2 per 100,000) are far *below* the regional average (26 per 100,000); less than ¼ that of Jamaica (39.3 per 100,000) and nearly ½ that of the Dominican Republic (22.1 per 100,000), making it among the safer countries in the region.^{[169][170]} In large part, this is due to the country's ability to fulfill a pledge by increasing its national police yearly by 50%, a four-year initiative that was started in 2012. In addition to the yearly recruits, the Haitian National Police (HNP) has been using innovative technologies to crack down on crime. A notable bust in recent years led to the dismantlement of the largest kidnapping ring in the country with the use of an advanced software program developed by a West Point-trained Haitian official that proved to be so effective that it has led to its foreign advisers to make inquiries.^{[171][172]}

In 2010, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) sent a team of veteran officers to Haiti to assist in the rebuilding of its police force with special training in investigative techniques, strategies to improve the anti-kidnapping personnel and community outreach to build stronger relationships with the public especially among the youth. It has also helped the HNP set up a police unit in the center of Delmas, a neighborhood of Port-au-Prince.^{[173][174][175]}



Law enforcement in Haiti is maintained primarily by police forces for each department. The Direction Département de L'Ouest (DDO) in Port-au-Prince, is one of the six offices in the metropolitan area.^[159]

In 2012 and 2013, 150 HNP officers received specialized training funded by the US government, which also contributed to the infrastructure and communications support by upgrading radio capacity and constructing new police stations from the most violent-prone neighborhoods of Cité Soleil and Grande Ravine in Port-au-Prince to the new northern industrial park at Caracol.^[175]

Administrative divisions

Administratively, Haiti is divided into ten departments. The departments are listed below, with the departmental capital cities in parentheses.

1. Nord-Ouest (Port-de-Paix)
2. Nord (Cap-Haïtien)
3. Nord-Est (Fort-Liberté)
4. Artibonite (Gonaïves)
5. Centre (Hinche)
6. Ouest (Port-au-Prince)
7. Grand'Anse (Jérémie)
8. Nippes (Miragoâne)
9. Sud (Les Cayes)
10. Sud-Est (Jacmel)

The departments are further divided into 42 arrondissements, 145 communes and 571 communal sections. These serve as, respectively, second- and third-level administrative divisions.^{[176][177][178]}



Departments of Haiti

Economy

Haiti's purchasing power parity GDP fell 8% in 2010 (from US\$12.15 billion to US\$11.18 billion) and the GDP per capita remained unchanged at PPP US\$1,200.^[2] Despite having a viable tourist industry, Haiti is one of the world's poorest countries and the poorest in the Americas region, with poverty, corruption, poor infrastructure, lack of health care and lack of education cited as the main sources. The economy receded due to the 2010 earthquake and subsequent outbreak of Cholera. Haiti ranked 145 of 182 countries in the 2010 United Nations Human Development Index, with 57.3% of the population being deprived in at least three of the HDI's poverty measures.^[179]

Following the disputed 2000 election and accusations about President Aristide's rule,^[180] US aid to the Haitian government was cut off between 2001 and 2004.^[181] After Aristide's departure in 2004, aid was restored and the Brazilian army led a United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti peacekeeping operation. After almost four years of recession, the economy grew by 1.5% in 2005.^[182] In September 2009, Haiti met the conditions set out by the IMF and World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries program to qualify for cancellation of its external debt.^[183]

According to the 2015 CIA World Factbook, Haiti's main import partners are: Dominican Republic 35%, US 26.8%, Netherlands Antilles 8.7%, China 7% (est. 2013). Haiti's main export partner is the US 83.5% (est. 2013).^[195]

Haiti had a trade deficit of US\$3 billion in 2011, or 41% of GDP.^[196]

Energy

In 1925, the city of Jacmel was the first area in the Caribbean to have electricity and was subsequently dubbed the *City of Light*.^[197]

Today, Haiti relies heavily on an oil alliance with Petrocaribe for much of its energy requirements. In recent years, hydroelectric, solar and wind energy have been explored as possible sustainable energy sources.^[198]

Personal income

The World Factbook reports a shortage of skilled labor, widespread unemployment and underemployment, saying "more than two-thirds of the labor force do not have formal jobs." It is also often stated that three-quarters of the population lives on US\$2 or less per day.^[199] Such statistical estimations could be viewed with skepticism because the average Haitian and Haitian family spends more than that daily.^[199]

The World Factbook also states that "remittances are the primary source of foreign exchange, equaling one-fifth (20%) of GDP and representing more than five times the earnings from exports in 2012".^[200] This implies that remittances are the life-blood of the Haitian economy.

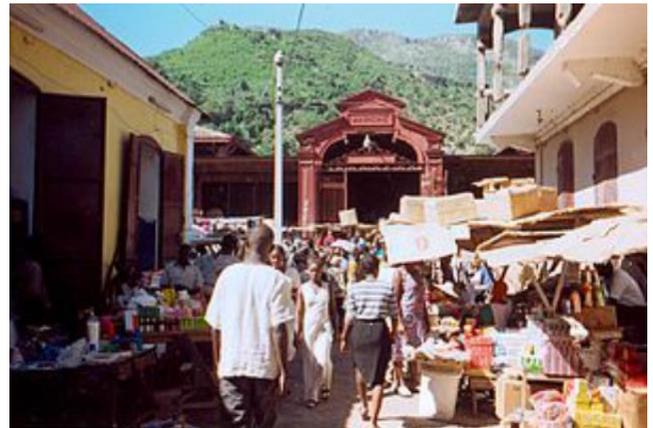
The World Bank estimates that over 80% of college graduates from Haiti were living abroad in 2004.^[201]

Haiti's economy was severely impacted by the 2010 Haiti earthquake which occurred on 12 January 2010, killing over 300,000 and displacing 1.5 million residents.^[202]

Real estate

In rural areas, people often live in wooden huts with corrugated iron roofs. Outhouses are located in back of the huts. In Port-au-Prince, colorful shantytowns surround the central city and go up the mountainsides.^[203]

The middle and upper classes live in Suburbs, or in the central part of the bigger cities in apartments, where there is urban planning. Many of the houses they live in are like miniature fortresses, located behind walls embedded with metal spikes, barbed wire, broken glass, and sometimes all three. The gates to these houses are



A market in Cap Haitien

barred at night, the house is locked; guard dogs patrol the yard. These houses are often self-sufficient as well. The houses have backup generators, because the electrical grid in Haiti is unreliable. Some even have rooftop reservoirs for water, as the water supply is also unreliable.^[203]

Agriculture

Haiti is the world's leading producer of vetiver, a root plant used to make luxury perfumes, essential oils and fragrances, providing for half the world's supply.^{[204][205][206]} Half of all Haitians work in the agricultural sector.^[207] Haiti relies upon imports for half its food needs and 80% of its rice.^[207]

Haiti exports crops such as mangoes, cacao, coffee, papayas, mahogany nuts, spinach, and watercress.^[208] Agricultural products comprise 6% of all exports.^[196] In addition, local agricultural products include corn, beans, cassava, sweet potato, peanuts, pistachios, bananas, millet, pigeon peas, sugarcane, rice, sorghum, and wood.^{[208][209]}

Currency

The Haitian gourde (HTG) is the national currency. The "Haitian dollar" equates to 5 gourdes (*goud*), which is a fixed exchange rate that exists in concept *only*, but are commonly used as informal prices.

The vast majority of the business sector and individuals in Haiti will also accept US dollars, though at the outdoor markets gourdes may be preferred. Locals may refer to the USD as "dollar américain" (*dola ameriken*) or "dollar US" (pronounced *oos*).^[210]

Tourism

In 2014, the country received 1,250,000 tourists (mostly from cruise ships), and the industry generated US\$200 million in 2014.^[134] In December 2014, the US State Department issued a travel warning about the country, noting that while thousands of American citizens safely visit Haiti each year, a few foreign tourists had been victims of burglary, predominantly in the Port-au-Prince area.^[211]

Several hotels were opened in 2014, including an upscale Best Western Premier,^{[212][213]} a five-star Royal Oasis hotel by Occidental Hotel and Resorts in Pétiön-Ville,^{[214][215][216]} a four-star Marriott hotel in the Turgeau area of Port-au-Prince^[217] and other new hotel developments in Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, Cap-Haïtien and Jacmel. Other tourist destinations include Île-à-Vache, Camp-Perrin, Pic Macaya.



Seaside in Jacmel

The Haitian Carnival has been one of the most popular carnivals in the Caribbean. In 2010, the government decided to stage the event in a different city outside Port-au-Prince every year in an attempt to decentralize the country.^{[218][219]} The National Carnival – usually held in one of the country's largest cities (i.e., Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haïtien or Les Cayes) – follows the also very popular Jacmel Carnival, which takes place a week earlier in February or March.^[218]

Caracol Industrial Park

On 21 October 2012, Haitian President Michel Martelly, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, Richard Branson, Ben Stiller and Sean Penn inaugurated the 600 acres (240 ha) Caracol industrial park, the largest in the Caribbean.^[220] Costing US\$300 million, the project, which includes a 10-megawatt power plant, a water-treatment plant and worker housing, is intended to transform the northern part of the country by creating 65,000 jobs.^[220]



Labadee, a cruise ship destination

The park is part of a "master plan" for Haiti's North and North-East departments, including the expansion of the Cap-Haïtien International Airport to accommodate large international flights, the construction of an international Seaport in Fort-Liberté and the opening of the \$50 million Roi Henri Christophe Campus of a new university in Limonade (near Cap-Haïtien) on 12 January 2012.^[221]

South Korean clothing manufacturer Sae-A Trading Co. Ltd, one of the park's main tenants, has created 5,000 permanent jobs out of the 20,000 projected and has built 8,600 houses in the surrounding area for its workers. The industrial park ultimately has the potential to create as many as 65,000 jobs once fully developed.^{[222][223]}

Infrastructure

Transportation

Haiti has two main highways that run from one end of the country to the other. The northern highway, Route Nationale No. 1 (National Highway One), originates in Port-au-Prince, winding through the coastal towns of Montrouis and Gonaïves, before reaching its terminus at the northern port Cap-Haïtien. The southern highway, Route Nationale No. 2, links Port-au-Prince with Les Cayes via Léogâne and Petit-Goâve.

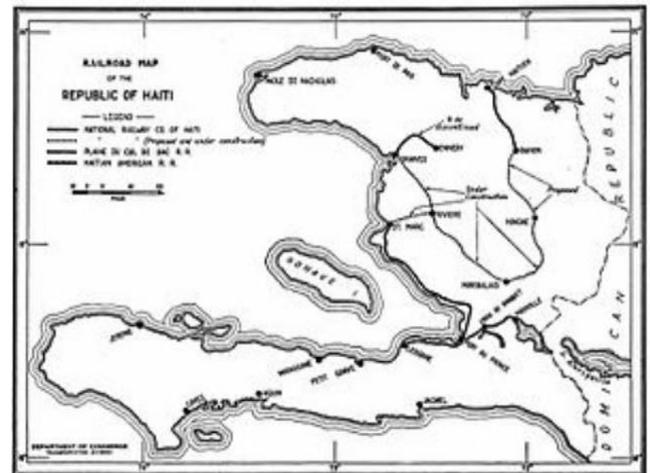
According to the Washington Post, "Officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Saturday [23 January 2010] that they assessed the damage from the [12 January] quake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and found that many of the roads aren't any worse than they were before because they've always been in poor condition."^[224]

The port at Port-au-Prince, Port international de Port-au-Prince, has more registered shipping than any of the other dozen ports in the country. The port's facilities include cranes, large berths, and warehouses, but these facilities are not in good condition. The port is underused, possibly due to the substantially high port fees. The port of Saint-Marc is currently the preferred port of entry for consumer goods coming into Haiti. Reasons for

this may include its location away from volatile and congested Port-au-Prince, as well as its central location relative to numerous Haitian cities.

During the 2010 earthquake, the Port-au-Prince port suffered widespread damage, impeding aid to the victims. The main pier caved in and fell into the water. One of the main cranes also collapsed in the water. Port access roads were severely damaged as well.

In the past, Haiti used rail transport, however the rail infrastructure was poorly maintained when in use and cost of rehabilitation is beyond the means of the Haitian economy.



Rail map as of 1925

Airports

Toussaint Louverture International Airport, located 10 kilometres (6.2 mi) North/North East of Port-au-Prince proper in the commune of Tabarre, is the primary transportation hub regarding entry and exit into the country. It has Haiti's main jetway, and along with Cap-Haïtien International Airport located near the northern city of Cap-Haïtien, handles the vast majority of the country's international flights. Cities such as Jacmel, Jérémie, Les Cayes, and Port-de-Paix have smaller, less accessible airports that are serviced by regional airlines and private aircraft. Such companies include: Caribintair, Sunrise Airways and Tortug' Air.



Toussaint L'Ouverture International Airport

In 2013, plans for the development of an international airport on Île-à-Vache were introduced by the Prime Minister.^[225]

Bus service

Tap tap buses are colorfully painted buses or pick-up trucks that serve as share taxis. The "tap tap" name comes from the sound of passengers tapping on the metal bus body to indicate they want off.^[226] These vehicles for hire are often privately owned and extensively decorated. They follow fixed routes, do not leave until filled with passengers, and riders can usually disembark at any point. The decorations are a typically Haitian form of art.^[227]



A "Tap tap" bus in Port-Salut

In August 2013, the first coach bus prototype was made in Haiti.^[228]

Communications

In Haiti, communications include the radio, television, fixed and mobile telephones, and the Internet. Haiti ranked last among North American countries in the World Economic Forum's Network Readiness Index (NRI) – an indicator for determining the development level of a country's information and communication technologies. Haiti ranked number 143 out of 148 overall in the 2014 NRI ranking, down from 141 in 2013.^[229]

Water supply and sanitation

Haiti faces key challenges in the water supply and sanitation sector: Notably, access to public services is very low, their quality is inadequate and public institutions remain very weak despite foreign aid and the government's declared intent to strengthen the sector's institutions. Foreign and Haitian NGOs play an important role in the sector, especially in rural and urban slum areas.

Demographics

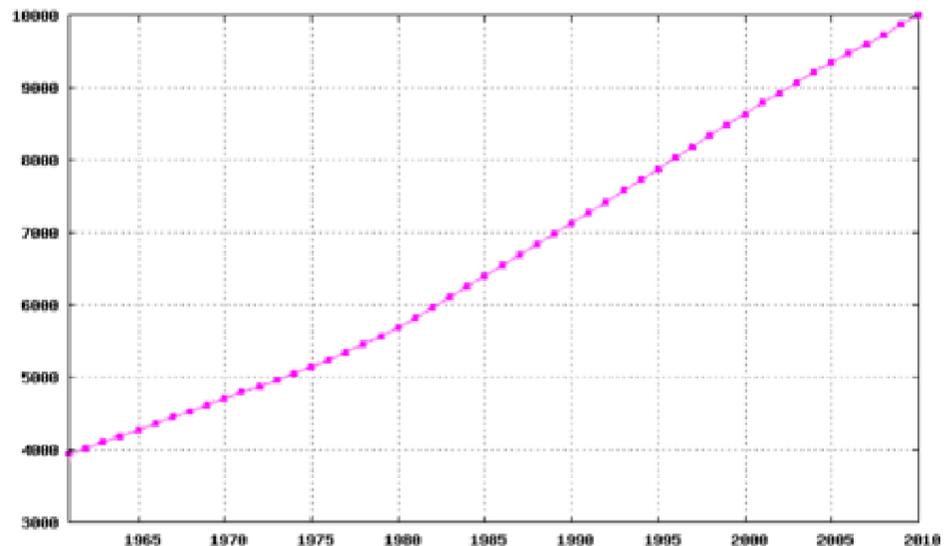
Haiti's population was about 10.8 million according to UN 2016 estimates,^[3] with half of the population younger than age 20.^[230] In 1950 the first formal census gave a total population of 3.1 million.^[231] Haiti averages approximately 350 people per square kilometer (~900 per sq mi.), with its population is concentrated most heavily in urban areas, coastal plains, and valleys.

Most modern Haitians are descendants of former black African slaves, including Mulattoes who are mixed-race. The remainder are of

European descent and Arab Haitians,^{[232][233]} the descendants of settlers (colonial remnants and contemporary immigration during WWI and WWII). Haitians of East Asian descent or East Indian origin number approximately 400+.

Millions of Haitians live abroad in the United States, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Canada (primarily Montreal), Bahamas, France, French Antilles, the Turks and Caicos, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Brazil, Suriname and French Guiana. There are an estimated 881,500 in the United States,^[234] 800,000 in the Dominican Republic,^[235] 300,000 in Cuba,^[236] 100,000 in Canada,^[237] 80,000 in France,^[238] and up to 80,000 in the Bahamas.^[239] There are also smaller Haitian communities in many other countries, including Chile, Switzerland, Japan and Australia.

In 2015, the life expectancy at birth was 63 years.^[240]



Haiti's population (1961–2003)

Population genetics

Autosomal DNA

The gene pool of Haiti is about 95.5% Sub-Saharan African, 4.3% European, with the rest showing some traces of East Asian genes,^[241] according to a 2010 autosomal genealogical DNA testing.

Y-chromosome and Mitochondrial DNA

A 2012 genetic study on Haitian and Jamaican Y-chromosomal ancestry, has revealed that both populations "exhibit a predominantly Sub-Saharan paternal component, with haplogroups A1b-V152, A3-M32, B2-M182, E1a-M33, E1b1a-M2, E2b-M98, and R1b2-V88" comprising (77.2%) of the Haitian and (66.7%) of Jamaican paternal gene pools.^[242] Y Chromosomes indicative of European ancestry "(i.e., haplogroups G2a*-P15, I-M258, R1b1b-M269, and T-M184) were detected at commensurate levels in Haiti (20.3%) and Jamaica (18.9%)".^[242] This corresponds to approximately 1 in every 5 Paternal ancestors, hailing from Europe. While, Y-haplogroups indicative of Chinese O-M175 (3.8%) and Indian H-M69 (0.6%) and L-M20 (0.6%) ancestry were found at significant levels in Jamaica,^[242] Levantine Y-haplogroups were found in Haiti.

Duffy antigens

According to a 2008 study examining the frequency of the Duffy antigen receptor for Chemokines (DARC) Single Nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), (75%) of Haitian women sampled exhibited the CC genotype (absent among women of European ancestry) at levels comparable to US African-Americans (73%), but more than Jamaican females (63%).^{[243][244]}

Casta discrimination

Due to the racial caste system instituted in colonial Haiti, Haitian mulattoes became the nation's social elite and racially privileged. Numerous leaders throughout Haiti's history have been mulattoes. Comprising 5% of the nation's population, mulattoes have retained their preeminence, evident in the political, economic, social and cultural hierarchy in Haiti.^[245] During this time, the slaves and the affranchis were given limited opportunities toward education, income, and occupations, but even after gaining independence, the social structure remains a legacy today as the disparity between the upper and lower classes have not been reformed significantly since the colonial days.^[246] As a result, the elite class today consists of a small group of influential people who are generally light in color and continue to establish themselves in high, prestigious positions.^[247] Alexandre Péti on, born to a Haitian mother and a wealthy French father, was the first President of the Republic of Haiti.

Religion

The 2017 CIA Factbook reported that around 54.7% of Haitians profess to being Catholics while Protestants made up about 28.5% of the population (Baptist 15.4%, Pentecostal 7.9%, Seventh-day Adventist 3%, Methodist 1.5%, other 0.7%). Other sources put the Protestant population higher than this, suggesting that it

might have formed one-third of the population in 2001.^[249] Moreover, Haiti is affected by a common Latin American phenomenon, i.e. a Protestant expansion, which is largely Evangelical Protestant and Pentecostal in nature.^{[250][251][252]} Haitian Cardinal Chibly Langlois is president of the National Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church.

Vodou, a religion with African roots similar to those of Cuba and Brazil, originated during colonial times in which slaves were obliged to disguise their loa or spirits as Roman Catholic saints, an element of a process called syncretism and is still practiced by some Haitians today. Since the religious syncretism between Catholicism and Vodou, it is difficult to estimate the number of Vodouists in Haiti.^{[253][254]}

Minority religions in Haiti include Islam, Bahá'í Faith, Judaism, and Buddhism.^[2]

Languages

The two official languages of Haiti are French and Haitian Creole. French is the principal written and administratively authorized language (as well as the main language of the press) and is spoken by 42% of Haitians.^{[255][256]}

It is spoken by all educated Haitians, is the medium of instruction in most schools, and is used in the business sector. It is also used in ceremonial events such as weddings, graduations and church masses. Haiti is one of two independent nations in the Americas (along with Canada) to designate French as an official language; the other French-speaking areas are all overseas *départements*, or *collectivités*, of France.

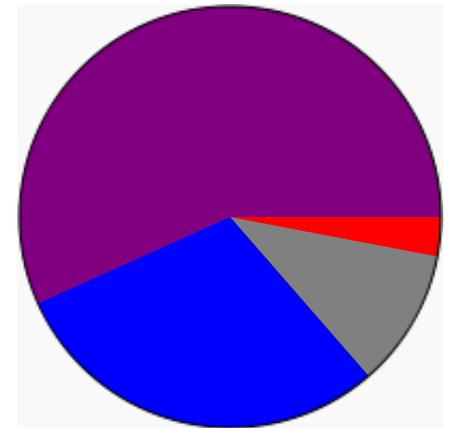
Haitian Creole,^[257] which has recently undergone a standardization, is spoken by virtually the entire population of Haiti.^[258] Haitian Creole is one of the French-based creole languages. Its vocabulary is 90% derived from French, but its grammar resembles that of some West African languages. It also has influences from Taino, Spanish, and Portuguese.^[259] Haitian Creole is related to the other French creoles, but most closely to the Antillean Creole and Louisiana Creole variants.

Emigration

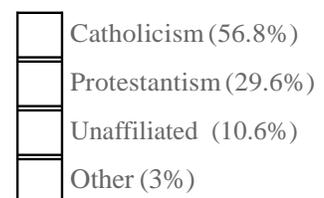
Emigrants from Haiti have constituted a segment of American and Canadian society since before the independence of Haiti from France in 1804.^{[260][261]}

Many influential early American settlers and black freemen, including Jean Baptiste Point du Sable and W. E. B. Du Bois, were of Haitian origin.^{[262][263][264][265]}

Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, an immigrant from Saint-Domingue (now the Republic of Haiti), founded the first nonindigenous settlement in what is now Chicago, Illinois, the third largest city in the United States. The state of Illinois and city of Chicago declared du Sable the founder of Chicago on 26 October 1968.^{[262][263][264]}



Religion in Haiti according to the Pew Research Center (2010)^[248]



Largest cities

Culture

Haiti has a rich and unique cultural identity consisting of a large blend of traditional customs of French and African, mixed with sizeable contributions from the Spanish and indigenous Taíno culture.^[266] The country's customs essentially are a blend of cultural beliefs that derived from the various ethnic groups that inhabited the island of Hispaniola. Haiti's culture is greatly reflected in its paintings, music, and literature. Galleries and museums in the United States and France have exhibited the works of the better-known artists to have come out of Haiti.^[267]

Art

Haitian art is distinctive, particularly through its paintings and sculptures, known for its various artistic expressions.^{[266][268][269]} Brilliant colors, naïve perspectives, and sly humor characterize Haitian art. Frequent subjects in Haitian art include big, delectable foods, lush landscapes, market activities, jungle animals, rituals, dances, and gods. Artists frequently paint in fables. People are disguised as animals and animals are transformed into people.

As a result of a deep history and strong African ties, symbols take on great meaning within Haitian society. For example, a rooster often represents Aristide and the red and blue colors of the Haitian flag often represent his Lavalas party. Many artists cluster in 'schools' of painting, such as the Cap-Haïtien school, which features depictions of daily life in the city, the Jacmel School, which reflects the steep mountains and bays of that coastal town, or the Saint-Soleil School, which is characterized by abstracted human forms and is heavily influenced by Vodou symbolism.

Music and dance

Haitian music combines a wide range of influences drawn from the many people who have settled on this Caribbean island. It reflects French, African rhythms, Spanish elements and others who have inhabited the island of Hispaniola and minor native Taino influences. Styles of music unique to the nation of Haiti include music derived from Vodou ceremonial traditions, Rara parading music, Twoubadou *ballads*, Mini-jazz rock bands, Rasin movement, Hip hop Kreyòl, Méringue,^[270] and Compas. Youth attend parties at nightclubs called *discos*, (pronounced "deece-ko"), and attend *Bal*. This term is the French word for ball, as in a formal dance.

Compas (konpa) (also known as *compas direct* in French, or *konpa dirèk* in creole)^[271] is a complex, ever-changing music that arose from African rhythms and European ballroom dancing, mixed with Haiti's bourgeois culture. It is a refined music, with méringue as its basic rhythm. Haiti had no recorded music until 1937 when Jazz Guignard was recorded non-commercially.^[272]

Literature

Haiti has always been a literary nation that has produced poetry, novels, and plays of international recognition. The French colonial experience established the French language as the venue of culture and prestige, and since then it has dominated the literary circles and the literary production. However, since the eighteenth century there has been a sustained effort to write in Haitian Creole. The recognition of Creole as an official language has led to an expansion of novels, poems, and plays in Creole.^[273] In 1975, Franketienne was the first to break with the French tradition in fiction with the publication of *Dezafi*, the first novel written entirely in Haitian Creole. The work offers a poetic picture of Haitian life.^[274]

Cuisine

Haitian cuisine is an eclectic blend of the various cooking practices and traditions of the various ethnic groups that populated the island of Hispaniola, chiefly French and African culinary elements with notable influences from the Spanish and indigenous Taíno as well. Haitian cuisine is similar to the rest of the Latin-Caribbean; however it differs in several ways from its regional counterparts, notably in its bold seasoning and emphasis on spices.

Dishes tend to be seasoned liberally. Consequently Haitian cuisine is often moderately spicy. The staple diet is rice and beans, in several variations, and it is the de facto national dish.



A table set with Haitian cuisine

One such dish is *mais moulu* (*mayi moulen*), which is comparable to grits that can be eaten with *sauce pois* (*sòs pwa*), a bean purée made from one of many types of beans such as kidney, pinto, chickpeas, or pigeon peas (known in some countries as *gandules*). *Mais moulin* can be eaten with fish (often red snapper), or alone depending on personal preference. Some of the many plants used in Haitian dishes include tomato, oregano, cabbage, avocado, bell peppers. A popular food is *banane pesée* (*ban-nan'n peze*), flattened plantain slices fried in cooking oil (known as *tostones* in the Spanish-speaking Latin American countries). It is eaten both as a snack and as part of a meal, and is often eaten with *tassot* and *griot* (deep-fried goat and pork).^[275]

Traditionally, the food that Haitians eat on independence day (1 January) is *soup joumou*.^[276] Haiti is also known globally for its rum; *Rhum Barbancourt* is an internationally renowned rum, the most popular alcoholic beverage in Haiti.^[277]

Architecture

Monuments include the Sans-Souci Palace and the Citadelle Laferrière, inscribed as a World Heritage site in 1982.^[278] Situated in the Northern Massif du Nord, in one of Haiti's National Parks, the structures date from the early 19th century.^[279] The buildings were among the first built after Haiti's independence from France. The Citadelle Laferrière, is the largest fortress in the Americas, is located in northern Haiti. It was built between 1805 and 1820 and is today referred to by some Haitians as the eighth wonder of the world.^[26]

Jacmel, a colonial city that was tentatively accepted as a World Heritage site, was extensively damaged by the 2010 Haiti earthquake.^[279]

Museums

The anchor of Christopher Columbus' largest ship, the *Santa María* now rests in the Musée du Panthéon National Haïtien (MUPANAH), in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.^[280]

Folklore and mythology

Haiti is known for its folklore traditions.^[281] The country has tales that are part of the Haitian Vodou tradition.

National holidays and festivals



Sans-Souci Palace, National History Park, Haiti



Santa María's anchor on display

Date	English name	Local name (in French)	Remarks
1 January	New Year's Day <i>and</i> Independence Day	<i>Nouvel an / Jour de l'an / Premier de l'a et Jour de l'Indépendance</i>	Act of Independence against France
2 January	Ancestry Day	<i>Jour des Aïeux</i>	Commemorates ancestors who have died fighting for freedom.
6 January	Epiphany	<i>Le Jour des Rois</i>	Celebrates the Three Wise Men's visit to see the newborn Christ.
<i>moveable</i>	Carnival/Mardi Gras	<i>Carnaval/Mardi Gras</i>	
1 May	Labour and Agriculture Day	<i>Fête du Travail / Fête des Travailleurs</i>	International holiday
18 May	Flag and Universities' Day	<i>Jour du Drapeau et de l'Université</i>	Celebrates the educational system and creation of the flag.
15 August	Assumption of Mary	<i>L'Assomption de Marie</i>	
17 October	Anniversary of the death of Dessalines	<i>Anniversaire de la mort de Dessalines</i>	commemorates the death of Jean-Jacques Dessalines.
1 November	All Saints Day	<i>La Toussaint</i>	Christian holiday; commemorates the sainthood.
2 November	All Souls' Day	<i>Jour des Morts</i>	Another Christian holiday; commemorates the faithful departed.
18 November	Battle of Vertières Day	<i>Vertières</i>	Commemorates the victory over the French in the Battle of Vertières in the year 1803. ^[282]
5 December	Discovery Day	<i>Découverte d'Haïti</i>	Commemorates Christopher Columbus' landing on Hispaniola in 1492.
25 December	Christmas	<i>Noël</i>	Traditional Christmas celebration.

The most festive time of the year in Haiti is during *Carnival* (referred to as *Kanaval* in Haitian Creole or Mardi Gras) in February. There is music, parade floats, and dancing and singing in the streets. Carnival week is traditionally a time of all-night parties.

Rara is a festival celebrated before Easter. The festival has generated a style of Carnival music.

Sports

Football is the most popular sport in Haiti with hundreds of small football clubs competing at the local level. Basketball is growing in popularity.^[283] Stade Sylvio Cator is the multi-purpose stadium in Port-au-Prince, where it is currently used mostly for association football matches that fits a capacity of 10,000 people. In 1974, the Haiti national football team were only the second Caribbean team to make the World Cup (after Cuba's entry in 1938). They lost in the opening qualifying stages against three of the pre-tournament favorites; Italy, Poland, and Argentina. The national team won the 2007 Caribbean Nations Cup.^[284]

Haiti has participated in the Olympic Games since the year 1900 and won a number of medals. Haitian footballer Joe Gaetjens played for the United States national team in the 1950 FIFA World Cup, scoring the winning goal in the 1–0 upset of England.^[285]

Notable natives and residents

- Comte d'Estaing – in command of more than 500 volunteers from Saint-Domingue; fought alongside American colonial troops against the British in the Siege of Savannah, contributions to the American Revolutionary War in 1779^[286]
- Frankétienne – arguably Haiti's greatest author; candidate for the Nobel Prize
- Garcelle Beauvais – television actress (*NYPD Blue*, *The Jamie Foxx Show*)
- Jean Baptiste Point du Sable – might have been born in St Marc, Saint-Domingue; trading post at present-day Chicago, Illinois; considered one of the first Americans to live on the site
- Jean Lafitte – pirate who operated around New Orleans and Galveston Bay; born in Port-au-Prince around 1782^[287]
- John James Audubon – ornithologist and painter; born in 1785 in Les Cayes, Saint-Domingue; his parents returned to France, where he was educated; emigrated to the United States as a young man and made a career as he painted, catalogued and described the birds of North America
- Jørgen Leth – Danish poet and filmmaker^[288]
- Sean Penn – American Oscar Award-winning actor, who currently serves as Ambassador to Haiti; the first non-Haitian citizen to hold such a position^[289]
- Michaëlle Jean – current Secretary-General of La Francophonie and 27th Governor General of Canada; born in Port-au-Prince in 1957 and lived in Haiti until 1968
- Wyclef Jean – Grammy Award-winning hip-hop recording artist



Wyclef Jean

Education

The educational system of Haiti is based on the French system. Higher education, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education,^[290] is provided by universities and other public and private institutions.^[291]

More than 80% of primary schools are privately managed by nongovernmental organizations, churches, communities, and for-profit operators, with minimal government oversight.^[292] According to the 2013 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Report, Haiti has steadily boosted net enrollment rate in primary

education from 47% in 1993 to 88% in 2011, achieving equal participation of boys and girls in education.^[293] Charity organizations, including Food for the Poor and Haitian Health Foundation, are building schools for children and providing necessary school supplies. According to CIA 2015 World Factbook, Haiti's literacy rate is now 60.7% (est. 2015).

The January 2010 earthquake, was a major setback for education reform in Haiti as it diverted limited resources to survival.^[294]

Many reformers have advocated the creation of a free, public and universal education system for all primary school-age students in Haiti. The Inter-American Development Bank estimates that the government will need at least US\$3 billion to create an adequately funded system.^[295]

Upon successful graduation of secondary school, students may continue into higher education. The higher education schools in Haiti include the University of Haiti. There are also medical schools and law schools offered at both the University of Haiti and abroad. Presently, Brown University is cooperating with L'Hôpital Saint-Damien in Haiti to coordinate a pediatric health care curriculum.^[296]



The Université Roi Henri Christophe in Limonade

Health

In the past, children's vaccination rates have been low – as of 2012, 60% of the children in Haiti under the age of 10 were vaccinated,^{[297][298]} compared to rates of childhood vaccination in other countries in the 93–95% range.^[299] Recently there have been mass vaccination campaigns claiming to vaccinate as many as 91% of a target population against specific diseases (measles and rubella in this case).^[300] Most people have no transportation or access to Haitian hospitals.^[301]

The World Health Organization cites diarrheal diseases, HIV/AIDS, meningitis, and respiratory infections as common causes of death in Haiti.^[302] Ninety percent of Haiti's children suffer from waterborne diseases and intestinal parasites.^[303] HIV infection is found in 1.71% of Haiti's population (est. 2015).^[304] The incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in Haiti is more than ten times as high as in the rest of Latin America.^[305] Approximately 30,000 Haitians fall ill with malaria each year.^[306]

Most people living in Haiti are at high risk for major infectious diseases. Food or water-borne diseases include bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, typhoid fever and hepatitis A and E; common vector-borne diseases are dengue fever and malaria; water-contact diseases include leptospirosis. Roughly 75% of Haitian households lack running water. Unsafe water, along with inadequate housing and unsanitary living conditions, contributes to the high incidence of infectious diseases. There is a chronic shortage of health care personnel and hospitals lack

resources, a situation that became readily apparent after the January 2010 earthquake.^[307] The infant mortality rate in Haiti in 2013 was 55 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to a rate of 6 per 1,000 in other countries.^[308]

After the 2010 earthquake, Partners In Health founded the Hôpital Universitaire de Mirebalais, the largest solar-powered hospital in the world.^{[309][310]}

See also

- Index of Haiti-related articles
- Outline of Haiti

Notes

- During the early years of independence, the nation was officially founded as *Hayti*.^[9] Published writings from 1802–1919 in the United States use the name "Hayti" as in *The Blue Book of Hayti* (1919), a book with official standing in Haiti. Although from 1873, "Haiti" was common among titles of books as well as in congressional publications. In Frederick Douglass' publications from 1891, he used "Haiti" in them all. As late as 1949, the name "Hayti" continues to be used in books published in England especially in a 1949 publishing in London, *Hayti: 145 Years of Independence-- The Bi-Centenary of Port-au-Prince*. By 1950, usage in England had shifted to "Haiti."^[10]
- The Taínos may have used *Bohío* as another name for the island.^{[31][32][33]}

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External links

Government

- (in French) (in Haitian Creole) President of Haiti (<http://www.presidence.ht/>)
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- (in French) Haitian Parliament (<http://www.parlementhaitien.ht/>)

General information

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- Web Site about Safe and Sustainable Water Solutions for Haiti (<http://www.gvsu.edu/haitiwater>)

Maps

- Collection of maps (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/haiti.html>) from the Perry-Castañeda Library at the University of Texas at Austin.
- Map of Haiti (<https://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/haiti.pdf>) from the United Nations.

History

- A Bibliography of Theses and Dissertations Related to Haiti – 20th Century (<http://www.potomitan.info/vitrine/bibliography.html>)
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Relief organizations

- The ICRC in Haiti (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/where-we-work/americas/haiti/>) (International Committee of the Red Cross).
- Hope for Haiti (<http://www.hope-for-haiti.org/>), education and grassroots development in rural Haiti.
- Haiti volunteer youth corps (<http://www.nouvelleviehaiti.org/>), training leaders in trauma relief, community empowerment and sustainable agriculture.

- Instituto Dominicano de Desarrollo Integral (<http://www.iddi.org/>), the Dominican parent of the Haitian Institute of Integral Development.

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Honduras

Coordinates: 15°00′N 86°30′W﻿ / ﻿15°00′N 86°30′W﻿ / 15; -86

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Honduras (/hɒnˈdʊərəs/; Spanish: [on ˈduɾas]), officially the **Republic of Honduras** (Spanish: *República de Honduras*), is a republic in Central America. It has at times been referred to as **Spanish Honduras** to differentiate it from British Honduras, which became modern-day Belize.^[6] Honduras is bordered to the west by Guatemala, to the southwest by El Salvador, to the southeast by Nicaragua, to the south by the Pacific Ocean at the Gulf of Fonseca, and to the north by the Gulf of Honduras, a large inlet of the Caribbean Sea.

Honduras was home to several important Mesoamerican cultures, most notably the Maya, before the Spanish invaded in the sixteenth century. The Spanish introduced Roman Catholicism and the now predominant Spanish language, along with numerous customs that have blended with the indigenous culture. Honduras became independent in 1821 and has since been a republic, although it has consistently endured much social strife and political instability, and remains one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. Honduras has the world's highest murder rate.^[7]

Honduras spans about 112,492 km² and has a population exceeding 9 million.^[2] Its northern portions are part of the Western Caribbean Zone, as reflected in the area's demographics and culture. Honduras is known for its rich natural resources, including minerals, coffee, tropical fruit, and sugar cane, as well as for its growing textiles industry, which serves the international market.

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 Pre-colonial period
 - 2.2 Spanish conquest (1524–1539)
 - 2.3 Spanish Honduras (1524–1821)
 - 2.4 Independence (1821)
 - 2.5 20th century
 - 2.6 21st century

Republic of Honduras

República de Honduras (Spanish)



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto:

"Libre, Soberana e Independiente" (Spanish)
"Free, Sovereign and Independent"

Anthem: "Himno Nacional de Honduras"
"National Anthem of Honduras"

0:00

MENU



Capital
and largest city

Tegucigalpa
14°6′N 87°13′W

Official languages

Spanish

Ethnic groups (1)

90%
Mestizo^a
7%
Amerindian
2% Black
1% White

- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
 - 3.2 Ecology
 - 3.3 Environmental issues
- 4 Government and politics
 - 4.1 Political culture
 - 4.2 Panama Papers
 - 4.3 Foreign relations
 - 4.4 Military
 - 4.5 Administrative divisions
- 5 Economy
 - 5.1 Poverty
 - 5.2 Trade
 - 5.3 Energy
 - 5.4 Transport
 - 5.5 Water supply and sanitation
- 6 Demographics
 - 6.1 Languages
 - 6.2 Urban areas
 - 6.3 Religion
 - 6.4 Health
 - 6.5 Education
 - 6.6 Crime
- 7 Culture
 - 7.1 Art
 - 7.2 Cuisine
 - 7.3 Media
 - 7.4 Music
 - 7.5 Celebrations
 - 7.6 National symbols
 - 7.7 Folklore
 - 7.8 Nobel Prize nominations
 - 7.9 Sports
- 8 See also
- 9 References
- 10 External links

Etymology

The literal meaning of the term "Honduras" is "depths" in Spanish. The name could either refer to the bay of Trujillo as an anchorage, *fondura* in the Leonese dialect of Spanish, or to Columbus's alleged quote that "*Gracias a Dios que hemos salido de esas Honduras*" ("Thank God we have departed from those depths").^{[8][9][10]}

Demonym	Honduran • Catracho(a)
Government	Presidential republic
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• President • Vice President • President of National Congress </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Juan Orlando Hernández Ricardo Álvarez Arias Mauricio Oliva </div>
Legislature	National Congress
Independence	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Declared^b from Spain • Declared from the First Mexican Empire • Declared, as Honduras, from the Federal Republic of Central America </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">15 September 1821 1 July 1823 5 November 1838 </div>
Area	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">112,492 km² (43,433 sq mi) (101st) </div>
Population	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2016 estimate • 2007 census • Density </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">9,112,867^[2] (95th) 7,529,403 64/km² (165.8/sq mi) (128th) </div>
GDP (PPP)	2017 estimate
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total • Per capita </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$45.628 billion^[3] \$5,492^[3] </div>
GDP (nominal)	2017 estimate
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Total • Per capita </div>	<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$21.790 billion^[3] \$2,623^[3] </div>
Gini (1992–2007)	55.3 ^[4] high
HDI (2014)	▲ 0.606 ^[5] medium · 131st
Currency	Lempira (HNL)

It was not until the end of the 16th century that *Honduras* was used for the whole province. Prior to 1580, *Honduras* only referred to the eastern part of the province, and *Higueras* referred to the western part.^[10] Another early name is Guaymuras, revived as the name for the political dialogue in 2009 that took place in Honduras as opposed to Costa Rica.^[11]

Hondurans are often referred to as *Catracho* or *Catracha* (fem) in Spanish. The word was coined by Nicaraguans and derives from the last name of the Spanish Honduran General Florencio Xatruch, who in 1857 led Honduran armed forces against an attempted invasion by North American adventurer William Walker. The nickname is considered complimentary, not derogatory.

History

Pre-colonial period

In pre-Columbian times, modern Honduras was part of the Mesoamerican cultural area. In the west, Mayan civilization flourished for hundreds of years. The dominant state within Honduras' borders was in Copán. Copán fell with the other Lowland centres during the conflagrations of the Terminal Classic in the 9th century. The Maya of this civilization survive in western Honduras as the Ch'orti', isolated from their Choltian linguistic peers to the west.^[12]

Remnants of other Pre-Columbian cultures are found throughout the country. Archaeologists have studied sites such as Naco and La Sierra in the Naco Valley, Los Naranjos on Lake Yojoa, Yarumela in the Comayagua Valley,^[13] La Ceiba and Salitron Viejo^[14] (both now under the Cajon Dam reservoir), Selin Farm and Cuyamel in the Aguan valley, Cerro Palenque, Travesia, Curruste, Ticamaya, Despoloncal in the lower Ulua river valley, and many others.

Spanish conquest (1524–1539)

On his fourth and the final voyage to the New World in 1502, Christopher Columbus landed near the modern town of Trujillo, near Guaimoreto Lagoon, becoming the first European to visit the Bay Islands on the coast of Honduras.^[15] On 30 July 1502 Columbus sent his brother Bartholomew to explore the islands and Bartholomew encountered a Mayan trading vessel from Yucatán, carrying well-dressed Maya and a rich cargo.^[16] Bartholomew's men stole the cargo they wanted and kidnapped the ship's elderly captain to serve as an interpreter^[17] in the first recorded encounter between the Spanish and the Maya.^[18]

Time zone	CST (UTC−6)
Drives on the	right
Calling code	+504
ISO 3166 code	HN
Internet TLD	.hn

- Mixture of European and American Indian.
- As part of the Federal Republic of Central America.

Population estimates explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates, lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected, as of July 2007.



A Maya stela, an emblematic symbol of the Honduran Mayan civilization at Copan.

In March 1524, Gil González Dávila became the first Spaniard to enter Honduras as a conquistador.^{[19][20]} followed by Hernán Cortés, had brought forces down from Mexico. Much of the conquest took place in the following two decades, first by groups loyal to Cristóbal de Olid, and then by those loyal of Francisco Montejo but most particularly by those following Alvarado. In addition to Spanish resources, the conquerors relied heavily on armed forces from Mexico—Tlaxcalans and Mexica armies of thousands who remained garrisoned in the region.

Resistance to conquest was led in particular by Lempira, and many regions in the north never fell to the Spanish, notably the Miskito Kingdom. After the Spanish conquest, Honduras became part of Spain's vast empire in the New World within the Kingdom of Guatemala. Trujillo and Gracias were the first city-capitals. The Spanish ruled the region for approximately three centuries.

Spanish Honduras (1524–1821)

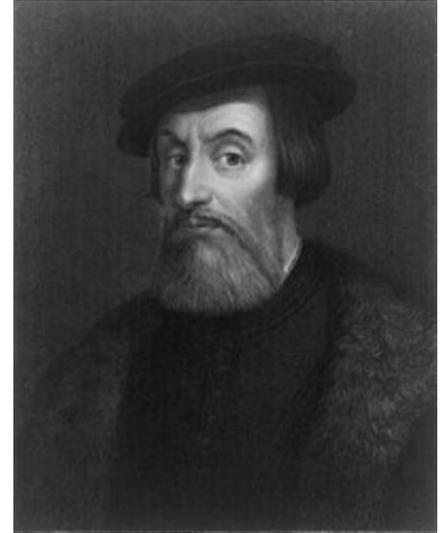
Honduras was organized as a province of the Kingdom of Guatemala and the capital was fixed, first at Trujillo on the Atlantic coast, and later at Comayagua, and finally at Tegucigalpa in the central part of the country.

Silver mining was a key factor in the Spanish conquest and settlement of Honduras.^[21] Initially the mines were worked by local people through the encomienda system, but as disease and resistance made this option less available, slaves from other parts of Central America were brought in. When local slave trading stopped at the end of the sixteenth century, African slaves, mostly from Angola, were imported.^[22] After about 1650, very few slaves or other outside workers arrived in Honduras.

Although the Spanish conquered the southern or Pacific portion of Honduras fairly quickly, they were less successful on the northern, or Atlantic side. They managed to found a few towns along the coast, at Puerto Caballos and Trujillo in particular, but failed to conquer the eastern portion of the region and many pockets of independent indigenous people as well. The Miskito Kingdom in the northeast was particularly effective at resisting conquest. The Miskito Kingdom found support from northern European privateers, pirates and especially the British (formerly English) colony of Jamaica, which placed much of its territory under its protection after 1740.

Independence (1821)

Honduras gained independence from Spain in 1821 and was a part of the First Mexican Empire until 1823, when it became part of the United Provinces of Central America. It has been an independent republic and has held regular elections since 1838. In the 1840s and 1850s Honduras participated in several failed attempts at Central American unity, such as the Confederation of Central America (1842–1845), the covenant of Guatemala (1842), the Diet of Sonsonate (1846), the Diet of Nacaome (1847) and National Representation in Central



Hernán Cortés, one of the conquerors of Honduras.

America (1849–1852). Although Honduras eventually adopted the name Republic of Honduras, the unionist ideal never waned, and Honduras was one of the Central American countries that pushed the hardest for a policy of regional unity.

Neoliberal policies favoring international trade and investment began in the 1870s, and soon foreign interests became involved, first in shipping from the north coast, especially tropical fruit and most notably bananas, and then in building railroads. In 1888, a projected railroad line from the Caribbean coast to the capital, Tegucigalpa, ran out of money when it reached San Pedro Sula. As a result, San Pedro grew into the nation's primary industrial center and second-largest city. Comayagua was the capital of Honduras until 1880, when the capital moved to Tegucigalpa.

Since independence, nearly 300 small internal rebellions and civil wars have occurred in the country, including some changes of régime.

20th century

In the late nineteenth century, Honduras granted land and substantial exemptions to several US-based fruit and infrastructure companies in return for developing the country's northern regions. Thousands of workers came to the north coast as a result to work in banana plantations and other businesses that grew up around the export industry. Banana-exporting companies, dominated until 1930 by the Cuyamel Fruit Company, as well as the United Fruit Company, and Standard Fruit Company, built an enclave economy in northern Honduras, controlling infrastructure and creating self-sufficient, tax-exempt sectors that contributed relatively little to economic growth. American troops landed in Honduras in 1903, 1907, 1911, 1912, 1919, 1924 and 1925.^[23] In 1904 the writer O. Henry coined the term "Banana republic" to describe Honduras.^[24]

In 1904, the author known as O. Henry (William Sydney Porter, 1862–1910) published a book called *Cabbages and Kings*, about a fictional country, Anchuria, inspired by his experiences in Honduras, where he had lived for six months.^[25] In *The Admiral*, O. Henry refers to the nation as a "small maritime banana republic"; naturally, the fruit was the entire basis of its economy.^{[26][27]} According to a literary analyst writing for *The Economist*, "his phrase neatly conjures up the image of a tropical, agrarian country. But its real meaning is sharper: it refers to the fruit companies from the United States that came to exert extraordinary influence over the politics of Honduras and its neighbors."^{[28][29]}

In addition to drawing Central American workers north, the fruit companies also encouraged immigration of workers from the English-speaking Caribbean, notably Jamaica and Belize, which introduced an African-descended, English-speaking and largely Protestant population into the country, although many of these workers



The Fortaleza de San Fernando de Omoa was built by the Spanish to protect the coast of Honduras from English pirates.

left following changes to immigration law in 1939.^[30] Honduras joined the Allied Nations after Pearl Harbor, on 8 December 1941, and signed the Declaration by United Nations on 1 January 1942 along with twenty-five other governments.

Constitutional crises in the 1940s led to reforms in the 1950s. One reform gave workers permission to organize, and a 1954 general strike paralyzed the northern part of the country for more than two months, but led to reforms. In 1963 a military coup unseated democratically-elected President Ramón Villeda Morales.

In 1969 Honduras and El Salvador fought what became known as the Football War. Border tensions led to acrimony between the two countries after Oswaldo López Arellano, a president of Honduras, blamed the deteriorating Honduran economy on immigrants from El Salvador. The relationship reached a low when El Salvador met Honduras for a three-round football elimination match preliminary to the World Cup.^[31]

Tensions escalated and on 14 July 1969, the Salvadoran army launched an attack on the Honduran army. The Organization of American States negotiated a cease-fire which took effect on 20 July and brought about a withdrawal of Salvadoran troops in early August.^[31] Contributing factors to the conflict were a boundary dispute and the presence of thousands of Salvadorans living in Honduras illegally. After the week-long war as many as 130,000 Salvadoran immigrants were expelled.^[32]

Hurricane Fifi caused severe damage when it skimmed the northern coast of Honduras on 18 and 19 September 1974. Melgar Castro (1975–78) and Paz García (1978–82) largely built the current physical infrastructure and telecommunications system of Honduras.^[33]

In 1979, the country returned to civilian rule . A constituent assembly was popularly elected in April 1980 to write a new constitution, and general elections were held in November 1981. The constitution was approved in 1982 and the PLH government of Roberto Suazo won the election with a promise to carry out an ambitious program of economic and social development to tackle the recession Honduras was in. He launched ambitious social and economic development projects sponsored by American development aid. Honduras became host to the largest Peace Corps mission in the world, and nongovernmental and international voluntary agencies proliferated. The Peace Corps withdrew its volunteers in 2012, citing safety concerns.^[34]

During the early 1980s the United States established a continuing military presence in Honduras to support El Salvador, the Contra guerrillas fighting the Nicaraguan government, and also develop an air strip and modern port in Honduras. Though spared the bloody civil wars wracking its neighbors, the Honduran army quietly



Part of the massive damage caused by Hurricane Mitch in Tegucigalpa, 1998.

waged campaigns against Marxist-Leninist militias such as the Cinchoneros Popular Liberation Movement, notorious for kidnappings and bombings,^[35] and against many non-militants as well. The operation included a CIA-backed campaign of extrajudicial killings by government-backed units, most notably Battalion 316.^[36]

In 1998, Hurricane Mitch caused massive and widespread destruction. Honduran President Carlos Roberto Flores said that fifty years of progress in the country had been reversed. Mitch destroyed about 70% of the crops and an estimated 70–80% of the transportation infrastructure, including nearly all bridges and secondary roads. Across Honduras 33,000 houses were destroyed, and an additional 50,000 damaged. Some 5,000 people killed, and 12,000 more injured. Total losses were estimated at \$3 billion USD.^[37]

21st century

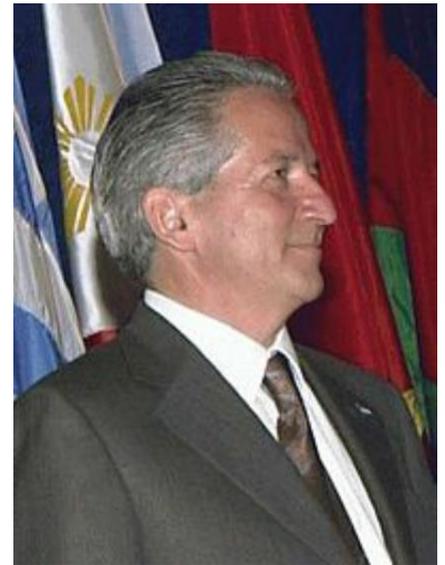
The 2008 Honduran floods were severe and damaged or destroyed around half of the roads as a result.^[38]

In 2009, a constitutional crisis resulted when power transferred in a coup from the president to the head of Congress. The Organization of American States (OAS) suspended Honduras because it did not feel its government was legitimate.^{[39][40]}

Countries around the world, the OAS, and the United Nations^[41] formally and unanimously condemned the action as a coup d'état, refusing to recognize the *de facto* government, even though the lawyers consulted by the Library of Congress submitted to the United States Congress an opinion that declared the coup legal.^{[41][42][43]} The Honduran Supreme Court also ruled that the proceedings had been legal. The government that followed the *de facto government* established a truth and reconciliation commission, *Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación*, which after more than a year of research and debate concluded that the ousting had been a coup d'état, and illegal in the commission's opinion.^{[44][45][46]}

Geography

The north coast of Honduras borders the Caribbean Sea and the Pacific Ocean lies south through the Gulf of Fonseca. Honduras consists mainly of mountains, with narrow plains along the coasts. A large undeveloped lowland jungle, *La Mosquitia* lies in the northeast, and the heavily populated lowland Sula valley in the northwest. In La Mosquitia lies the UNESCO world-heritage site Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, with the Coco River which divides Honduras from Nicaragua.



Ricardo Maduro



Manuel Zelaya

The Islas de la Bahía and the Swan Islands are off the north coast. Misteriosa Bank and Rosario Bank, 130 to 130 to 150 kilometres (81 to 93 miles) north of the Swan Islands, fall within the Exclusive Economic Zone



A map of Honduras.

(EEZ) of Honduras.

Natural resources include timber, gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, iron ore, antimony, coal, fish, shrimp, and hydropower.

Climate

The climate varies from tropical in the lowlands to temperate in the mountains. The central and southern regions are relatively hotter and less humid than the northern coast.

Ecology

The region is considered a biodiversity hotspot because of the many plant and animal species found there. Like other countries in the region, it contains vast biological resources. Honduras hosts more than 6,000 species of vascular plants, of which 630 (described so far) are orchids; around 250 reptiles and amphibians, more than 700 bird species, and 110 mammal species, of which half are bats.^[47]

In the northeastern region of La Mosquitia lies the Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve, a lowland rainforest which is home to a great diversity of life. The reserve was added to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites List in 1982.

Honduras has rain forests, cloud forests (which can rise up to nearly three thousand metres or 9,800 feet above sea level), mangroves, savannas and mountain ranges with pine and oak trees, and the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System. In the Bay Islands there are bottlenose dolphins, manta rays, parrot fish, schools of blue tang and whale shark.

Environmental issues

Deforestation resulting from logging is rampant in Olancho Department. The clearing of land for agriculture is prevalent in the largely undeveloped La Mosquitia region, causing land degradation and soil erosion.

Lake Yojoa, which is Honduras' largest source of fresh water, is polluted by heavy metals produced from mining activities.^[48] Some rivers and streams are also polluted by mining.^[49]



Honduran rainforest.

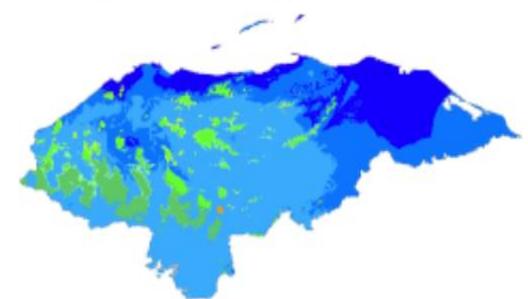
Government and politics

Honduras is governed within a framework of a presidential representative democratic republic. The President of Honduras is both head of state and head of government. Executive power is exercised by the Honduran government. Legislative power is vested in the National Congress of Honduras. The Judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

The National Congress of Honduras (*Congreso Nacional*) has 128 members (*diputados*), elected for a four-year term by proportional representation. Congressional seats are assigned the parties' candidates on a departmental basis in proportion to the number of votes each party receives.^[1]

Political culture

Köppen climate types of Honduras



Köppen climate type		
■ Af (rainforest)	■ BSh (hot semi-arid)	■ Cfa (humid subtropical)
■ Am (Monsoon)	■ Cwa (humid subtropical)	■ Cfb (Oceanic)
■ Aw (Savanna)	■ Cwb (Subtropical highland)	

^aIsoterns used to separate temperate (C) and continental (E) climates in °C.
Data source: Climate types calculated from data from WorldClim.org

Köppen climate types of Honduras

In 1963, a military coup removed the democratically elected president, Ramón Villeda Morales. A string of authoritarian military governments held power uninterrupted until 1981, when Roberto Suazo Córdova was elected president.

Today, the party system is dominated by the conservative National Party of Honduras (Partido Nacional de Honduras: PNH) and the liberal Liberal Party of Honduras (Partido Liberal de Honduras: PLH). Since 1981 Honduras has had six Liberal Party presidents: Roberto Suazo Córdova, José Azcona del Hoyo, Carlos Roberto Reina, Carlos Roberto Flores, Manuel Zelaya and Roberto Micheletti, and four National Party Presidents: Rafael Leonardo Callejas Romero, Ricardo Maduro, Porfirio Lobo Sosa and Juan Orlando Hernández.

Another coup in 2009 removed Zelaya from office and put Micheletti in his place.

Current Honduran president Juan Orlando Hernández took office on 27 January 2014.



Incumbent President Juan Orlando Hernández

Panama Papers

Two Honduran names that surfaced in the Panama Papers disclosures belong to highly successful businessmen from some of Honduras' most prominent families. Jaime Rosenthal and Gilberto Goldstein are among the elite of Honduras, both successful businessmen and politicians. Rosenthal was a vice-president in the 1980s administration of José Azcona del Hoyo. His son César Rosenthal was, according to the Panama Papers, the sole stockholder of Renton Management S.A., a Panamanian entity created to purchase airplanes.

Foreign relations

Honduras and Nicaragua had tense relations throughout 2000 and early 2001 due to a boundary dispute off the Atlantic coast. Nicaragua imposed a 35% tariff against Honduran goods due to the dispute.

In June 2009 a coup d'état ousted President Manuel Zelaya; he was taken in a military aircraft to neighboring Costa Rica. The General Assembly of the United Nations voted to denounce the coup and called for the restoration of Zelaya. Several Latin American nations including Mexico temporarily severed diplomatic relations with Honduras. In July 2010, full diplomatic relations were once again re-established with Mexico.^[50] The United States sent out mixed messages after the coup; Obama called the ouster a coup and expressed support for Zelaya's return to power. US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, advised by John Negroponte, the former Reagan-era to Honduras implicated in the Iran-Contra affair, refrained from expressing support.^[51] She has since explained that the US would have had to cut aid if it called Zelaya's ouster a military coup, although the US has a record of ignoring these events when it chooses.^[52] Zelaya had expressed an interest in Hugo Chávez' Bolivarian Alliance for Peoples of our America (ALBA), and had actually joined in 2008. After the 2009 coup, Honduras withdrew its membership.

This interest in regional agreements may have increased the alarm of establishment politicians. When Zelaya began calling for a "fourth ballot box" to determine whether Hondurans wished to convoke a special constitutional congress, this sounded a lot to some like the constitutional amendments that had extended the terms of both Hugo Chavez and Evo Morales. "Chavez has served as a role model for like-minded leaders intent on cementing their power. These presidents are barely in office when they typically convene a constitutional convention to guarantee their reelection," said a 2009 Spiegel International analysis,^[53] which noted that one reason to join ALBA was discounted Venezuelan oil. In addition to Chavez and Morales, Carlos Menem of Argentina, Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil and Columbian President Álvaro Uribe had all taken this step, and Washington and the EU were both accusing the Sandanista government in Nicaragua of tampering with election results.^[53] Politicians of all stripes expressed opposition to Zelaya's referendum proposal, and the Attorney-General accused him of violating the constitution. The Honduran Supreme Court agreed, saying that the constitution had put the Supreme Electoral Tribunal in charge of elections and referenda, not the National Statistics Institute, which Zelaya had proposed to have run the count.^[54] Whether or not Zelaya's removal from power had constitutional elements, the Honduran constitution explicitly protects all Hondurans from forced expulsion for Honduras.

The United States maintains a small military presence at one Honduran base. The two countries conduct joint peacekeeping, counter-narcotics, humanitarian, disaster relief, humanitarian, medical and civic action exercises. U.S. troops conduct and provide logistics support for a variety of bilateral and multilateral exercises. The United States is Honduras' chief trading partner.^[33]

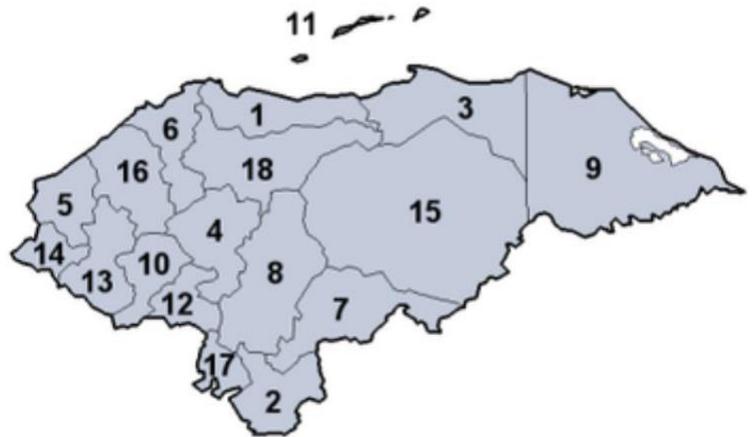
Military

Honduras has a modest military with Western equipment.

Administrative divisions

Honduras is divided into 18 departments. The capital city is Tegucigalpa in the Central District within the department of Francisco Morazán.

1. Atlántida
2. Choluteca
3. Colón
4. Comayagua
5. Copán
6. Cortés
7. El Paraíso
8. Francisco Morazán
9. Gracias a Dios
10. Intibucá
11. Islas de la Bahía
12. La Paz
13. Lempira
14. Ocotepeque



The departmental divisions of Honduras.

In 2006 the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Energy announced the first phase of the Secure Freight Initiative (SFI), which built upon existing port security measures. SFI gave the U.S.

government enhanced authority, allowing it to scan containers from overseas for nuclear and radiological materials in order to improve the risk assessment of individual US-bound containers. The initial phase of Secure Freight involved deploying of nuclear detection and other devices to six foreign ports:



- Port Qasim in Pakistan;
- Puerto Cortes in Honduras;
- Southampton in the United Kingdom;
- Port of Salalah in Oman;
- Port of Singapore;
- Gamman Terminal at Port Busan, Korea.

Containers in these ports have been scanned since 2007 for radiation and other risk factors before they are allowed to depart for the United States.^[58]

For economic development a 2012 memorandum of understanding with a group of international investors obtained Honduran government approval to build a zone (city) with its own laws, tax system, judiciary and police, but opponents brought a suit against it in the Supreme Court, calling it a "state within a state".^[59] In 2013, Honduras' Congress ratified Decree 120, which led to the establishment of ZEDEs. The government began construction of the first zones in June 2015.^[60]

Energy

About half of the electricity sector in Honduras is privately owned. The remaining generation capacity is run by ENEE (*Empresa Nacional de Energía Eléctrica*). Key challenges in the sector are:

- How to finance investments in generation and transmission in the absence of either a financially healthy utility or of concessionary funds by external donors for this type of investment
- How to re-balance tariffs, cut arrears and reduce losses, including electricity theft, without social unrest
- How to reconcile environmental concerns with the government objectives – two large new dams and associated hydropower plants.
- How to improve access to electricity in rural areas.

Transport

Infrastructure for transportation in Honduras consists of: 699 kilometres (434 miles) of railways; 13,603 kilometres (8,453 miles) of roadways;^[1] seven ports and harbors; and 112 airports altogether (12 Paved, 100 unpaved).^[1] The Ministry of Public Works, Transport and Housing (SOPRTRAVI in Spanish acronym) is responsible for transport sector policy.

Water supply and sanitation

Water supply and sanitation in Honduras differ greatly from urban centers to rural villages. Larger population centers generally have modernized water treatment and distribution systems, however water quality is often poor because of lack of proper maintenance and treatment. Rural areas generally have basic drinking water systems with limited capacity for water treatment. Many urban areas have sewer systems in place for the collection of wastewater, but proper treatment of wastewater is scarce. In rural areas sanitary facilities are generally limited to latrines and basic septic pits.

Water and sanitation services were historically provided by the Servicio Autónomo de Alcantarillas y Aqueductos (SANAA). In 2003, the government enacted a new "water law" which called for the decentralization of water services. Under the 2003 law, local communities have both the right and the responsibility to own, operate, and control their own drinking water and wastewater systems. Since this law passed, many communities have joined together to address water and sanitation issues on a regional basis.

Many national and international non-government organizations have a history of working on water and sanitation projects in Honduras. International groups include the Red Cross, Water 1st, Rotary Club, Catholic Relief Services, Water for People, EcoLogic Development Fund, CARE, the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO-SACO), Engineers Without Borders – USA, Flood The Nations, Students Helping Honduras (SHH), Global Brigades, and Agua para el Pueblo^[61] in partnership with AguaClara at Cornell University.

In addition, many government organizations work on projects in Honduras, including the European Union, the USAID, the Army Corps of Engineers, Cooperacion Andalucia, the government of Japan, and others.

Demographics

Honduras had a population of 9,112,867 in 2016.^[2] The proportion of the population below the age of 15 in 2010 was 36.8%, 58.9% were between 15 and 65 years old, and 4.3% were 65 years old or older.^[62]

Since 1975, emigration from Honduras has accelerated as economic migrants and political refugees sought a better life elsewhere. A majority of expatriate Hondurans live in the United States. A 2012 US State Department estimate suggested that between 800,000 and one million Hondurans lived in the United States at that time, nearly 15% of the Honduran population.^[33] The large uncertainty about numbers is because numerous Hondurans live in the United States without a visa. In the 2010 census in the United States, 617,392 residents identified as Hondurans, up from 217,569 in 2000.^[63]

Languages



A highway in Honduras

In addition to Spanish a number of indigenous languages are spoken in Honduras, as well as Honduran sign language and Bay Islands Creole English.^[64]

The main indigenous languages are:

- Garifuna (Arawakan) (almost 100,000 speakers in Honduras including monolinguals)
- Mískito (Misumalpan) (29,000 speakers in Honduras)
- Mayangna (Misumalpan) (less than 1000 speakers in Honduras, more in Nicaragua)
- Pech/Paya, (Chibchan) (less than 1000 speakers)
- Tol (isolate) (less than 500 speakers)
- Ch'orti' (Mayan) (less than 50 speakers)

The Lenca isolate lost all its fluent native speakers in the 20th century but is currently undergoing revival efforts among the members of the ethnic population of about 100,000. The largest immigrant languages are Arabic (42,000), Armenian (1,300), Turkish (900), Yue Chinese (1,000).^[64]

Urban areas

These are the top 10 most populated cities in Honduras as

Rank	City/Town	Population	Department
1	Tegucigalpa	1,126,534	Francisco Morazán
2	San Pedro Sula	638,259	Cortés
3	Choloma	222,828	Cortés
4	La Ceiba	174,006	Atlántida
5	El Progreso	131,125	Yoro
6	Choluteca	93,598	Choluteca
7	Comayagua	75,281	Comayagua
8	Puerto Cortés	60,751	Cortés
9	La Lima	59,030	Cortés
10	Danlí	56,968	El Paraíso

per the 2010 estimates.^[65]



Tegucigalpa, the capital of Honduras

Religion

Although most Hondurans are nominally Roman Catholic (which would be considered the main religion), membership in the Roman Catholic Church is declining while membership in Protestant churches is increasing. The International Religious Freedom Report, 2008, notes that a CID Gallup poll reported that 51.4% of the population identified themselves as Catholic, 36.2% as evangelical Protestant, 1.3% claiming to be from other

religions, including Muslims, Buddhists, Jews, Rastafarians, etc. and 11.1% do not belong to any religion or unresponsive. Customary Catholic church tallies and membership estimates 81% Catholic where the priest (in more than 185 parishes) is required to fill out a pastoral account of the parish each year.^{[66][67]}

The CIA Factbook lists Honduras as 97% Catholic and 3% Protestant.^[1] Commenting on statistical variations everywhere, John Green of Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life notes that: "It isn't that ... numbers are more right than [someone else's] numbers ... but how one conceptualizes the group."^[68] Often people attend one church without giving up their "home" church. Many who attend evangelical megachurches in the US, for example, attend more than one church.^[69] This shifting and fluidity is common in Brazil where two-fifths of those who were raised evangelical are no longer evangelical and Catholics seem to shift in and out of various churches, often while still remaining Catholic.^[70]

Most pollsters suggest an annual poll taken over a number of years would provide the best method of knowing religious demographics and variations in any single country. Still, in Honduras are thriving Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Seventh-day Adventist, Lutheran, Latter-day Saint (Mormon) and Pentecostal churches. There are Protestant seminaries. The Catholic Church, still the only "church" that is recognized, is also thriving in the number of schools, hospitals, and pastoral institutions (including its own medical school) that it operates. Its archbishop, Oscar Andres Rodriguez Maradiaga, is also very popular, both with the government, other churches, and in his own church. Practitioners of the Buddhist, Jewish, Islamic, Bahá'í, Rastafari and indigenous denominations and religions exist.^[71]



Cardinal Óscar Andrés Rodríguez is Archbishop of Tegucigalpa and a figure of national and international note

Health

The fertility rate is approximately 3.7 per woman.^[72] The under-five mortality rate is at 40 per 1,000 live births.^[72] The health expenditure was US\$ (PPP) 197 per person in 2004.^[72] There are about 57 physicians per 100,000 people.^[72]

Education

About 83.6% of the population are literate and the net primary enrollment rate was 94% in 2004.^[72] In 2014, the primary school *completion* rate was 90.7%.^[73] Honduras has bilingual (Spanish and English) and even trilingual (Spanish with English, Arabic, and/or German) schools and numerous universities.^[74]

The higher education is governed by the National Autonomous University of Honduras which has centers in the most important cities of Honduras.

Crime

Owing to insufficient law enforcement resources, crime in Honduras is rampant and criminals operate with a high degree of impunity. Consequently, Honduras has one of the highest murder rates in the world. Official statistics from the Honduran Observatory on National Violence show Honduras' homicide rate was 60 per 100,000 in 2015 with the majority of homicide cases being unprosecuted.^[75]

Highway assaults and carjackings at roadblock or checkpoints set up by criminals with police uniforms and equipment occur frequently. Although reports of kidnappings of foreigners are not common, families of kidnapping victims often pay ransoms without reporting the crime to police out of fear of retribution, so kidnapping figures may be underreported.^[75]

Owing to measures taken by government and business in 2014 to improve tourism security, Roatan and the Bay Islands have lower crime rates than the Honduran mainland.^[75]

In the less populated region of Gracias a Dios, narcotics-trafficking is rampant and police presence is scarce. Threats against U.S. citizens by drug traffickers and other criminal organizations have resulted in the U.S. Embassy placing restrictions on the travel of U.S. officials through the region.^[75]

Culture

Art

The most renowned Honduran painter is José Antonio Velásquez. Other important painters include Carlos Garay, and Roque Zelaya. Some of Honduras' most notable writers are Lucila Gamero de Medina, Froylán Turcios, Ramón Amaya Amador and Juan Pablo Suazo Euceda, Marco Antonio Rosa,^[76] Roberto Sosa, Eduardo Bähr, Amanda Castro, Javier Abril Espinoza, Teófilo Trejo, and Roberto Quesada.

The José Francisco Saybe theater in San Pedro Sula is home to the Círculo Teatral Sampedrano (Theatrical Circle of San Pedro Sula)



The Cathedral of Comayagua

Cuisine

Honduran cuisine is a fusion of indigenous Lenca cuisine, Spanish cuisine, Caribbean cuisine and African cuisine. There are also dishes from the Garifuna people. Coconut and coconut milk are featured in both sweet and savory dishes. Regional specialties include fried fish, tamales, carne asada and baleadas.

Other popular dishes include: meat roasted with chismol and carne asada, chicken with rice and corn, and fried fish with pickled onions and jalapeños. Some of the ways seafood and some meats are prepared in coastal areas and in the Bay Islands involve coconut milk.

The soups Hondurans enjoy include bean soup, mondongo soup tripe soup, seafood soups and beef soups. Generally these soups are served mixed with plantains, yuca, and cabbage, and served with corn tortillas.

Other typical dishes are the montucas or corn tamales, stuffed tortillas, and tamales wrapped in plantain leaves. Honduran typical dishes also include an abundant selection of tropical fruits such as papaya, pineapple, plum, sapote, passion fruit and bananas which are prepared in many ways while they are still green.

Media

At least half of the Honduran households have at least one television. Public television has a far smaller role than in most other countries. Honduras' main newspapers are La Prensa, El Heraldo, La Tribuna and Diario Tiempo. The official newspaper is La Gaceta (Honduras).

Music

Punta is the main music of Honduras, with other sounds such as Caribbean salsa, merengue, reggae, and reggaeton all widely heard, especially in the north, and Mexican rancheras heard in the rural interior of the country.

Celebrations

Some of Honduras' national holidays include Honduras Independence Day on 15 September and Children's Day or Día del Niño, which is celebrated in homes, schools and churches on 10 September; on this day, children receive presents and have parties similar to Christmas or birthday celebrations. Some neighborhoods have piñatas on the street. Other holidays are Easter, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Day of the Soldier (3 October to celebrate the birth of Francisco Morazán), Christmas, El Día de Lempira on 20 July,^[77] and New Year's Eve.

Honduras Independence Day festivities start early in the morning with marching bands. Each band wears different colors and features cheerleaders. Fiesta Catracha takes place this same day: typical Honduran foods such as beans, tamales, baleadas, cassava with chicharron, and tortillas are offered.

On Christmas Eve people reunite with their families and close friends to have dinner, then give out presents at midnight. In some cities fireworks are seen and heard at midnight. On New Year's Eve there is food and "cohetes", fireworks and festivities. Birthdays are also great events, and include piñatas filled with candies and surprises for the children.



"Olla" Soup, made with beef broth, squash, yuca and common Central American vegetables



Sawdust carpets of Comayagua during Easter celebrations

La Feria Isidra is celebrated in La Ceiba, a city located in the north coast, in the second half of May to celebrate the day of the city's patron saint Saint Isidore. People from all over the world come for one week of festivities. Every night there is a little carnival (carnavalito) in a neighborhood. On Saturday there is a big parade with floats and displays with people from many countries. This celebration is also accompanied by the Milk Fair, where many Hondurans come to show off their farm products and animals.

National symbols

The flag of Honduras is composed of three equal horizontal stripes, with the upper and lower ones being blue and representing the Pacific Ocean and Caribbean Sea. The central stripe is white. It contains five blue stars representing the five states of the Central American Union. The middle star represents Honduras, located in the center of the Central American Union.

The coat of arms was established in 1945. It is an equilateral triangle, at the base is a volcano between three castles, over which is a rainbow and the sun shining. The triangle is placed on an area that symbolizes being bathed by both seas. Around all of this an oval containing in golden lettering: "Republic of Honduras, Free, Sovereign and Independent".

The "National Anthem of Honduras" is a result of a contest carried out in 1914 during the presidency of Manuel Bonilla. In the end, it was the poet Augusto Coello that ended up writing the anthem, with German-born Honduran composer Carlos Hartling writing the music. The anthem was officially adopted on 15 November 1915, during the presidency of Alberto de Jesús Membreño. The anthem is composed of a choir and seven stroonduran.

The national flower is the famous orchid, *Rhyncholaelia digbyana* (formerly known as *Brassavola digbyana*), which replaced the rose in 1969. The change of the national flower was carried out during the administration of general Oswaldo López Arellano, thinking that *Brassavola digbyana* "is an indigenous plant of Honduras; having this flower exceptional characteristics of beauty, vigor and distinction", as the decree dictates it.

The national tree of Honduras was declared in 1928 to be simply "the Pine that appears symbolically in our Coat of Arms" (*el Pino que figura simbólicamente en nuestro Escudo*),^[78] even though pines comprise a genus and not a species, and even though legally there's no specification as for what kind of pine should appear in the coat of arms *either*. Because of its commonality in the country, the *Pinus oocarpa* species has become since then the species most strongly associated as the national tree, but legally it is not so. Another species associated as the national tree is the *Pinus caribaea*.

The national mammal is the white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), which was adopted as a measure to avoid excessive depredation. It is one of two species of deer that live in Honduras. The national bird of Honduras is the scarlet macaw (*Ara macao*). This bird was much valued by the pre-Columbian civilizations of Honduras.



The national bird, *Ara macao*

Folklore

Legends and fairy tales are paramount within Honduran culture. Lluvia de Peces (Rain of Fish) is an example of this. The legends of El Cadejo, La Llorona and La Ciguanaba (La Sucia) are also popular.

Nobel Prize nominations

The Honduran nation, has in its history with two nominations for the Nobel Prize.

- 1971 Argentina Diaz Lozano
- 1998 Salvador Moncada

Sports

The major sports in Honduras are football, basketball, rugby, volleyball and cycling, with smaller followings of athletics, softball and handball. Information about some of the sports organisations in Honduras are listed below:

- Football in Honduras
- Honduran Football Federation
- Honduras national baseball team
- Honduras national football team
- Honduras national under-20 football team
- Honduras U-17 national football team
- Rugby union in Honduras

See also

- Outline of Honduras
- Index of Honduras-related articles

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External links

- Government of Honduras (<http://www.gob.hn/>) (in Spanish)
- Official Site of the Tourism Institute of Honduras (English) (<http://www.letsgehonduras.com/>)
- Chief of State and Cabinet Members (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-h/honduras.html>)
- "Honduras" (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ho.html>). *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency.
- Honduras (<http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/honduras.htm>) at *University of Colorado at Boulder Libraries GovPubs*
- Honduras (https://dmoztools.net/Regional/Central_America/Honduras) at DMOZ
- Honduras profile (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1225416.stm) from the BBC News
-  Wikimedia Atlas of Honduras
- Honduran Biodiversity Database (<http://www.hondurassilvestre.com/>) (in Spanish)
- Honduras Tips Travel Info (English) (<http://www.hondurastips.honduras.com/>)
- Honduras Weekly (<http://hondurasweekly.com/>)
- Travel and Tourism Info on Honduras (English) (<http://www.honduras.com/>)
- Humanitarian Aid in Honduras (<http://www.missionlazarus.org/>)
- Answers.com (<http://www.answers.com/topic/honduras>)
- Project Honduras (<http://www.projecthonduras.org/>)
- Interactive Maps Honduras (<http://www.infohn.com/>)
- Key Development Forecasts for Honduras (http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=HN) from International Futures

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Jamaica

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Jamaica (/dʒəˈmeɪkə/) is an island country situated in the Caribbean Sea, consisting of the third-largest island of the Greater Antilles. The island, 10,990 square kilometres (4,240 sq mi) in area, lies about 145 kilometres (90 mi) south of Cuba, and 191 kilometres (119 mi) west of Hispaniola (the island containing the countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic). Jamaica is the fourth-largest island country in the Caribbean, by area.^[8]

Inhabited by the indigenous Arawak and Taíno peoples, the island came under Spanish rule following the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1494. Many of the indigenous people died of disease, and the Spanish imported African slaves as labourers. Named *Santiago*, the island remained a possession of Spain until 1655, when England (later Great Britain) conquered it and renamed it Jamaica. Under British colonial rule Jamaica became a leading sugar exporter, with its plantation economy highly dependent on slaves forcibly transported from Africa. The British fully emancipated all slaves in 1838, and many freedmen chose to have subsistence farms rather than to work on plantations. Beginning in the 1840s, the British imported Chinese and Indian indentured labour to work on plantations. The island achieved independence from the United Kingdom on 6 August 1962.^[9]

With 2.9 million people,^[3] Jamaica is the third-most populous Anglophone country in the Americas (after the United States and Canada), and the fourth-most populous country in the Caribbean. Kingston is the country's capital and largest city, with a population of 937,700.^{[10][11]} Jamaicans predominately have African ancestry, with significant European, Chinese, Indian, and mixed-race minorities. Due to a high rate of emigration for work since the 1960s, Jamaica has a large diaspora around the world, particularly in Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.^[12]

Jamaica is a Commonwealth realm, with Queen Elizabeth II as its monarch and head of state. Her appointed representative in the country is the Governor-General of Jamaica, an office held by Sir Patrick Allen since 2009. Andrew Holness has served as the head of government and Prime Minister of Jamaica from March 2016.

Jamaica	
	
Flag	Coat of arms
Motto: "Out of Many, One People"	
Anthem: "Jamaica, Land We Love"	
0:00 MENU	
Royal anthem: "God Save the Queen"	
0:00 MENU	
	
Capital and largest city	Kingston 17°59′N 76°48′W
Official languages	English
National language	Jamaican Patois (<i>de facto</i>)
Ethnic groups (2011 ^[1])	92.1% African 6.1% Mixed 0.8% Indian 0.4% Other 0.7% Unspecified

Jamaica is a parliamentary constitutional monarchy with legislative power vested in the bicameral Parliament of Jamaica, consisting of an appointed Senate and a directly elected House of Representatives.^{[13][14][15][16]}

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 Prehistory
 - 2.2 Spanish rule (1509–1655)
 - 2.3 British rule (1655–1962)
 - 2.4 Independence (1962)
- 3 Government and politics
 - 3.1 Political culture
 - 3.2 Administrative divisions
 - 3.3 Military
- 4 Geography and environment
 - 4.1 Flora and fauna
- 5 Demographics
 - 5.1 Ethnic origins
 - 5.2 Languages
 - 5.3 Emigration
 - 5.4 Crime
 - 5.5 Major cities
- 6 Religion
- 7 Culture
 - 7.1 Music
 - 7.2 Literature
 - 7.3 Film
 - 7.4 Cuisine
 - 7.5 National symbols
 - 7.6 Sport
- 8 Education
- 9 Economy
- 10 Infrastructure
 - 10.1 Transport
 - 10.1.1 Roadways
 - 10.1.2 Railways
 - 10.1.3 Air transport
 - 10.1.4 Ports, shipping and lighthouses
 - 10.2 Energy
 - 10.3 Water supply and sanitation
 - 10.4 Communication
- 11 See also

Religion	68.9% Christian 1.1% Rastafarian 6.5% Other 2.3% Not stated 21.3% None
	[2]
Demonym	Jamaican
Government	Unitary parliamentary constitutional monarchy
• Monarch	Elizabeth II
• Governor-General	Patrick Allen
• Prime Minister	Andrew Holness
Legislature	Parliament
• Upper house	Senate
• Lower house	House of Representatives
Independence from the United Kingdom	
• Granted	6 August 1962
Area	
• Total	10,991 km ² (4,244 sq mi) (160th)
• Water (%)	1.5
Population	
• 2016 estimate	2,881,355 ^[3] (139th)
• Density	268/km ² (694.1/sq mi) (49th)
GDP (PPP)	2016 estimate
• Total	\$25.437 billion ^[4] (2016)
• Per capita	\$8,991 ^[4]
GDP (nominal)	2016 estimate
• Total	\$14.057 billion ^[4]
• Per capita	\$4,968 ^[4]
Gini (2004)	45.5 ^[5] medium · 84th ^[6]
HDI (2014)	▲ 0.719 ^[7] high · 99th
Currency	Jamaican dollar (JMD)
Time zone	(UTC-5)

- 12 References
- 13 Further reading
- 14 External links

Drives on the	left
Calling code	+1-876 +1-658 (Overlay of 876; active in November 2018)
ISO 3166 code	JM
Internet TLD	.jm

Etymology

The indigenous people, the Taíno, called the island *Xaymaca* in Arawakan,^[17] meaning the "Land of Wood and Water" or the "Land of Springs".^[18]

Colloquially Jamaicans refer to their home island as the "Rock." Slang names such as "Jamrock", "Jamdown" ("Jamdung" in Jamaican Patois), or briefly "Ja", have derived from this.^[19]



A map of Jamaica

History

Prehistory

The Arawak and Taíno indigenous people, originating in South America, settled on the island between 4000 and 1000 BC.^[20] When Christopher Columbus arrived in 1494, there were more than 200 villages ruled by *caciques* (chiefs of villages). The south coast of Jamaica was the most populated, especially around the area now known as Old Harbour.^[20] The Taino still inhabited Jamaica when the English took control of the island in 1655.^[20] The Jamaican National Heritage Trust is attempting to locate and document any evidence of the Taino/Arawak.^[21]

Spanish rule (1509–1655)

Christopher Columbus claimed Jamaica for Spain after landing there in 1494. His probable landing point was Dry Harbour, now called Discovery Bay,^[22] although there is some debate that it might have been St. Ann's Bay. St. Ann's Bay was named "Saint Gloria" by Columbus, as the first sighting of the land. One and a half kilometres west of St. Ann's Bay is the site of the first Spanish settlement on the island, Sevilla, which was established in 1509 and abandoned around 1524 because it was deemed unhealthy.^[23] The capital was moved to Spanish Town, then called *St. Jago de la Vega*, around 1534 (at present-day St. Catherine).^[24]

British rule (1655–1962)

Spanish Town has the oldest cathedral of the British colonies in the Caribbean.^[24] The Spanish were forcibly evicted by the English at Ocho Rios in St. Ann. In 1655, the English, led by Sir William Penn and General Robert Venables, took over the last Spanish fort in Jamaica.^[25] The name of Montego Bay, the capital of the

parish of St. James, was derived from the Spanish name *manteca bahía* (or Bay of Lard), alluding to the lard-making industry based on processing the numerous boars in the area.^[26]

The English continued to import African slaves as labourers.

In 1660, the population of Jamaica was about 4,500 white and 1,500 black.^[28] By the early 1670s, as the English developed sugar cane plantations and imported more slaves, black people formed a majority of the population.^[29]

The Irish in Jamaica also formed a large part of the island's early population, making up 2 thirds of the white population on the island in the late 17th century, twice that of the English population. They were brought in as indentured labourers and soldiers after the conquest of Jamaica by Cromwells forces in 1655, The majority of Irish were transported by force as political prisoners of war from Ireland as a result of the ongoing Wars of the Three Kingdoms at the time.^[30] Migration of large numbers Irish to the island continued into the 18th century.^[31]

Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492 and then forcibly converted to Christianity in Portugal, during a period of persecution by the Inquisition. Some Spanish and Portuguese Jewish refugees went to the Netherlands and England, and from there to Jamaica. Others were part of the Iberian colonisation of the New World, after overtly converting to Catholicism, as only Catholics were allowed in the Spanish colonies. By 1660, Jamaica had become a refuge for Jews in the New World, also attracting those who had been expelled from Spain and Portugal.

An early group of Jews arrived in 1510, soon after the son of Christopher Columbus settled on the island. Primarily working as merchants and traders, the Jewish community was forced to live a clandestine life, calling themselves "Portugals". After the British took over rule of Jamaica, the Jews decided the best defense against Spain's regaining control was to encourage making the colony a base for Caribbean pirates. With the pirates installed in Port Royal, the Spanish would be deterred from attacking. The British leaders agreed with the viability of this strategy to forestall outside aggression.^[32]

When the English captured Jamaica in 1655, the Spanish colonists fled after freeing their slaves.^[25] The slaves dispersed into the mountains, joining the *maroons*, those who had previously escaped to live with the Taíno native people.^[33] During the centuries of slavery, Maroons established free communities in the mountainous interior of Jamaica, where they maintained their freedom and independence for generations. The Jamaican Maroons fought the British during the 18th century. Under treaties of 1738 and 1739, the British agreed to stop trying to round them up in exchange for their leaving the colonial settlements alone, but serving if needed for military actions.^[33] Some of the communities were broken up and the British deported Maroons to Nova Scotia and, later, Sierra Leone. The name is still used today by modern Maroon descendants, who have certain rights and autonomy at the community of Accompong.



Henry Morgan was a famous Caribbean pirate and privateer; he had first come to the West Indies as an indentured servant, like most of the early English colonists.^[27]

During its first 200 years of British rule, Jamaica became one of the world's leading sugar-exporting, slave-dependent colonies, producing more than 77,000 tons of sugar annually between 1820 and 1824. After the abolition of the international slave trade in 1807,^[34] the British began to import indentured servants to supplement the labour pool, as many freedmen resisted working on the plantations. After slavery was abolished, workers recruited from India began arriving in 1845, Chinese workers in 1854,^[35] as many freedmen resisted working on the plantations. Many South Asian and Chinese descendants continue to reside in Jamaica today.^{[36][37]}

By the beginning of the 19th century, Jamaica's dependence on slave labour and a plantation economy had resulted in black people outnumbering white people by a ratio of almost 20 to 1. Although the UK had outlawed the importation of slaves, some were still smuggled in from Spanish colonies and directly. While planning the abolition of slavery, the British Parliament passed laws to improve conditions for slaves. They banned the use of whips in the field and flogging of women; informed planters that slaves were to be allowed religious instruction, and required a free day during each week when slaves could sell their produce, prohibiting Sunday markets to enable slaves to attend church.



Montpelier Plantation, the property of C. R. Ellis, Esq. M.P., c. 1820

The House of Assembly in Jamaica resented and resisted the new laws. Members (then restricted to European-Jamaicans) claimed that the slaves were content and objected to Parliament's interference in island affairs. Slave owners feared possible revolts if conditions were lightened. Following a series of rebellions on the island and changing attitudes in Great Britain, the British government formally abolished slavery by an 1833 act, beginning in 1834, with full emancipation from chattel slavery declared in 1838. The population in 1834 was 371,070, of whom 15,000 were white, 5,000 free black; 40,000 'coloured' or free people of color (mixed race); and 311,070 were slaves.^[28]

In the 19th century, the British established a number of botanical gardens. These included the Castleton Botanical Gardens, developed in 1862 to replace the Bath Botanical Gardens (created in 1779) which was subject to flooding. Bath Botanical Gardens was the site for planting breadfruit, brought to Jamaica from the Pacific by Captain William Bligh. It became a staple in island diets. Other gardens were the Cinchona Plantation, founded in 1868, and the Hope Botanical Gardens founded in 1874. In 1872, Kingston was designated as the island's capital.

In 1945, Sir Horace Hector Hearne became Chief Justice and Keeper of the Records in Jamaica. He headed the Supreme Court, Kingston between 1945 and 1950/1951. After Kenya achieved independence, its government appointed him as Chief Justice and he moved there.

Independence (1962)

Jamaica slowly gained increasing independence from the United Kingdom. In 1958, it became a province in the Federation of the West Indies, a federation among the British West Indies. Jamaica attained full independence by leaving the federation in 1962.

Strong economic growth, averaging approximately 6% per annum, marked the first ten years of independence under conservative Jamaica Labour Party governments; they were led successively by Prime Ministers Alexander Bustamante, Donald Sangster and Hugh Shearer. The growth was fueled by strong private investments in bauxite/alumina, tourism, the manufacturing industry and, to a lesser extent, the agricultural sector.

The optimism of the first decade was accompanied by a growing sense of inequality among many Afro-Jamaicans, and a concern that the benefits of growth were not being shared by the urban poor. Combined with the effects of a slowdown in the global economy in 1970, the voters elected the PNP (People's National Party) in 1972. They tried to implement more socially equitable policies in education and health, but the economy suffered under their leadership. By 1980, Jamaica's gross national product had declined to some 25% below the 1972 level. Due to rising foreign and local debt, accompanied by large fiscal deficits, the government sought International Monetary Fund (IMF) financing from the United States and others.

Economic deterioration continued into the mid-1980s, exacerbated by a number of factors. The first and third largest alumina producers, Alpart and Alcoa, closed, and there was a significant reduction in production by the second-largest producer, Alcan. Reynolds Jamaica Mines, Ltd. left the Jamaican industry. There was also a decline in tourism, which was important to the economy.

Independence, however widely celebrated in Jamaica, has been questioned in the early 21st century. In 2011, a survey showed that approximately 60% of Jamaicans would prefer to become a British territory again, citing as problems years of social and fiscal mismanagement in the country.^{[38][39]}

Government and politics

Jamaica is a parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy, with Queen Elizabeth II serving as the Jamaican monarch.^[40] As Elizabeth II is shared as head of state of fifteen other countries and resides mostly in the United Kingdom, she is thus often represented as Queen of Jamaica in Jamaica and abroad by the Governor-General of Jamaica.^[41]

The governor-general is nominated by the Prime Minister of Jamaica and the entire Cabinet and appointed by the monarch. All the members of the Cabinet are appointed by the governor-general on the advice of the prime minister. The monarch and the governor-general serve largely ceremonial roles, apart from their reserve powers for use in certain constitutional crisis situations.



Prince Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall during a visit to Jamaica in 2008



Inside the Jamaican Parliament

Jamaica's current constitution was drafted in 1962 by a bipartisan joint committee of the Jamaican legislature. It came into force with the Jamaica Independence Act, 1962 of the United Kingdom parliament, which gave Jamaica independence.

The Parliament of Jamaica is bicameral, consisting of the House of Representatives (Lower House) and the Senate (Upper House). Members of the House (known as Members of Parliament or *MPs*) are directly elected, and the member of the House of Representatives who, in the governor-general's best judgement, is best able to command the confidence of a majority of the members of that House, is appointed by the governor-general to be the prime minister. Senators are nominated jointly by the prime minister and the parliamentary Leader of the Opposition and are then appointed by the governor-general.

Political culture

Jamaica has traditionally had a two-party system, with power often alternating between the People's National Party (PNP) and Jamaica Labour Party (JLP). The party with current administrative and legislative power is the Jamaica Labour Party, with a one-seat parliamentary majority as of 2016. There are also several minor parties who have yet to gain a seat in parliament; the largest of these is the National Democratic Movement (NDM).

Administrative divisions

Jamaica is divided into 14 parishes, which are grouped into three historic counties that have no administrative relevance.

Cornwall County				Middlesex County				Surrey County			
		Capital	km ²			Capital	km ²			Capital	km ²
1	Hanover	Lucea	450	6	Clarendon	May Pen	1,196	11	Kingston	Kingston	25
2	Saint Elizabeth	Black River	1,212	7	Manchester	Mandeville	830	12	Portland	Port Antonio	814
3	Saint James	Montego Bay	595	8	Saint Ann	St. Ann's Bay	1,213	13	Saint Andrew	Half Way Tree	453
4	Trelawny	Falmouth	875	9	Saint Catherine	Spanish Town	1,192	14	Saint Thomas	Morant Bay	743
5	Westmoreland	Savanna-la-Mar	807	10	Saint Mary	Port Maria	611				



Military

The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) is the small but professional military force of Jamaica. The JDF is based on the British military model with similar organisation, training, weapons and traditions. Once chosen, officer candidates are sent to one of several British or Canadian basic officer courses depending on the arm of service. Enlisted soldiers are given basic training at Up Park Camp or JDF Training Depot, Newcastle, both in St. Andrew. As with the British model, NCOs are given several levels of professional training as they rise up the ranks. Additional military schools are available for speciality training in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom.

The JDF is directly descended from the British Army's West India Regiment formed during the colonial era.^[42] The West India Regiment was used extensively by the British Empire in policing the empire from 1795 to 1926. Other units in the JDF heritage include the early colonial Jamaica Militia, the Kingston Infantry Volunteers of WWI and reorganised into the Jamaican Infantry Volunteers in World War II. The West Indies Regiment was reformed in 1958 as part of the West Indies Federation, after dissolution of the Federation the JDF was established.

The Jamaica Defence Force (JDF) comprises an infantry Regiment and Reserve Corps, an Air Wing, a Coast Guard fleet and a supporting Engineering Unit.^[43] The infantry regiment contains the 1st, 2nd and 3rd (National Reserve) battalions. The JDF Air Wing is divided into three flight units, a training unit, a support unit and the JDF Air Wing (National Reserve). The Coast Guard is divided between seagoing crews and support crews who conduct maritime safety and maritime law enforcement as well as defence-related operations.^[44]

The role of the support battalion is to provide support to boost numbers in combat and issue competency training in order to allow for the readiness of the force.^[45] The 1st Engineer Regiment was formed due to an increased demand for military engineers and their role is to provide engineering services whenever and wherever they are needed.^[46] The Headquarters JDF contains the JDF Commander, Command Staff as well as Intelligence, Judge Advocate office, Administrative and Procurement sections.^[47]

In recent years the JDF has been called on to assist the nation's police, the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), in fighting drug smuggling and a rising crime rate which includes one of the highest murder rates in the world. JDF units actively conduct armed patrols with the JCF in high-crime areas and known gang neighbourhoods. There has been vocal controversy as well as support of this JDF role. In early 2005, an Opposition leader, Edward Seaga, called for the merger of the JDF and JCF. This has not garnered support in either organisation nor among the majority of citizens.

Geography and environment



Jamaican soldiers training to fire the FN FAL in 2002.

Jamaica is the third largest island in the Caribbean.^[48] It lies between latitudes 17° and 19°N, and longitudes 76° and 79°W. Mountains, including the Blue Mountains, dominate the inland. They are surrounded by a narrow coastal plain.^[49] Jamaica only has two cities, the first being Kingston, the capital city and centre of business, located on the south coast and the 'second' city being Montego Bay, one of the best known cities in the Caribbean for tourism, located on the north coast. Other towns include Portmore, Spanish Town, Mandeville and the resort towns of Ocho Ríos, Port Antonio and Negril.^[50]



Doctor's Cave Beach Club is a popular destination in Montego Bay.

Kingston Harbour is the seventh-largest natural harbour in the world,^[51] which contributed to the city being designated as the capital in 1872.

Tourist attractions include Dunn's River Falls in St. Ann, YS Falls in St. Elizabeth, the Blue Lagoon in Portland, believed to be the crater of an extinct volcano. Port Royal was the site of a major earthquake in 1692 that helped form the island's Palisadoes.^{[52][53][54][55]}



The picturesque Dunn's River Falls in Ocho Ríos.

The climate in Jamaica is tropical, with hot and humid weather, although higher inland regions are more temperate.^[56] Some regions on the south coast, such as the Liguanea Plain and the Pedro Plains, are relatively dry rain-shadow areas.^[57]

Jamaica lies in the hurricane belt of the Atlantic Ocean and because of this, the island sometimes suffers significant storm damage.^[58] Hurricanes Charlie and Gilbert hit Jamaica directly in 1951 and 1988, respectively, causing major damage and many deaths. In the 2000s (decade), hurricanes Ivan, Dean, and Gustav also brought severe weather to the island.

Among the variety of terrestrial, aquatic and marine ecosystems are dry and wet limestone forests, rainforest, riparian woodland, wetlands, caves, rivers, seagrass beds and coral reefs. The authorities have recognised the tremendous significance and potential of the environment and have designated some of the more 'fertile' areas as 'protected'. Among the island's protected areas are the Cockpit Country, Hellshire Hills, and Litchfield forest reserves. In 1992, Jamaica's first marine park, covering nearly 15 square kilometres (5.8 sq mi), was established in Montego Bay. Portland Bight Protected Area was designated in 1999.^[59]

The following year Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park was created on roughly 300 square miles (780 km²) of wilderness, which supports thousands of tree and fern species and rare animals.

Flora and fauna

Jamaica's climate is tropical, supporting diverse ecosystems with a wealth of plants and animals.

Jamaica's plant life has changed considerably over the centuries. When the Spanish arrived in 1494, except for small agricultural clearings, the country was deeply forested. The European settlers cut down the great timber trees for building and ships' supplies, and cleared the plains, savannas, and mountain slopes for intense agricultural cultivation. Many new plants were introduced including sugarcane, bananas, and citrus trees.

Areas of heavy rainfall contain stands of bamboo, ferns, ebony, mahogany, and rosewood. Cactus and similar dry-area plants are found along the south and southwest coastal area. Parts of the west and southwest consist of large grasslands, with scattered stands of trees.

The Jamaican animal life, typical of the Caribbean, includes highly diversified wildlife with many endemic species found nowhere else on earth. As with other oceanic islands, land mammals are mostly bats. The only non-bat native mammal extant in Jamaica is the Jamaican hutia, locally known as the coney. Introduced mammals such as wild boar and the small Asian mongoose are also common. Jamaica is also home to about 50 species of reptiles,^[60] the largest of which is the American crocodile; however, it is only present within the Black River and a few other areas. Lizards such as anoles, iguanas and snakes such as racers and the Jamaican boa (the largest snake on the island), are common in areas such as the Cockpit Country. None of Jamaica's eight species of native snakes is venomous.^[61]



Jamaican boa



Jamaican hutia

One species of freshwater turtle is native to Jamaica, the Jamaican slider. It is found only on Jamaica, Cat Island, and a few other islands in the Bahamas. In addition, many types of frogs are common on the island, especially treefrogs. Birds are abundant, and make up the bulk of the endemic and native vertebrate species. Beautiful and exotic birds, such as the Jamaican tody and the doctor bird (the national bird), can be found among a large number of others.

Jamaican waters contain considerable resources of fresh-and saltwater fish.^[62] The chief varieties of saltwater fish are kingfish, jack, mackerel, whiting, bonito, and tuna. Fish that occasionally enter freshwater and estuarine environments include snook, jewfish, mangrove snapper, and mullets. Fish that spend the majority of their lives in Jamaica's fresh waters include many species of livebearers, killifish, freshwater gobies, the mountain mullet, and the American eel. Tilapia have been introduced from Africa for aquaculture, and are very common.

Insects and other invertebrates are abundant, including the world's largest centipede, the Amazonian giant centipede, and the Homerus swallowtail, the western hemisphere's largest butterfly.

Demographics

Ethnic origins

According to the most recent census, conducted in 2011, the majority of Jamaicans identify as black.^[63]

Ethnic Group	%
Black ^[1]	92.1%
Mixed ^[1]	6.1%
Asian ^[1]	0.8%
Other ^[1]	0.4%
Unspecified ^[1]	0.7%

Much of Jamaica's black population are of African or partially African descent with many being able to trace their origins to West Africa,^[64] as well as Europe^[65] and Asia.^[66] Like many other anglophone Caribbean countries, many Jamaicans with mixed ancestry self-report as *black*.

Asians form the second largest group and include Indo-Jamaicans and Chinese Jamaicans.^[63] Most are descended from indentured workers brought by the British colonial government to fill labour shortages following the abolition of slavery in 1838.

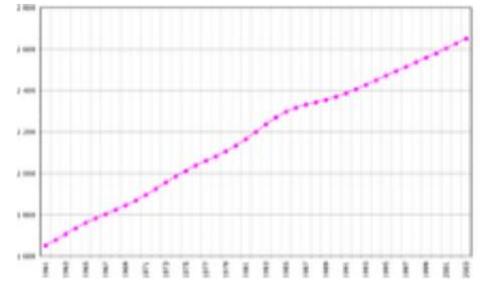
In recent years, immigration has increased, coming mainly from China, Haiti, Cuba, Colombia, and Latin America; 20,000 Latin Americans reside in Jamaica. About 7,000 Americans also reside in Jamaica, as well as many first-generation American, British and Canadians of Jamaican descent.^[67]

A study found that the average admixture on the island was 78.3% Sub-Saharan African, 16.0% European, and 5.7% East Asian.^[68]

Languages

Jamaica is regarded as a bilingual country, with two major languages in use by the population.^[69] The official language is Jamaican Standard English (JSE) or Standard Jamaican English (SJE), which is "used in all domains of public life", including the government, the legal system, the media, and education.^[70] However, the primary spoken language is an English-based creole called Jamaican Patois (or Patwa). A 2007 survey by the Jamaican Language Unit found that 17.1 percent of the population were monolingual in JSE, 36.5 percent were monolingual in Patois, and 46.4 percent were bilingual, although earlier surveys had pointed to a greater degree of bilinguality (up to 90 percent).^[71] The Jamaican education system has only recently begun to offer formal instruction in Patois, while retaining JSE as the "official language of instruction".^[72]

Additionally, some Jamaicans speak one or more of Jamaican Sign Language, American Sign Language or the indigenous Jamaican Country Sign Language (Konchri Sain). Both JSL and ASL are rapidly replacing Konchri Sain for a variety of reasons.



Jamaica's population, 1961–2003.



The streets of Montego Bay, Jamaica

Emigration

Many Jamaicans have emigrated to other countries, especially to the United Kingdom, the United States, and Canada. In the case of the United States, about 20,000 Jamaicans per year are granted permanent residence.^[73] The great number of Jamaicans living abroad has become known as the Jamaican diaspora. There has also been emigration of Jamaicans to Cuba.^[74] The scale of emigration has been widespread and similar to other Caribbean entities such as Puerto Rico, Guyana, and The Bahamas. It was estimated in 2004 that up to 2.5 million Jamaicans and Jamaican descendants live abroad.^[75]

Jamaicans in the United Kingdom number an estimated 800,000 making them by far the country's largest African-Caribbean group. Large-scale migration from Jamaica to the UK occurred primarily in the 1950s and 1960s (when the country was still under British rule). Jamaican communities exist in most large UK cities.^[76] Concentrations of expatriate Jamaicans are quite considerable in numerous cities in the United States, including New York City, Buffalo, the Miami metro area, Atlanta, Chicago, Orlando, Tampa, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, Hartford, Providence and Los Angeles. In Canada, the Jamaican population is centred in Toronto, and there are smaller communities in cities such as Hamilton, Montreal, Winnipeg, Vancouver and Ottawa.

Crime

When Jamaica gained independence in 1962, the murder rate was 3.9 per 100,000 inhabitants, one of the lowest in the world. By 2009, the rate was 62 per 100,000 inhabitants, one of the highest in the world.^[77] Jamaica has had one of the highest murder rates in the world for many years, according to UN estimates.^{[78][79]} Some areas of Jamaica, particularly cities such as Kingston, experience high levels of crime and violence.^[80] Some Jamaicans are hostile towards LGBT and intersex people,^[81] and there have been reported cases of mob attacks against gay people.^{[82][83][84]}

However, crime in Jamaica has recently shown a downward trend. There were 1,682 reported murders in 2009 and 1,428 in 2010. Since 2011 the murder rate has continued to fall following the downward trend started in 2010, with increases in police patrols, curfews and more effective anti-gang activities.^[85] In 2012, the Ministry of National Security reported a 30 percent decrease in murders.^[86]

Major cities

Religion

Christianity is the largest religion practised in Jamaica. Protestants form the majority of approximately 70% in the country, and Roman Catholics are a minority with 2% of the population. According to the 2001 census, the country's largest Protestant denominations are the Church of God (24%), Seventh-day Adventist Church (11%), Pentecostal (10%), Baptist (7%), Anglican (4%), United Church (2%), Methodist (2%), Moravian (1%) and Plymouth Brethren (1%).^[87] The Christian faith gained acceptance as British Christian abolitionists and Baptist missionaries joined educated former slaves in the struggle against slavery.^[88]

The Rastafari movement has 29,026 adherents, according to the 2011 census, with 25,325 Rastafarian males and 3,701 Rastafarian females.^[87] Other religions in Jamaica include Jehovah's Witnesses (2% population), the Bahá'í faith, which counts perhaps 8,000 adherents^[89] and 21 Local Spiritual Assemblies,^[90] Buddhism, and Hinduism.^[91] There is a small population of Jews, about 200, who describe themselves as Liberal-Conservative.^[92] The first Jews in Jamaica trace their roots back to early 15th century Spain and Portugal.^[93] Other small groups include Muslims, who claim 5,000 adherents,^[87] as do the Mormons.^[94]

Culture

Music

Though a small nation, Jamaican culture has a strong global presence. The musical genres reggae, ska, mento, rocksteady, dub, and, more recently, dancehall and ragga all originated in the island's vibrant, popular urban recording industry. Jamaica also played an important role in the development of punk rock, through reggae and ska. Reggae has also influenced American rap music, as they share roots as rhythmic, African styles of music. Some rappers, such as The Notorious B.I.G., Busta Rhymes, and Heavy D, are of Jamaican descent. Internationally known reggae musician Bob Marley was also Jamaican.

Many other internationally known artists were born in Jamaica, including Millie Small, Lee "Scratch" Perry, Gregory Isaacs, Half Pint, Protoje, Peter Tosh, Bunny Wailer, Big Youth, Jimmy Cliff, Dennis Brown, Desmond Dekker, Beres Hammond, Beenie Man, Shaggy, Grace Jones, Shabba Ranks, Super Cat, Buju Banton, Sean Paul, I Wayne, Bounty Killer and many others. Bands that came from Jamaica include Black Uhuru, Third World Band, Inner Circle, Chalice Reggae Band, Culture, Fab Five and Morgan Heritage. The genre jungle emerged from London's Jamaican diaspora. The birth of hip-hop in New York City owed much to the city's Jamaican community.

Literature

Ian Fleming, who lived in Jamaica, repeatedly used the island as a setting in his James Bond novels, including *Live and Let Die*, *Doctor No*, "For Your Eyes Only", *The Man with the Golden Gun*, and *Octopussy and The Living Daylights*. In addition, James Bond uses a Jamaica-based cover in *Casino Royale*. So far, the only James Bond film adaptation to have been set in Jamaica is *Doctor No*. Filming for the fictional island of San Monique in *Live and Let Die* took place in Jamaica.

The journalist and author H. G. de Lisser (1878–1944) used his native country as the setting for his many novels. Born in Falmouth, Jamaica, de Lisser worked as a reporter for the *Jamaica Times* at a young age and in 1920 began publishing the magazine *Planters' Punch*. *The White Witch of Rosehall* is one of his better-known



Mandeville Church in Manchester Parish. Founded in 1816.



Marcus Garvey, father of the Back to Africa Movement and Jamaica's first National Hero.

novels. He was named Honorary President of the Jamaican Press Association; he worked throughout his professional career to promote the Jamaican sugar industry.

Marlon James (1970), novelist has published three novels: *John Crow's Devil* (2005), *The Book of Night Women* (2009) and *A Brief History of Seven Killings* (2014), winner of the 2015 Man Booker Prize

Film

The cinema actor Errol Flynn lived with his third wife Patrice Wymore in Port Antonio in the 1950s. He helped develop tourism to this area, popularising trips down rivers on bamboo rafts.^[95]

Jamaica has a long history in the film industry dating from the early 1960s. A look at delinquent youth in Jamaica is presented in the 1970s musical crime film *The Harder They Come*, starring Jimmy Cliff as a frustrated (and psychopathic) reggae musician who descends into a murderous crime spree. The American film *Cocktail* (1988), starring Tom Cruise, is one of the more popular films to depict Jamaica. Another popular Jamaican-based film is the 1993 Disney comedy *Cool Runnings*, which is loosely based on the true story of Jamaica's first bobsled team trying to make it in the Winter Olympics.



Bob Marley, the most famous reggae artist from Jamaica.

Cuisine

The island is famous for its Jamaican jerk spice, which is integral to Jamaican cuisine. Jamaica is also home to Red Stripe beer and Jamaican Blue Mountain Coffee.

National symbols

(From the *Jamaica Information Service*)^[96]

- National bird: red-billed streamertail (also called doctor bird) (a hummingbird, *Trochilus polytmus*)
- National flower – lignum vitae (*Guaiacum officinale*)
- National tree: blue mahoe (*Hibiscus talipariti elatum*)
- National fruit: ackee (*Blighia sapida*)
- National motto: "Out of Many, One People."

Sport

Sport is an integral part of national life in Jamaica and the island's athletes tend to perform to a standard well above what might ordinarily be expected of such a small country.^[97] While the most popular local sport is cricket, on the international stage Jamaicans have tended to do particularly well at track and field athletics.^{[97][98]}

Jamaica has produced some of the world's most famous cricketers, including George Headley, Courtney Walsh, and Michael Holding.^[99] The country was one of the venues of 2007 Cricket World Cup and the West Indies cricket team is one of 10 ICC full member teams that participate in international Test cricket.^[100] The Jamaica national cricket team competes regionally, and also provides players for the West Indies team. Sabina Park is the only Test venue in the island, but the Greenfield Stadium is also used for cricket.^{[101][102]} Chris Gayle is the most renowned batsman from Jamaica currently representing the West Indies cricket team.

Since independence Jamaica has consistently produced world class athletes in track and field.^[97] In Jamaica involvement in athletics begins at a very young age and most high schools maintain rigorous athletics programs with their top athletes competing in national competitions (most notably the VMBS Girls and Boys Athletics Championships) and international meets (most notably the Penn Relays). In Jamaica it is not uncommon for young athletes to attain press coverage and national fame long before they arrive on the international athletics stage.

Over the past six decades Jamaica has produced dozens of world class sprinters including Olympic and World Champion Usain Bolt, world record holder in the 100m for men at 9.58s, and 200m for men at 19.19s. Other noteworthy Jamaican sprinters include Arthur Wint, the first Jamaican Olympic Gold Medalist; Donald Quarrie, Elaine Thompson double Olympic champion from Rio 2016 in the 100m and 200m, Olympic Champion and former 200m world record holder; Roy Anthony Bridge, part of the International Olympic Committee; Merlene Ottey; Delloreen Ennis-London; Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, the former World and two time Olympic 100m Champion; Kerron Stewart; Aleen Bailey; Juliet Cuthbert; three-time Olympic gold medalist; Veronica Campbell-Brown; Sherone Simpson; Brigitte Foster-Hylton; Yohan Blake; Herb McKenley; George Rhoden, Olympic Gold Medalist; Deon Hemmings, Olympic Gold Medalist; as well as Asafa Powell, former 100m world record holder and 2x 100m Olympic finalist and Gold medal winner in the men's 2008 Olympic 4 × 100 m.

Jamaica has also produced several world class amateur and professional boxers including Trevor Berbick and Mike McCallum. First-generation Jamaican athletes have continued to make a significant impact on the sport internationally, especially in the United Kingdom where the list of top British boxers born in Jamaica or of Jamaican parents includes Lloyd Honeyghan, Chris Eubank, Audley Harrison, David Haye, Lennox Lewis and Frank Bruno.

Association football and horse-racing are other popular sports in Jamaica. The national football team qualified for the 1998 FIFA World Cup.

The Jamaica national bobsled team was once a serious contender in the Winter Olympics, beating many well-established teams. Chess and basketball are widely played in Jamaica and are supported by the Jamaica Chess Federation (JCF) and the Jamaica Basketball Federation (JBF), respectively. Netball is also very popular on the



Jamaica motto on a building at Papine High School in Kingston, Jamaica.



Usain Bolt at the 2009 World Championships in Athletics in Berlin

island, with the Jamaica national netball team called *The Sunshine Girls* consistently ranking in the top five in the world.^[103]

The Jamaica national rugby league team is made up of players who play in Jamaica, and UK-players from professional and semi professional teams in the UK.^[104] Their first international was a 37–22 loss to the United States national rugby league team in November 2009.^[105] Rugby league in Jamaica is growing with universities and high schools taking up the sport.^{[106][107]} The JRLA Championship is the main rugby league competition in the country.^[108] The Hurricanes Rugby League are a professional rugby league team who are hoping to compete in either the USA Rugby League or the AMNRL by 2013 during that time they will be training young players aged 14–19 who will be part of the Hurricanes RL Academy in the hope of developing into full-time professional players.

According to ESPN, the highest paid Jamaican professional athlete in 2011 was Justin Masterson, starting pitcher for the Cleveland Indians.^[109]

Education

The emancipation of the slaves heralded in the establishment of the Jamaican education system for the masses. Prior to emancipation there were few schools for educating locals. Many sent their children off to England to access quality education.

After emancipation the West Indian Commission granted a sum of money to establish Elementary Schools, now known as *All Age Schools*. Most of these schools were established by the churches.^[110] This was the genesis of the modern Jamaican school system.

Presently the following categories of schools exist:

- **Early childhood** – Basic, Infant and privately operated pre-school. Age cohort: 2 – 5 years.
- **Primary** – Publicly and privately owned (Privately owned being called Preparatory Schools). Ages 3 – 12 years.
- **Secondary** – Publicly and privately owned. Ages 10 – 19 years. The high schools in Jamaica may be either single-sex or co-educational institutions, and many schools follow the traditional English grammar school model used throughout the British West Indies.
- **Tertiary** – Community Colleges, Teachers' Colleges with The Mico Teachers' College (now The MICO University College) being the oldest founded in 1836, The Shortwood Teachers' College (which was once an all-female teacher training institution), Vocational Training Centres, Colleges and Universities – Publicly and privately owned. There are five local universities namely: The University of the West Indies (Mona Campus); the University of Technology, Jamaica formerly The College of Art Science and Technology (CAST); the Northern Caribbean University formerly West Indies College; the University College of The Caribbean and the International University of the Caribbean.

Additionally, there are many community and teacher training colleges.

Education is free from the early childhood to secondary levels. There are also opportunities for those who cannot afford further education in the vocational arena through the Human Employment and Resource Training-National Training Agency (HEART Trust-NTA) programme,^[111] which is opened to all working age national population^[112] and through an extensive scholarship network for the various universities.

Students are taught Spanish in school from the primary level upwards; about 40–45% of educated people in Jamaica knows some form of Spanish.

Economy

Jamaica is a mixed economy with both state enterprises and private sector businesses. Major sectors of the Jamaican economy include agriculture, mining, manufacturing, tourism, and financial and insurance services. Tourism and mining are the leading earners of foreign exchange. Half the Jamaican economy relies on services, with half of its income coming from services such as tourism. An estimated 1.3 million foreign tourists visit Jamaica every year.^[113]

Supported by multilateral financial institutions, Jamaica has, since the early 1980s, sought to implement structural reforms aimed at fostering private sector activity and increasing the role of market forces in resource allocation. Since 1991, the government has followed a programme of economic liberalisation and stabilisation by removing exchange controls, floating the exchange rate, cutting tariffs, stabilising the Jamaican currency, reducing inflation and removing restrictions on foreign investment. Emphasis has been placed on maintaining strict fiscal discipline, greater openness to trade and financial flows, market liberalisation and reduction in the size of government. During this period, a large share of the economy was returned to private sector ownership through divestment and privatisation programmes.

The macroeconomic stabilisation programme introduced in 1991, which focused on tight fiscal and monetary policies, has contributed to a controlled reduction in the rate of inflation. The annual inflation rate decreased from a high of 80.2% in 1991 to 7.9% in 1998. Inflation for FY1998/99 was 6.2% compared to 7.2% in the corresponding period in CUU1997/98. The Government of Jamaica remains committed to lowering inflation, with a long-term objective of bringing it in line with that of its major trading partners.

After a period of steady growth from 1985 to 1995, real GDP decreased by 1.8% and 2.4% in 1996 and 1997, respectively. The decrease in GDP in 1996 and 1997 was largely due to significant problems in the financial sector and, in 1997, a severe island-wide drought (the worst in 70 years) that drastically reduced agricultural production. In 1997, nominal GDP was approximately J\$220,556.2 million (US\$6,198.9 million based on the average annual exchange rate of the period).



A beach in Negril with a hotel and restaurant



James Bond Beach in Oracabessa

The economy in 1997 was marked by low levels of import growth, high levels of private capital inflows and relative stability in the foreign exchange market.

Recent economic performance shows the Jamaican economy is recovering. Agricultural production, an important engine of growth increased 15.3% in third quarter of 1998 compared to the corresponding period in 1997, signaling the first positive growth rate in the sector since January 1997. Bauxite and alumina production increased 5.5% from January to December, 1998 compared to the corresponding period in 1997. January's bauxite production recorded a 7.1% increase relative to January 1998 and continued expansion of alumina production through 2009 is planned by Alcoa.^[114] Jamaica is the fifth largest exporter of bauxite in the world, after Australia, China, Brazil and Guinea. Tourism, which is the largest foreign exchange earner, showed improvement as well. In the third quarter of 1998, growth in tourist arrivals accelerated with an overall increase of 8.5% in tourism earnings in 1998 when compared to the corresponding period in 1997. Jamaica's agricultural exports are sugar, bananas, coffee, rum, and yams.



Fishing boats and bauxite cargo ships share the waterways near Alligator Pond, Jamaica

Jamaica has a wide variety of industrial and commercial activities. The aviation industry is able to perform most routine aircraft maintenance, except for heavy structural repairs. There is a considerable amount of technical support for transport and agricultural aviation. Jamaica has a considerable amount of industrial engineering, light manufacturing, including metal fabrication, metal roofing, and furniture manufacturing. Food and beverage processing, glassware manufacturing, software and data processing, printing and publishing, insurance underwriting, music and recording, and advanced education activities can be found in the larger urban areas. The Jamaican construction industry is entirely self-sufficient, with professional technical standards and guidance.^[115]

Since the first quarter of 2006, the economy of Jamaica has undergone a period of staunch growth. With inflation for the 2006 calendar year down to 6.0% and unemployment down to 8.9%, the nominal GDP grew by an unprecedented 2.9%.^[116] An investment programme in island transportation and utility infrastructure and gains in the tourism, mining, and service sectors all contributed this figure. All projections for 2007 show an even higher potential for economic growth with all estimates over 3.0% and hampered only by urban crime and public policies.

In 2006, Jamaica became part of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) as one of the pioneering members.

The global economic downturn had a significant impact on the Jamaican economy for the years 2007 to 2009, resulting in negative economic growth. The government implemented a new Debt Management Initiative, the Jamaica Debt Exchange (JDX) on 14 January 2010. The initiative would see holders of Government of Jamaica (GOJ) bonds returning the high interest earning instruments for bonds with lower yields and longer maturities. The offer was taken up by over 95% of local financial institutions and was deemed a success by the government. Owing to the success of the JDX program, the Bruce Golding-led government was successful in entering into a borrowing arrangement with the IMF on 4 February 2010 for the amount of US\$1.27b. The loan agreement is for a period of three years. ^[117]

In April 2014, the Governments of Jamaica and China signed the preliminary agreements for the first phase of the Jamaican Logistics Hub (JLH) – the initiative that aims to position Kingston as the fourth node in the global logistics chain, joining Rotterdam, Dubai and Singapore, and serving the Americas.^[118] The Project, when completed, is expected to provide many jobs for Jamaicans, Economic Zones for multinational companies^[119] and much needed economic growth to alleviate the country's heavy debt-to-GDP ratio. Strict adherence to the IMF's refinancing programme and preparations for the JLH has favourably affected Jamaica's credit rating and outlook from the three biggest rating agencies.

Infrastructure

Transport

The transport infrastructure in Jamaica consists of roadways, railways and air transport, with roadways forming the backbone of the island's internal transport system.

Roadways

The Jamaican road network consists of almost 21,000 kilometres (13,000 mi) of roads, of which over 15,000 kilometres (9,300 mi) is paved.^[1] The Jamaican Government has, since the late 1990s and in cooperation with private investors, embarked on a campaign of infrastructural improvement projects, one of which includes the creation of a system of freeways, the first such access-controlled roadways of their kind on the island, connecting the main population centres of the island. This project has so far seen the completion of 33 kilometres (21 mi) of freeway.

Railways

Railways in Jamaica no longer enjoy the prominent position they once did, having been largely replaced by roadways as the primary means of transport. Of the 272 kilometres (169 mi) of railway found in Jamaica, only 57 kilometres (35 mi) remain in operation, currently used to transport bauxite.^[1]

On 13 April 2011, limited passenger service was resumed between May Pen, Spanish Town and Linstead.

Air transport

There are three international airports in Jamaica with modern terminals, long runways, and the navigational equipment required to accommodate the large jet aircraft used in modern and air travel: Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston; Ian Fleming International Airport in Boscobel, Saint Mary Parish; and the island's largest and busiest airport, Sir Donald Sangster International Airport in the resort city of Montego Bay.



Halfway Tree Transport Center,
Kingston, Jamaica

Manley and Sangster International airports are home to the country's national airline, Air Jamaica. In addition there are local commuter airports at Tinson Pen (Kingston), Port Antonio, and Negril, which cater to internal flights only. Many other small, rural centres are served by private fields on sugar estates or bauxite mines.

Ports, shipping and lighthouses

Owing to its location in the Caribbean Sea in the shipping lane to the Panama Canal and relative proximity to large markets in North America and emerging markets in Latin America, Jamaica receives high container traffic. The container terminal at the Port of Kingston has undergone large expansion in capacity in recent years to handle growth both already realised as well as that which is projected in coming years.^[120] Montego Freeport in Montego Bay also handles a variety of cargo like (though more limited than) the Port of Kingston, mainly agricultural products.



A US Airways aircraft landing at Montego Bay (2013)

There are several other ports positioned around the island, including Port Esquivel in St. Catherine (WINDALCO), Rocky Point in Clarendon, Port Kaiser in St. Elizabeth, Port Rhoades in Discovery Bay, Reynolds Pier in Ocho Rios, and Boundbrook Port in Port Antonio.

To aid the navigation of shipping, Jamaica operates nine lighthouses.

Energy

Jamaica depends on petroleum imports to satisfy its national energy needs.^[1] Many test sites have been explored for oil, but no commercially viable quantities have been found.^[121] The most convenient sources of imported oil and motor fuels (diesel, gasoline, and jet fuel) are from Mexico and Venezuela.

Jamaica's electrical power is produced by diesel (bunker oil) generators located in Old Harbour. Other smaller power stations (most owned by the Jamaica Public Service Company (<http://www.myjpsco.com/>) – the island's electricity provider) support the island's electrical grid including the Hunts Bay Power Station, the Bogue Power Station, the Rockfort Power Station and small hydroelectric plants on the White River, Rio Bueno, Morant River, Black River (Maggotty) and Roaring River.^[122] A wind farm, owned by the Petroleum Corporation of Jamaica, was established at Wigton, Manchester.^[123]

Jamaica has successfully operated a SLOWPOKE-2 nuclear reactor of 20 kW capacity since the early 1980s, but there are no plans to expand nuclear power at present.^[124]

Jamaica imports approximately 80,000 barrels (13,000 m³) of oil energy products per day,^[121] including asphalt and lubrication products. Just 20% of imported fuels are used for road transportation, the rest being used by the bauxite industry, electricity generation, and aviation. 30,000 barrels/day of crude imports are processed into various motor fuels and asphalt by the Petrojam Refinery in Kingston.^[125]

Jamaica produces enormous quantities of drinking alcohol (at least 5% water content), most of which appears to be consumed as beverages, and none of it used as motor fuel. Facilities exist to refine hydrous ethanol feedstock into anhydrous ethanol (0% water content), but as of 2007, the process appeared to be uneconomic and the production plant was idle.^[126]

Water supply and sanitation

Water supply and sanitation is characterised by high levels of access to an improved water source, while access to adequate sanitation stands at only 80%. This situation affects especially the poor, including the urban poor many of which live in the country's over 595 unplanned squatter settlements in unhealthy and unsanitary environments with a high risk of waterborne disease. Despite a number of policy papers that were mainly focused on water supply and despite various projects funded by external donors, increases in access have remained limited (1% for water and 5% for sanitation between 1990 and 2004).

The responsibility for water and sanitation policies within the government rests with the Ministry of Water and Housing, and the main service provider is the National Water Commission. An autonomous regulatory agency, the Office of Utilities Regulation, approves tariffs and establishes targets for efficiency increases.

Communication

Jamaica has a fully digital telephone communication system with a mobile penetration of over 95%.^[127]

The country's two mobile operators – FLOW Jamaica (formerly LIME, bMobile and Cable and Wireless Jamaica) and Digicel Jamaica have spent millions in network upgrades and expansion. The newest operator, Digicel was granted a licence in 2001 to operate mobile services in the newly liberalised telecom market that had once been the sole domain of the incumbent FLOW (then Cable and Wireless Jamaica) monopoly. Digicel opted for the more widely used GSM wireless system, while a past operator, Oceanic (which became Claro Jamaica and later merged with Digicel Jamaica in 2011) opted for the CDMA standard. FLOW (formerly "LIME" – pre-Columbus Communications merger) which had begun with TDMA standard, subsequently upgraded to GSM in 2002, decommissioned TDMA in 2006 and only utilised that standard until 2009 when LIME launched its 3G network.^[128] Both operators currently provide islandwide coverage with HSPA+ (3G) technology. Currently, only Digicel offers LTE to its customers ^[129] whereas FLOW Jamaica has committed to launching LTE in the cities of Kingston and Montego Bay, places where Digicel's LTE network is currently only found in, in short order.

A new entrant to the Jamaican communications market, Flow Jamaica, laid a new submarine cable connecting Jamaica to the United States. This new cable increases the total number of submarine cables connecting Jamaica to the rest of the world to four. Cable and Wireless Communications (parent company of LIME) acquired the company in late 2014 and replaced their brand LIME with FLOW.^[130] FLOW Jamaica currently has the most broadband and cable subscribers on the island and also has 1 million mobile subscribers,^[131] second to Digicel (which had, at its peak, over 2 Million mobile subscriptions on its network).

Digicel entered the broadband market in 2010 by offering WiMAX broadband,^[132] capable of up to 6 Mbit/s per subscriber. To further their broadband share post-LIME/FLOW merger in 2014, the company introduced a new broadband service called Digicel Play,^[133] which is Jamaica's second FTTH offering (after LIME's deployment in selected communities in 2011^[134]). It is currently only available in the parishes of Kingston, Portmore and St. Andrew. It offers speeds of up to 200 Mbit/s down, 100 Mbit/s up via a pure fibre optic network. Digicel's competitor, FLOW Jamaica, has a network consisting of ADSL, Coaxial and Fibre to the Home (inherited from LIME) and only offers speeds up to 100 Mbit/s. FLOW has committed to expanding its Fibre offering to more areas in order to combat Digicel's entrance into the market.

It was announced that the Office and Utilities Regulations (OUR), Ministry of Science, Technology, Energy and Mining (MSTEM) and the Spectrum Management Authority (SMA) have given approval for another mobile operator licence in January 2016.^[135] The identity of this entrant was ascertained on May 20, 2016, when the Jamaican Government named the new carrier as Symbiote Investments Limited operating under the name Caricel.^[136] The company will focus on 4G LTE data offerings and will first go live in the Kingston Metropolitan Area and will expand to the rest of Jamaica thereafter.

See also

- Index of Jamaica-related articles
- Outline of Jamaica

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- Chief of State and Cabinet Members (<https://web.archive.org/web/20081210080622/https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-j/jamaica.html>)

General information

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-  Wikimedia Atlas of Jamaica
- National Library of Jamaica (<http://www.dloc.com/inlj>) materials in the Digital Library of the Caribbean (<http://www.dloc.com/>)
- JAMAICA VIRTUAL TOUR IN HD – many locations around the island (<https://web.archive.org/web/20100122124019/http://virtualtravel.cz/jamaica/portland/winnifred-beach/beach.html>)
- Key Development Forecasts for Jamaica (http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=JM) from International Futures

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Puerto Rico

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Puerto Rico^[a] (Spanish for "Rich Port"), officially the **Commonwealth of Puerto Rico** (Spanish: *Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico*, lit. "Free Associated State of Puerto Rico")^[b] and briefly called **Porto Rico**,^{[c][16][17][18]} is an unincorporated territory of the United States located in the northeast Caribbean Sea.

It is an archipelago among the Greater Antilles that includes the main island of Puerto Rico and a number of smaller ones, such as Mona, Culebra, and Vieques. The capital and most populous city is San Juan. Its official languages are Spanish and English, though Spanish predominates.^[19] The island's population is approximately 3.4 million. Puerto Rico's rich history, tropical climate, diverse natural scenery, traditional cuisine, and attractive tax incentives make it a popular destination for travelers from around the world.

Originally populated by the indigenous Taíno people, the island was claimed in 1493 by Christopher Columbus for the Crown of Castile during his second voyage. Later it endured invasion attempts from the French, Dutch, and British. Four centuries of Spanish colonial government transformed the island's ethnic, cultural and physical landscapes primarily with waves of African slaves, and Canarian, and Andalusian settlers. In the Spanish imperial imagination, Puerto Rico played a secondary, but strategic role when compared to wealthier colonies like Peru and the mainland parts of New Spain.^{[20][21]} Spain's distant administrative control continued up to the end of the 19th century, helping to produce a distinctive creole Hispanic culture and language that combined elements from the Native Americans, Africans, and Iberians.^[22] In 1898, following the Spanish–American War, the United States acquired Puerto Rico along with other Spanish colonies under the terms of the Treaty of Paris.

Puerto Ricans are by law natural-born citizens of the United States and may move freely between the island and the mainland.^[23] As it is not a state Puerto Rico does not have a vote in the United States Congress, which governs the territory with full jurisdiction under the Puerto Rico Federal Relations Act of 1950. As a U.S. territory, American citizens residing on the island are disenfranchised at the national level and do not vote for president and vice president of the United States.^[24] Congress approved a local constitution, allowing U.S. citizens on the territory to elect a governor. A 2012 referendum showed a majority (54% of those who voted) disagreed with "the present form of territorial status", with full statehood the preferred option among those who voted for a change of status, although a significant number of people did not answer the second question of the referendum.^[25] Another fifth referendum was held on June 11, 2017, with "Statehood" and "Independence/Free Association" initially as the only available choices. At the recommendation of the Department of Justice, an option for the "current territorial status" was added.^[26] The referendum showed an overwhelming support for statehood, with 97.18% voting for it, although the voter turnout had a historically low figure of only 22.99% of the registered voters casting their ballots.

Commonwealth of Puerto Rico

Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico (Spanish)



Flag



Seal

Motto: "Joannes est nomen ejus" (Latin)
"John is his name"

Anthem: "La Borinqueña"^[a]
"The Borinquenian"

0:00

MENU

"The Star-Spangled Banner"

Coat of arms



In early 2017, the Puerto Rican government-debt crisis posed serious problems for the government. The outstanding bond debt had climbed to \$70 billion at a time with 12.4% unemployment. The debt had been increasing during a decade long recession.^[27] This was the second major financial crisis to affect the island after the Great Depression when the U.S. government, in 1935, provided relief efforts through the Puerto Rico Reconstruction Administration.^[28] On May 3, 2017, Puerto Rico's financial oversight board in the U.S. District Court for Puerto Rico filed the debt restructuring petition which was made under Title III of PROMESA.^[29] By early August 2017, the debt was \$72 billion with a 45% poverty rate.^[30]

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 Pre-Columbian era
 - 2.2 Spanish colony (1493–1898)
 - 2.3 American era (1898–present)
 - 2.4 Plebiscites on statehood or independence
 - 2.5 United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization
- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
 - 3.2 Biodiversity
- 4 Government and politics
 - 4.1 Political culture
 - 4.2 Law
- 5 Law and government
 - 5.1 Crime
 - 5.2 Political status
 - 5.3 Foreign and intergovernmental relations
 - 5.4 Military
 - 5.5 Administrative divisions
- 6 Economy
 - 6.1 Heavy debt load
 - 6.2 Infrastructure
 - 6.3 Public finances
 - 6.4 Cost of living
- 7 Demographics
 - 7.1 Population makeup
 - 7.2 Immigration and emigration
 - 7.3 Population distribution
 - 7.4 Languages
 - 7.5 Religion
 - 7.6 Education
 - 7.7 Health
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Architecture
 - 8.2 Arts
 - 8.3 Literature
 - 8.4 Media

Status	Unincorporated territory
Capital and largest city	San Juan <div>18°27′N 66°6′W﻿ / ﻿18.45°N 66.1°W﻿ / 18.45; -66.1﻿ / 18.45; -66.1</div>
Official languages	Spanish (most commonly used) <div>English^[1]</div>
Common languages	94.7% Spanish ^[2] <div>5.3% English</div>
Ethnic groups	75.8% White <div>12.4% Black</div> <div>3.3% Two or more races</div> <div>0.5% American Indian & Alaskan Native</div> <div>0.2% Asian</div> <div><0.1% Pacific Islander</div> <div>7.8% Other^[3]</div>
Demonym	Puerto Rican (formal) <div>Boricua (colloquial)</div>
Country	 United States
Government	Commonwealth ^[b]
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President • Governor • Delegate • President of the Senate • Speaker of the House of Representatives • Chief Justice of the Supreme Court 	<div>Donald Trump (R)</div> <div>Ricardo Rosselló (NPP)</div> <div>Resident Commissioner Jenniffer González (NPP)</div> <div>Thomas Rivera Schatz (NPP)</div> <div>Johnny Méndez (NPP)</div> <div>Maite Oronoz Rodríguez</div>
Legislature	Legislative Assembly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper house • Lower house 	<div>Senate</div> <div>House of Representatives</div>
Commonwealth within the United States	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cession from Spain • U.S. citizenship 	<div>December 10, 1898</div> <div>March 2, 1917</div>

- 8.5 Music
 - 8.6 Cuisine
 - 8.7 Philately
 - 8.8 Sports
- 9 See also
- 10 Notes
- 11 References
- 12 Further reading
- 13 External links

Etymology

Puerto Rico means "rich port" in Spanish. Puerto Ricans often call the island *Borinquén* – a derivation of *Borikén*, its indigenous Taíno name, which means "Land of the Valiant Lord".^{[31][32][33]} The terms *boricua* and *borincano* derive from *Borikén* and *Borinquen* respectively, and are commonly used to identify someone of Puerto Rican heritage. The island is also popularly known in Spanish as *la isla del encanto*, meaning "the island of enchantment".^[34]

Columbus named the island *San Juan Bautista*, in honor of Saint John the Baptist, while the capital city was named *Ciudad de Puerto Rico* ("Rich Port City"). Eventually traders and other maritime visitors came to refer to the entire island as Puerto Rico, while San Juan became the name used for the main trading/shipping port and the capital city.^[d]

The island's name was changed to "Porto Rico" by the United States after the Treaty of Paris of 1898.^[36] The anglicized name was used by the US government and private enterprises. The name was changed back to Puerto Rico by a joint resolution in Congress introduced by Félix Córdova Dávila in 1931.^[37]

The official name of the entity in Spanish is *Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico* ("free associated state of Puerto Rico"), while its official English name is Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

History

Pre-Columbian era

The ancient history of the archipelago which is now Puerto Rico is not well known. Unlike other indigenous cultures in the New World (Aztec, Maya and Inca) which left behind abundant archeological and physical evidence of their societies, scant artifacts and evidence remain of the Puerto Rico's indigenous population. Scarce archaeological findings and early Spanish accounts from the colonial era constitute all that is known about them. The first comprehensive book on the history of Puerto Rico was written by Fray Íñigo Abbad y Lasierra in 1786, nearly three centuries after the first Spaniards landed on the island.^[38]

<div> <div><div>granted</div></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Constitution adopted </div>	<div> <div><div>July 25, 1952</div></div> </div>
Area	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Total </div>	<div> <div><div>9,104 km²</div></div> <div><div>(3,515 sq mi)</div></div> </div>
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Water (%) </div>	<div> <div><div>1.6</div></div> </div>
Population	
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">2016 estimate2010 censusDensity </div>	<div> <div><div>3,411,307^[4] (130th)</div></div> <div><div>3,725,789</div></div> <div><div>375/km²</div></div> <div><div>(971.2/sq mi) (29th)</div></div> </div>
GDP (PPP)	<div> <div><div>2015 estimate</div></div> </div>
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">TotalPer capita </div>	<div> <div><div>\$125.861 billion^[5]</div></div> <div><div>(75th)</div></div> <div><div>\$35,024^[6] (29th)</div></div> </div>
GDP (nominal)	<div> <div><div>2015 estimate</div></div> </div>
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">TotalPer capita </div>	<div> <div><div>\$103.676 billion^[7]</div></div> <div><div>(62th)</div></div> <div><div>\$27,939^[8] (32nd)</div></div> </div>
Gini (2011)	<div> <div><div>53.1^[9]</div></div> <div><div>high</div></div> </div>
HDI (2015)	<div> <div><div>0.845^[10]</div></div> <div><div>very high · 40th</div></div> </div>
Currency	<div> <div><div>United States dollar (USD)</div></div> </div>
Time zone	<div> <div><div>Atlantic (UTC−4)</div></div> </div>
<div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Summer (DST) </div>	<div> <div><div>no longer observed (UTC−4)</div></div> </div>
Drives on the	<div> <div><div>right</div></div> </div>
Calling code	<div> <div><div>+1-787, +1-939</div></div> </div>
ISO 3166 code	<div> <div><div>PR</div></div> </div>
Internet TLD	<div> <div><div>.pr</div></div> </div>
	<div> <div><div>a. ^ "The Star-Spangled Banner" serves as the national anthem for the United States of America and its territories.</div></div> <div><div>b. ^ The term 'Commonwealth' does not describe or provide for any specific political status or relationship. It has, for example, been applied to both states and territories. When used in connection with areas under U.S. sovereignty that are not states, the term broadly describes an area that has a constitution of its adoption.^[11]</div></div> </div>

The first known settlers were the Ortoiroid people, an Archaic Period culture of Amerindian hunters and fishermen who migrated from the South American mainland. Some scholars suggest their settlement dates back about 4,000 years.^[39] An archeological dig in 1990 on the island of Vieques found the remains of a man, designated as the "Puerto Ferro Man", which was dated to around 2000 BC.^[40] The Ortoiroid were displaced by the Saladoid, a culture from the same region that arrived on the island between 430 and 250 BC.^[39]

The Igneri tribe migrated to Puerto Rico between 120 and 400 AD from the region of the Orinoco river in northern South America. The Arcaico and Igneri co-existed on the island between the 4th and 10th centuries.

Between the 7th and 11th centuries, the Taíno culture developed on the island. By approximately 1000 AD, it had become dominant. At the time of Columbus' arrival, an estimated 30,000 to 60,000 Taíno Amerindians, led by the *cacique* (chief) Agüeybaná, inhabited the island. They called it *Borikén*, meaning "the great land of the valiant and noble Lord".^[41] The natives lived in small villages, each led by a cacique. They subsisted by hunting and fishing, done generally by men, as well as by the women's gathering and processing of indigenous cassava root and fruit. This lasted until Columbus arrived in 1493.^{[42][43]}

Spanish colony (1493–1898)

Conquest and early settlement



Juan Ponce de León
(Santervás de Campos,
Valladolid, Spain), Puerto
Rico's first governor

When Columbus arrived in Puerto Rico during his second voyage on November 19, 1493, the island was inhabited by the Taíno. They called it *Borikén* (*Borinquen* in Spanish transliteration). Columbus named the island San Juan Bautista, in honor of St John the Baptist.^[e] Having reported the findings of his first travel, Columbus brought with him this time a letter from King Ferdinand^[44] empowered by a papal bull that authorized any course of action necessary for the expansion of the Spanish Empire and the Christian faith. Juan Ponce de León, a lieutenant under Columbus, founded the first Spanish settlement, Caparra, on August 8, 1508. He later served as the first governor of the island.^[f] Eventually, traders and other maritime visitors came to refer to the entire island as Puerto Rico, and San Juan became the name of the main trading/shipping port.

At the beginning of the 16th century, the Spanish people began to colonize the island. Despite the Laws of Burgos of 1512 and other decrees for the protection of the indigenous population, some Taíno Indians were forced into an *encomienda* system of forced labor in the early years of colonization. The population suffered extremely high fatalities from epidemics of European

infectious diseases.^{[g][h][i][j][k]}

Colonization, the Habsburgs

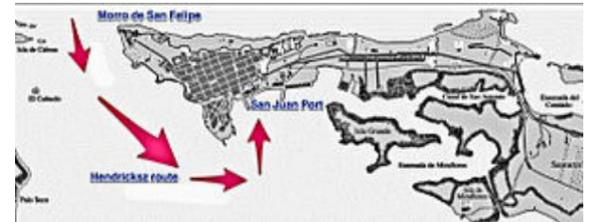
In 1520, King Charles I of Spain issued a royal decree collectively emancipating the remaining Taíno population. By that time, the Taíno people were few in number.^[52] Enslaved Africans had already begun to compensate for the native labor loss, but their numbers were proportionate to the diminished commercial interest Spain soon began to demonstrate for the island colony. Other nearby islands, like Cuba, Saint-Domingue, and Guadeloupe, attracted more of the slave trade than Puerto Rico, probably because of greater agricultural interests in those islands, on which colonists had developed large sugar plantations and had the capital to invest in the Atlantic slave trade.^[53]



A reconstructed Taíno village at the Tibes Ceremonial Center

From the beginning of the country, the colonial administration relied heavily on the industry of enslaved Africans and creole blacks for public works and defenses, primarily in coastal ports and cities, where the tiny colonial population had hunkered down. With no significant industries or large-scale agricultural production as yet, enslaved and free communities lodged around the few littoral settlements, particularly around San Juan, also forming lasting Afro-creole communities. Meanwhile, in the island's interior, there developed a mixed and independent peasantry that relied on a subsistence economy. This mostly unsupervised population supplied villages and settlements with foodstuffs and, in relative isolation, set the pattern for what later would be known as the Puerto Rican *Jíbaro* culture. By the end of the 16th Century, the Spanish Empire was diminishing and, in the face of increasing raids from European competitors, the colonial administration throughout the Americas fell into a "bunker mentality". Imperial strategists and urban planners redesigned port settlements into military posts with the objective of protecting Spanish territorial claims and ensuring the safe passing of the king's silver-laden Atlantic Fleet to the Iberian Peninsula. San Juan served as an important port-of-call for ships driven across the Atlantic by its powerful trade winds. West Indies convoys linked Spain to the island, sailing between Cádiz and the Spanish West Indies. The colony's seat of government was on the forested Islet of San Juan and for a time became one of the most heavily fortified settlements in the Spanish Caribbean earning the name of the "Walled City". The islet is still dotted with the various forts and walls, such as La Fortaleza, Castillo San Felipe del Morro, and Castillo San Cristóbal, designed to protect the population and the strategic Port of San Juan from the raids of the Spanish European competitors.

In 1625, in the Battle of San Juan, the Dutch commander Boudewijn Hendricksz tested the defenses' limits like no one else before. Learning from Francis Drake's previous failures here, he circumvented the cannons of the castle of San Felipe del Morro and quickly brought his 17 ships into the San Juan Bay. He then occupied the port and attacked the city while the population hurried for shelter behind the Morro's moat and high battlements. Historians consider this event the worst attack on San Juan. Though the Dutch set the village on fire, they failed to conquer the Morro, and its batteries pounded their troops and ships until Hendricksz deemed the cause lost. Hendricksz's expedition eventually helped propel a fortification frenzy. Constructions of defenses for the San Cristóbal Hill were soon ordered so as to prevent the landing of invaders out of reach of the Morro's artillery. Urban planning responded to the needs of keeping the colony in Spanish hands.



Hendricksz 1625 attack on San Juan, Puerto Rico

Late colonial period



Hacienda La Fortuna. A sugar mill complex in Puerto Rico painted by Francisco Oller in 1885 (Brooklyn Museum)

During the late 16th and early 17th centuries, Spain concentrated its colonial efforts on the more prosperous mainland North, Central, and South American colonies. With the advent of the lively Bourbon Dynasty in Spain in the 1700s, the island of Puerto Rico began a gradual shift to more imperial attention. More roads began connecting previously isolated inland settlements to coastal cities, and coastal settlements like Arecibo, Mayaguez, and Ponce began acquiring importance of their own, separate from San Juan. By the end of the 18th century, merchant ships from an array of nationalities threatened the tight regulations of the Mercantilist system, which turned each colony solely toward the European metropole and limited contact with other nations. U.S. ships came to surpass Spanish trade and with this also came the exploitation of the island's natural resources. Slavers, which had made but few stops on the island before, began selling more enslaved Africans to growing sugar and coffee plantations. The increasing number of Atlantic wars in which the Caribbean islands played major roles, like the War of Jenkins' Ear, the Seven Years' War and the Atlantic Revolutions, ensured Puerto Rico's growing esteem in Madrid's eyes. On April 17, 1797, Sir Ralph Abercromby fleet invaded the island with a force of 6,000–13,000 men,^[54] which included German soldiers and Royal Marines and 60 to 64 ships. Fierce fighting continued for

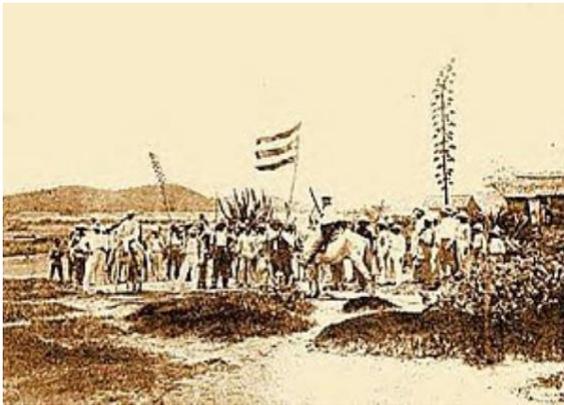
the next days with Spanish troops. Both sides suffered heavy losses. On Sunday April 30 the British ceased their attack and began their retreat from San Juan. By the time independence movements in the larger Spanish colonies gained success, new waves of loyal creole immigrants began to arrive in Puerto Rico, helping to tilt the island's political balance toward the Crown.

In 1809, to secure its political bond with the island and in the midst of the European Peninsular War, the Supreme Central Junta based in Cádiz recognized Puerto Rico as an overseas province of Spain. This gave the island residents the right to elect representatives to the recently convened Spanish parliament (Cádiz Cortes), with equal representation to mainland Iberian, Mediterranean (Balearic Islands) and Atlantic maritime Spanish provinces (Canary Islands).

Ramón Power y Giralt, the first Spanish parliamentary representative from the island of Puerto Rico, died after serving a three-year term in the Cortes. These parliamentary and constitutional reforms were in force from 1810 to 1814, and again from 1820 to 1823. They were twice reversed during the restoration of the traditional monarchy by Ferdinand VII. Immigration and commercial trade reforms in the 19th century increased the island's ethnic European population and economy and expanded the Spanish cultural and social imprint on the local character of the island.

Minor slave revolts had occurred on the island throughout the years, with the revolt planned and organized by Marcos Xiorro in 1821 being the most important. Even though the conspiracy was unsuccessful, Xiorro achieved legendary status and is part of Puerto Rico's folklore.^[55]

Politics of liberalism



The flag flown by Fidel Vélez and his men during the "Intentona de Yauco" revolt

island in the period up until the American conquest. Printed in three languages—Spanish, English, and French—it was intended to also attract non-Spanish Europeans, with the hope that the independence movements would lose their popularity if new settlers had stronger ties to the Crown. Hundreds of non Spanish families, mainly from Corsica, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy and Scotland, also immigrated to the island.^[57]



The 16th-century Castillo San Felipe del Morro in San Juan, Puerto Rico

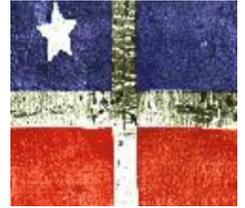
In the early 19th century, Puerto Rico spawned an independence movement that, due to harsh persecution by the Spanish authorities, convened in the island of St. Thomas. The movement was largely inspired by the ideals of Simón Bolívar in establishing a United Provinces of New Granada and Venezuela, that included Puerto Rico and Cuba. Among the influential members of this movement were Brigadier General Antonio Valero de Bernabé and María de las Mercedes Barbudo. The movement was discovered, and Governor Miguel de la Torre had its members imprisoned or exiled.^[56]

With the increasingly rapid growth of independent former Spanish colonies in the South and Central American states in the first part of the 19th century, the Spanish Crown considered Puerto Rico and Cuba of strategic importance. To increase its hold on its last two New World colonies, the Spanish Crown revived the Royal Decree of Graces of 1815 as a result of which 450,000 immigrants, mainly Spaniards, settled on the

Free land was offered as an incentive to those who wanted to populate the two islands, on the condition that they swear their loyalty to the Spanish Crown and allegiance to the Roman Catholic Church.^[57] The offer was very successful, and European immigration continued even after 1898. Puerto Rico still receives Spanish and European immigration.

Poverty and political estrangement with Spain led to a small but significant uprising in 1868 known as *Grito de Lares*. It began in the rural town of Lares, but was subdued when rebels moved to the neighboring town of San Sebastián.

Leaders of this independence movement included Ramón Emeterio Betances, considered the "father" of the Puerto Rican independence movement, and other political figures such as Segundo Ruiz Belvis. Slavery was abolished in Puerto Rico in 1873, "with provisions for periods of apprenticeship".^[58]



The Lares
Revolutionary Flag



Abolition Park in Ponce, Puerto Rico

Leaders of "El Grito de Lares" went into exile in New York City. Many joined the Puerto Rican Revolutionary Committee, founded on December 8, 1895, and continued their quest for Puerto Rican independence. In 1897, Antonio Mattei Lluberas and the local leaders of the independence movement in Yauco organized another uprising, which became known as the *Intentona de Yauco*. They raised what they called the Puerto Rican flag, which was adopted as the national flag. The local conservative political factions opposed independence. Rumors of the planned event spread to the local Spanish authorities who acted swiftly and put an end to what would be the last major uprising in the island to Spanish colonial rule.^[59]

In 1897, Luis Muñoz Rivera and others persuaded the liberal Spanish government to agree to grant limited self-government to the island by royal decree in the Autonomic Charter, including a bicameral legislature.^[60] In 1898, Puerto Rico's first, but short-lived, quasi-autonomous government was organized as an "overseas province" of Spain. This bilaterally agreed-upon charter maintained a governor appointed by the King of Spain – who held the power to annul any legislative decision – and a partially elected parliamentary structure. In February, Governor-General Manuel Macías inaugurated the new government under the Autonomic Charter. General elections were held in March and the new government began to function on July 17, 1898.^{[61][62][63]}

American era (1898–present)

In 1890, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, a member of the Navy War Board and leading U.S. strategic thinker, published a book titled *The Influence of Sea Power upon History* in which he argued for the establishment of a large and powerful navy modeled after the British Royal Navy. Part of his strategy called for the acquisition of colonies in the Caribbean, which would serve as coaling and naval stations. They would serve as strategic points of defense with the construction of a canal through the Isthmus of Panama, to allow easier passage of ships between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.^[64]

William H. Seward, the former Secretary of State under presidents Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson, had also stressed the importance of building a canal in Honduras, Nicaragua or Panama. He suggested that the United States annex the Dominican Republic and purchase Puerto Rico and Cuba. The U.S. Senate did not approve his annexation proposal, and Spain rejected the U.S. offer of 160 million dollars for Puerto Rico and Cuba.^[64]

Since 1894, the United States Naval War College had been developing contingency plans for a war with Spain. By 1896, the U.S. Office of Naval Intelligence had prepared a plan that included military operations in Puerto Rican waters. Except for one 1895 plan, which recommended annexation of the island then named *Isle of Pines* (later renamed as Isla de la Juventud), a recommendation dropped in later planning, plans developed for attacks on Spanish territories were intended as support

operations against Spain's forces in and around Cuba.^[65] Recent research suggests that the U.S. did consider Puerto Rico valuable as a naval station, and recognized that it and Cuba generated lucrative crops of sugar – a valuable commercial commodity which the United States lacked.^[66]

On July 25, 1898, during the Spanish–American War, the U.S. invaded Puerto Rico with a landing at Guánica. As an outcome of the war, Spain ceded Puerto Rico, along with the Philippines and Guam, then under Spanish sovereignty, to the U.S. under the Treaty of Paris. Spain relinquished sovereignty over Cuba, but did not cede it to the U.S.^[67] Later, Cuba became nominally independent but effectively a US protectorate until its 1958 revolution.



The first company of Puerto Ricans enlisted in the U.S. Army, 1899

United States unincorporated organized territory (1900–1952)

The United States and Puerto Rico began a long-standing metropolis-colony relationship.^[68] In the early 20th century, Puerto Rico was ruled by the military, with officials including the governor appointed by the President of the United States. The Foraker Act of 1900 gave Puerto Rico a certain amount of civilian popular government, including a popularly elected House of Representatives. The upper house and governor were appointed by the United States.



Children in a company housing settlement, 1941

Its judicial system was constructed to follow the American legal system; a Puerto Rico Supreme Court and a United State District Court for the territory were established. It was authorized a non-voting member of Congress, by the title of "Resident Commissioner", who was appointed. In addition, this Act extended all U.S. laws "not locally inapplicable" to Puerto Rico, specifying, in particular, exemption from U.S. Internal Revenue laws.^[69]

The Act empowered the civil government to legislate on "all matters of legislative character not locally inapplicable", including the power to modify and repeal any laws then in existence in Puerto Rico, though the U.S. Congress retained the power to annul acts of the Puerto Rico legislature.^{[69][70]} During an address to the Puerto Rican legislature in 1906, President Theodore Roosevelt recommended that Puerto Ricans become U.S. citizens.^{[69][71]}

In 1914, the Puerto Rican House of Delegates voted unanimously in favor of independence from the United States, but this was rejected by the U.S. Congress as "unconstitutional", and in violation of the 1900 Foraker Act.^[72]

U.S. citizenship and Puerto Rican citizenship

In 1917, the U.S. Congress passed the Jones–Shafroth Act, popularly called the Jones Act, which granted Puerto Ricans, born on or after, April 25, 1898, U.S. citizenship.^[73] Opponents, which included all of the Puerto Rican House of Delegates, who voted unanimously against it, said that the US imposed citizenship in order to draft Puerto Rican men into the army as American entry into World War I became likely.^[72]

The same Act provided for a popularly elected Senate to complete a bicameral Legislative Assembly, as well as a bill of rights. It authorized the popular election of the Resident Commissioner to a four-year term.

Natural disasters, including a major earthquake and tsunami in 1918, and several hurricanes, and the Great Depression

impoverished the island during the first few decades under U.S. rule.^[74] Some political leaders, such as Pedro Albizu Campos, who led the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, demanded change in relations with the United States. He organized a protest at the University of Puerto Rico in 1935, in which four were killed by police.



Soldiers of the 65th Infantry training in Salinas, Puerto Rico (August 1941)

In 1936, U.S. Senator Millard Tydings introduced a bill supporting independence for Puerto Rico, but it was opposed by Luis Muñoz Marín of the Liberal Party of Puerto Rico.^[75] (Tydings had co-sponsored the Tydings–McDuffie Act, which provided independence to the Philippines after a 10-year transition under a limited autonomy.) All the Puerto Rican parties supported the bill, but Muñoz Marín opposed it. Tydings did not gain passage of the bill.^[75]

In 1937, Albizu Campos' party organized a protest in which numerous people were killed by police in Ponce. The Insular Police, resembling the National Guard, opened fire upon unarmed^[76] cadets and bystanders alike.^[76] The attack on unarmed protesters was reported by the U.S. Congressman Vito Marcantonio and confirmed by the report of the Hays Commission, which investigated the events. The commission was led by Arthur Garfield Hays, counsel to the American Civil Liberties Union.^[76]

Nineteen people were killed and over 200 were badly wounded, many in their backs while running away.^{[77][78]} The Hays Commission declared it a massacre and police mob action,^[77] and it has since been known as the Ponce massacre. In the aftermath, on April 2, 1943, Tydings introduced a bill in Congress calling for independence for Puerto Rico. This bill ultimately was defeated.^[69]

During the latter years of the Roosevelt–Truman administrations, the internal governance was changed in a compromise reached with Luis Muñoz Marín and other Puerto Rican leaders. In 1946, President Truman appointed the first Puerto Rican-born governor, Jesús T. Piñero.

Since 2007, the Puerto Rico State Department has developed a protocol to issue certificates of Puerto Rican citizenship to Puerto Ricans. In order to be eligible, applicants must have been born in Puerto Rico; born outside of Puerto Rico to a Puerto Rican–born parent; or be an American citizen with at least one year of residence in Puerto Rico.

United States unincorporated organized territory with commonwealth constitution (1952–present)

In 1947, the U.S. granted Puerto Ricans the right to democratically elect their own governor. In 1948, Luis Muñoz Marín became the first popularly elected governor of Puerto Rico.

A bill was introduced before the Puerto Rican Senate which would restrain the rights of the independence and nationalist movements in the island. The Senate at the time was controlled by the Popular Democratic Party (PPD), and was presided over by Luis Muñoz Marín.^[79] The bill, also known as the Gag Law (Spanish: *Ley de la Mordaza*), was approved by the legislature on May 21, 1948. It made it illegal to display a Puerto Rican flag, to sing a pro-independence tune, to talk of independence, or to campaign for independence.

The bill, which resembled the Smith Act passed in the United States, was signed and made into law on June 10, 1948, by the U.S. appointed governor of Puerto Rico, Jesús T. Piñero, and became known as "Law 53" (Spanish: *Ley 53*).^[81]

In accordance with this law, it would be a crime to print, publish, sell, exhibit, organize or help anyone organize any society, group or assembly of people whose intentions are to paralyze or destroy the insular government. Anyone accused and found guilty of disobeying the law could be sentenced to ten years of prison, be fined \$10,000 (US), or both. According to Dr. Leopoldo Figueroa, a member of the Puerto Rico House of Representatives, the law was repressive and in violation of the



Painting of bayonet charge by the U.S. 65th Infantry Regiment, made up of Puerto Rican troops, against a Chinese division during the Korean War

First Amendment of the US Constitution, which guarantees Freedom of Speech. He asserted that the law as such was a violation of the civil rights of the people of Puerto Rico. The law was repealed in 1957.^[82]

In 1950, the U.S. Congress approved Public Law 600 (P.L. 81-600), which allowed for a democratic referendum in Puerto Rico to determine whether Puerto Ricans desired to draft their own local constitution.^[83] This Act was meant to be adopted in the "nature of a compact". It required congressional approval of the Puerto Rico Constitution before it could go into effect, and repealed certain sections of the Organic Act of 1917. The sections of this statute left in force were entitled the *Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act*.^{[84][85]} U.S. Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman, under whose Department resided responsibility of Puerto Rican affairs, clarified the new commonwealth status in this manner:

“ The bill (to permit Puerto Rico to write its own constitution) merely authorizes the people of Puerto Rico to adopt their own constitution and to organize a local government...The bill under consideration would not change Puerto Rico's political, social, and economic relationship to the United States.^{[86][87]} ”

On October 30, 1950, Pedro Albizu Campos and other nationalists led a three-day revolt against the United States in various cities and towns of Puerto Rico, in what is known as the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party Revolts of the 1950s. The most notable occurred in Jayuya and Utuado. In the Jayuya revolt, known as the Jayuya Uprising, the Puerto Rican governor declared martial law, and attacked the insurgents in Jayuya with infantry, artillery and bombers under control of the Puerto Rican commander. The Utuado uprising culminated in what is known as the Utuado massacre.

On November 1, 1950, Puerto Rican nationalists from New York City, Griselio Torresola and Oscar Collazo, attempted to assassinate President Harry S. Truman at his temporary residence of Blair House. Torresola was killed during the attack, but Collazo was wounded and captured. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to death, but President Truman commuted his sentence to life. After Collazo served 29 years in a federal prison, President Jimmy Carter commuted his sentence to times served and he was released in 1979.

Pedro Albizu Campos served many years in a federal prison in Atlanta, for seditious conspiracy to overthrow the U.S. government in Puerto Rico.^[88]

The Constitution of Puerto Rico was approved by a Constitutional Convention on February 6, 1952, and 82% of the voters in a March referendum. It was modified and ratified by the U.S. Congress, approved by President Truman on July 3 of that year, and proclaimed by Gov. Muñoz Marín on July 25, 1952. This was the anniversary of July 25, 1898, landing of U.S. troops in the Puerto Rican Campaign of the Spanish–American War, until then celebrated as an annual Puerto Rico holiday.

Puerto Rico adopted the name of *Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico* (literally "Associated Free State of Puerto Rico"^[89]), officially translated into English as Commonwealth, for its body politic.^{[m][90][91]} "The United States Congress legislates over many fundamental aspects of Puerto Rican life, including citizenship, the currency, the postal service, foreign policy, military defense, communications, labor relations, the environment, commerce, finance, health and welfare, and many others."^[92]

External video



 Puerto Rico (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_71hkXrTTf8), U.S. Embassy in Vienna, October 24, 2014

 View newsreel scenes in Spanish of the *Puerto Rican Nationalist Party Revolts of the 1950s* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RfOJj0nmGEU>) on YouTube

During the 1950s and 1960s, Puerto Rico experienced rapid industrialization, due in large part to *Operación Manos a la Obra* ("Operation Bootstrap"), an offshoot of FDR's New Deal. It was intended to transform Puerto Rico's economy from agriculture-based to manufacturing-based to provide more jobs. Puerto Rico has become a major tourist destination, as well as a global center for pharmaceutical manufacturing.^[93]



A shantytown along the Martin Peña Channel (1973)

Plebiscites on statehood or independence

Four plebiscites have been held since the late 20th century to resolve the political status. The 2012 referendum showed a majority (54% of the voters) in favor of a change in status, with full statehood the preferred option of those who wanted a change. Because there were almost 500,000 blank ballots in the 2012 referendum, creating confusion as to the voters' true desire, Congress decided to ignore the vote.^{[94][95]}

The first three plebiscites provided voters with three options: statehood, free association, and independence. The Puerto Rican status referendum, 2017 in June 2017 was going to offer only two options: Statehood and Independence/Free Association. However, a letter from the Donald Trump administration recommended adding the Commonwealth, the current

status, in the plebiscite. The option had been removed from this plebiscite in response to the results of the plebiscite in 2012 which asked whether to remain in the current status and No had won. The Trump administration cited changes in demographics during the past 5 years to add the option once again. Amendments to the plebiscite bill were adopted making ballot wording changes requested by the Department of Justice, as well as adding a "current territorial status" option.^[96]

While 97 percent voted in favor of statehood, the turnout was low; only some 23 percent voted.^[97] After the ballots were counted the Justice Department was non-committal. The Justice Department had asked for the 2017 plebiscite to be postponed but the Rosello government chose not to do so. After the outcome was announced, the department told the Associated Press that it had "not reviewed or approved the ballot's language".^[98]

Former Governor Aníbal Acevedo Vilá (2005–2009) is convinced that statehood is not the solution for either the U.S. or for Puerto Rico "for economic, identity and cultural reasons". He pointed out that voter turnout for the 2017 referendum was extremely low, and suggests that a different type of mutually-beneficial relationship should be found.^[99]

If the federal government agrees to discuss an association agreement, the conditions would be negotiated between the two entities.^[100] The agreement might cover topics such as the role of the U.S. military in Puerto Rico, the use of the US currency, free trade between the two entities, and whether Puerto Ricans would be U.S. citizens.^[101]

The three current Free Associated States (Marshall Islands, Micronesia and Palau) use the American dollar, receive some financial support and the promise of military defense if they refuse military access to any other country. Their citizens are allowed to work in the U.S. and serve in its military.^[100]

Governor Ricardo Rosselló is strongly in favor of statehood to help develop the economy and help to "solve our 500-year-old colonial dilemma ... Colonialism is not an option It's a civil rights issue ... 3.5 million citizens seeking an absolute democracy," he told the news media.^[102] Benefits of statehood include an additional \$10 billion per year in federal funds, the right to vote in presidential elections, higher Social Security and Medicare benefits, and a right for its government agencies and municipalities to file for bankruptcy. The latter is currently prohibited.^[103]

Statehood might be useful as a means of dealing with the financial crisis, since it would allow for bankruptcy and the relevant protection. According to the Government Development Bank, this might be the only solution to the debt crisis. Congress has the power to vote to allow Chapter 9 protection without the need for statehood, but in late 2015 there was very little support in

the House for this concept. Other benefits to statehood include increased disability benefits and Medicaid funding, the right to vote in Presidential elections and the higher (federal) minimum wage.^[104]

Subsequent to the 2017 referendum, Puerto Rico's legislators are also expected to vote on a bill that would allow the Governor to draft a state constitution and hold elections to choose senators and representatives to the federal Congress.^{[105][106]} In spite of the outcome of the referendum, and the so-called Tennessee Plan (above), action by the United States Congress would be necessary to implement changes to the status of Puerto Rico under the Territorial Clause of the United States Constitution.^[107]

United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization

Since 1953, the UN has been considering the political status of Puerto Rico and how to assist it in achieving "independence" or "decolonization". In 1978, the Special Committee determined that a "colonial relationship" existed between the US and Puerto Rico.^[108]

Note that the UN's Special Committee on Decolonization has often referred to Puerto Rico as a "nation" in its reports, because, internationally, the people of Puerto Rico are often considered to be a Caribbean nation with their own national identity.^{[109][110][111]} Most recently, in a June 2016 report, the Special Committee called for the United States to expedite the process to allow self-determination in Puerto Rico. More specifically, the group called on the United States to expedite a process that would allow the people of Puerto Rico to exercise fully their right to self-determination and independence. ... allow the Puerto Rican people to take decisions in a sovereign manner, and to address their urgent economic and social needs, including unemployment, marginalization, insolvency and poverty".^[112]

Geography

Puerto Rico consists of the main island of Puerto Rico and various smaller islands, including Vieques, Culebra, Mona, Desecheo, and Caja de Muertos. Of these five, only Culebra and Vieques are inhabited year-round. Culebra, which is merely 29 km (18 miles) away from the mainland, is home to Flamenco Beach, considered by some travel writers as one of the top ten beaches in the world.^[113] Mona, which has played a key role in maritime history, is uninhabited most of the year except for employees of the Puerto Rico Department of Natural Resources.^[114] There are many

other even smaller islets, like Monito, which is near to Mona,^[115] Isla de Cabras and La Isleta de San Juan, both located on the San Juan Bay. The latter is the only inhabited islet with communities like Old San Juan and Puerta de Tierra, and connected to the main island by bridges.^{[116][117]}



A map of Puerto Rico

The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico has an area of 13,790 square kilometers (5,320 sq mi), of which 8,870 km² (3,420 sq mi) is land and 4,921 km² (1,900 sq mi) is water.^[118] Puerto Rico is larger than two U.S. states, Delaware and Rhode Island. The maximum length of the main island from east to west is 180 km (110 mi), and the maximum width from north to south is 65 km (40 mi).^[119] Puerto Rico is the smallest of the Greater Antilles. It is 80% of the size of Jamaica,^[120] just over 18% of the size of Hispaniola and 8% of the size of Cuba, the largest of the Greater Antilles.^[121]

The island is mostly mountainous with large coastal areas in the north and south. The main mountain range is called "La Cordillera Central" (The Central Range). The highest elevation in Puerto Rico, Cerro de Punta 1,338 meters (4,390 ft),^[118] is located in this range.

Another important peak is El Yunque, one of the highest in the *Sierra de Luquillo* at the El Yunque National Forest, with an elevation of 1,065 m (3,494 ft).^[122]



The coast at Patillas, Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico has 17 lakes, all man-made, and more than 50 rivers, most originating in the Cordillera Central.^[123] Rivers in the northern region of the island are typically longer and of higher water flow rates than those of the south, since the south receives less rain than the central and northern regions.

Puerto Rico is composed of Cretaceous to Eocene volcanic and plutonic rocks, overlain by younger Oligocene and more recent carbonates and other sedimentary rocks.^[124] Most of the caverns and karst topography on the island occurs in the northern region in the carbonates. The oldest rocks are approximately 190 million years old (Jurassic) and are located at Sierra Bermeja in the southwest part of the island. They may represent part of the oceanic crust and are believed to come from the Pacific Ocean realm.

Puerto Rico lies at the boundary between the Caribbean and North American plates and is being deformed by the tectonic stresses caused by their interaction. These stresses may cause earthquakes and tsunamis. These seismic events, along with landslides, represent some of the most dangerous geologic hazards in the island and in the northeastern Caribbean.

The most recent major earthquake occurred on October 11, 1918, and had an estimated magnitude of 7.5 on the Richter scale.^[125] It originated off the coast of Aguadilla, several kilometers off the northern coast, and was accompanied by a tsunami. It caused extensive property damage and widespread losses, damaging infrastructure, especially bridges. It resulted in an estimated 116 deaths and \$4 million in property damage. The failure of the government to move rapidly to provide for the general welfare contributed to political activism by opponents and eventually to the rise of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party.

The Puerto Rico Trench, the largest and deepest trench in the Atlantic, is located about 115 km (71 mi) north of Puerto Rico at the boundary between the Caribbean and North American plates.^[126] It is 280 km (170 mi) long.^[127] At its deepest point, named the Milwaukee Deep, it is almost 8,400 m (27,600 ft) deep.^[126]

Climate

The climate of Puerto Rico in the Köppen climate classification is tropical rainforest. Temperatures are warm to hot year round, averaging near 85 °F (29 °C) in lower elevations and 70 °F (21 °C) in the mountains. Easterly trade winds pass across the island year round. Puerto Rico has a rainy season which stretches from April into November. The mountains of the

Cordillera Central are the main cause of the variations in the temperature and rainfall that occur over very short distances. The mountains can also cause wide variation in local wind speed and direction due to their sheltering and channeling effects adding to the climatic variation.

The island has an average temperature of 82.4 °F (28 °C) throughout the year, with an average minimum temperature of 66.9 °F (19 °C) and maximum of 85.4 °F (30 °C). Daily temperature changes seasonally are quite small in the lowlands and coastal areas. The temperature in the south is usually a few degrees higher than the north and temperatures in the central interior mountains are always cooler than those on the rest of the island.

Between the dry and wet season, there is a temperature change of around 6 °F (3.3 °C). This is mainly due to the warm waters of the tropical Atlantic Ocean, which significantly modify cooler air moving in from the north and northwest. Coastal waters temperatures around the years are about 75 °F (24 °C) in February to 85 °F (29 °C) in August. The highest temperature ever recorded was 99 °F (37 °C) at Arecibo,^[128] while the lowest temperature ever recorded was 40 °F (4 °C) in the mountains at Adjuntas, Aibonito, and Corozal.^[129] The average yearly precipitation is 1,687 mm (66 in).^[130]

Climate data for San Juan													
Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Average high °C (°F)	28 (83)	29 (84)	29 (85)	30 (86)	31 (88)	32 (89)	32 (89)	32 (89)	32 (89)	32 (89)	30 (86)	29 (84)	31 (87)
Average low °C (°F)	22 (72)	22 (72)	23 (73)	23 (74)	24 (76)	26 (78)	26 (78)	26 (78)	26 (78)	25 (77)	24 (75)	23 (73)	24 (75)
Average rainfall mm (inches)	95.5 (3.76)	62.7 (2.47)	49.5 (1.95)	118.9 (4.68)	149.9 (5.90)	112 (4.41)	128.8 (5.07)	138.7 (5.46)	146.6 (5.77)	142 (5.59)	161.3 (6.35)	127.5 (5.02)	1,433.4 (56.43)
Average rainy days	17	13	12	13	17	15	19	18	17	17	18	19	196
Average relative humidity (%)	78.0	75.5	73.9	75.0	77.2	77.0	78.0	77.6	77.7	78.2	78.6	78.3	77.1
Mean daily sunshine hours	8	8	9	9	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	8.6
Source: "Average Weather for San Juan, PR" (http://www.weather.com/weather/wxclimatology/monthly/graph/USPR0087). The Weather Channel. Retrieved March 22, 2014.													

Puerto Rico experiences the Atlantic hurricane season, similar to the remainder of the Caribbean Sea and North Atlantic oceans. On average, a quarter of its annual rainfall is contributed from tropical cyclones, which are more prevalent during periods of La Niña than El Niño.^[131] A cyclone of tropical storm strength passes near Puerto Rico, on average, every five years. A hurricane passes in the vicinity of the island, on average, every seven years. Since 1851, the Lake Okeechobee Hurricane of September 1928 is the only hurricane to make landfall as a Category 5 hurricane.^[132]

In the busy 2017 Atlantic hurricane season, Puerto Rico avoided a direct hit by the Category 5 Hurricane Irma on September 8, 2017, but high winds caused a loss of electrical power to some one million residents. Almost 50% of hospitals were operating with power provided by generators.^[133] The Category 4 Hurricane Jose, as expected, veered away from Puerto Rico.^[134] Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico as a Category 4 hurricane later that month and caused 100% of residents to lose power, which could remain out for 4–6 months.^{[135][136]}

Biodiversity

Species endemic to the archipelago number 239 plants, 16 birds and 39 amphibians/reptiles, recognized as of 1998. Most of these (234, 12 and 33 respectively) are found on the main island.^[137] The most recognizable endemic species and a symbol of Puerto Rican pride is the *coquí*, a small frog easily identified by the sound of its call, from which it gets its name. Most *coquí* species (13 of 17) live in the El Yunque National Forest, a tropical rainforest in the northeast of the island previously known as the Caribbean National Forest. El Yunque is home to more than 240 plants, 26 of which are endemic to the island. It is also home to 50 bird species, including the critically endangered Puerto Rican amazon.



Common Coquí

Across the island in the southwest, the 40 km² (15 sq mi) of dry land at the Guánica Commonwealth Forest Reserve^[138] contain over 600 uncommon species of plants and animals, including 48 endangered species and 16 endemic to Puerto Rico.

Government and politics

Puerto Rico has 8 senatorial districts, 40 representative districts and 78 municipalities. It has a republican form of government with separation of powers subject to the jurisdiction and sovereignty of the United States.^{[139][140]} Its current powers are all delegated by the United States Congress and lack full protection under the United States Constitution.^[141] Puerto Rico's head of state is the President of the United States.

The government of Puerto Rico, based on the formal republican system, is composed of three branches: the executive, legislative, and judicial branch. The executive branch is headed by the governor, currently Ricky Rosselló. The legislative branch consists of a bicameral legislature called the Legislative Assembly, made up of a Senate as its upper chamber and a House of Representatives as its lower chamber. The Senate is headed by the President of the Senate, currently Thomas Rivera Schatz, while the House of Representatives is headed by the Speaker of the House, currently Johnny Méndez. The governor and legislators are elected by popular vote every four years with the last election held in November 2016.

The judicial branch is headed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, currently Maite Oronoz Rodríguez. Members of the judicial branch are appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the Senate.

Puerto Rico is represented in the United States Congress by a nonvoting delegate, the Resident Commissioner, currently Jenniffer González. Current congressional rules have removed the Commissioner's power to vote in the Committee of the Whole, but the Commissioner can vote in committee.^[142]

Puerto Rican elections are governed by the Federal Election Commission and the State Elections Commission of Puerto Rico.^{[143][144]} While residing in Puerto Rico, Puerto Ricans cannot vote in U.S. presidential elections, but they can vote in primaries. Puerto Ricans who become residents of a U.S. state can vote in presidential elections.

Puerto Rico hosts consulates from 41 countries, mainly from the Americas and Europe, with most located in San Juan.^[145] As an unincorporated territory of the United States, Puerto Rico does not have any first-order administrative divisions as defined by the U.S. government, but has 78 municipalities at the second level. Mona Island is not a municipality, but part of the



The First Supreme Court of Puerto Rico, appointed pursuant to the Foraker Act

Spanish), the New Progressive Party (PNP in Spanish) and the Puerto Rican Independence Party (PIP). The three parties stand for different political status. The PPD, for example, seeks to maintain the island's status with the U.S. as a commonwealth, while the PNP, on the other hand, seeks to make Puerto Rico a state of the United States. The PIP, in contrast, seeks a complete separation from the United States by seeking to make Puerto Rico a sovereign nation. In terms of party strength, the PPD and PNP usually hold about 47% of the vote each while the PIP holds only about 5%.

After 2007, other parties emerged on the island. The first, the Puerto Ricans for Puerto Rico Party (PPR in Spanish) was registered that same year. The party claims that it seeks to address the islands' problems from a status-neutral platform. But it ceased to remain as a registered party when it failed to obtain the required number of votes in the 2008 general election. Four years later, the 2012 election saw the emergence of the Movimiento Unión Soberanista (MUS; English: *Sovereign Union Movement*) and the Partido del Pueblo Trabajador (PPT; English: *Working People's Party*) but none obtained more than 1% of the vote.

Other non-registered parties include the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, the Socialist Workers Movement, and the Hostosian National Independence Movement.

Law

The insular legal system is a blend of civil law and the common law systems.

Puerto Rico is the only current U.S. possession whose legal system operates primarily in a language other than American English: namely, Spanish. Because the U.S. federal government operates primarily in English, all Puerto Rican attorneys must be bilingual in order to litigate in English in U.S. federal courts, and litigate federal preemption issues in Puerto Rican courts.

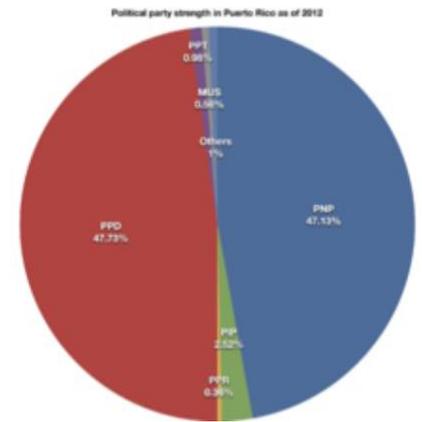
Title 48 of the United States Code outlines the role of the United States Code to United States territories and insular areas such as Puerto Rico. After the U.S. government assumed control of Puerto Rico in 1901, it initiated legal reforms resulting in the adoption of codes of criminal law, criminal procedure, and civil procedure modeled after those then in effect in California. Although Puerto Rico has since followed the federal example of transferring criminal and civil procedure from statutory law to rules promulgated by the judiciary, several portions of its criminal law still reflect the influence of the California Penal Code.

municipality of Mayagüez.^[146]

Municipalities are subdivided into wards or barrios, and those into sectors. Each municipality has a mayor and a municipal legislature elected for a four-year term. The municipality of San Juan (previously called "town"), was founded first, in 1521, San Germán in 1570, Coamo in 1579, Arecibo in 1614, Aguada in 1692 and Ponce in 1692. An increase of settlement saw the founding of 30 municipalities in the 18th century and 34 in the 19th. Six were founded in the 20th century; the last was Florida in 1971.^[147]

Political culture

Since 1952, Puerto Rico has had three main political parties: the Popular Democratic Party (PPD in



The difference between the incumbent party, the PPD, and its opponent, the PNP, was a mere 0.6% in the last election. This difference is common as the political landscape experiences political cycles between both parties, with the PPD ruling all branches of government for 36 of the past 64 years. The PNP, on the other hand, has ruled both the executive and legislative branch concurrently for 16 years. The other 12 years experienced a divided government.

The judicial branch is headed by the Chief Justice of the Puerto Rico Supreme Court, which is the only appellate court required by the Constitution. All other courts are created by the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico. There is also a Federal District Court for Puerto Rico. Someone accused of a criminal act at the federal level may not be accused for the same act in a Commonwealth court, unlike a state court, since Puerto Rico as a territory lacks sovereignty separate from Congress as a state does.^[148] Such a parallel accusation would constitute double jeopardy.

Law and government

Crime

The overall rate of crime is low in Puerto Rico. The territory has a high firearm homicide rate. The homicide rate of 19.2 per 100,000 inhabitants was significantly higher than any U.S. state in 2014.^{[149][150]} Most homicide victims are gang members and drug traffickers with about 80% of homicides in Puerto Rico being drug related.^[151]

Political status

The nature of Puerto Rico's political relationship with the U.S. is the subject of ongoing debate in Puerto Rico, the United States Congress, and the United Nations.^[152] Specifically, the basic question is whether Puerto Rico should remain a U.S. territory, become a U.S. state, or become an independent country.^[153]

Estado Libre Asociado

In 1950, the U.S. Congress granted Puerto Ricans the right to organize a constitutional convention via a referendum that gave them the option of voting their preference, "yes" or "no", on a proposed U.S. law that would organize Puerto Rico as a "commonwealth" that would continue United States sovereignty over Puerto Rico and its people. Puerto Rico's electorate expressed its support for this measure in 1951 with a second referendum to ratify the constitution. The Constitution of Puerto Rico was formally adopted on July 3, 1952. The Constitutional Convention specified the name by which the body politic would be known.

On February 4, 1952, the convention approved Resolution 22 which chose in English the word *Commonwealth*, meaning a "politically organized community" or "state", which is simultaneously connected by a compact or treaty to another political system. Puerto Rico officially designates itself with the term "Commonwealth of Puerto Rico" in its constitution, as a translation into English of the term to "Estado Libre Asociado" (ELA).

In 1967 Puerto Rico's Legislative Assembly polled the political preferences of the Puerto Rican electorate by passing a plebiscite act that provided for a vote on the status of Puerto Rico. This constituted the first plebiscite by the Legislature for a choice among three status options (commonwealth, statehood, and independence). In subsequent plebiscites organized by Puerto Rico held in 1993 and 1998 (without any formal commitment on the part of the U.S. Government to honor the results), the current political status failed to receive majority support. In 1993, Commonwealth status won by a plurality of votes (48.6% versus 46.3% for statehood), while the "none of the above" option, which was the Popular Democratic Party-sponsored choice, won in 1998 with 50.3% of the votes (versus 46.5% for statehood). Disputes arose as to the definition of each of the ballot alternatives, and Commonwealth advocates, among others, reportedly urged a vote for "none of the above".^{[154][155][156]} The latest referendum on statehood, independence, or an associated republic was held on November 6, 2012. The people of Puerto Rico made history by requesting, for the first time ever, the conclusion of the island's current territorial status. Almost 78% of registered voters participated in a plebiscite held to resolve Puerto Rico's status, and a clear majority (54%) disagreed with Puerto Rico maintaining its present territorial status. Furthermore, among the possible alternatives, sixty-one percent (61%) of voters chose the statehood option, while one third of the ballots were submitted blank.^{[157][158]}

On December 11, 2012, the Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico enacted a concurrent resolution requesting the President and the Congress of the United States to respond to the referendum of the people of Puerto Rico, held on November 6, 2012, to end its current form of territorial status and to begin the process to admit Puerto Rico as a State.^[100] The initiative has not made Puerto Rico into a state.

Within the United States



The Capitol of Puerto Rico, home of the Legislative Assembly in Puerto Rico

Constitutionally, Puerto Rico is subject to the plenary powers of the United States Congress under the territorial clause of Article IV of the U.S. Constitution.^[159] Laws enacted at the federal level in the United States apply to Puerto Rico as well, regardless of its political status. Their residents do not have voting representation in the U.S. Congress. Like the different states of the United States, Puerto Rico lacks "the full sovereignty of an independent nation", for example, the power to manage its "external relations with other nations", which is held by the U.S. federal government. The Supreme Court of the United States has indicated that once the U.S. Constitution has been extended to an area (by Congress or the courts), its coverage is irrevocable. To hold that the political branches may switch the Constitution on or off at will would lead to a regime in which they, not this Court, say "what the law is".^[160]

Puerto Ricans "were collectively made U.S. citizens" in 1917 as a result of the Jones-Shafroth Act.^[161] U.S. citizens residing in Puerto Rico cannot vote for the U.S. president, though both major parties, Republican and Democratic, run primary elections in Puerto Rico to send delegates to vote on a presidential candidate. Since Puerto Rico is an unincorporated territory (see above) and not a U.S. state, the United States Constitution does not fully enfranchise US citizens residing in Puerto Rico.^{[141][162]} (*See also*: "Voting rights in Puerto Rico").

Only fundamental rights under the American federal constitution and adjudications are applied to Puerto Ricans. Various other U.S Supreme Court decisions have held which rights apply in Puerto Rico and which ones do not. Puerto Ricans have a long history of service in the U.S. Armed Forces and, since 1917, they have been included in the U.S. compulsory draft whensoever it has been in effect.

Though the Commonwealth government has its own tax laws, Puerto Ricans are also required to pay many kinds of U.S. federal taxes, not including the federal personal income tax for Puerto Rico-sourced income, but only under certain circumstances.^{[163][164][165][166][167][168][169][170]} In 2009, Puerto Rico paid \$3.742 billion into the US Treasury.^[171] Residents of Puerto Rico pay into Social Security, and are thus eligible for Social Security benefits upon retirement. They are excluded from the Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and the island actually receives a smaller fraction of the Medicaid funding it would receive if it were a U.S. state.^[172] Also, Medicare providers receive less-than-full state-like reimbursements for services rendered to beneficiaries in Puerto Rico, even though the latter paid fully into the system.^[173]

While a state may try an individual for the same crime he/she was tried in federal court since a federated state's separate sovereignty protects it from double jeopardy, Puerto Rico's authority to enact a criminal code derives from the sovereignty of Congress which, as a territory, it lacks. Thus, such a parallel accusation would constitute double jeopardy and is constitutionally impermissible.^[148]

In 1992, President George H. W. Bush issued a memorandum to heads of executive departments and agencies establishing the current administrative relationship between the federal government and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. This memorandum directs all federal departments, agencies, and officials to treat Puerto Rico administratively as if it were a state, insofar as doing so would not disrupt federal programs or operations.

Many federal executive branch agencies have significant presence in Puerto Rico, just as in any state, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Transportation Security Administration, Social Security Administration, and others. While Puerto Rico has its own Commonwealth judicial system similar to that of a U.S. state, there is also a U.S federal district court in Puerto Rico, and Puerto Ricans have served as judges in that Court and in other federal courts on the U.S. mainland regardless of their residency status at the time of their appointment. Sonia Sotomayor, a New Yorker of Puerto Rican descent, serves as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States. Puerto Ricans have also been frequently appointed to high-level federal positions, including serving as United States Ambassadors to other nations.

International status

On November 27, 1953, shortly after the establishment of the Commonwealth, the General Assembly of the United Nations approved Resolution 748, removing Puerto Rico's classification as a non-self-governing territory. The General Assembly did not apply the full list of criteria which was enunciated in 1960 when it took favorable note of the cessation of transmission of information regarding the non-self-governing status of Puerto Rico.^{[174][175]}

According to the White House Task Force on Puerto Rico's Political Status in its December 21, 2007 report, the U.S., in its written submission to the UN in 1953, never represented that Congress could not change its relationship with Puerto Rico without the territory's consent.^[176] It stated that the U.S. Justice Department in 1959 reiterated that Congress held power over Puerto Rico pursuant to the Territorial Clause^[177] of the U.S. Constitution.^[176]

In 1993 the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit stated that Congress may unilaterally repeal the Puerto Rican Constitution or the Puerto Rican Federal Relations Act and replace them with any rules or regulations of its choice.^[178] In a 1996 report on a Puerto Rico status political bill, the U.S. House Committee on Resources stated, "Puerto Rico's current status does not meet the criteria for any of the options for full self-government under Resolution 1541" (the three established forms of full self-government being stated in the report as (1) national independence, (2) free association based on separate sovereignty, or (3) full integration with another nation on the basis of equality). The report concluded that Puerto Rico "... remains an unincorporated colony and does not have the status of 'free association' with the United States as that status is defined under United States law or international practice", that the establishment of local self-government with the consent of the people can be unilaterally revoked by the U.S. Congress, and that U.S. Congress can also withdraw the U.S. citizenship of Puerto Rican residents of Puerto Rico at any time, for a legitimate Federal purpose.^{[179][180]} The application of the U.S. Constitution to Puerto Rico is limited by the Insular Cases.

In 2006,^[181] 2007,^[182] 2009,^[183] 2010,^[184] and 2011^[185] the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization passed resolutions calling on the United States to expedite a process "that would allow Puerto Ricans to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence",^[186] and to release all Puerto Rican political prisoners in U.S. prisons, to clean up, decontaminate and return the lands in the islands of Vieques and Culebra to the people of Puerto Rico, to perform a probe into U.S. human rights violations on the island and a probe into the killing by the FBI of pro-independence leader Filiberto Ojeda Rios.

Recent developments

On July 15, 2009, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization approved a draft resolution calling on the Government of the United States to expedite a process that would allow the Puerto Rican people to exercise fully their inalienable right to self-determination and independence.^[188]

Puerto Rican status referendum, 2012

Location	Puerto Rico
Date	November 6, 2012
Voting	simple majority for the first question

On April 29, 2010, the U.S. House voted 223–169 to approve a measure for a federally sanctioned process for Puerto Rico's self-determination, allowing Puerto Rico to set a new referendum on whether to continue its present form of commonwealth, or to have a different political status. If Puerto Ricans voted to continue as a commonwealth, the Government of Puerto Rico was authorized to conduct additional plebiscites at intervals of every eight years from the date on which the results of the prior plebiscite were certified; if Puerto Ricans voted to have a different political status, a second referendum would determine whether Puerto Rico would become a U.S. state, an independent country, or a sovereign nation associated with the U.S. that would not be subject to the Territorial Clause of the United States Constitution.^[189] During the House debate, a fourth option, to retain its present form of commonwealth (sometimes referred to as "the status quo") political status, was added as an option in the second plebiscite.^{[189][190]}

Immediately following U.S. House passage, H.R. 2499 was sent to the U.S. Senate, where it was given two formal readings and referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. On December 22, 2010, the 111th United States Congress adjourned without any Senate vote on H.R.2499, killing the bill.^[191]

The latest Task Force report was released on March 11, 2011. The report suggested a two-plebiscite process, including a "first plebiscite that requires the people of Puerto Rico to choose whether they wish to be part of the United States (either via Statehood or Commonwealth) or wish to be independent (via Independence or Free Association). If continuing to be part of the United States were chosen in the first plebiscite, a second vote would be taken between Statehood and Commonwealth."^[192]

On June 14, 2011, President Barack Obama "promised to support 'a clear decision' by the people of Puerto Rico on statehood".^[193] That same month, the United Nations Special Committee on Decolonization passed a resolution and adopted a consensus text introduced by Cuba's delegate on June 20, 2011, calling on the United States to expedite a process "that would allow Puerto Ricans to fully exercise their inalienable right to self-determination and independence".^[186]

On November 6, 2012, a two-question referendum took place, simultaneous with the general elections.^{[194][194][195]} The first question asked voters whether they wanted to maintain the current status under the territorial clause of the U.S. Constitution. The second question posed three alternate status options if the first question was approved: statehood, independence or free association.^[196] For the first question, 54 percent voted against the current Commonwealth status. For the second question, 61.16% voted for statehood, 33.34% for a sovereign free associated state, and 5.49% for independence.^[197]

There were also 515,348 blank and invalidated ballots, which are not reflected in the final tally, as they are not considered cast votes under Puerto Rico law.^[187] On December 11, 2012, Puerto Rico's Legislature passed a concurrent resolution to request to the President and the U.S. Congress action on November 6, 2012 plebiscite results.^[198] But on April 10, 2013, with the issue still being widely debated, the White House announced that it will seek \$2.5 million to hold another referendum, this next one being the first Puerto Rican status referendum to be financed by the U.S. Federal government.^[199]

In December 2015, the U.S. Government submitted a brief as Amicus Curiae to the U.S. Supreme Court related to the case Commonwealth of Puerto Rico v. Sanchez Valle. The U.S. Government official position is that the U.S. Constitution does not contemplate "sovereign territories". That the Court has consistently recognized that "there is no sovereignty in a Territory of the United States but that of the United States itself". and a U.S. territory has "no independent sovereignty comparable to that

system	first-past-the-post for the second question
Should Puerto Rico continue its current territorial status?	
Yes	46.00%
No	54.00%
Which non-territorial option do you prefer?	
Statehood	61.16%
Sovereign Free Associated State	33.34%
Independence	5.49%
There were 515,348 blank and invalidated ballots counted alongside the 1,363,854 ballots which indicated a choice for one of the non-territorial alternatives. Under Puerto Rico Law, these ballots are not considered cast votes and are therefore not reflected in the final tally. ^[187]	

of a state. That is because "the Government of a territory owes its existence wholly to the United States". Congress's plenary authority over federal territories includes the authority to permit self-government, whereby local officials administer a territory's internal affairs.^[200]

On June 9, 2016, in *Commonwealth of Puerto Rico vs Sanchez Valle*, an 6–2 majority of the Supreme Court of the United States determined that Puerto Rico is a territory and lacks Sovereignty.^[201]

On June 30, 2016, the President of the United States of America signed a new law approved by U.S. Congress, H.R. 5278: PROMESA, establishing a Control Board over the Puerto Rico Government. This board will have a significant degree of federal control involved in its establishment and operations. In particular, the authority to establish the control board derives from the federal government's constitutional power to "make all needful rules and regulations" regarding U.S. territories; The President would appoint all seven voting members of the board; and the board would have broad sovereign powers to effectively overrule decisions by Puerto Rico's legislature, governor, and other public authorities.^[202]

Foreign and intergovernmental relations

Puerto Rico is subject to the Commerce and Territorial Clause of the Constitution of the United States and, therefore, is restricted on how it can engage with other nations, sharing the opportunities and limitations that state governments have albeit not being one. As is the case with state governments, regardless, it has established several trade agreements with other nations, particularly with Hispanic American countries such as Colombia and Panamá.^{[203][204]}

It has also established trade promotion offices in many foreign countries, all Spanish-speaking, and within the United States itself, which now include Spain, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Colombia, Washington, D.C., New York City and Florida, and has included in the past offices in Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico. Such agreements require permission from the U.S. Department of State; most, are simply allowed by existing laws or trade treaties between the United States and other nations which supersede trade agreements pursued by Puerto Rico and different U.S. states.

At the local level, Puerto Rico established by law that the international relations which states and territories are allowed to engage must be handled by the Department of State of Puerto Rico, an executive department, headed by the Secretary of State of Puerto Rico, who also serves as the territory's lieutenant governor. It is also charged to liaise with general consuls and honorary consuls based in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration, along with the Office of the Resident Commissioner, manage all its intergovernmental affairs before entities of or in the United States (including the federal government of the United States, local and state governments of the United States, and public or private entities in the United States).

Both entities frequently assist the Department of State of Puerto Rico in engaging with Washington, D.C.-based ambassadors and federal agencies that handle Puerto Rico's foreign affairs, such as the U.S. Department of State, the Agency for International Development, and others. The current Secretary of State is Víctor Suárez Meléndez from the Popular Democratic Party and member of the Democratic Party of the United States, while the current Director of the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration is Juan Eugenio Hernández Mayoral also from the Popular Democratic and member of the Democratic Party.

The Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico, the delegate elected by Puerto Ricans to represent them before the federal government, including the U.S. Congress, sits in the United States House of Representatives, serves and votes on congressional committees, and functions in every respect as a legislator except being denied a vote on the final disposition of legislation on the House floor, also engages in foreign affairs to the same extent as other members of Congress. The current Resident Commissioner is Pedro Pierluisi from the New Progressive Party and member of the Democratic Party of the United States.

Many Puerto Ricans have served as United States ambassadors to different nations and international organizations, such as the Organization of American States, mostly but not exclusively in Latin America. For example, Maricarmen Aponte, a Puerto Rican and now an Acting Assistant Secretary of State, previously served as U.S. ambassador to El Salvador.^[205]

Military

As it is a territory of the United States of America, the defense of Puerto Rico is provided by the United States as part of the Treaty of Paris with the President of the United States as its commander-in-chief. Puerto Rico has its own Puerto Rico National Guard, and its own state defense force, the Puerto Rico State Guard, which by local law is under the authority of the Puerto Rico National Guard.

The commander-in-chief of both local forces is the governor of Puerto Rico who delegates his authority to the Puerto Rico Adjutant General, currently Colonel Marta Carcana. The Adjutant General, in turn, delegates the authority over the State Guard to another officer but retains the authority over the Puerto Rico National Guard as a whole.



U.S. military installations in Puerto Rico (including the United States Virgin Islands) throughout the 20th century

U.S. military installations in Puerto Rico were part of the U.S. Atlantic Command (LANTCOM after 1993 USACOM), which had authority over all US military operations that took place throughout the Atlantic. Puerto Rico had been seen as crucial in supporting LANTCOM's mission until 1999, when U.S. Atlantic Command was renamed and given a new mission as United States Joint Forces Command. Puerto Rico is currently under the responsibility of United States Northern Command.

Both the Naval Forces Caribbean (NFC) and the Fleet Air Caribbean (FAIR) were formerly based at the Roosevelt Roads Naval Station. The NFC had authority over all US Naval activity in the waters of the Caribbean while FAIR had authority over all US military flights and air operations over the Caribbean. With the closing of the Roosevelt Roads and Vieques Island training facilities, the US Navy has basically exited from Puerto Rico, except for the ships that steam by, and the only significant military presence in the island is the U.S. Army at Ft Buchanan, the Puerto Rican Army and Air National Guards, and the U.S. Coast Guard.

A branch of the U.S. Army National Guard is stationed in Puerto Rico — known as the Puerto Rico Army National Guard — which performs missions equivalent to those of the Army National Guards of the different states of the United States, including ground defense, disaster relief, and control of civil unrest. The local National Guard also incorporates a branch of the U.S. Air National Guard — known as the Puerto Rico Air National Guard — which performs missions equivalent to those of the Air National Guards of each one of the U.S. states.

At different times in the 20th century, the U.S. had about 25 military or naval installations in Puerto Rico, some very small ones,^[206] as well as large installations. The largest of these installations were the former Roosevelt Roads Naval Station in Ceiba, the Atlantic Fleet Weapons Training Facility (AFWTF) on Vieques, the National Guard training facility at Camp Santiago in Salinas, Fort Allen in Juana Diaz, the Army's Fort Buchanan in San Juan, the former U.S. Air Force Ramey Air Force Base in Aguadilla, and the Puerto Rico Air National Guard at Muñiz Air Force base in San Juan.^[207]

The former U.S. Navy facilities at Roosevelt Roads, Vieques, and Sabana Seca have been deactivated and partially turned over to the local government. Other than U.S. Coast Guard and Puerto Rico National Guard facilities, there are only two remaining military installations in Puerto Rico: the U.S. Army's small Ft. Buchanan (supporting local veterans and reserve

units) and the PRANG (Puerto Rico Air National Guard) Muñiz Air Base (the C-130 Fleet). In recent years, the U.S. Congress has considered their deactivations, but these have been opposed by diverse public and private entities in Puerto Rico – such as retired military who rely on Ft. Buchanan for the services available there.

Puerto Ricans have participated in many of the military conflicts in which the United States has been involved. For example, they participated in the American Revolution, when volunteers from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Mexico fought the British in 1779 under the command of General Bernardo de Gálvez (1746–1786),^[208] and have continued to participate up to the present-day conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.^[209]

A significant number of Puerto Ricans participate as members and work for the U.S. Armed Services, largely as National Guard members and civilian employees. The size of the overall military-related community in Puerto Rico is estimated to be 100,000 individuals. This includes retired personnel.^[207] Fort Buchanan has about 4,000 military and civilian personnel. In addition, approximately 17,000 people are members of the Puerto Rico Army and Air National Guards, or the U.S. Reserve forces.^[210] Puerto Rican soldiers have served in every US military conflict from World War I to the current military engagement known by the United States and its allies as the War against Terrorism.

The 65th Infantry Regiment, nicknamed "*The Borinqueneers*" from the original Taíno name of the island (Borinquen), is a Puerto Rican regiment of the United States Army. The regiment's motto is *Honor et Fidelitas*, Latin for *Honor and Fidelity*. The 65th Infantry Regiment participated in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, and the War on Terror and in 2014 was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal, presented by President Barack Obama, for its heroism during the Korean War.



Ohio-class ballistic missile submarine USS *Maryland*, Roosevelt Roads Naval Station, 1997

Administrative divisions

As an unincorporated territory of the United States, Puerto Rico does not have any first order administrative divisions as defined by the U.S. Government, but there are 78 municipalities at the secondary level which function as counties. Municipalities are further subdivided into *barríos*, and those into sectors. Each municipality has a mayor and a municipal legislature elected to four-year terms.



A map of Puerto Rico showing its municipalities

Economy

The economy of Puerto Rico is classified as a high income economy by the World Bank and as the most competitive economy in Latin America by the World Economic Forum but Puerto Rico currently has a public debt of \$72.204 billion (equivalent to 103% of GNP), and a government deficit of \$2.5 billion.^{[211][212]} According to World Bank, gross national income per capita of Puerto Rico in 2013 is \$23,830 (PPP, International Dollars), ranked as 63rd among all sovereign and dependent territories entities in the world.^[213] Its economy is mainly driven by manufacturing (primarily pharmaceuticals, textiles, petrochemicals and electronics) followed by the service industry (primarily finance, insurance, real estate and tourism).^{[n][o]} In recent years, the territory has also become a popular destination for MICE (meetings, incentives, conferencing, exhibitions), with a modern convention centre district overlooking the Port of San Juan.^[215]

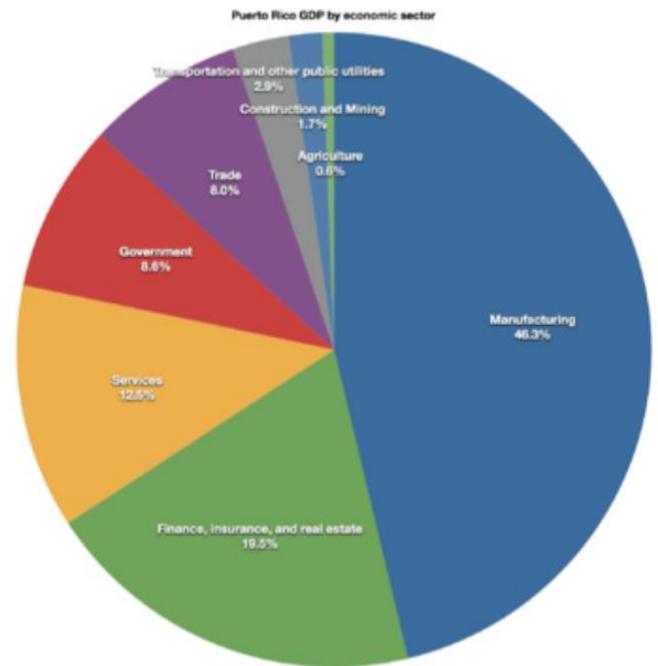
The geography of Puerto Rico and its political status are both determining factors on its economic prosperity, primarily due to its relatively small size as an island; its lack of natural resources used to produce raw materials, and, consequently, its dependence on imports; as well as its territorial status with the United States, which controls its foreign policy while exerting trading restrictions, particularly in its shipping industry.

Puerto Rico experienced a recession from 2006 to 2011, interrupted by 4 quarters of economic growth, and entered into recession again in 2013, following growing fiscal imbalance and the expiration of the IRS Section 936 corporate incentives that the U.S. Internal Revenue Code had applied to Puerto Rico. This IRS section was critical to the economy, as it established tax exemptions for U.S. corporations that settled in Puerto Rico, and allowed their insular subsidiaries to send their earnings to the parent corporation at any time, without paying federal tax on corporate income. Puerto Rico has surprisingly been able to maintain a relatively low inflation in the past decade while maintaining a purchasing power parity per capita higher than 80% of the rest of the world.^[216]

Academically, most of Puerto Rico's economic woes stem from federal regulations that expired, have been repealed, or no longer apply to Puerto Rico; its inability to become self-sufficient and self-sustainable throughout history;^[p] its highly politicized public policy which tends to change whenever a political party gains power;^[q] as well as its highly inefficient local government^{[r][s]} which has accrued a public debt equal to 68% of its gross domestic product throughout time.^{[t][u]}

In comparison to the different states of the United States, Puerto Rico is poorer than Mississippi (the poorest state of the U.S.) with 41% of its population below the poverty line.^[v] When compared to Latin America, Puerto Rico has the highest GDP per capita in the region. Its main trading partners are the United States itself, Ireland, and Japan, with most products coming from East Asia, mainly from China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. At a global scale, Puerto Rico's dependency on oil for transportation and electricity generation, as well as its dependency on food imports and raw materials, makes Puerto Rico volatile and highly reactive to changes in the world economy and climate. Puerto Rico's agricultural sector represents less than 1% of GNP.^[223]

Heavy debt load



Puerto Rico's gross domestic product (GDP) by economic sector

In early 2017, the Puerto Rican government-debt crisis posed serious problems for the government which was saddled with outstanding bond debt that had climbed to \$70 billion at a time with a 45 percent poverty rate and 12.4% unemployment that is more than twice the mainland U.S. average.^[224] The debt had been increasing during a decade long recession.^[27]

The Commonwealth had been defaulting on many debts, including bonds, since 2015. With debt payments due, the Governor was facing the risk of a government shutdown and failure to fund the managed health care system.^{[225][226]} "Without action before April, Puerto Rico's ability to execute contracts for Fiscal Year 2018 with its managed care organizations will be threatened, thereby putting at risk beginning July 1, 2017 the health care of up to 900,000 poor U.S. citizens living in Puerto Rico", according to a letter sent to Congress by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Health and Human Services. They also said that "Congress must enact measures recommended by both Republicans and Democrats that fix Puerto Rico's inequitable health care financing structure and promote sustained economic growth."^[226]

Initially, the oversight board created under PROMESA called for Puerto Rico's governor Ricardo Rosselló to deliver a fiscal turnaround plan by January 28. Just before that deadline, the control board gave the Commonwealth government until February 28 to present a fiscal plan (including negotiations with creditors for restructuring debt) to solve the problems. A moratorium on lawsuits by debtors was extended to May 31.^[27] It is essential for Puerto Rico to reach restructuring deals to avoid a bankruptcy-like process under PROMESA.^[227] An internal survey conducted by the Puerto Rican Economists Association revealed that the majority of Puerto Rican economists reject the policy recommendations of the Board and the Rosselló government, with more than 80% of economists arguing in favor of auditing the debt.^[228]

In early August 2017, the island's financial oversight board (created by PROMESA) planned to institute two days off without pay per month for government employees, down from the original plan of four days per month; the latter had been expected to achieve \$218 million in savings. Governor Rossello rejected this plan as unjustified and unnecessary. Pension reforms were also discussed including a proposal for a 10% reduction in benefits to begin addressing the \$50 billion in unfunded pension liabilities.^{[30][229]}

Infrastructure



Puerto Rico interstate highways

Cities and towns in Puerto Rico are interconnected by a system of roads, freeways, expressways, and highways maintained by the Highways and Transportation Authority under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Transportation, and patrolled by the Puerto Rico Police Department. The island's metropolitan area is served by a public bus transit system and a metro system called *Tren Urbano* (in English: Urban Train). Other forms of public transportation include seaborne ferries (that serve Puerto Rico's archipelago) as well as *Carros Públicos* (private mini buses).

Puerto Rico has three international airports, the Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport in Carolina, Mercedita Airport in Ponce, and the Rafael Hernández Airport in Aguadilla, and 27 local airports. The Luis Muñoz Marín International Airport is the largest aerial transportation hub in the Caribbean.^[230]

Puerto Rico has nine ports in different cities across the main island. The San Juan Port is the largest in Puerto Rico, and the busiest port in the Caribbean and the 10th busiest in the United States in terms of commercial activity and cargo movement, respectively.^[230] The second largest port is the Port of the Americas in Ponce, currently under expansion to increase cargo capacity to 1.5 million twenty-foot containers (TEUs) per year.^[231]

The **Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA)**—Spanish: *Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE)*—is an electric power company and the government-owned corporation of Puerto Rico responsible for electricity generation, power transmission, and power distribution in Puerto Rico.^[232] PREPA is the only entity authorized to conduct such business in Puerto Rico, effectively making it a government monopoly. The Authority is ruled by a Governing Board appointed by the Governor with the advice and consent of the Senate of Puerto Rico, and is run by an Executive Director.

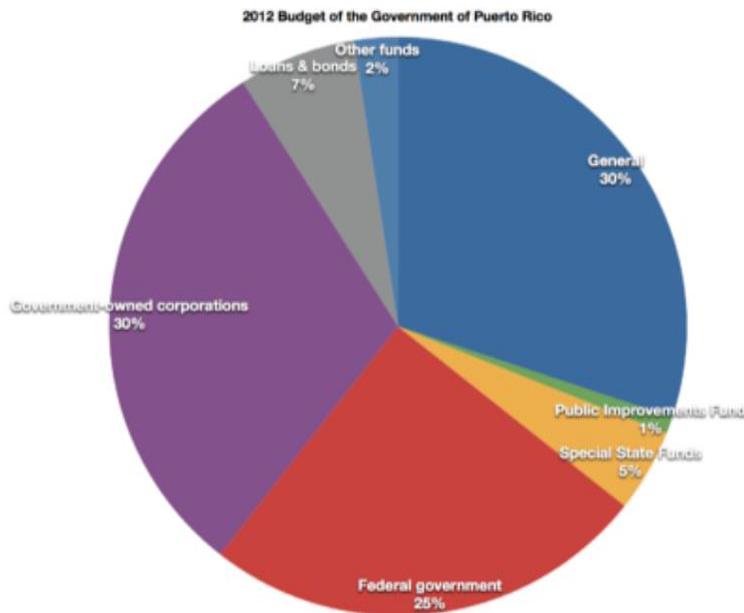
Telecommunications in Puerto Rico includes radio, television, fixed and mobile telephones, and the Internet. Broadcasting in Puerto Rico is regulated by the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC).^[233] As of 2007, there were 30 TV stations, 125 radio stations and roughly 1 million TV sets on the island. Cable TV subscription services are available and the US Armed Forces Radio and Television Service also broadcast on the island.^[234]

Public finances

Puerto Rico has an operating budget of about US\$9.8 billion with expenses at about \$10.4 billion; creating a structural deficit of \$775 million (about 7.9% of the budget).^[235] The practice of approving budgets with a structural deficit has been done for 17 consecutive years starting in 2000. Throughout those years, including present time, all budgets contemplated issuing bonds to cover said projected deficits rather than make proper adjustments. This practice eroded Puerto Rico's treasury as the government had already been issuing bonds to balance its actual budget for four decades since 1973.^{[w][237]}



The Tren Urbano system at Bayamón Station



The 2012 Budget of the Government of Puerto Rico

government of the United States, and by other funds.

Projected deficits added substantial burdens to an already indebted nation which accrued a public debt of \$71B or about 70% of Puerto Rico's gross domestic product. This sparked an ongoing government-debt crisis after Puerto Rico's general obligation bonds were downgraded to speculative non-investment grade ("junk status") by three credit rating agencies. In terms of financial control, almost 9.6%—or about \$1.5 billion—of Puerto Rico's central government budget expenses for FY2014 is expected to be spent on debt service.^[x] Harsher budget cuts are expected as Puerto Rico must now repay larger chunks of debts in the following years.

For practical reasons the budget is divided into two aspects: a "general budget" which comprises the assignments funded exclusively by the Department of Treasury of Puerto Rico, and the "consolidated budget" which comprises the assignments funded by the general budget, by Puerto Rico's government-owned corporations, by revenue expected from loans, by the sale of government bonds, by subsidies extended by the federal

Both budgets contrast each other drastically, with the consolidated budget being usually thrice the size of the general budget; currently \$29B and \$9.0B respectively. Almost one out of every four dollars in the consolidated budget comes from U.S. federal subsidies while government-owned corporations compose more than 31% of the consolidated budget.

The critical aspects come from the sale of bonds, which comprise 7% of the consolidated budget; a ratio that increased annually due to the government's inability to prepare a balanced budget in addition to being incapable of generating enough income to cover all its expenses. In particular, the government-owned corporations add a heavy burden to the overall budget and public debt as not a single one is self-sufficient, all of them carrying extremely inefficient operations. For example, in FY2011 the government-owned corporations reported aggregated losses of more than \$1.3B with the Puerto Rico Highways and Transportation Authority (PRHTA) reporting losses of \$409M, the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA; the government monopoly that controls all electricity on the island) reporting losses of \$272M, while the Puerto Rico Aqueducts and Sewers Authority (PRASA; the government monopoly that controls all water utilities on the island) reported losses of \$112M.^[239]

Losses by government-owned corporations have been defrayed through the issuance of bonds compounding more than 40% of Puerto Rico's entire public debt today.^[240] Holistically, from FY2000–FY2010 Puerto Rico's debt grew at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9% while GDP remained stagnant.^[241] This has not always provided a long-term solution. In early July 2017 for example, the Prepa power authority was effectively bankrupt after defaulting in a plan to restructure \$9 billion in bond debt; the agency planned to seek Court protection.^[242]

In terms of protocol, the governor, together with the Puerto Rico Office of Management and Budget (OGP in Spanish), formulates the budget he believes is required to operate all government branches for the ensuing fiscal year. He then submits this formulation as a budget request to the Puerto Rican legislature before July 1, the date established by law as the beginning of Puerto Rico's fiscal year. While the constitution establishes that the request must be submitted "at the beginning of each regular session", the request is typically submitted during the first week of May as the regular sessions of the legislature begin in January and it would be unpractical to submit a request so far ahead. Once submitted the budget is then approved by the legislature, typically with amendments, through a joint resolution and referred back to the governor for his approval. The governor then either approves it or vetoes it. If vetoed the legislature can then either refer it back with amendments for the governor's approval, or approve it without the governor's consent by two-thirds of the bodies of each chamber.^[243]

Once approved the Department of Treasury disburses funds to the Office of Management and Budget which in turn disburses the funds to the respective agencies, all while the Puerto Rico Government Development Bank (the government's intergovernmental bank) manages all related banking affairs including those related to the government-owned corporations.

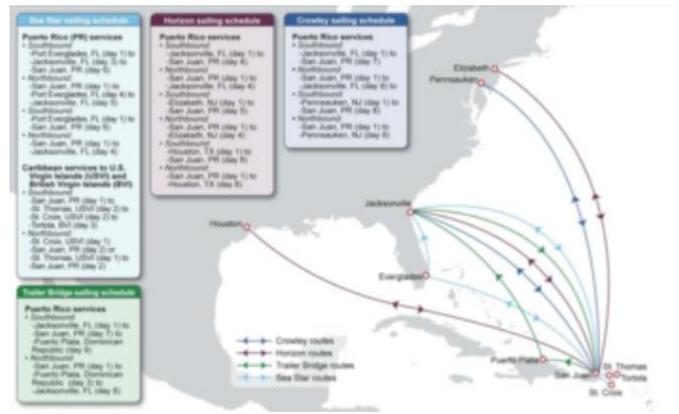
Cost of living

The cost of living in Puerto Rico is high and has increased over the past decade.^{[y][245][246][247][248][249][250][251]} San Juan's in particular is higher than Atlanta, Dallas, and Seattle but lower than Boston, Chicago, and New York City.^[252] One factor is housing prices which are comparable to Miami and Los Angeles, although property taxes are considerably lower than most places in the United States.^[z]

Statistics used for cost of living sometimes do not take into account certain costs, such as the high cost of electricity, which has hovered in the 24¢ to 30¢ range per kilowatt/hour, two to three times the national average, increased travel costs for longer flights, additional shipping fees, and the loss of promotional participation opportunities for customers "outside the continental United States". While some online stores do offer free shipping on orders to Puerto Rico, many merchants exclude Hawaii, Alaska, Puerto Rico and other United States territories.

The household median income is stated as 19,350 and the mean income as \$30,463 in the US Census Bureau's 2015 update. The report also indicates that 45.5% of individuals are below the poverty level.^[254] The median home value in Puerto Rico ranges from US\$100,000 to US\$214,000, while the national median home value sits at \$119,600.^[aa]

One of the most cited contributors to the high cost of living in Puerto Rico is the Merchant Marine Act of 1920, also known as the Jones Act, which prevents foreign-flagged ships from carrying cargo between two American ports, a practice known as cabotage.^[256] Because of the Jones Act, foreign ships inbound with goods from Central and South America, Western Europe, and Africa cannot stop in Puerto Rico, offload Puerto Rico-bound goods, load mainland-bound Puerto Rico-manufactured goods, and continue to U.S. ports. Instead, they must proceed directly to U.S. ports, where distributors break bulk and send Puerto Rico-bound manufactured goods to Puerto Rico across the ocean by U.S.-flagged ships.^[256]

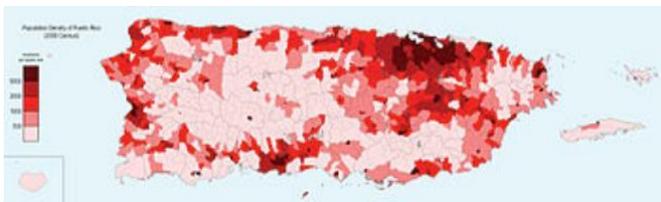


A map of Jones Act carrier routes for Puerto Rico

The local government of Puerto Rico has requested several times to the U.S. Congress to exclude Puerto Rico from the Jones Act restrictions without success.^[ab] The most recent measure has been taken by the 17th Legislative Assembly of Puerto Rico through R. Conc. del S. 21.^{[258][259]} These measures have always received support from all the major local political parties.

In 2013 the Government Accountability Office published a report which concluded that "repealing or amending the Jones Act cabotage law might cut Puerto Rico shipping costs" and that "shippers believed that opening the trade to non-U.S.-flag competition could lower costs".^{[ac][ad]} However, the same GAO report also found that "[shippers] doing business in Puerto Rico that GAO contacted reported that the freight rates are often—although not always—lower for foreign carriers going to and from Puerto Rico and foreign locations than the rates shippers pay to ship similar cargo to and from the United States, despite longer distances. Data were not available to allow us to validate the examples given or verify the extent to which this difference occurred."^[261] Ultimately, the report concluded that "[the] effects of modifying the application of the Jones Act for Puerto Rico are highly uncertain" for both Puerto Rico and the United States, particularly for the U.S. shipping industry and the military preparedness of the United States.^{[260][261]}

Demographics



Population density, Census 2000

The population of Puerto Rico has been shaped by Amerindian settlement, European colonization, slavery, economic migration, and Puerto Rico's status as unincorporated territory of the United States.

Population makeup

The estimated population of Puerto Rico as of July 1, 2015, was 3,474,182, a 6.75% decrease since the 2010 United States Census.^[263] From 2000 to 2010, the population decreased, the first such decrease in census history for Puerto Rico. It went from the 3,808,610 residents registered in the 2000 Census to 3,725,789 in the 2010 Census.^[264]

Historical population

Year	Pop.	±%
1765	44,883	—
1775	70,250	+56.5%
1800	155,426	+121.2%

A declining and aging population presents additional problems for the society. The US Census Bureau's estimate for July 1, 2016 was 3,411,307 people, down substantially from the 2010 data which had indicated 3,725,789 people.^[265]

Continuous European immigration and high natural increase helped the population of Puerto Rico grow from 155,426 in 1800, to almost a million by the close of the 19th century.

A census conducted by royal decree on September 30, 1858 gave the following totals of the Puerto Rican population at that time: 341,015 were Free colored; 300,430 identified as Whites; and 41,736 were slaves.^[266]

During the 19th century hundreds of families arrived in Puerto Rico, primarily from the Canary Islands and Andalusia, but also from other parts of Spain such as Catalonia, Asturias, Galicia and the Balearic Islands and numerous Spanish loyalists from Spain's former colonies in South America. Settlers from outside Spain also arrived in the islands, including from Corsica, France, Lebanon, China, Portugal, Ireland, Scotland, Germany and Italy. This immigration from non-Hispanic countries was the result of the *Real Cedula de Gracias de 1815* ("Royal Decree of Graces of 1815"), which allowed European Catholics to settle in the island with land allotments in the interior of the island, provided they paid taxes and continued to support the Catholic Church.

Racial and Ethnic Composition in Puerto Rico (2015 Census est.)^[267]

Ethnicity	
White	75.8%
Black or African American	12.4%
Asian	0.2%
Two or more races	3.3%
American Indian	0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0.1%
Other races	7.8%

Rico suggests that between 52.6% and 84% of the population possess some degree of Amerindian mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) in their maternal ancestry, usually in a combination with other ancestries such as aboriginal Guanche North-West African ancestry brought by Spanish settlers from the Canary Islands.^[268] In addition, these DNA studies show Amerindian ancestry in addition to the Taíno.^{[269][270][271][272]}

One genetic study on the racial makeup of Puerto Ricans (including all races) found them to be roughly around 61% West Eurasian/North African (overwhelmingly of Spanish provenance), 27% Sub-Saharan African and 11% Native American.^[273] Another genetic study from 2007, claimed that "the average genomewide individual (ie. Puerto Rican) ancestry proportions have been estimated as 66%, 18%, and 16%, for European, West African, and Native American, respectively."^[274] Other study estimates 63.7% European, 21.2% (Sub-Saharan) African, and 15.2% Native American; European ancestry is more prevalent in the West and in Central Puerto Rico, African in Eastern Puerto Rico, and Native American in Northern Puerto Rico.^[275]

A Pew Research survey indicated a literacy rate of 90.4% (adult population) in 2012 based on data from the United Nations and a life expectancy of 79.3 years.^[276]

1815	220,892	+42.1%
1832	350,051	+58.5%
1846	447,914	+28.0%
1860	583,308	+30.2%
1877	731,648	+25.4%
1887	798,565	+9.1%
1899	953,243	+19.4%
1910	1,118,012	+17.3%
1920	1,299,809	+16.3%
1930	1,543,913	+18.8%
1940	1,869,255	+21.1%
1950	2,210,703	+18.3%
1960	2,349,544	+6.3%
1970	2,712,033	+15.4%
1980	3,196,520	+17.9%
1990	3,522,037	+10.2%
2000	3,808,610	+8.1%
2010	3,725,789	−2.2%
2016	3,411,307	−8.4%

1765–2010^[262]

2016 Estimate^[4]

Between 1960

and 1990 the census questionnaire in Puerto Rico did not ask about race or ethnicity. The 2000 United States Census included a racial self-identification question in Puerto Rico. According to the census, most Puerto Ricans identified as White and Hispanic; few identified as Black or some other race.

Population genetics

A recent population genetics study conducted in Puerto

Immigration and emigration

Racial groups						
Year	Population	White	Mixed (mainly Mulatto)	Black	Asian	Other
2000	3,808,610	80.5% (3 064 862)	11.0% (418 426)	8.0% (302 933)	0.2% (7 960)	0.4% (14 429)
2010	3,725,789	75.8% (2 824 148)	11.1% (413 563)	12.4% (461 998)	0.2% (7 452)	0.6% (22 355)

Puerto Rico has recently become the permanent home of over 100,000 legal residents. The vast majority of recent immigrants, both legal and illegal, come from the Dominican Republic and Haiti.^{[244][277][278][279][280]} Other sources sending in significant numbers of recent immigrants include Cuba, Mexico, Colombia, Panama, Jamaica, Venezuela, Spain, and Nigeria.^{[281][282]} Also, there are many non-Puerto Rican US citizens settling in Puerto Rico, from the mainland United States and the US Virgin Islands, as well as Nuyoricans (stateside Puerto Ricans) coming back to Puerto Rico.^[283] Most recent immigrants settle in and around San Juan.

Emigration is a major part of contemporary Puerto Rican history. Starting soon after World War II, poverty, cheap airfares, and promotion by the island government caused waves of Puerto Ricans to move to the United States, particularly to the Northeastern states, and Florida.^[284] This trend continued even as Puerto Rico's economy improved and its birth rate declined. Puerto Ricans continue to follow a pattern of "circular migration", with some migrants returning to the island. In recent years, the population has declined markedly, falling nearly 1% in 2012 and an additional 1% (36,000 people) in 2013 due to a falling birthrate and emigration.^[285]

Based on the July 1, 2016 estimate by the US Census Bureau, the population of the Commonwealth had declined by 314,482 people since the 2010 Census data had been tabulated.^[265]

Population distribution

The most populous city is the capital, San Juan, with approximately 371,400 people based on a 2015 estimate by the Census Bureau.^[286] Other major cities include Bayamón, Carolina, Ponce, and Caguas. Of the ten most populous cities on the island, eight are located within what is considered San Juan's metropolitan area, while the other two are located in the south (Ponce) and west (Mayagüez) of the island.

Largest cities or towns in Puerto Rico

2010 Census^[287]

Rank	Name	Metropolitan Statistical Area	Pop.
1	San Juan	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	395,326
2	Bayamón	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	208,116
3	Carolina	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	176,762
4	Ponce	Ponce	166,327
5	Caguas	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	142,893
6	Guaynabo	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	97,924
7	Arecibo	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	96,440
8	Toa Baja	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	89,609
9	Mayagüez	Mayagüez	89,080
10	Trujillo Alto	San Juan-Caguas-Guaynabo	74,842



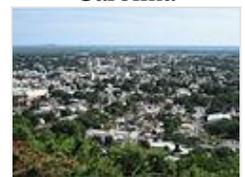
San Juan



Bayamón



Carolina



Ponce

Languages

The official languages^[288] of the executive branch of government of Puerto Rico^[289] are Spanish and English, with Spanish being the primary language. Spanish is, and has been, the only official language of the entire Commonwealth judiciary system, despite a 1902 English-only language law.^[290] All official business of the U.S. District Court for the District of Puerto Rico is conducted in English. English is the primary language of less than 10% of the population. Spanish is the dominant language of business, education and daily life on the island, spoken by nearly 95% of the population.^[291]

The US Census Bureau's 2015 update provides the following facts:^[292] 94.1% of adults speak Spanish, 5.8% speak only English, 78.3% do not speak English "very well".

In Puerto Rico, public school instruction is conducted almost entirely in Spanish. There have been pilot programs in about a dozen of the over 1,400 public schools aimed at conducting instruction in English only. Objections from teaching staff are common, perhaps because many of them are not fully fluent in English.^[293] English is taught as a second language and is a compulsory subject from elementary levels to high school. The languages of the deaf community are American Sign Language and its local variant, Puerto Rican Sign Language.

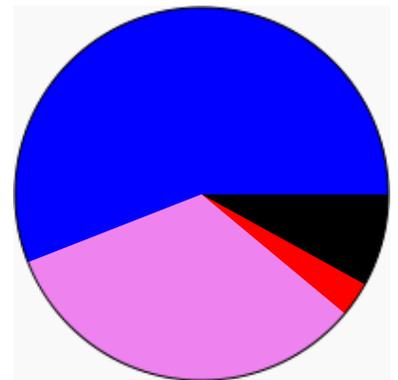
The Spanish of Puerto Rico has evolved into having many idiosyncrasies in vocabulary and syntax that differentiate it from the Spanish spoken elsewhere. As a product of Puerto Rican history, the island possesses a unique Spanish dialect. Puerto Rican Spanish utilizes many Taíno words, as well as English words. The largest influence on the Spanish spoken in Puerto Rico is that of the Canary Islands. The Spanish of Puerto Rico also includes Taíno words, typically in the context of vegetation, natural phenomena or primitive musical instruments. Similarly, words attributed to primarily West African languages were adopted in the contexts of foods, music or dances, particularly in coastal towns with concentrations of descendants of Sub-Saharan Africans.^[294]

Religion

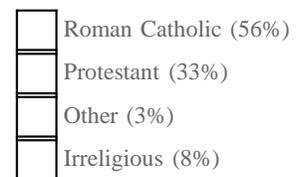
The Roman Catholic Church was brought by Spanish colonists and gradually became the dominant religion in Puerto Rico. The first dioceses in the Americas, including that of Puerto Rico, were authorized by Pope Julius II in 1511.^[297] One Pope, John Paul II, visited Puerto Rico in October 1984. All municipalities in Puerto Rico have at least one Catholic Church, most of which are located at the town center or "*plaza*". African slaves brought and maintained various ethnic African religious practices associated with different peoples; in particular, the Yoruba beliefs of Santería and/or Ifá, and the Kongo-derived Palo Mayombe. Some aspects were absorbed into syncretic Christianity.

Protestantism, which was suppressed under the Spanish Catholic regime, has slightly reemerged under United States rule, making contemporary Puerto Rico more interconfessional than in previous centuries, although Catholicism continues to be the dominant religion. The first Protestant church, Iglesia de la Santísima Trinidad, was established in Ponce by the Anglican Diocese of Antigua in 1872.^[298] It was the first non-Roman Catholic Church in the entire Spanish Empire in the Americas.^{[299][300]}

Pollster Pablo Ramos stated in 1998 that the population was 38% Roman Catholic, 28% Pentecostal, and 18% were members of independent churches, which would give a Protestant percentage of 46% if the last two populations are combined. Protestants collectively added up to almost two million people. Another researcher gave a more conservative assessment of the proportion of Protestants:



Religious Affiliation (2014)^{[295][296]}



Puerto Rico, by virtue of its long political association with the United States, is the most Protestant of Latin American countries, with a Protestant population of approximately 33 to 38 percent, the majority of whom are Pentecostal. David Stoll calculates that if we extrapolate the growth rates of evangelical churches from 1960–1985 for another twenty-five years Puerto Rico will become 75 percent evangelical. (Ana Adams: "Brincando el Charco..." in *Power, Politics and Pentecostals in Latin America*, Edward Cleary, ed., 1997. p. 164).^[301]

The data provided for 2014 by Pew Research Center,^[276] is summarized in the chart to the right. An Associated Press article in March 2014 stated that "more than 70 percent of whom identify themselves as Catholic" but provided no source for this information.^[302]

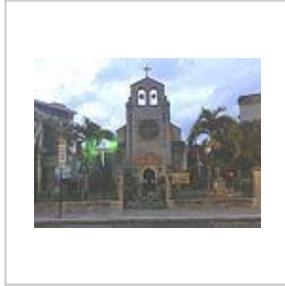
The CIA World Factbook reports that 85% of the population of Puerto Rico identifies as Roman Catholic, while 15% identify as Protestant and Other. Neither a date or a source for that information is provided and may not be recent.^[303] A 2013 Pew Research survey found that only about 45% of Puerto Rican adults identified themselves as Catholic, 29% as Protestant and 20% as unaffiliated with a religion. The people surveyed by Pew consisted of Puerto Ricans living in the 50 states and DC and may not be indicative of those living in the Commonwealth.^[304]

By 2014, a Pew Research report, with the sub-title *Widespread Change in a Historically Catholic Region*, indicated that only 56% of Puerto Ricans were Catholic and that 33% were Protestant; this survey was completed between October 2013 and February 2014.^[305]

An Eastern Orthodox community, the Dormition of the Most Holy Theotokos / St. Spyridon's Church is located in Trujillo Alto, and serves the small Orthodox community. This affiliation accounted for under 1% of the population in 2010 according to the Pew Research report.^[306] In 1940, Juanita García Peraza founded the Mita Congregation, the first religion of Puerto Rican origin.^[307] Taíno religious practices have been rediscovered/reinvented to a degree by a handful of advocates. Similarly, some aspects of African religious traditions have been kept by some adherents. In 1952, a handful of American Jews established the island's first synagogue; this religion accounts for under 1% of the population in 2010 according to the Pew Research report.^{[308][309]} The synagogue, called *Sha'are Zedeck*, hired its first rabbi in 1954.^[310] Puerto Rico has the largest Jewish community in the Caribbean, numbering 3000 people (date not stated),^[311] and is the only Caribbean island in which the Conservative, Reform and Orthodox Jewish movements all are represented.^{[310][312]} In 2007, there were about 5,000 Muslims in Puerto Rico, representing about 0.13% of the population.^{[313][314]} Eight mosques are located throughout the island, with most Muslims living in Río Piedras and Caguas, most of these Muslims are of Palestinian and Jordanian descent.^{[315][316]} In 2015, the 25,832 Jehovah's Witnesses represented about 0.70% of the population, with 324 congregations.^[317] The Padmasambhava Buddhist Center, whose followers practice Tibetan Buddhism, has a branch in Puerto Rico.^[318]



Roman Catholic
Cathedral of **San Juan**
Bautista.



Anglican Iglesia
Santísima Trinidad in
Ponce



Islamic Center at Ponce



Inside Sha'are Zedeck
in San Juan

Education

The first school in Puerto Rico was the *Escuela de Gramática* (Grammar School). It was established by Bishop Alonso Manso in 1513, in the area where the Cathedral of San Juan was to be constructed. The school was free of charge and the courses taught were Latin language, literature, history, science, art, philosophy and theology.^[319]

Education in Puerto Rico is divided in three levels—Primary (elementary school grades 1–6), Secondary (intermediate and high school grades 7–12), and Higher Level (undergraduate and graduate studies). As of 2002, the literacy rate of the Puerto Rican population was 94.1%; by gender, it was 93.9% for males and 94.4% for females.^[320] According to the 2000 Census, 60.0% of the population attained a high school degree or higher level of education, and 18.3% has a bachelor's degree or higher.

Instruction at the primary school level is compulsory and enforced by the state between the ages of 5 and 18. The Constitution of Puerto Rico grants the right to an education to every citizen on the island. To this end, public schools in Puerto Rico provide free and non-sectarian education at the elementary, and secondary levels. At any of the three levels, students may attend either public or private schools. By 1999, there were 1532 public schools^[321] and 569 private schools in the island. As of 2010, there are 1539 public schools and 806 private schools.^[322]

The largest and oldest university system is the public University of Puerto Rico (UPR) with 11 campuses. The largest private university systems on the island are the Sistema Universitario Ana G. Mendez which operates the Universidad del Turabo, Metropolitan University and Universidad del Este. Other private universities include the multi-campus Inter American University, the Pontifical Catholic University, Universidad Politécnica de Puerto Rico, and the Universidad del Sagrado Corazón. Puerto Rico has four schools of Medicine and three ABA-approved Law Schools.

Health

As of 2015 medical care in Puerto Rico had been heavily impacted by emigration of doctors to the mainland and underfunding of the Medicare and Medicaid programs which serve 60% of the island's population. Affordable medical insurance under the Affordable Care Act is not available in Puerto Rico as, since Puerto Ricans pay no income tax, no subsidies are available.^[323]

The city of San Juan has a system of triage, hospital, and preventive care health services. The municipal government sponsors regular health fairs in different areas of the city focusing on health care for the elderly and the disabled.

There are twenty hospitals in San Juan, half of which are operated by the government. The largest hospital is the *Centro Médico de Río Piedras* (the Río Piedras Medical Center). Founded in 1956, it is operated by the Medical Services Administration of the Department of Health of Puerto Rico, and is actually a network of eight hospitals:

- San Juan Municipal Hospital: This hospital is operated by the San Juan municipal government.
- Industrial Hospital: This is the hospital for Puerto Rico government employees, whether municipal or Commonwealth government employees. Normally, injured police officers and firefighters are cared for here.
- San Juan Pediatric Hospital – Also operated by the San Juan municipal government.
- Pediatric Hospital: Operated by the government of the Commonwealth, this is the main trauma hospital for pediatric cases.
- Centro Medico Emergency Room: This is the main hospital for trauma cases for Puerto Rico and the Caribbean.
- *Centro Cardiovascular del Caribe* (Caribbean Cardiovascular Center): This is the main hospital for open heart surgery in the Caribbean. It features a hotel for the patients' families.
- Psychiatric Hospital: The main psychiatric hospital in Puerto Rico. Operated by the government of Puerto Rico.
- Psychiatric Correctional Hospital: It is both a hospital and correctional facility. It is operated jointly by the Puerto Rico Department of Corrections and the Medical Services Administration.

The city of San Juan operates nine other hospitals. Of these, eight are Diagnostic and Treatment Centers located in communities throughout San Juan. These nine hospitals are:

- La Perla
- Puerta de Tierra
- Llorens Torres
- Puerto Nuevo
- San José
- Río Piedras
- Sabana Llana
- Hoare
- Santurce Parada 19

There are also ten private hospitals in San Juan. These are:

- *Hospital Metropolitano*
- *Hospital Auxilio Mutuo*
- *Hospital Auxilio Mutuo Expreso*
- Hospital de Veteranos: The main Veterans hospital in the Caribbean. Operated by the U.S. Veteran Healthcare System.
- Ashford Presbyterian Hospital
- Hospital Pavia Hato Rey
- Hospital Pavia Santurce
- San Jorge Children's Hospital: The most well known children's hospital in the San Juan Metropolitan Area.
- Hospital San Gerardo: Located at the Cupey neighborhood, is a small hospital but is also specialized in psychiatry and elderly.
- Hospital del Maestro (Teachers Hospital): Located in Hato Rey, this hospital is operated by the Puerto Rico Teachers Association.

The city of Ponce is served by several clinics and hospitals. There are four comprehensive care hospitals: Hospital Dr. Pila, Hospital San Cristobal, Hospital San Lucas,^[324] and Hospital de Damas. In addition, Hospital Oncológico Andrés Grillasca specializes in the treatment of cancer,^[325] and Hospital Siquiátrico specializes in mental disorders.^[326] There is also a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic that provides health services to U.S. veterans.^[327] The U.S. Veterans Administration will build a new hospital in the city to satisfy regional needs.^[328] Hospital de Damas is listed in the U.S. News & World Report as one of the best hospitals under the U.S. flag.^[329] Ponce has the highest concentration of medical infrastructure per inhabitant of any municipality in Puerto Rico.

On the island of Culebra, there is a small hospital in the island called *Hospital de Culebra*. It also offers pharmacy services to residents and visitors. For emergencies, patients are transported by plane to Fajardo on the main island.^[330]

The town of Caguas has three hospitals: Hospital Hima San Pablo, Menonita Caguas Regional Hospital, and the San Juan Bautista Medical Center.

The town of Cayey is served by the *Hospital Menonita de Cayey*, and the *Hospital Municipal de Cayey*.

Reforma de Salud de Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Health Reform) – locally referred to as *La Reforma* (The Reform) – is a government-run program which provides medical and health care services to the indigent and impoverished, by means of contracting private health insurance companies, rather than employing government-owned hospitals and emergency centers. The Reform is administered by the Puerto Rico Health Insurance Administration.^[331]

Culture

Modern Puerto Rican culture is a unique mix of cultural antecedents: including people European (predominantly Spanish, Italian, French, German and Irish), African, and, more recently, some North American and lots of South Americans. A large number of Cubans and Dominican have relocated to the island in the past few decades.

From the Spanish, Puerto Rico received the Spanish language, the Catholic religion and the vast majority of their cultural and moral values and traditions. The United States added English-language influence, the university system and the adoption of some holidays and practices. On March 12, 1903, the University of Puerto Rico was officially founded, branching out from the "Escuela Normal Industrial", a smaller organization that was founded in Fajardo three years before.

Much of Puerto Rican culture centers on the influence of music and has been shaped by other cultures combining with local and traditional rhythms. Early in the history of Puerto Rican music, the influences of Spanish and African traditions were most noticeable. The cultural movements across the Caribbean and North America have played a vital role in the more recent musical influences which have reached Puerto Rico.^{[332][333]}

The official symbols of Puerto Rico are the *reinita mora* or Puerto Rican spindalis (a type of bird), the *flor de maga* (a type of flower), and the *ceiba* or kapok (a type of tree). The unofficial animal and a symbol of Puerto Rican pride is the coquí, a small frog. Other popular symbols of Puerto Rico are the *jíbaro* (the "countryman"), and the carite.

Architecture

The architecture of Puerto Rico demonstrates a broad variety of traditions, styles and national influences accumulated over four centuries of Spanish rule, and a century of American rule. Spanish colonial architecture, Ibero-Islamic, art deco, post-modern, and many other architectural forms are visible throughout the island. From town to town, there are also many regional distinctions.

Old San Juan is one of the two *barrios*, in addition to Santurce, that made up the municipality of San Juan from 1864 to 1951, at which time the former independent municipality of Río Piedras was annexed. With its abundance of shops, historic places, museums, open air cafés, restaurants, gracious homes, tree-shaded plazas, and its old beauty and architectural peculiarity, Old San Juan is a main spot for local and internal tourism. The district is also characterized by numerous public plazas and churches including San José Church and the Cathedral of San Juan Bautista, which contains the tomb of the Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León. It also houses the oldest Catholic school for elementary education in Puerto Rico, the Colegio de Párvulos, built in 1865.

The oldest parts of the district of Old San Juan remain partly enclosed by massive walls. Several defensive structures and notable forts, such as the emblematic Fort San Felipe del Morro, Fort San Cristóbal, and El Palacio de Santa Catalina, also known as La Fortaleza, acted as the primary defenses of the settlement which was subjected to numerous attacks. La Fortaleza continues to serve also as the executive mansion for the Governor of Puerto Rico. Many of the historic fortifications are part of San Juan National Historic Site.



Old San Juan

During the 1940s, sections of Old San Juan fell into disrepair, and many renovation plans were suggested. There was even a strong push to develop Old San Juan as a "small Manhattan". Strict remodeling codes were implemented to prevent new constructions from affecting the common colonial Spanish architectural themes of the old city. When a project proposal suggested that the old Carmelite Convent in San Juan be demolished to erect a new hotel, the Institute had the building declared as a historic building, and then asked that it be converted to a hotel in a renewed facility. This was what became the *Hotel El Convento* in Old San Juan. The paradigm to reconstruct and renovate the old city and revitalize it has been followed by other cities in the Americas, particularly Havana, Lima and Cartagena de Indias.

Ponce Creole is an architectural style created in Ponce, Puerto Rico, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This style of Puerto Rican buildings is found predominantly in residential homes in Ponce that developed between 1895 and 1920. Ponce Creole architecture borrows heavily from the traditions of the French, the Spaniards, and the Caribbean to create houses that were especially built to withstand the hot and dry climate of the region, and to take advantage of the sun and sea breezes characteristic of the southern Puerto Rico's Caribbean Sea coast.^[334] It is a blend of wood and masonry, incorporating architectural elements of other styles, from Classical revival and Spanish Revival to Victorian.^[335]

Arts

Puerto Rican art reflects many influences, much from its ethnically diverse background. A form of folk art, called *santos* evolved from the Catholic Church's use of sculptures to convert indigenous Puerto Ricans to Christianity. *Santos* depict figures of saints and other religious icons and are made from native wood, clay, and stone. After shaping simple, they are often finished by painting them in vivid colors. *Santos* vary in size, with the smallest examples around eight inches tall and the largest about twenty inches tall. Traditionally, santos were seen as messengers between the earth and Heaven. As such, they occupied a special place on household altars, where people prayed to them, asked for help, or tried to summon their protection.

Also popular, *caretas* or *vejigantes* are masks worn during carnivals. Similar masks signifying evil spirits were used in both Spain and Africa, though for different purposes. The Spanish used their masks to frighten lapsed Christians into returning to the church, while tribal Africans used them as protection from the evil spirits they represented. True to their historic origins Puerto Rican *caretas* always bear at least several horns and fangs. While usually constructed of papier-mâché, coconut shells and fine metal screening are sometimes used as well. Red and black were the typical colors for *caretas* but their palette has expanded to include a wide variety of bright hues and patterns.

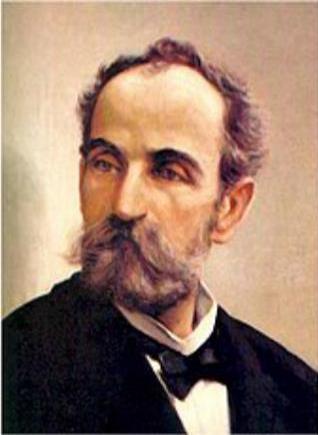
Literature

Puerto Rican literature evolved from the art of oral story telling to its present-day status. Written works by the native islanders of Puerto Rico were prohibited and repressed by the Spanish colonial government. Only those who were commissioned by the Spanish Crown to document the chronological history of the island were allowed to write.

Diego de Torres Vargas was allowed to circumvent this strict prohibition for three reasons: he was a priest, he came from a prosperous Spanish family, and his father was a Sergeant Major in the Spanish Army, who died while defending Puerto Rico from an invasion by the Dutch armada. In 1647, Torres Vargas wrote *Descripción de la Ciudad e Isla de Puerto Rico* ("Description of the Island and City of Puerto Rico"). This historical book was the first to make a detailed geographic description of the island.^[336]

The book described all the fruits and commercial establishments of the time, mostly centered in the towns of San Juan and Ponce. The book also listed and described every mine, church, and hospital in the island at the time. The book contained notices on the State and Capital, plus an extensive and erudite bibliography. *Descripción de la Ciudad e Isla de Puerto Rico* was the first successful attempt at writing a comprehensive history of Puerto Rico.^[336]

Some of Puerto Rico's earliest writers were influenced by the teachings of Rafael Cordero. Among these was Dr. Manuel A. Alonso, the first Puerto Rican writer of notable importance. In 1849 he published *El Gíbaro*, a collection of verses whose main themes were the poor Puerto Rican country farmer. Eugenio María de Hostos wrote *La peregrinación de Bayoán* in 1863, which used Bartolomé de las Casas as a spring board to reflect on Caribbean identity. After this first novel, Hostos abandoned fiction in favor of the essay which he saw as offering greater possibilities for inspiring social change.



Eugenio María de Hostos

In the late 19th century, with the arrival of the first printing press and the founding of the Royal Academy of Belles Letters, Puerto Rican literature began to flourish. The first writers to express their political views in regard to Spanish colonial rule of the island were journalists. After the United States invaded Puerto Rico during the Spanish–American War and the island was ceded to the Americans as a condition of the Treaty of Paris of 1898, writers and poets began to express their opposition to the new colonial rule by writing about patriotic themes.

Alejandro Tapia y Rivera, also known as the Father of Puerto Rican Literature, ushered in a new age of historiography with the publication of *The Historical Library of Puerto Rico*. Cayetano Coll y Toste was another Puerto Rican historian and writer. His work *The Indo-Antillano Vocabulary* is valuable in understanding the way the Taínos lived. Dr. Manuel Zeno Gandía in 1894 wrote *La Charca* and told about the harsh life in the remote and mountainous coffee regions in Puerto Rico. Dr. Antonio S. Pedreira, described in his work *Insularismo* the cultural survival of the Puerto Rican identity after the American invasion.

With the Puerto Rican diaspora of the 1940s, Puerto Rican literature was greatly influenced by a phenomenon known as the Nuyorican Movement. Puerto Rican literature continued to flourish and many Puerto Ricans have since distinguished themselves as authors, journalists, poets, novelists, playwrights, screenwriters, essayists and have also stood out in other literary fields. The influence of Puerto Rican literature has transcended the boundaries of the island to the United States and the rest of the world. Over the past fifty years, significant writers include Ed Vega, Luis Rafael Sánchez, Piri Thomas, Giannina Braschi, and Miguel Piñero. Esmeralda Santiago has written an autobiographical trilogy about growing up in modern Puerto Rico as well as an historical novel, *Conquistadora*, about life on a sugar plantation during the mid-19th century.

Media

The media in Puerto Rico includes local radio stations, television stations and newspapers, the majority of which are conducted in Spanish. There are also three stations of the U.S. Armed Forces Radio and Television Service. Newspapers with daily distribution are El Nuevo Día, El Vocero and Índice, Metro, and Primera Hora. El Vocero is distributed free of charge as well as Índice and Metro.

Newspapers distributed on a weekly or regional basis include Claridad, La Perla del Sur, La Opinion, Vision, and La Estrella del Norte, among others. Several television channels provide local content in the island. These include WIPR-TV, Telemundo, Univision Puerto Rico, WAPA-TV, and WKAQ-TV.

Music

The music of Puerto Rico has evolved as a heterogeneous and dynamic product of diverse cultural resources. The most conspicuous musical sources have been Spain and West Africa, although many aspects of Puerto Rican music reflect origins elsewhere in Europe and the Caribbean and, over the last century, from the U.S. Puerto Rican music culture today comprises a

wide and rich variety of genres, ranging from indigenous genres like bomba, plena, aguinaldo, danza and salsa to recent hybrids like reggaeton.

Puerto Rico has some national instruments, like the Cuatro (Spanish for Four). The cuatro is a local instrument that was made by the "Jibaro" or people from the mountains. Originally, the Cuatro consisted of four steel strings, hence its name, but currently the Cuatro consists of five double steel strings. It is easily confused with a guitar, even by locals. When held upright, from right to left, the strings are G, D, A, E, B.

In the realm of classical music, the island hosts two main orchestras, the Orquesta Sinfónica de Puerto Rico and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Puerto Rico. The Casals Festival takes place annually in San Juan, drawing in classical musicians from around the world.

With respect to opera, the legendary Puerto Rican tenor Antonio Paoli was so celebrated, that he performed private recitals for Pope Pius X and the Czar Nicholas II of Russia. In 1907, Paoli was the first operatic artist in world history to record an entire opera – when he participated in a performance of *Pagliacci* by Ruggiero Leoncavallo in Milan, Italy.

Over the past fifty years, Puerto Rican artists such as Jorge Emmanuelli, Yomo Toro, Ramito, Jose Feliciano, Bobby Capo, Rafael Cortijo, Ismael Rivera, Chayanne, Tito Puente, Eddie Palmieri, Ray Barreto, Dave Valentin, Omar Rodríguez-López, Hector Lavoe, Ricky Martin, Marc Anthony and Luis Fonsi have thrilled audiences around the world.

Cuisine



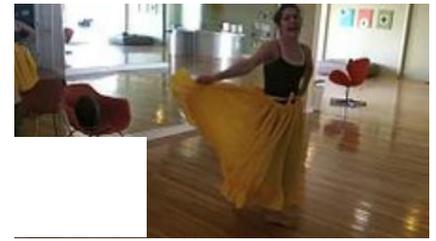
Cuchifritos (Carnitas) in New York

Puerto Rican cuisine has its roots in the cooking traditions and practices of Europe (Spain), Africa and the native Taínos. In the latter part of the 19th century, the cuisine of Puerto Rico was greatly influenced by the United States in the ingredients used in its preparation. Puerto Rican cuisine has transcended the boundaries of the island, and can be found in several countries outside the archipelago. Basic ingredients include grains and legumes, herbs and spices, starchy tropical tubers, vegetables, meat and poultry, seafood and shellfish, and fruits. Main dishes include *mofongo*, *arroz con gandules*, *pasteles*, *alcapurrias* and pig roast (or lechón). Beverages include *maví* and *piña colada*. Desserts include flan, *arroz con dulce* (sweet rice pudding), *piraguas*, *brazo gitanos*, *tembleque*, *polvorones*, and *dulce de leche*.

Locals call their cuisine *cocina criolla*. The traditional Puerto Rican cuisine was well established by the end of the 19th century. By 1848 the first restaurant, La Mallorquina, opened in Old San Juan. *El Cocinero Puertorriqueño*, the island's first cookbook was

published in 1849.^[337]

From the diet of the Taíno people come many tropical roots and tubers like *yautía* (taro) and especially *Yuca* (cassava), from which thin cracker-like *casabe* bread is made. Ajicito or cachucha pepper, a slightly hot habanero pepper, *recao/culantro* (spiny leaf), *achiote* (annatto), *peppers*, *ají caballero* (the hottest pepper native to Puerto Rico), peanuts, guavas, pineapples, *jicacos* (cocoplum), *quenepas* (mamoncillo), *lerenes* (Guinea arrowroot), *calabazas* (tropical pumpkins), and *guanabanas* (soursops) are all Taíno foods. The Taínos also grew varieties of beans and some maize/corn, but maize was not as dominant in their cooking as it was for the peoples living on the mainland of Mesoamerica. This is due to the frequent hurricanes that Puerto Rico experiences, which destroy crops of maize, leaving more safeguarded plants like *conucos* (hills of *yuca* grown together).



A dancer performs typical *bomba* choreography.

Spanish / European influence is also seen in Puerto Rican cuisine. Wheat, chickpeas (*garbanzos*), capers, olives, olive oil, black pepper, onions, garlic, *cilantrillo* (cilantro), oregano, basil, sugarcane, citrus fruit, eggplant, ham, lard, chicken, beef, pork, and cheese all came to Borikén (Puerto Rico's native Taino name) from Spain. The tradition of cooking complex stews and rice dishes in pots such as rice and beans are also thought to be originally European (much like Italians, Spaniards, and the British). Early Dutch, French, Italian, and Chinese immigrants influenced not only the culture but Puerto Rican cooking as well. This great variety of traditions came together to form La Cocina Criolla.

Coconuts, coffee (brought by the Arabs and Corsos to Yauco from Kafa, Ethiopia), okra, yams, sesame seeds, *gandules* (pigeon peas in English) sweet bananas, plantains, other root vegetables and Guinea hen, all come to Puerto Rico from Africa.

Philately

Puerto Rico has been commemorated on four U.S. postal stamps and four personalities have been featured. Insular Territories were commemorated in 1937, the third stamp honored Puerto Rico featuring 'La Fortaleza', the Spanish Governor's Palace.^[338] The first free election for governor of the US colony of Puerto Rico was honored on April 27, 1949, at San Juan, Puerto Rico. 'Inauguration' on the 3-cent stamp refers to the election of Luis Munoz Marin, the first democratically elected governor of Puerto Rico.^[339] San Juan, Puerto Rico was commemorated with an 8-cent stamp on its 450th anniversary issued September 12, 1971, featuring a sentry box from Castillo San



Plantain "arañitas" and "tostones rellenos"

Felipe del Morro.^[340] In the "Flags of our nation series" 2008–2012, of the fifty-five, five territorial flags were featured. Forever stamps included the Puerto Rico Flag illustrated by a bird issued 2011.^[341]

Four Puerto Rican personalities have been featured on U.S. postage stamps. These include Roberto Clemente in 1984 as an individual and in the Legends of Baseball series issued in 2000.^[342] Luis Muñoz Marín in the Great Americans series,^[343] on February 18, 1990.^[339] Julia de Burgos in the Literary Arts series, issued 2010.,^[344] and José Ferrer in the Distinguished American series, issued 2012.^[345]

Sports

Baseball was one of the first sports to gain widespread popularity in Puerto Rico. The Puerto Rico Baseball League serves as the only active professional league, operating as a winter league. No Major League Baseball franchise or affiliate plays in Puerto Rico, however, San Juan hosted the Montreal Expos for several series in 2003 and 2004 before they moved to Washington, D.C. and became the Washington Nationals.

The Puerto Rico national baseball team has participated in the World Cup of Baseball winning one gold (1951), four silver and four bronze medals, the Caribbean Series (winning fourteen times) and the World Baseball Classic. On March 2006, San Juan's Hiram Bithorn Stadium hosted the opening round as well as the second round of the newly formed World Baseball Classic. Puerto Rican baseball players include Hall of Famers Roberto Clemente, Orlando Cepeda and Roberto Alomar, enshrined in 1973, 1999, and 2011 respectively.^{[346][347][348]}

Boxing, basketball, and volleyball are considered popular sports as well. Wilfredo Gómez and McWilliams Arroyo have won their respective divisions at the World Amateur Boxing Championships. Other medalists include José Pedraza, who holds a silver medal, and three boxers who finished in third place, José Luis Vellón, Nelson Dieppa and McJoe Arroyo. In the



San Juan 450th
1971 issue

professional circuit, Puerto Rico has the third-most boxing world champions and it is the global leader in champions per capita. These include Miguel Cotto, Félix Trinidad, Wilfred Benítez and Gómez among others.



Puerto Rico Islanders supporters' Orange Star Ultras at an association football game

The Puerto Rico national basketball team joined the International Basketball Federation in 1957. Since then, it has won more than 30 medals in international competitions, including gold in three FIBA Americas Championships and the 1994 Goodwill Games August 8, 2004, became a landmark date for the team when it became the first team to defeat the United States in an Olympic tournament since the integration of National Basketball Association players. Winning the inaugural game with scores of 92–73 as part of the 2004 Summer Olympics organized in Athens, Greece.^[349] Baloncesto Superior Nacional acts as the top-level professional basketball league in Puerto Rico, and has experienced success since its beginning in 1930.

Puerto Rico is also a member of FIFA and CONCACAF. In 2008, the archipelago's first unified league, the Puerto Rico Soccer League, was established.

Other sports include professional wrestling and road running. The World Wrestling Council and International Wrestling Association are the largest wrestling promotions in the main island. The World's Best 10K, held annually in San Juan, has been ranked among the 20 most competitive races globally. The "Puerto Rico All Stars" team, which has won twelve world championships in unicycle basketball.^[350]

Organized Streetball has gathered some exposition, with teams like "Puerto Rico Street Ball" competing against established organizations including the Capitanes de Arecibo and AND1's Mixtape Tour Team. Six years after the first visit, AND1 returned as part of their renamed Live Tour, losing to the Puerto Rico Streetballers.^[351] Consequently, practitioners of this style have earned participation in international teams, including Orlando "El Gato" Meléndez, who became the first Puerto Rican born athlete to play for the Harlem Globetrotters.^[352] Orlando Antigua, whose mother is Puerto Rican, in 1995 became the first Hispanic and the first non-black in 52 years to play for the Harlem Globetrotters.^[353]

Puerto Rico has representation in all international competitions including the Summer and Winter Olympics, the Pan American Games, the Caribbean World Series, and the Central American and Caribbean Games. Puerto Rico hosted the Pan Am Games in 1979 (officially in San Juan), and The Central American and Caribbean Games were hosted in 1993 in Ponce and in 2010 in Mayagüez.

Puerto Rican athletes have won nine medals in Olympic competition (one gold, two silver, six bronze), the first one in 1948 by boxer Juan Evangelista Venegas. Monica Puig won the first gold medal for Puerto Rico in the Olympic Games by winning the Women's Tennis singles title in Rio 2016.^{[354][355]}

See also

- Outline of Puerto Rico
- Index of Puerto Rico-related articles
- Economy of Puerto Rico
- History of Puerto Rico
- Military history of Puerto Rico
- Piragua (food)
- Political status of Puerto Rico
- Politics of Puerto Rico
- Privileges and Immunities Clause

- Proposed political status for Puerto Rico
- Puerto Rican citizenship
- Puerto Rican government-debt crisis
- Puerto Rican status referendum, 2012
- Puerto Rican status referendum, 2017
- Puerto Ricans
- Puerto Rico (proposed state)
- Puerto Rico Democracy Act of 2007 (H.R. 900 & S. 1936)
- Sovereignism (Puerto Rico)
- Special Committee on Decolonization
- Statehood movement in Puerto Rico
- Territories of the United States
- United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories
- Voting rights in Puerto Rico

Notes

- a. "Puerto Rico" pronunciations: English: / pɔːrtə ˈriːkoʊ^[12]/ or / pʊɛərtə ˈriːkoʊ^[12]/; Spanish: [ˈpweɾto ˈriko], rural, locally also [ˈpweɾto ˈχiko; ˈɾiko].^[12]
- b. The Spanish word for commonwealth is typically *mancomunidad*.
- c. In 1932, the U.S. Congress officially back-corrected the former Anglicization of *Porto Rico* into the Spanish name *Puerto Rico*.^[13] It had been using the former spelling in its legislative and judicial records since it acquired the territory. Patricia Gherovici states that both "Porto Rico" and "Puerto Rico" were used interchangeably in the news media and documentation before, during, and after the U.S. conquest of the island in 1898. The "Porto" spelling, for instance, was used in the **Treaty of Paris**, but "Puerto" was used by *The New York Times* that same year. Nancy Morris clarifies that "a curious oversight in the drafting of the **Foraker Act** caused the name of the island to be officially misspelled".^[14] However, Gervasio Luis Garcia traces the Anglicized spelling to a *National Geographic* article from 1899, after which the spelling was kept by many agencies and entities because of the ethnic and linguistic pride of the English-speaking citizens of the American mainland.^[15]
- d. Proyecto Salón Hogar (in Spanish) "Los españoles le cambiaron el nombre de Borikén a San Juan Bautista y a la capital le llamaron Ciudad de Puerto Rico. Con los años, Ciudad de Puerto Rico pasó a ser San Juan, y San Juan Bautista pasó a ser Puerto Rico."^[35]
- e. Today, Puerto Ricans are also known as Boricuas, or people from Borinquen.
- f. **Vicente Yañez Pinzón** is considered the first appointed governor of Puerto Rico, but he never arrived from Spain.
- g. **PBS**, to which they had no natural immunity.^[45] For example, a **smallpox** outbreak in 1518–1519 killed much of the Island's indigenous population.^[46] "The first *repartimiento* in Puerto Rico is established, allowing colonists fixed numbers of Tainos for wage-free and forced labor in the gold mines. When several priests protest, the crown requires Spaniards to pay native laborers and to teach them the Christian religion; the colonists continue to treat the natives as slaves."^[47]
- h. Tavenner (2010) "The Taíno people living [in Puerto Rico] at the time [...] were forced into slavery."^[48]
- i. Poole (2011) "[The Taíno] began to starve; many thousands fell prey to smallpox, measles and other European diseases for which they had no immunity [...]"^[49]
- j. **PBS** "[The Taíno] eventually succumbed to the Spanish soldiers and European diseases that followed Columbus's arrival in the New World in 1492."^[50]
- k. **Yale University** "[...] the high death rate among the Taíno due to enslavement and European diseases (smallpox, influenza, measles, and typhus) persisted."^[51]
- l. Cockcroft (2001; in Spanish) "[La Ley 53] fué llamada la 'pequeña ley Smith', debido a la semejanza con la Ley Smith de Estados Unidos [...]"^[80]
- m. However, as Robert William Anderson states on page 14 of his book "Party Politics in Puerto Rico" (Stanford,

California: Stanford University Press. 1965.), *No one disputes the ambiguous status of the current Commonwealth. It is illustrated in the very different images conjured up by the English term "commonwealth" and the Spanish version, Estado Libre Asociado (literally, free associated state). The issue seems to be whether this ambiguity is a purposeful virtue or a disguised colonial vice.*

- n. pr.gov (in Spanish) "La manufactura es el sector principal de la economía de Puerto Rico."^[214]
- o. pr.gov (in Spanish) "Algunas de las industrias más destacadas dentro del sector de la manufactura son: las farmacéuticas, los textiles, los petroquímicos, las computadoras, la electrónica y las compañías dedicadas a la manufactura de instrumentos médicos y científicos, entre otros."^[214]
- p. Torrech San Inocencio (2011; in Spanish) "Con los más de \$1,500 millones anuales que recibimos en asistencia federal para alimentos podríamos desarrollar una industria alimentaria autosuficiente en Puerto Rico."^[217]
- q. Millán Rodríguez (2013; in Spanish) "Los representantes del Pueblo en la Junta de Gobierno de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica [...] denunciaron ayer que la propuesta del Gobernador para hacer cambios en la composición del organismo institucionaliza la intervención político partidista en la corporación pública y la convierte en una agencia del Ejecutivo."^[218]
- r. Vera Rosa (2013; in Spanish) "Aunque Puerto Rico mueve entre el sector público y privado \$15 billones en el área de salud, las deficiencias en el sistema todavía no alcanzan un nivel de eficiencia óptimo."^[219]
- s. Vera Rosado (2013; in Spanish) "Para mejorar la calidad de servicio, que se impacta principalmente por deficiencias administrativas y no por falta de dinero[...]"^[219]
- t. González (2012; in Spanish) "[...] al analizarse la deuda pública de la Isla contra el Producto Interno Bruto (PIB), se ubicaría en una relación deuda/PIB de 68% aproximadamente."^[220]
- u. Bauzá (2013; in Spanish) "La realidad de nuestra situación económica y fiscal es resultado de años de falta de acción. Al Gobierno le faltó creatividad, innovación y rapidez en la creación de un nuevo modelo económico que sustentara nuestra economía. Tras la eliminación de la Sección 936, debimos ser proactivos, y no lo fuimos."^[221]
- v. Quintero (2013; in Spanish) "Los indicadores de una economía débil son muchos, y la economía en Puerto Rico está sumamente debilitada, según lo evidencian la tasa de desempleo (13.5%), los altos niveles de pobreza (41.7%), los altos niveles de quiebra y la pérdida poblacional."^[222]
- w. Walsh (2013) "In each of the last six years, Puerto Rico sold hundreds of millions of dollars of new bonds just to meet payments on its older, outstanding bonds – a red flag. It also sold \$2.5 billion worth of bonds to raise cash for its troubled pension system – a risky practice – and it sold still more long-term bonds to cover its yearly budget deficits."^[236]
- x. PRGDB "Financial Information and Operating Data Report to October 18, 2013" p. 142^[238]
- y. MRGI (2008) "Many female migrants leave their families behind due to the risk of illegal travel and the high cost of living in Puerto Rico."^[244]
- z. Rivera. "Housing prices in Puerto Rico are comparable to Miami or Los Angeles, but property taxes are considerably lower than most places in the US."^[253]
- aa. FRBNY (2011) "...home values vary considerably across municipios: for the metro area overall, the median value of owner-occupied homes was estimated at \$126,000 (based on data for 2007–09), but these medians ranged from \$214,000 in Guaynabo to around \$100,000 in some of the outlying municipios. The median value in the San Juan municipio was estimated at \$170,000."^[255]
- ab. Santiago (2021) "Local detractors of the Jones Act [...] for many years have unsuccessfully tried to have Puerto Rico excluded from the law's provisions[...]"^[257]
- ac. JOC (2013) "Repealing or amending the Jones Act cabotage law might cut Puerto Rico shipping costs"^[260]
- ad. JOC (2013) "The GAO report said its interviews with shippers indicated they [...] believed that opening the trade to non-U.S.-flag competition could lower costs."^[260]

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- 3.1 Pacific lowlands
 - 3.2 North central highlands
 - 3.3 Caribbean lowlands
- 4 Nature and environment
 - 4.1 Flora and fauna
 - 4.2 Climate change
- 5 Government
 - 5.1 Foreign relations
 - 5.2 Military
 - 5.3 Law enforcement
 - 5.4 Administrative divisions
- 6 Economy
 - 6.1 Tourism
- 7 Demographics
 - 7.1 Ethnic groups
 - 7.2 Languages
 - 7.3 Largest cities
 - 7.4 Religion
 - 7.5 Immigration
 - 7.6 Diaspora
 - 7.7 Healthcare
 - 7.8 Education
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Music
 - 8.2 Dance
 - 8.3 Literature
 - 8.4 Cuisine
 - 8.5 Media
 - 8.6 Sports
- 9 See also
- 10 References
- 11 Notes
- 12 External links

Etymology

There are two prevailing theories on how the name "Nicaragua" came about. The first is that the name was coined by Spanish colonists based on the name Nicarao,^[11] who was the chieftain or cacique of a powerful indigenous tribe encountered by the Spanish conquistador Gil González Dávila during his entry into southwestern Nicaragua in 1522. This theory holds that the name Nicaragua was formed as a portmanteau of Nicarao

(2011 ^[2])	17% White 9% Black 5% Indigenous
Demonym	Nicaraguan
Government	Unitary presidential constitutional republic
<ul style="list-style-type: none">President Vice President	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Daniel Ortega (FSLN) Rosario Murillo
Legislature	National Assembly
Independence from Spain, Mexico and the Federal Republic of Central America	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Declared Recognized from the First Mexican Empire from the Federal Republic of Central America Revolution Current constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">15 September 1821 25 July 1850 1 July 1823 31 May 1838 19 July 1979 9 January 1987^[3]
Area	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total Water (%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">130,375 km² (50,338 sq mi) (96th) 7.14
Population	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">2012 census Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none">6,167,237^[4] 51/km² (132.1/sq mi) (155th)
GDP (PPP)	2017 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total Per capita	<ul style="list-style-type: none">\$35.835 billion^[5] \$5,755^[5]
GDP (nominal)	2017 estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total Per capita	<ul style="list-style-type: none">\$13.748 billion^[5] \$2,207^[5]
Gini (2009)	45.7 ^[6] medium
HDI (2015)	▲ 0.645 ^[7] medium · 125th
Currency	Córdoba (NIO)
Time zone	CST (UTC−6)

and the word *agua* which means "water" in Spanish, to reference the fact that there are two large lakes and several other bodies of water within the country.^[12] However, as of 2002, it was determined that the cacique's real name was Macuilmiquiztli, which meant "Five Deaths" in the Nahuatl language, rather than Nicarao.^{[13][14][15][16]}

Drives on the	right
Calling code	+505
ISO 3166 code	NI
Internet TLD	.ni

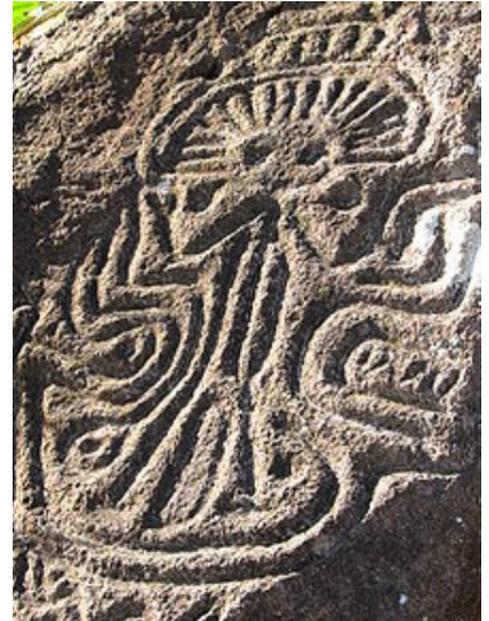
The second theory is that the country's name comes from any of the following Nahuatl words: *nic-anahuac*, which meant "Anahuac reached this far", or "the Nahuas came this far", or "those who come from Anahuac came this far"; *nican-nahua*, which meant "here are the Nahuas"; or *nic-atl-nahuac*, which meant "here by the water" or "surrounded by water".^{[11][12][17][18]}

History

Pre-Columbian history

Paleo-Americans first inhabited what is now known as Nicaragua as far back as 12,000 BCE.^[19] In later pre-Columbian times, Nicaragua's indigenous people were part of the Intermediate Area,^{[20]:33} between the Mesoamerican and Andean cultural regions, and within the influence of the Isthmo-Colombian area. Nicaragua's central region and its Caribbean coast were inhabited by Macro-Chibchan language ethnic groups.^{[20]:20} They had coalesced in Central America and migrated also to present-day northern Colombia and nearby areas.^[21] They lived a life based primarily on hunting and gathering, as well as fishing, and performing slash-and-burn agriculture.^{[20]:33[22][23]:65}

At the end of the 15th century, western Nicaragua was inhabited by several different indigenous peoples related by culture to the Mesoamerican civilizations of the Aztec and Maya, and by language to the Mesoamerican Linguistic Area.^[24] The Chorotegas were Mangué language ethnic groups who had arrived in Nicaragua from what is now the Mexican state of Chiapas sometime around 800 CE.^{[17][23]:26–33} The Pipil-Nicarao people were a branch of Nahuas who spoke the Nahuatl dialect, and like the Chorotegas, they too had come from Chiapas to Nicaragua in approximately 1200 CE. Prior to that, the Pipil-Nicaraos had been associated with the Toltec civilization.^{[23]:26–33[25][26][27]} Both the Chorotegas and the Pipil-Nicaraos were originally from Mexico's Cholula valley, and had gradually migrated southward.^{[23]:26–33} Additionally, there were trade-related colonies in Nicaragua that had been set up by the Aztecs starting in the 14th century.^{[23]:26–33}



An ancient petroglyph on Ometepe Island

Spanish era (1522–1821)

In 1502, on his fourth voyage, Christopher Columbus became the first European known to have reached what is now Nicaragua as he sailed southeast toward the Isthmus of Panama.^{[20]:193[23]:92} Columbus explored the Mosquito Coast on the Atlantic side of Nicaragua^[28] but did not encounter any indigenous people. 20 years later, the Spaniards returned to Nicaragua, this time to its southwestern part. The first attempt to conquer Nicaragua was by the conquistador Gil González Dávila,^[29] who had arrived in Panama in January 1520. In 1522, González Dávila ventured into the area that later became known as the Rivas Department of Nicaragua.^{[20]:35[23]:92} It was there that he encountered an indigenous Nahuatl tribe led by a chieftain named Macuilmiquiztli, whose name has sometimes been erroneously referred to as "Nicarao" or "Nicaragua". At the time, the tribe's capital city was called Quauhcapolca.^{[16][30][31]} González Dávila had brought along two indigenous interpreters who had been taught the Spanish language, and thus he was able to have a discourse with Macuilmiquiztli.^[15] After exploring and gathering gold^{[16][20]:35[23]:55} in the fertile western valleys, González Dávila and his men were attacked and driven off by Chorotega natives led by the chieftain Diriangen.^{[16][32]} The Spanish attempted to convert the tribes to Christianity; the people in Macuilmiquiztli's tribe were baptized,^{[16][23]:86} but Diriangen, however, was openly hostile to the Spaniards.



The Colonial City of Granada near Lake Nicaragua is one of the most visited sites in Central America.

The first Spanish permanent settlements were founded in 1524.^[29] That year, the conquistador Francisco Hernández de Córdoba founded two of Nicaragua's principal cities: Granada on Lake Nicaragua was the first settlement, followed by León at a location west of Lake Managua.^{[20]:35, 193[23]:92} Córdoba soon built defenses for the cities and fought against incursions by other conquistadors.^{[23]:92} Córdoba was later publicly beheaded as a consequence for having defied the authority of his superior, Pedro Arias Dávila.^{[20]:35} Córdoba's tomb and remains were discovered in 2000 in the ruins of León Viejo.^[33]

The clashes among Spanish forces did not impede their destruction of the indigenous people and their culture. The series of battles came to be known as the "War of the Captains".^[34] Pedro Arias Dávila was a winner;^{[20]:35} although he had lost control of Panama, he moved to Nicaragua and successfully established his base in León.^[35] In 1527, León became the capital of the colony.^{[23]:93[35]} Through adroit diplomatic machinations, Arias Dávila became the colony's first governor.^[33]

Without women in their parties,^{[23]:123} the Spanish conquerors took Nahuatl and Chorotega wives and partners, beginning the multiethnic mix of native and European stock now known as "*mestizo*", which constitutes the great majority of the population in western Nicaragua.^[24] Many indigenous people died as a result of new infectious diseases, compounded by neglect by the Spaniards, who controlled their subsistence.^[29] Furthermore, a large number of other natives were captured and transported to Panama and Peru between 1526 and 1540, where they were forced to perform slave labor.^{[20]:193[23]:104–105}

In 1610, the Momotombo volcano erupted, destroying the city of León.^[36] The city was rebuilt northwest of the original,^{[35][36]} which is now known as the ruins of León Viejo. During the American Revolutionary War, Central America was subject to conflict between Britain and Spain. British navy admiral Horatio Nelson led expeditions in the Battle of San Fernando de Omoa in 1779 and on the San Juan River in 1780, the latter of which had temporary success before being abandoned due to disease.

Independence (1821)

The Captaincy General of Guatemala was dissolved in September 1821 with the Act of Independence of Central America, and Nicaragua soon became part of the First Mexican Empire. After the monarchy of the First Mexican Empire was overthrown in 1823, Nicaragua joined the newly formed United Provinces of Central America, which was later renamed as the Federal Republic of Central America. Nicaragua finally became an independent republic in 1838.^[37]

Rivalry between the Liberal elite of León and the Conservative elite of Granada characterized the early years of independence and often degenerated into civil war, particularly during the 1840s and 1850s. Managua was chosen as the nation's capital in 1852 to allay the rivalry between the two feuding cities.^{[38][39]} During the days of the California Gold Rush, Nicaragua provided a route for travelers from the eastern United States to journey to California by sea, via the use of the San Juan River and Lake Nicaragua.^{[20]:81} Invited by the Liberals in 1855 to join their struggle against the Conservatives, a United States adventurer and filibuster named William Walker set himself up as President of Nicaragua, after conducting a farcical election in 1856. Costa Rica, Honduras, and other Central American countries united to drive Walker out of Nicaragua in 1857,^{[40][41][42]} after which a period of three decades of Conservative rule ensued.

Great Britain, which had claimed the Mosquito Coast as a protectorate since 1655, delegated the area to Honduras in 1859 before transferring it to Nicaragua in 1860. The Mosquito Coast remained an autonomous area until 1894. José Santos Zelaya, President of Nicaragua from 1893 to 1909, negotiated the annexation of the Mosquito Coast to the rest of Nicaragua. In his honor, the region was named "Zelaya Department".

Throughout the late 19th century, the United States and several European powers considered a scheme to build a canal across Nicaragua, linking the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic.^[43]

United States intervention (1909–33)

In 1909, the United States provided political support to Conservative-led forces rebelling against President Zelaya. On November 18, 1909, U.S. warships were sent to the area after 500 revolutionaries (including two Americans) were executed by order of Zelaya. Zelaya resigned later that year.



Political Evolution of Central America and the Caribbean
Federal Republic of Central America in 1830

In August 1912, the President of Nicaragua, Adolfo Díaz, requested the secretary of war, General Luis Mena, to resign for fear he was leading an insurrection. Mena fled Managua with his brother, the chief of police of Managua, to start an insurrection. When the U.S. legation asked President Díaz to ensure the safety of American citizens and property during the insurrection, he replied he could not, and asked the United States to intervene in the conflict.^[44]

United States Marines occupied Nicaragua from 1912 to 1933,^{[20]:111, 197[45]} except for a nine-month period beginning in 1925. In 1914, the Bryan–Chamorro Treaty was signed, giving the U.S. control over a proposed canal through Nicaragua, as well as leases for potential canal defenses.^[46] Following the evacuation of U.S. Marines, another violent conflict between Liberals and Conservatives took place in 1926, which resulted in the return of U.S. Marines.^[47]



Rebel leader Augusto César Sandino
(center)

From 1927 until 1933, rebel general Augusto César Sandino led a sustained guerrilla war first against the Conservative regime and subsequently against the U.S. Marines, whom he fought for over five years.^[48] When the Americans left in 1933, they set up the *Guardia Nacional* (national guard),^[49] a combined military and police force trained and equipped by the Americans and designed to be loyal to U.S. interests.

After the U.S. Marines withdrew from Nicaragua in January 1933, Sandino and the newly elected administration of President Juan Bautista Sacasa reached an agreement by which Sandino would cease his guerrilla activities in return for amnesty, a grant of land for an agricultural colony, and retention of an armed band of 100 men for a year.^[50] However, due to a growing hostility between Sandino and National Guard director Anastasio Somoza García and a fear of armed opposition from Sandino, Somoza García decided to order his assassination.^{[49][51][52]} Sandino was invited by Sacasa to have dinner and sign a peace treaty at the Presidential House in Managua on the night of February 21, 1934. After leaving the Presidential House, Sandino's car was stopped by soldiers of the National Guard and they kidnapped him. Later that night, Sandino was assassinated by soldiers of the National Guard. Hundreds of men, women, and children from Sandino's agricultural colony were executed later.^[53]

Somoza dynasty (1927–1979)

Nicaragua has experienced several military dictatorships, the longest being the hereditary dictatorship of the Somoza family, who ruled for 43 nonconsecutive years during the 20th century.^[54] The Somoza family came to power as part of a U.S.-engineered pact in 1927 that stipulated the formation of the *Guardia Nacional* to replace the marines who had long reigned in the country.^[55] Somoza García slowly eliminated officers in the national guard who might have stood in his way, and then deposed Sacasa and became president on January 1, 1937, in a rigged election.^[49]

Nicaragua declared war on Germany on December 8, 1941, during World War II.^[56] No soldiers were sent to the war, but Somoza García did seize the occasion to confiscate properties held by German Nicaraguan residents.^[57] In 1945, Nicaragua was among the first countries to ratify the United Nations Charter.^[58]

On September 21, 1956, Somoza García was shot to death by Rigoberto López Pérez, a 27-year-old Liberal Nicaraguan poet. Luis Somoza Debayle, the eldest son of the late president, was appointed president by the congress and officially took charge of the country.^[49] He is remembered by some for being moderate, but was in power only for a few years and then died of a heart attack. His successor as president was René Schick Gutiérrez, whom most Nicaraguans viewed "as nothing more than a puppet of the Somozas".^[59] Somoza



Anastasio Somoza Debayle (center) with Richard Nixon, 1971

García's youngest son, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, often referred to simply as "Somoza", became president in 1967.

An earthquake in 1972 destroyed nearly 90% of Managua, creating major losses.^[60] Instead of helping to rebuild Managua, Somoza siphoned off relief money. The

mishandling of relief money also prompted Pittsburgh Pirates star Roberto Clemente to personally fly to Managua on December 31, 1972, but he died *en route* in an airplane accident.^[61] Even the economic elite were reluctant to support Somoza, as he had acquired monopolies in industries that were key to rebuilding the nation.^[62]

The Somoza family was among a few families or groups of influential firms which reaped most of the benefits of the country's growth from the 1950s to the 1970s. When Somoza was deposed by the Sandinistas in 1979, the family's worth was estimated to be between \$500 million and \$1.5 billion.^[63]

Nicaraguan Revolution (1960s–1990)

In 1961, Carlos Fonseca looked back to the historical figure of Sandino, and along with two other people (one of whom was believed to be Casimiro Sotelo, who was later assassinated), founded the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN).^[49] After the 1972 earthquake and Somoza's apparent corruption, the ranks of the Sandinistas were flooded with young disaffected Nicaraguans who no longer had anything to lose.^[64]

In December 1974, a group of the FSLN, in an attempt to kidnap U.S. ambassador Turner Shelton, held some Managuan partygoers hostage (after killing the host, former agriculture minister, Jose Maria Castillo), until the Somozan government met their demands for a large ransom and free transport to Cuba. Somoza granted this, then subsequently sent his national guard out into the countryside to look for the perpetrators of the kidnapping, described by opponents of the kidnapping as "terrorists".^[65]



President Anastasio Somoza García (left), with Dominican President Rafael Trujillo, 1952

On January 10, 1978, Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, the editor of the national newspaper *La Prensa* and ardent opponent of Somoza, was assassinated.^[66] It is alleged that the planners and perpetrators of the murder were at the highest echelons of the Somoza regime.^[66]

The Sandinistas forcefully took power in July 1979, ousting Somoza, and prompting the exodus of the majority of Nicaragua's middle class, wealthy landowners, and professionals, many of whom settled in the United States.^{[67][68][69]} The Carter administration decided to work with the new government, while attaching a provision for aid forfeiture if it was found to be assisting insurgencies in neighboring countries.^[70] Somoza fled the country and eventually ended up in Paraguay, where he was assassinated in September 1980, allegedly by members of the Argentinian Revolutionary Workers' Party.^[71]

In 1980, the Carter administration provided \$60 million in aid to Nicaragua under the Sandinistas, but the aid was suspended when the administration obtained evidence of Nicaraguan shipment of arms to El Salvadoran rebels.^[72] In response to the coming to power of the Sandinistas, various rebel groups collectively known as the "contras" were formed to oppose the new government. The Reagan administration authorized the CIA to help the contra rebels with funding, armaments, and training.^[73] The contras operated out of camps in the neighboring countries of Honduras to the north and Costa Rica to the south.^[73]

They engaged in a systematic campaign of terror amongst the rural Nicaraguan population to disrupt the social reform projects of the Sandinistas. Several historians have criticized the contra campaign and the Reagan administration's support for it, citing the brutality and numerous human rights violations of the contras. LaRamee and Polakoff, for example, describe the destruction of health centers, schools, and cooperatives at the hands of the rebels,^[74] and others have contended that murder, rape, and torture occurred on a large scale in contra-dominated areas.^[75] The United States also carried out a campaign of economic sabotage, and disrupted shipping by planting underwater mines in Nicaragua's port of Corinto,^[76] an action condemned by the International Court of Justice as illegal.^[77] The U.S. also sought to place economic pressure on the Sandinistas, and the Reagan administration imposed a full trade embargo.^[78] The Sandinistas were also accused of human rights abuses.^{[79][80]}

In the Nicaraguan general elections of 1984, which were judged to have been free and fair, the Sandinistas won the parliamentary election and their leader Daniel Ortega won the presidential election.^{[81][82]} The Reagan administration criticized the elections as a "sham" based on the charge that Arturo Cruz, the candidate nominated by the Coordinadora Democrática Nicaragüense, comprising three right wing political parties, did



United States–supported anti-Sandinista "Contra" rebels (ARDE Frente Sur) in 1987.



10th anniversary of the Nicaraguan revolution in Managua, 1989

not participate in the elections. However, the administration privately argued against Cruz's participation for fear his involvement would legitimize the elections, and thus weaken the case for American aid to the contras.^[83] According to Martin Kriele, the results of the election were rigged.^{[84][85][86]}

After the U.S. Congress prohibited federal funding of the contras in 1983, the Reagan administration nonetheless illegally continued to back them by covertly selling arms to Iran and channeling the proceeds to the contras (the Iran–Contra affair), for which several members of the Reagan administration were convicted of felonies.^[87] The International Court of Justice, in regard to the case of *Nicaragua v. United States* in 1984, found, "the United States of America was under an obligation to make reparation to the Republic of Nicaragua for all injury caused to Nicaragua by certain breaches of obligations under customary international law and treaty-law committed by the United States of America".^[88] During the war between the contras and the Sandinistas, 30,000 people were killed.^[89]

Post-war (1990–present)



Violeta Chamorro in 1990 became the first woman president democratically elected in the Americas.

In the Nicaraguan general election, 1990, a coalition of anti-Sandinista parties (from the left and right of the political spectrum) led by Violeta Chamorro, the widow of Pedro Joaquín Chamorro Cardenal, defeated the Sandinistas. The defeat shocked the Sandinistas, who had expected to win.^[90] Commentators such as Noam Chomsky and Brian Willson attributed the outcome to the U.S.-Contra threats to continue the war if the Sandinistas retained power, the general war-weariness of the Nicaraguan population, and the abysmal Nicaraguan economic situation.^[91]

Exit polls of Nicaraguans reported Chamorro's victory over Ortega was achieved with a 55% majority.^[92] Chamorro was the first woman president of Nicaragua. Ortega vowed he would govern *desde abajo* (from below).^[93] Chamorro came to office with an economy in ruins, primarily because of the financial and social costs of the contra war with the Sandinista-led government.^[94] In the next election, the Nicaraguan general election, 1996, Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas of the FSLN were defeated again, this time by Arnoldo Alemán of the Constitutional Liberal Party (PLC).

In the 2001 elections, the PLC again defeated the FSLN, with Alemán's Vice President Enrique Bolaños succeeding him as President. Subsequently, however, Alemán was convicted and sentenced in 2003 to 20 years in prison for embezzlement, money laundering, and corruption;^[95] liberal and Sandinista parliament members subsequently combined to strip the presidential powers of President Bolaños and his ministers, calling for his resignation and threatening impeachment. The Sandinistas said they no longer supported Bolaños after U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell told Bolaños to keep his distance from the FSLN.^[96] This "slow motion *coup d'état*" was averted partially by pressure from the Central American presidents, who vowed not to recognize any movement that removed Bolaños; the U.S., the OAS, and the European Union also opposed the action.^[97]

Before the general elections on November 5, 2006, the National Assembly passed a bill further restricting abortion in Nicaragua.^[98] As a result, Nicaragua is one of five countries in the world where abortion is illegal with no exceptions.^[99] Legislative and presidential elections took place on November 5, 2006. Ortega returned to the presidency with 37.99% of the vote. This percentage was enough to win the presidency outright, because of a change in electoral law which lowered the percentage requiring a runoff election from 45% to 35% (with a 5% margin of victory).^[100] Nicaragua's 2011 general election resulted in re-election of Ortega, with a landslide victory and 62.46% of the vote. In 2014 the National Assembly approved changes to the constitution allowing Ortega to run for a third successive term.^[101]



Flooding in Lake Managua after the Hurricane Mitch in 1998

In November 2016, Ortega was elected for his third consecutive term (his fourth overall). International monitoring of the elections were not prohibited, and as a result the validity of the elections is disputed. Ortega was reported by Nicaraguan election officials as having received 72% of the vote. However the Broad Front for Democracy (FAD), having promoted boycotts of the elections, claimed that 70% of voters had abstained (while election officials claimed 65.8% participation)^[102]. Despite growing fears of autocracy and the increasing governmental powers of Ortega's wife Rosario Murillo (m.1979)^[103] as his vice president, Ortega is still popular among many Nicaraguans. This is largely due to the fact that under his presidency, gang violence has diminished, poverty levels have fallen, and Nicaraguan economic growth has surpassed other Latin American countries.^[104]

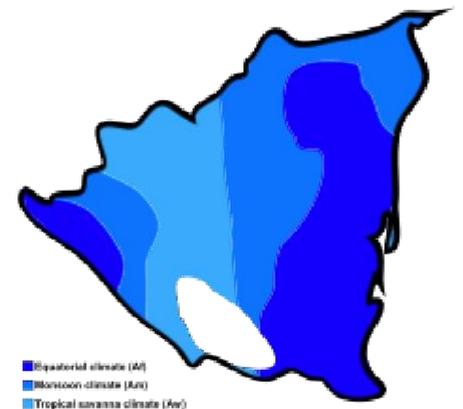
Geography and climate

Nicaragua occupies a landmass of 130,967 km² (50,567 sq mi). Nicaragua has three distinct geographical regions: the Pacific lowlands – fertile valleys which the Spanish colonists settled, the Amerrisque Mountains (North-central highlands), and the Mosquito Coast (Atlantic lowlands/Caribbean lowlands).

The low plains of the Atlantic Coast are 97 km (60 mi) wide in areas. They have long been exploited for their natural resources.

On the Pacific side of Nicaragua are the two largest fresh water lakes in Central America—Lake Managua and Lake Nicaragua. Surrounding these lakes and extending to their northwest along the rift valley of the Gulf of Fonseca are fertile lowland plains, with soil highly enriched by ash from nearby volcanoes of the central highlands. Nicaragua's abundance of biologically significant and unique ecosystems contribute to Mesoamerica's designation as a biodiversity hotspot.

Nicaragua map of Köppen climate classification



Nicaragua map of Köppen climate classification.

Nearly one fifth of Nicaragua is designated as protected areas like national parks, nature reserves, and biological reserves. Geophysically, Nicaragua is surrounded by the Caribbean Plate, an oceanic tectonic plate underlying Central America and the Cocos Plate. Since Central America is a major subduction zone, Nicaragua hosts most of the Central American Volcanic Arc.

Pacific lowlands

In the west of the country, these lowlands consist of a broad, hot, fertile plain. Punctuating this plain are several large volcanoes of the Cordillera Los Maribios mountain range, including Mombacho just outside Granada, and Momotombo near León. The lowland area runs from the Gulf of Fonseca to Nicaragua's Pacific border with Costa Rica south of Lake Nicaragua. Lake Nicaragua is the largest freshwater lake in Central America (20th largest in the world),^[105] and is home to some of the world's rare freshwater sharks (Nicaraguan shark).^[106] The Pacific lowlands region is the most populous, with over half of the nation's population.

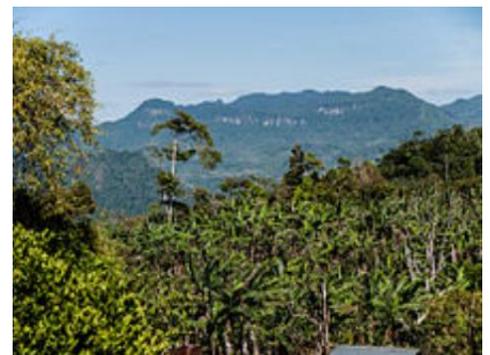
The eruptions of western Nicaragua's 40 volcanoes, many of which are still active, have sometimes devastated settlements but also have enriched the land with layers of fertile ash. The geologic activity that produces vulcanism also breeds powerful earthquakes. Tremors occur regularly throughout the Pacific zone, and earthquakes have nearly destroyed the capital city, Managua, more than once.^[107]

Most of the Pacific zone is *tierra caliente*, the "hot land" of tropical Spanish America at elevations under 610 metres (2,000 ft). Temperatures remain virtually constant throughout the year, with highs ranging between 29.4 and 32.2 °C (85 and 90 °F). After a dry season lasting from November to April, rains begin in May and continue to October, giving the Pacific lowlands 1,016 to 1,524 millimetres (40 to 60 in) of precipitation. Good soils and a favourable climate combine to make western Nicaragua the country's economic and demographic centre. The southwestern shore of Lake Nicaragua lies within 24 kilometres (15 mi) of the Pacific Ocean. Thus the lake and the San Juan River were often proposed in the 19th century as the longest part of a canal route across the Central American isthmus. Canal proposals were periodically revived in the 20th and 21st centuries.^{[107][108]} Roughly a century after the opening of the Panama Canal, the prospect of a Nicaraguan ecocanal remains a topic of interest.^{[109][110][111][112]}

In addition to its beach and resort communities, the Pacific lowlands contains most of Nicaragua's Spanish colonial architecture and artifacts. Cities such as León and Granada abound in colonial architecture; founded in 1524, Granada is the oldest colonial city in the Americas.^[113]



Nicaragua is known as the land of lakes and volcanoes; pictured is Concepción volcano, as seen from Maderas volcano.



Peñas Blancas, part of the Bosawás Biosphere Reserve is the second largest rainforest in the Western Hemisphere, after the Amazonian Rainforest in Brazil. Located northeast of the city of Jinotega in Northeastern Nicaragua.

North central highlands

Northern Nicaragua is the most diversified region producing coffee, cattle, milk products, vegetables, wood, gold, and flowers. Its extensive forests, rivers and geography are suited for ecotourism.

The central highlands are a significantly less populated and economically developed area in the north, between Lake Nicaragua and the Caribbean. Forming the country's tierra templada, or "temperate land", at elevations between 610 and 1,524 metres (2,000 and 5,000 ft), the highlands enjoy mild temperatures with daily highs of 23.9 to 26.7 °C (75 to 80 °F). This region has a longer, wetter rainy season than the Pacific lowlands, making erosion a problem on its steep slopes. Rugged terrain, poor soils, and low population density characterize the area as a whole, but the northwestern valleys are fertile and well settled.^[107]

The area has a cooler climate than the Pacific lowlands. About a quarter of the country's agriculture takes place in this region, with coffee grown on the higher slopes. Oaks, pines, moss, ferns and orchids are abundant in the cloud forests of the region.

Bird life in the forests of the central region includes resplendent quetzals, goldfinches, hummingbirds, jays and toucanets.

Caribbean lowlands

This large rainforest region is irrigated by several large rivers and is sparsely populated. The area has 57% of the territory of the nation and most of its mineral resources. It has been heavily exploited, but much natural diversity remains. The Rio Coco is the largest river in Central America; it forms the border with Honduras. The Caribbean coastline is much more sinuous than its generally straight Pacific counterpart; lagoons and deltas make it very irregular.

Nicaragua's Bosawás Biosphere Reserve is in the Atlantic lowlands, part of which is located in the municipality of Siuna; it protects 7,300 square kilometres (1,800,000 acres) of La Mosquitia forest – almost 7% of the country's area – making it the largest rainforest north of the Amazon in Brazil.^[114]

The municipalities of Siuna, Rosita, and Bonanza, known as the "Mining Triangle", are located in the region known as the RAAN, in the Caribbean lowlands. Bonanza still contains an active gold mine owned by HEMCO. Siuna and Rosita do not have active mines but panning for gold is still very common in the region.

Nicaragua's tropical east coast is very different from the rest of the country. The climate is predominantly tropical, with high temperature and high humidity. Around the area's principal city of Bluefields, English is widely spoken along with the official Spanish. The population more closely resembles that found in many typical Caribbean ports than the rest of Nicaragua.^[115]



The Somoto Canyon National Monument is located in Somoto in the Madriz Department in Northern Nicaragua.

A great variety of birds can be observed including eagles, turkeys, toucans, parakeets and macaws. Animal life in the area includes different species of monkeys, anteaters, white-tailed deer and tapirs.

Nature and environment

Flora and fauna

Nicaragua is home to a rich variety of plants and animals. Nicaragua is located in the middle of the Americas and this privileged location has enabled the country to serve as host to a great biodiversity. This factor, along with the weather and light altitudinal variations, allows the country to harbor 248 species of amphibians and reptiles, 183 species of mammals, 705 bird species, 640 fish species, and about 5,796 species of plants.



Guardabarranco ("ravine-guard") is Nicaragua's national bird.

The region of great forests is located on the eastern side of the country. Rainforests are found in the Río San Juan Department and in the autonomous regions of RAAN and RAAS. This biome groups together the greatest biodiversity in the country and is largely protected by the Indio Maiz Biological Reserve in the south and the Bosawás Biosphere Reserve in the north. The Nicaraguan jungles, which represent about 2.4 million acres, are considered the lungs of Central America and comprise the second largest-sized rainforest of the Americas.^{[116][117]}

There are currently 78 protected areas in Nicaragua, covering more than 22,000 square kilometres (8,500 sq mi), or about 17% of its landmass. These include wildlife refuges and nature reserves that shelter a wide range of ecosystems. There are more than 1,400 animal species classified thus far in Nicaragua. Some 12,000 species of plants have been classified thus far in Nicaragua, with an estimated 5,000 species not yet classified.^[118]

The bull shark is a species of shark that can survive for an extended period of time in fresh water. It can be found in Lake Nicaragua and the San Juan River, where it is often referred to as the "Nicaragua shark".^[119] Nicaragua has recently banned freshwater fishing of the Nicaragua shark and the sawfish in response to the declining populations of these animals.^[120]

Climate change

Nicaragua was one of the few countries that didn't enter an INDC at COP21.^{[121][122]}

Government

Politics of Nicaragua takes place in a framework of a presidential representative democratic republic, whereby the President of Nicaragua is both head of state and head of government, and of a multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the national

assembly. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

Between 2007 and 2009, Nicaragua's major political parties discussed the possibility of going from a presidential system to a parliamentary system. Their reason: there would be a clear differentiation between the head of government (prime minister) and the head of state (president). Nevertheless, it was later argued that the true reason behind this proposal was to find a legal way for President Ortega to stay in power after January 2012, when his second and last government period was expected to end. Ortega was reelected to a third term in November 2016.

Foreign relations

Nicaragua pursues an independent foreign policy. Nicaragua is in territorial disputes with Colombia over the Archipelago de San Andres y Providencia and Quita Sueno Bank and with Costa Rica over a boundary dispute involving the San Juan River.

Military

The armed forces of Nicaragua consists of various military contingencies. Nicaragua has an army, navy and an air force. There are roughly 14,000 active duty personnel, which is much less compared to the numbers seen during the Nicaraguan Revolution. Although the army has had a rough military history, a portion of its forces, which were known as the national guard, became integrated with what is now the National Police of Nicaragua. In essence, the police became a *gendarmerie*. The National Police of Nicaragua are rarely, if ever, labeled as a *gendarmerie*. The other elements and manpower that were not devoted to the national police were sent over to cultivate the new Army of Nicaragua.

The age to serve in the armed forces is 17 and conscription is not imminent. As of 2006, the military budget was roughly 0.7% of Nicaragua's expenditures.

Law enforcement

The National Police of Nicaragua Force (in Spanish: La Policía Nacional Nicaragüense) is the national police of Nicaragua. The force is in charge of regular police functions and, at times, works in conjunction with the Nicaraguan military, making it an indirect and rather subtle version of a *gendarmerie*. However, the Nicaraguan National Police work separately and have a different established set of norms than the nation's military.

Nicaragua is the safest country in Central America and one of the safest in Latin America, according to the United Nations Development Program, with a homicide rate of 8.7 per 100,000 inhabitants.^[123]



Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega with then Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Moscow, Russia.



AN-26 and Mi-17 are used by the Nicaraguan Air Force.

Administrative divisions

Nicaragua is a unitary republic. For administrative purposes it is divided into 15 departments (*departamentos*) and two self-governing regions (autonomous communities) based on the Spanish model. The departments are then subdivided into 153 municipios (municipalities). The two autonomous regions are the North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region and South Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region, often referred to as RACCN and RACCS, respectively.^[124]

	Department	Capital city		Department	Capital city
1	 Boaco	Boaco	10	 Managua	Managua
2	 Carazo	Jinotepe	11	 Masaya	Masaya
3	 Chinandega	Chinandega	12	 Matagalpa	Matagalpa
4	 Chontales	Juigalpa	13	 Nueva Segovia	Ocotal
5	 Estelí	Estelí	14	 Rivas	Rivas
6	 Granada	Granada	15	 Río San Juan	San Carlos
7	 Jinotega	Jinotega	16	 North Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region	Bilwi
8	 León	León	17	 South Caribbean Coast Autonomous Region	Bluefields
9	 Madriz	Somoto			

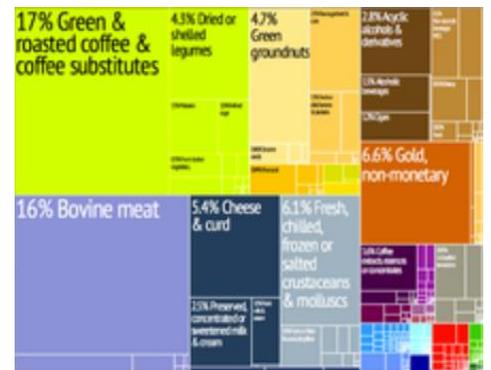


National Police of Nicaragua.

Economy

Nicaragua is among the poorest countries in the Americas.^{[125][126][127]} Its gross domestic product (GDP) in purchasing power parity (PPP) in 2008 was estimated at \$17.37 billion USD.^[3] Agriculture represents 17% of GDP, the highest percentage in Central America.^[128] Remittances account for over 15% of the Nicaraguan GDP. Close to one billion dollars are sent to the country by Nicaraguans living abroad.^[129] The economy grew at a rate of about 4% in 2011.^[3]

According to the United Nations Development Programme, 48% of the population of Nicaragua live below the poverty line,^[130] 79.9% of the population live with less than \$2 per day,^[131] According to UN figures,



A proportional representation of Nicaragua's exports.

80% of the indigenous people (who make up 5% of the population) live on less than \$1 per day.^[132]

According to the World Bank, Nicaragua ranked as the 123rd best economy for starting a business.^[133] Nicaragua's economy is "62.7% free" with high levels of fiscal, government, labor, investment, financial, and trade freedom.^[134] It ranks as the 61st freest economy, and 14th (of 29) in the Americas.

In March 2007, Poland and Nicaragua signed an agreement to write off 30.6 million dollars which was borrowed by the Nicaraguan government in the 1980s.^[135] Inflation reduced from 33,500% in 1988 to 9.45% in 2006, and the foreign debt was cut in half.^[136]



Coffee is one of the most important exports of Nicaragua. It is grown in Jinotega, Esteli, Nueva Segovia, Matagalpa and Madriz, and exported worldwide through North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia and Australia. Many coffee companies, like Nestlé and Starbucks, buy Nicaraguan coffee.

Nicaragua is primarily an agricultural country; agriculture constitutes 60% of its total exports which annually yield approximately US \$300 million.^[137] Nearly two-thirds of the coffee crop comes from the northern part of the central highlands, in the area north and east of the town of Estelí.^[107] Soil erosion and pollution from the heavy use of pesticides have become serious concerns in the cotton district. Yields and exports have both been declining since 1985.^[107] Today most of Nicaragua's bananas are grown in the northwestern part of the country near the port of Corinto; sugarcane is also grown in the same district.^[107] Cassava, a root crop somewhat similar to the potato, is an important food in tropical regions. Cassava is also the main ingredient in tapioca pudding.^[107] Nicaragua's agricultural sector has benefited because of the country's strong ties to Venezuela. It is estimated that Venezuela will import approximately \$200 million in agricultural goods.^[138] In the 1990s, the government initiated efforts to diversify agriculture. Some of the new export-oriented crops were peanuts, sesame, melons, and onions.^[107]

Fishing boats on the Caribbean side bring shrimp as well as lobsters into processing plants at Puerto Cabezas, Bluefields, and Laguna de Perlas.^[107] A turtle fishery thrived on the Caribbean coast before it collapsed from overexploitation.^[107]

Mining is becoming a major industry in Nicaragua,^[139] contributing less than 1% of gross domestic product (GDP). Restrictions are being placed on lumbering due to increased environmental concerns about destruction of the rain forests. But lumbering continues despite these obstacles; indeed, a single hardwood tree may be worth thousands of dollars.^[107]

During the war between the US-backed Contras and the government of the Sandinistas in the 1980s, much of the country's infrastructure was damaged or destroyed.^[140] Transportation throughout the nation is often inadequate. For example, one cannot travel all the way by highway from Managua to the Caribbean coast. The road ends at the town of El Rama. Travelers have to transfer and make the rest of the trip by riverboat down the Río Escondido—a five-hour journey.^[107] The Centroamérica power plant on the Tuma River in the Central

highlands has been expanded, and other hydroelectric projects have been undertaken to help provide electricity to the nation's newer industries.^[107] Nicaragua has long been considered as a possible site for a new sea-level canal that could supplement the Panama Canal.^[107]

Nicaragua's minimum wage is among the lowest in the Americas and in the world.^{[141][142][143][144]}

Remittances are equivalent to roughly 15% of the country's gross domestic product.^[3] Growth in the *maquila* sector slowed in the first decade of the 21st century with rising competition from Asian markets, particularly China.^[107] Land is the traditional basis of wealth in Nicaragua, with great fortunes coming from the export of staples such as coffee, cotton, beef, and sugar. Almost all of the upper class and nearly a quarter of the middle class are substantial landowners.

A 1985 government study classified 69.4 percent of the population as poor on the basis that they were unable to satisfy one or more of their basic needs in housing, sanitary services (water, sewage, and garbage collection), education, and employment. The defining standards for this study were very low; housing was considered substandard if it was constructed of discarded materials with dirt floors or if it was occupied by more than four persons per room.

Rural workers are dependent on agricultural wage labor, especially in coffee and cotton. Only a small fraction hold permanent jobs. Most are migrants who follow crops during the harvest period and find other work during the off-season. The "lower" peasants are typically smallholders without sufficient land to sustain a family; they also join the harvest labor force. The "upper" peasants have sufficient resources to be economically independent. They produce enough surplus, beyond their personal needs, to allow them to participate in the national and world markets.



The capital city Managua at night

The urban lower class is characterized by the informal sector of the economy. The informal sector consists of small-scale enterprises that utilize traditional technologies and operate outside the legal regime of labor protections and taxation. Workers in the informal sector are self-employed, unsalaried family workers or employees of small-enterprises, and they are generally poor.

Nicaragua's informal sector workers include tinsmiths, mattress makers, seamstresses, bakers, shoemakers, and carpenters; people who take in laundry and ironing or prepare food for sale in the streets; and thousands of peddlers, owners of small businesses (often operating out of their own homes), and market stall operators. Some work alone, but others labor in the small talleres (workshops/factories) that are responsible for a large share of the country's industrial production. Because informal sector earnings are generally very low, few families can subsist on one income.^[145] Like most Latin American nations Nicaragua is also characterized by a very small upper-class, roughly 2% of the population, that is very wealthy and wields the political and economic power in the country that is not in the hands of foreign corporations and private industries. These families are oligarchical in nature and have ruled Nicaragua for generations and their wealth is politically and economically horizontally and vertically integrated.

Nicaragua is currently a member of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas, which is also known as ALBA. ALBA has proposed creating a new currency, the Sucre, for use among its members. In essence, this means that the Nicaraguan córdoba will be replaced with the Sucre. Other nations that will follow a similar pattern include: Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, Honduras, Cuba, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Dominica and Antigua and Barbuda.^[146]

Nicaragua is considering construction of a canal linking the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, which President Daniel Ortega has said will give Nicaragua its "economic independence."^[147] The project is scheduled to begin construction in December 2014.^[148]

Tourism

By 2006, tourism had become the second largest industry in Nicaragua.^[149] Previously, tourism had grown about 70% nationwide during a period of 7 years, with rates of 10%–16% annually.^[150] The increase and growth led to the income from tourism to rise more than 300% over a period of 10 years.^[151] The growth in tourism has also positively affected the agricultural, commercial, and finance industries, as well as the construction industry. President Daniel Ortega has stated his intention to use tourism to combat poverty throughout the country.^[152] The results for Nicaragua's tourism-driven economy have been significant, with the nation welcoming one million tourists in a calendar year for the first time in its history in 2010.^[153]

Every year about 60,000 U.S. citizens visit Nicaragua, primarily business people, tourists, and those visiting relatives.^[154] Some 5,300 people from the U.S. reside in Nicaragua. The majority of tourists who visit Nicaragua are from the U.S., Central or South America, and Europe. According to the Ministry of Tourism of Nicaragua (INTUR),^[155] the colonial cities of León and Granada are the preferred spots for tourists. Also, the cities of Masaya, Rivas and the likes of San Juan del Sur, El Ostional, the Fortress of the Immaculate Conception, Ometepe Island, the Mombacho volcano, and the Corn Islands among other locations are the main tourist attractions. In addition, ecotourism, sport fishing and surfing attract many tourists to Nicaragua.

According to the *TV Noticias* news program, the main attractions in Nicaragua for tourists are the beaches, the scenic routes, the architecture of cities such as León and Granada, ecotourism, and agritourism particularly in northern Nicaragua.^[150] As a result of increased tourism, Nicaragua has seen its foreign direct investment increase by 79.1% from 2007 to 2009.^[156]



A Royal Caribbean Cruise ship docked near the beach at San Juan del Sur in Southern Nicaragua.



2,100-year-old human footprints called "Huellas de Acahualinca" preserved in volcanic mud near Lake Managua.

Nicaragua is referred to as *"the land of lakes and volcanoes"* due to the number of lagoons and lakes, and the chain of volcanoes that runs from the north to the south along the country's Pacific side. Today, only 7 of the 50 volcanoes in Nicaragua are considered active. Many of these volcanoes offer some great possibilities for tourists with activities such as hiking, climbing, camping, and swimming in crater lakes.



Apoyo Lagoon Natural Reserve is a nature reserve located between the departments of Masaya and Granada.

The Apoyo Lagoon Natural Reserve was created by the eruption of the Apoyo Volcano about 23,000 years ago, which left a huge 7 km-wide crater that gradually filled with water. It is surrounded by the old crater wall.^[157] The rim of the lagoon is lined with restaurants, many of which have kayaks available. Besides exploring the forest around it, many water sports are practiced in the lagoon, most notably kayaking.^[158]

Sand skiing has become a popular attraction at the Cerro Negro volcano in León. Both dormant and active volcanoes can be climbed. Some of the most visited volcanoes include the Masaya Volcano, Momotombo, Mombacho, Cosigüina and Ometepe's Maderas and Concepción.

Ecotourism aims to be ecologically and socially conscious; it focuses on local culture, wilderness, and adventure. Nicaragua's ecotourism is growing with every passing year.^[159] It boasts a number of ecotourist tours and perfect places for adventurers. Nicaragua has three eco-regions (the Pacific, Central, and Atlantic) which contain volcanoes, tropical rainforests, and agricultural land.^[160] The majority of the eco-lodges and other environmentally-focused touristic destinations are found on Ometepe Island,^[161] located in the middle of Lake Nicaragua just an hour's boat ride from Granada. While some are foreign-owned, such as the tropical permaculture lodge at Finca El Zopilote ([http://www.ometepezopilote.com/TheFarm.html](http://www.ometepozopilote.com/TheFarm.html)), others are owned by local families, like the small but well-acclaimed Finca Samaria (<http://www.fincasverdes.com/inf?tokem=20>).



The Solentiname Islands are tropical islands located in Lake Nicaragua which are home to 76 bird species and are a growing ecotourism destination.

Demographics

According to the CIA World Factbook, Nicaragua's 2016 population of 5,966,798 comprises 69% mestizo, 17% white, 5% Native American, and 9% black and other races.^[3] This fluctuates with changes in migration patterns. The population is 58% urban as of 2013.^[162]

The capital Managua is the biggest city, with an estimated population of 2.2 million in 2010, and more than 2.5 million living in the greater metropolitan area. In 2005, over 5 million people lived in the Pacific, Central and North regions, and 700,000 in the Caribbean region.^[163]

There is a growing expatriate community,^[164] the majority of whom move for business, investment or retirement from across the world, such as from the US, Canada, Taiwan, and European countries; the majority have settled in Managua, Granada and San Juan del Sur.

Many Nicaraguans live abroad, particularly in Costa Rica, the United States, Spain, Canada, and other Central American countries.^[165]

Nicaragua has a population growth rate of 1.5% as of 2013.^[166] This is the result of one of the highest birth rates in the Western Hemisphere: 24.9 per 1,000 according to the United Nations for the period 2005–2010. The death rate was 4.7 per 1,000 during the same period according to the United Nations.^[167]

Ethnic groups



An African-Nicaraguan.

The majority of the Nicaraguan population is composed of mestizos, roughly 69%. 17% of Nicaragua's population is of unmixed European stock, with the majority of them being of Spanish descent, while others are of German, Italian, English, Turkish, Danish or French ancestry.

About 9% of Nicaragua's population is black and mainly resides on the country's Caribbean (or Atlantic) coast. The black population is mostly composed of black English-speaking Creoles who are the descendants of escaped or shipwrecked slaves; many carry the name of Scottish settlers who brought slaves with them, such as Campbell, Gordon, Downs and Hodgeson. Although many Creoles supported Somoza because of his close association with the US, they rallied to the Sandinista cause in July 1979 only to reject the revolution soon afterwards in response to a new phase of 'westernization' and imposition of central rule from Managua.^[168] There is a smaller number of Garifuna, a people of mixed West African, Carib and Arawak descent. In the mid-1980s, the government divided the Zelaya Department – consisting of the eastern half of the country – into two autonomous regions and granted the black and indigenous people of this region limited self-rule within the republic.

The remaining 5% of Nicaraguans are Native Americans, the descendants of the country's indigenous inhabitants. Nicaragua's pre-Columbian population consisted of many indigenous groups. In the western region, the Nahua (Pipil-Nicarao) people were present along with other groups such as the Chorotega people and the Subtiabas (also known as Maribios or Hokan Xiu). The central region and the Caribbean coast of Nicaragua were inhabited by indigenous peoples who were Macro-Chibchan language groups that had migrated to and from South America in ancient times, primarily what is now Colombia and Venezuela. These groups include the



Nicaraguan women at a concert in Managua.



Nicaraguan High school students at the American Nicaraguan School.

present-day Matagalpas, Miskitos, Ramas, as well as Mayangnas and Ulwas who are also known as Sumos.^{[20]:20} In the 19th century, there was a substantial indigenous minority, but this group was largely assimilated culturally into the mestizo majority.

Languages

Nicaraguan Spanish has many indigenous influences and several distinguishing characteristics. For example, some Nicaraguans have a tendency to replace /s/ with /h/ when speaking.^[169] Although Spanish is spoken throughout, the country has great variety: vocabulary, accents and colloquial language can vary between towns and departments.^[170]

On the Caribbean coast, indigenous languages, English-based creoles, and Spanish are spoken. The Miskito language, spoken by the Miskito people as a first language and some other indigenous and Afro-descendants people as a second, third, or fourth language, is the most commonly spoken indigenous language. The indigenous Misumalpan languages of Mayangna and Ulwa are spoken by the respective peoples of the same names. Many Miskito, Mayangna, and Ulwa people also speak Miskito Coast Creole, and a large majority also speak Spanish.

Fewer than three dozen of nearly 2,000 Rama people speak their Chibchan language fluently, with nearly all Ramas speaking Rama Cay Creole and the vast majority speaking Spanish. Linguists have attempted to document and revitalize the language over the past three decades.^[171]

The Garifuna people, descendants of indigenous and Afro-descendant people who came to Nicaragua from Honduras in the early twentieth century, have recently attempted to revitalize their Arawakan language. The majority speak Miskito Coast Creole as their first language and Spanish as their second. The Creole or Kriol people, descendants of enslaved Africans brought to the Mosquito Coast during the British colonial period and European, Chinese, Arab, and British West Indian immigrants, also speak Miskito Coast Creole as their first language and Spanish as their second.^[172]

Largest cities

Religion

Religion plays a significant part of the culture of Nicaragua and is afforded special protections in the constitution. Religious freedom, which has been guaranteed since 1939, and religious tolerance are promoted by the government and the constitution.

Nicaragua has no official religion. Catholic bishops are expected to lend their authority to important state occasions, and their pronouncements on national issues are closely followed. They can be called upon to mediate between contending parties at moments of political crisis.^[173] In 1979, Miguel D'Escoto Brockman, a priest who had embraced Liberation Theology, served in the government as foreign minister when the



A sign in Bluefields in English (top), Spanish (middle) and Miskito (bottom)

Sandinistas came to power. The largest denomination, and traditionally the religion of the majority, is Roman Catholic. Roman Catholicism came to Nicaragua in the 16th century with the Spanish conquest and remained, until 1939, the established faith.

The numbers of practising Roman Catholics have been declining, while members of evangelical Protestant groups and Mormons have been rapidly growing since the 1990s. There are also strong Anglican and Moravian communities on the Caribbean coast in what constituted the sparsely populated Mosquito Coast colony, which came under British influence for nearly three centuries. British and German colonists brought Protestantism, respectively in forms of Anglicanism and the Moravian Church. Other kinds of Protestant and other Christian denominations were introduced to the rest of Nicaragua during the 19th century.

Popular religion revolves around the saints, who are perceived as intercessors (but not mediators) between human beings and God. Most localities, from the capital of Managua to small rural communities, honour patron saints, selected from the Roman Catholic calendar, with annual *fiestas*. In many communities, a rich lore has grown up around the celebrations of patron saints, such as Managua's Saint Dominic (Santo Domingo), honoured in August with two colourful, often riotous, day-long processions through the city. The high point of Nicaragua's religious calendar for the masses is neither Christmas nor Easter, but La Purísima, a week of festivities in early December dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, during which elaborate altars to the Virgin Mary are constructed in homes and workplaces.^[173]

There is a significant LDS missionary effort in Nicaragua, with two missions, and 95,768 Mormons (1.54% of the population).^[174]

The country's close political ties have encouraged religious ties. Buddhism has increased with a steady influx of immigration.^[175]

Immigration

Relative to its overall population, Nicaragua has never experienced any large-scale immigrant waves. The number of immigrants to Nicaragua, both originating from other Latin American countries and all other countries, never surpassed 1% of its total population before 1995. The 2005 census showed the foreign-born population at 1.2%, having risen a mere .06% in 10 years.^[163]

In the 19th century, Nicaragua experienced modest waves of immigration from Europe. In particular, families from Germany, Italy, Spain, France and Belgium immigrated to Nicaragua, particularly the departments in the Central and Pacific region.



The León Cathedral, one of Nicaragua's World Heritage Sites.

Also present is a small Middle Eastern-Nicaraguan community of Syrians, Armenians, Jewish Nicaraguans, and Lebanese people in Nicaragua with a population of about 30,000. There is an East Asian community mostly consisting of Chinese, Taiwanese, and Japanese. The Chinese Nicaraguan population is estimated at around 12,000.^[176] The Chinese arrived in the late 19th century but were unsubstantiated until the 1920s.

Diaspora

The Civil War forced many Nicaraguans to start lives outside of their country. Many people emigrated during the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st century due to the lack of employment opportunities and poverty. The majority of the Nicaraguan Diaspora migrated to the United States and Costa Rica. Today one in six Nicaraguans live in these two countries.^[177]

The diaspora has seen Nicaraguans settling around in smaller communities in other parts of the world, particularly Western Europe. Small communities of Nicaraguans are found in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Communities also exist in Australia and New Zealand. Canada, Brazil and Argentina host small groups of these communities. In Asia, Japan hosts a small Nicaraguan community.

Due to extreme poverty at home, many Nicaraguans are now living and working in neighboring El Salvador, a country that has the US dollar as currency.^{[178][179]}

Healthcare

Although Nicaragua's health outcomes have improved over the past few decades with the efficient utilization of resources relative to other Central American nations, healthcare in Nicaragua still confronts challenges responding to its populations' diverse healthcare needs.^[180]

The Nicaraguan government guarantees universal free health care for its citizens.^[181] However, limitations of current delivery models and unequal distribution of resources and medical personnel contribute to the persistent lack of quality care in more remote areas of Nicaragua, especially amongst rural communities in the Central and Atlantic region.^[180] To respond to the dynamic needs of localities, the government has adopted a decentralized model that emphasizes community-based preventative and primary medical care.^[182] The Nicaraguan government provides free health care for all of its citizens.^[181]

Education

The adult literacy rate in 2005 was 78.0%.^[183]

Primary education is free in Nicaragua. A system of private schools exists, many of which are religiously affiliated and often have more robust English programs.^[184] As of 1979, the educational system was one of the poorest in Latin America.^[185] One of the first acts of the newly elected Sandinista government in 1980 was an extensive and successful literacy campaign, using secondary school students, university students and teachers as volunteer teachers: it reduced the overall illiteracy rate from 50.3% to 12.9% within only five months.^[186] This

was one of a number of large-scale programs which received international recognition for their gains in literacy, health care, education, childcare, unions, and land reform.^{[187][188]} The Sandinistas also added a leftist ideological content to the curriculum, which was removed after 1990.^[107] In September 1980, UNESCO awarded Nicaragua the Soviet Union sponsored Nadezhda Krupskaya award for the literacy campaign.^[189]

The majority of higher education institutions are in Managua.^[190] Nicaragua's higher education system consists of 48 universities, and 113 colleges and technical institutes in the areas of electronics, computer systems and sciences, agroforestry, construction and trade-related services.^[191] In 2005, almost 400,000 (7%) of Nicaraguans held a university degree.^[192] Nicaragua also has several more specialized institutions, with a focus on education that will promote economic development.^[107]

Culture

Nicaraguan culture has strong folklore, music and religious traditions, deeply influenced by European culture but also including Native American sounds and flavors. Nicaraguan culture can further be defined in several distinct strands. The Pacific coast has strong folklore, music and religious traditions, deeply influenced by Europeans. It was colonized by Spain and has a similar culture to other Spanish-speaking Latin American countries. The indigenous groups that historically inhabited the Pacific coast have largely been assimilated into the mestizo culture.

The Caribbean coast of Nicaragua was once a British protectorate. English is still predominant in this region and spoken domestically along with Spanish and indigenous languages. Its culture is similar to that of Caribbean nations that were or are British possessions, such as Jamaica, Belize, the Cayman Islands, etc. Unlike on the west coast, the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean coast have maintained distinct identities, and some still speak their native languages as first languages.

Music

Nicaraguan music is a mixture of indigenous and Spanish influences. Musical instruments include the marimba and others common across Central America. The marimba of Nicaragua is played by a sitting performer holding the instrument on his knees. He is usually accompanied by a bass fiddle, guitar and guitarrilla (a small guitar like a mandolin). This music is played at social functions as a sort of background music.



Universidad Nacional De Ingeniería
"National University of Engineering",
Managua.



El Güegüense is a drama and was the first literary work of post-Columbian Nicaragua. It is regarded as one of Latin America's most distinctive colonial-era expressions and as Nicaragua's signature folkloric masterpiece combining music, dance and theatre.

The marimba is made with hardwood plates placed over bamboo or metal tubes of varying lengths. It is played with two or four hammers. The Caribbean coast of Nicaragua is known for a lively, sensual form of dance music called *Palo de Mayo* which is popular throughout the country. It is especially loud and celebrated during the Palo de Mayo festival in May. The Garifuna community (Afro-Native American) is known for its popular music called *Punta*.

Nicaragua enjoys a variety of international influence in the music arena. Bachata, Merengue, Salsa and Cumbia have gained prominence in cultural centres such as Managua, Leon and Granada. Cumbia dancing has grown popular with the introduction of Nicaraguan artists, including Gustavo Leyton, on Ometepe Island and in Managua. Salsa dancing has become extremely popular in Managua's nightclubs. With various influences, the form of salsa dancing varies in Nicaragua. New York style and Cuban Salsa (Salsa Casino) elements have gained popularity across the country.

Dance

Dance in Nicaragua varies depending upon the region. Rural areas tend to have a stronger focus on movement of the hips and turns. The dance style in cities focuses primarily on more sophisticated footwork in addition to movement and turns. Combinations of styles from the Dominican Republic and the United States can be found throughout Nicaragua. Bachata dancing is popular in Nicaragua. A considerable amount of Bachata dancing influence comes from Nicaraguans living abroad, in cities that include Miami, Los Angeles and, to a much lesser extent, New York City. Tango has also surfaced recently in cultural cities and ballroom dance occasions.

Literature

The origin of Nicaraguan literature can arguably be traced to pre-Columbian times. The myths and oral literature formed the cosmogenic view of the world of the indigenous people. Some of these stories are still known in Nicaragua. Like many Latin American countries, the Spanish conquerors have had the most effect on both the culture and the literature. Nicaraguan literature has historically been an important source of poetry in the Spanish-speaking world, with internationally renowned contributors such as Rubén Darío who is regarded as the most important literary figure in Nicaragua. He is called the "Father of Modernism" for leading the *modernismo* literary movement at the end of the 19th century.^[194] Other literary figures include Carlos Martínez Rivas, Pablo Antonio Cuadra, Alberto Cuadra Mejía, Manolo Cuadra, Pablo Alberto Cuadra Arguello, Orlando Cuadra Downing, Alfredo Alegría Rosales, Sergio Ramírez Mercado, Ernesto Cardenal, Gioconda Belli, Claribel Alegría and José Coronel Urtecho, among others.



Nicaraguan women wearing the Mestizaje costume, which is a traditional costume worn to dance the Mestizaje dance. The costume demonstrates the Spanish influence upon Nicaraguan clothing.^[193]



Rubén Darío, the founder of the modernismo literary movement in Latin America.

The satirical drama *El Güegüense* was the first literary work of post-Columbian Nicaragua. Written in both Aztec Nahuatl and Spanish it is regarded as one of Latin America's most distinctive colonial-era expressions and as Nicaragua's signature folkloric masterpiece, a work of resistance to Spanish colonialism that combined music, dance and theatre.^[194] The theatrical play was written by an anonymous author in the 16th century, making it one of the oldest indigenous theatrical/dance works of the Western Hemisphere. In 2005 it was recognized by UNESCO as "a patrimony of humanity,"^[195] After centuries of popular performance, the play was first published in a book in 1942.^[196]

Cuisine

Nicaraguan cuisine is a mixture of Spanish food and dishes of a pre-Columbian origin.^[197] Traditional cuisine changes from the Pacific to the Caribbean coast. The Pacific coast's main staple revolves around local fruits

and corn, the Caribbean coast cuisine makes use of seafood and the coconut.

As in many other Latin American countries, maize is a staple food and is used in many of the widely consumed dishes, such as the nacatamal, and *indio viejo*. Maize is also an ingredient for drinks such as pinolillo and chicha as well as sweets and desserts. In addition to corn, rice and beans are eaten very often.

Gallo pinto, Nicaragua's national dish, is made with white rice and red beans that are cooked individually and then fried together. The dish has several variations including the addition of coconut milk and/or grated coconut on the Caribbean coast. Most Nicaraguans begin their day with Gallopinto. Gallopinto is most usually served with *carne asada*, a salad, fried cheese, plantains or maduros.

Many of Nicaragua's dishes include indigenous fruits and vegetables such as jocote, mango, papaya, tamarindo, pipian, banana, avocado, yuca, and herbs such as cilantro, oregano and achiote.^[197]

Nicaraguans have been known to eat guinea pigs,^[198] known as *cuy*.

Tapirs, iguanas, turtle eggs, armadillos and boas are also sometimes eaten, but because of extinction threats to these wild creatures, there are efforts to curb this custom.^[197]

Media



Vigorón is a dish that is served with vegetables and chicharrones (fried pork with skin or with meat) and wrapped in Banana leaf.



Gallo Pinto is a traditional dish of Nicaragua made with rice and beans.

For most Nicaraguans radio and TV are the main sources of news. There are more than 100 radio stations and several TV networks. Cable TV is available in most urban areas.^[199]

The Nicaraguan print media are varied and partisan, representing pro and anti-government positions. Publications include *La Prensa*, *El Nuevo Diario*, *Confidencial*, *Hoy*, and *Mercurio*. Online news publications include *Confidencial* and *The Nicaragua Dispatch*.

Sports

Baseball is the most popular sport in Nicaragua. Although some professional Nicaraguan baseball teams have recently folded, the country still enjoys a strong tradition of American-style baseball.

Baseball was introduced to Nicaragua during the 19th century. In the Caribbean coast, locals from Bluefields were taught how to play baseball in 1888 by Albert Addlesberg, a retailer from the United States.^[200] Baseball did not catch on in the Pacific coast until 1891 when a group of mostly college students from the United States formed "La Sociedad de Recreo" (Society of Recreation) where they played various sports, baseball being the most popular.^[200]



Dennis Martínez National Stadium is Nicaragua's main stadium.

Nicaragua has had its share of MLB players, including short stop Everth Cabrera and pitcher Vicente Padilla, but the most notable is Dennis Martínez, who was the first baseball player from Nicaragua to play in Major League Baseball.^[201] He became the first Latin-born pitcher to throw a perfect game, and the 13th in the major league history, when he played with the Montreal Expos against the Dodgers at Dodger Stadium in 1991.^[202]

Boxing is the second most popular sport in Nicaragua.^[203] The country has had world champions such as Alexis Argüello and Ricardo Mayorga as well as Román González. Recently, football has gained popularity. The Dennis Martínez National Stadium has served as a venue for both baseball and football. The first ever national football-only stadium in Managua, the Nicaragua National Football Stadium, was completed in 2011.^[204]

See also

- Healthcare in Nicaragua
- Bibliography of Nicaragua
- Index of Nicaragua-related articles
- LGBT rights in Nicaragua
- Outline of Nicaragua
- Territorial disputes of Nicaragua
- Water supply and sanitation in Nicaragua

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Notes

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External links

- Visit Nicaragua (<http://www.visitnicaragua.com/>)
- Nicaragua Economy (<http://www.fedbrain.com/world-economy/nicaragua/index.html>)
- Teaching Central America (<http://www.teachingcentralamerica.org/>)

Government

- Chief of State and Cabinet Members (<https://web.archive.org/web/20090114083119/https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-n/nicaragua.html>)

General information

- "Nicaragua" (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/nu.html>). *The World Factbook*. Central Intelligence Agency.
- Nicaragua Corruption Profile (<http://www.business-anti-corruption.com/country-profiles/the-americas/nicaragua/business-corruption-in-nicaragua.aspx>) from the Business Anti-Corruption Portal
- Nicaragua (<http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/nicaragua.htm>) at *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
- Nicaragua (https://dmoztools.net/Regional/Central_America/Nicaragua) at DMOZ
- Nicaragua profile (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1225218.stm) from the BBC

News

-  [Wikimedia Atlas of Nicaragua](#)
- [Maps \(http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/camerica/ni.htm\)](http://www.worldatlas.com/webimage/countrys/namerica/camerica/ni.htm) from [WorldAtlas.com](#)
- [Nicaraguaportal \(http://www.nicaraguaportal.de/\)](http://www.nicaraguaportal.de/): Official information of the Honorary Consulate of Nicaragua
- [Key Development Forecasts for Nicaragua \(http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=NI\)](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=NI) from [International Futures](#)

Other

- [The State of the World's Midwifery – Nicaragua Country Profile \(http://www.unfpa.org/sowmy/resources/docs/country_info/profile/en_Nicaragua_SoWMy_Profile.pdf\)](http://www.unfpa.org/sowmy/resources/docs/country_info/profile/en_Nicaragua_SoWMy_Profile.pdf)

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Saint Lucia

Coordinates: 13°53′N 60°58′W﻿ / ﻿13°53′N 60°58′W﻿ / 13.883°N 60.967°W

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Saint Lucia (/seɪˈluːʃə/; French: *Sainte-Lucie*) is a sovereign island country in the eastern Caribbean Sea on the boundary with the Atlantic Ocean.^[6] Part of the Lesser Antilles, it is located north/northeast of the island of Saint Vincent, northwest of Barbados and south of Martinique. It covers a land area of 617 km² (238.23 sq mi) and reported a population of 165,595 in the 2010 census.^[7] Its capital is Castries.

The French were the island's first European settlers. They signed a treaty with the native Carib Indians in 1660. England took control of the island from 1663 to 1667. In ensuing years, it was at war with France 14 times, and rule of the island changed frequently (it was seven times each ruled by the French and British). In 1814, the British took definitive control of the island. Because it switched so often between British and French control, Saint Lucia was also known as the "Helen of the West Indies".

Representative government came about in 1840 (with universal suffrage from 1953). From 1958 to 1962, the island was a member of the Federation of the West Indies. On 22 February 1979, Saint Lucia became an independent state of the Commonwealth of Nations associated with the United Kingdom.^[6] Saint Lucia is a mixed jurisdiction,^[8] meaning that it has a legal system based in part on both the civil law and English common law. The Civil Code of St. Lucia of 1867 was based on the Quebec Civil Code of 1866, as supplemented by English common law-style legislation. It is also a member of *La Francophonie*.^[9]

Contents

- 1 Etymology
- 2 History
 - 2.1 French colony
 - 2.2 18th and 19th century
 - 2.3 20th century
- 3 Geography
 - 3.1 Climate
- 4 Geology

Saint Lucia



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: "The Land, The People, The Light"

Anthem: *Sons and Daughters of Saint Lucia*



Location of Saint Lucia (circled in red) in the Caribbean (light yellow)



Capital

Castries

- 5 Government
 - 5.1 Foreign relations
 - 5.2 The Organisation of American States (OAS)
 - 5.2.1 Summits of the Americas
 - 5.2.1.1 Indigenous Leaders Summits of Americas (ILSA)
 - 5.3 Agreements which impact on Financial Relationships
 - 5.3.1 The Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty 1994
 - 5.3.2 FATCA
 - 5.4 Military
 - 5.5 Administrative divisions
- 6 Economy
 - 6.1 Tourism
- 7 Demographics
 - 7.1 Ethnic groups
 - 7.2 Languages
 - 7.3 Religion
 - 7.4 Health
 - 7.5 Crime
- 8 Culture
 - 8.1 Festivals
 - 8.2 Sport
 - 8.3 Music and dance
 - 8.4 Education
 - 8.5 Cuisine
- 9 Gallery
- 10 See also
- 11 References
 - 11.1 Citations
 - 11.2 Sources
- 12 External links

and largest city	14°1′N 60°59′W
Official languages	English
Vernacular languages	Saint Lucian Creole French ^[1]
Ethnic groups (2010 ^[2])	85.3% Black 10.9% Mixed 2.2% Indian 1.6% other 0.1% unspecified
Demonym	Saint Lucian
Government	Parliamentary democracy under constitutional monarchy
 • Monarch	Elizabeth II
 • Governor-General	Dame Pearlette Louisy
 • Prime Minister	Allen Chastanet
Legislature	Parliament
 • Upper house	Senate
 • Lower house	House of Assembly
Independence	
 • Associated State	1 March 1967
 • from the United Kingdom	22 February 1979
Area	
 • Total	617 km ² (238 sq mi) (178th)
 • Water (%)	1.6
Population	
 • 2016 estimate	178,015 ^[3]
 • 2010 census	165,595
 • Density	300/km ² (777.0/sq mi)
GDP (PPP)	2016 estimate
 • Total	\$2.083 billion ^[4]
 • Per capita	\$11,970 ^[4]
GDP (nominal)	2016 estimate
 • Total	\$1.439 billion ^[4]
 • Per capita	\$8,268 ^[4]
HDI (2014)	 0.729 ^[5] high · 89th

Etymology

One of the Windward Islands, Saint Lucia was named after Saint Lucy of Syracuse by the French, the island's first European settlers, and the only country in the world named after a woman.^[10]

History

The French pirate François le Clerc (also known as *Jambe de Bois*, due to his wooden leg) frequently visited Saint Lucia in the 1550s. It was not until around 1600 that the first European camp was started by the Dutch at what is now Vieux Fort. In 1605 an English vessel called the *Olive Branch* was blown off-course on its way to Guyana, and the 67 colonists started a settlement on Saint Lucia. After five weeks only 19 survived due to disease and conflict with the Caribs, so they fled the island. The French officially claimed the island in 1635. The English attempted the next European settlement in 1639, and that too was wiped out by Caribs.

Currency	East Caribbean dollar (XCD)
Time zone	(UTC−4)
Drives on the	left
Calling code	+1 758
ISO 3166 code	LC
Internet TLD	.lc

French colony

In 1643 a French expedition sent out from Martinique established a permanent settlement on the island. De Rousselan was appointed the island's governor, took a Carib wife and remained in post until his death in 1654.

In 1664, Thomas Warner (son of Sir Thomas Warner, the governor of St Kitts) claimed Saint Lucia for England. He brought 1,000 men to defend it from the French, but after two years, only 89 survived with the rest dying mostly due to disease. In 1666 the French West India Company resumed control of the island, which in 1674 was made an official French crown colony as a dependency of Martinique.^[11]

18th and 19th century

Both the British and the French found the island attractive after the sugar industry developed, and during the 18th century the island changed ownership or was declared neutral territory a dozen times, although the French settlements remained and the island was a de facto French colony well into the eighteenth century.

In 1722, George I of Great Britain granted both Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent to The 2nd Duke of Montagu. He in turn appointed Nathaniel Uring, a merchant sea captain and adventurer, as deputy-governor. Uring went to the islands with a group of seven ships, and established settlement at Petit Carenage. Unable to get enough support from British warships, he and the new colonists were quickly run off by the French.^[12]

During the Seven Years' War Britain occupied Saint Lucia for a year. Britain handed the island back to the French at the Treaty of Paris in 1763. Like the English and Dutch on other islands, the French began to develop the land for the cultivation of sugar cane as a commodity crop on large plantations in 1765.

When the French Revolution occurred, and the slaves had heard about the revolution, they walked off their jobs in 1790–1791 to work for themselves. In 1792 a revolutionary tribunal was sent to Saint Lucia, headed by Captain Jean-Baptiste Raymond de Lacrosse. Bringing the ideas of the revolution to Saint Lucia, Lacrosse set up a guillotine used to execute Royalists. In 1794 the French governor of the island Nicolas Xavier de Ricard declared that all slaves were free, as also happened in Saint-Domingue. However, the decree was unevenly carried out.

A short time later the British invaded the island as a part of the recently broken out war with France. On 21 February 1795 a group of locals led by Victor Hugues defeated a battalion of British troops. In 1796 Castries was burned as part of the conflict. In 1803 the British regained control of the island. Many of the rebels escaped into the thick rain forests where they evaded capture and established maroon communities.^[13]

The slavery on the island was continued for a short time, but anti-slavery sentiment was rising in Britain. The British stopped the import of slaves by anyone, white or coloured, when they abolished the slave trade in 1807.

France and Great Britain continued to contest Saint Lucia until the British secured it in 1814, as part of the Treaty of Paris ending the Napoleonic Wars. Thereafter Saint Lucia was considered part of the British Windward Islands colony.

In 1836 the institution of slavery was abolished on the island and throughout the British Empire. After abolition, all former slaves had to serve a four-year "apprenticeship," to accustom them to the idea of freedom. During this period, they worked for their former masters for at least three-quarters of the work week. Full freedom was duly granted by the British in 1838. By that time, people of African ethnicity greatly outnumbered those of ethnic European background. Some people of Carib descent also comprised a minority on the island.

20th century

In the mid-twentieth century, Saint Lucia joined the West Indies Federation (1958–1962) when the colony was dissolved. In 1967, Saint Lucia became one of the six members of the West Indies Associated States, with internal self-government. In 1979 it gained full independence under Sir John Compton of the conservative United Workers party (UWP), who served as prime minister from 1982 to 1996, after which he was succeeded by Vaughan Lewis.

Dr Kenny Davis Anthony of the Labour Party was prime minister from 1997 to 2006. In 2006, the UWP, again led by Compton, won control of parliament. In May 2007, after Compton suffered a series of small strokes, Finance and External Affairs Minister Stephenson King became acting prime minister and succeeded Compton as prime minister when the latter died in September 2007. In November 2011, the Honorable Dr. Kenny D. Anthony was re-elected as prime minister for a third time. In the June 2016 elections the UWP assumed power again, under Prime Minister Allen Chastanet.^[14]

Geography

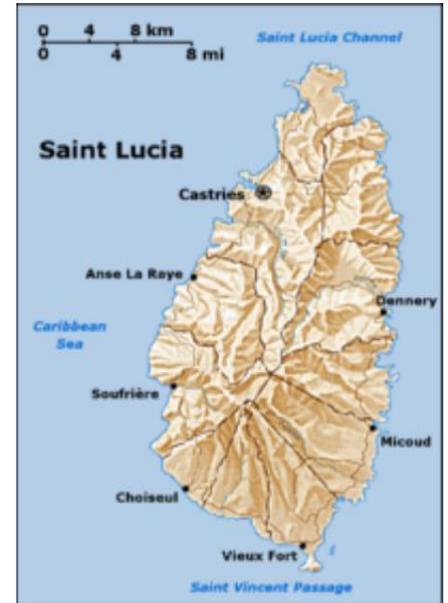
The volcanic island of Saint Lucia is more mountainous than most Caribbean islands, with the highest point being Mount Gimie, at 950 metres (3,120 feet) above sea level. Two other mountains, the Pitons, form the island's most famous landmark. They are located between Soufrière and Choiseul on the western side of the island. Saint Lucia is also one of the few islands in the world that boasts a drive-in volcano.

The capital city of Saint Lucia is Castries (population 60,263) where 32.4% of the population lives. Major towns include Gros Islet, Soufrière, and Vieux Fort.

Climate

The local climate is tropical, moderated by northeast trade winds, with a dry season from 1 December to 31 May, and a wet season from 1 June to 30 November.

Average daytime temperatures are around 29 °C (84.2 °F), and average nighttime temperatures are around 18 °C (64.4 °F). Since it is fairly close to the equator, the temperature does not fluctuate much between winter and summer. Average annual rainfall ranges from 1,300 mm (51.2 in) on the coast to 3,810 mm (150 in) in the mountain rainforests.



A map of Saint Lucia.



A view of Soufrière.

Geology

The geology of St. Lucia can be described as composing three main areas. The oldest, 15-18 Ma, volcanic rocks are exposed from Castries northward and consist of eroded basalt and andesite centres. The middle, central highlands, portion of the island consists of dissected andesite centres, 10.4 to 1 Ma, while the lower southwest portion of the island contains recent activity from the Soufriere Volcanic Centre (SVC). This SVC, centered about the Qualibou depression, contains pyroclastic flow deposits, lava flows, domes, block-and-ash-flow deposits, and explosion craters. This depression's perimeter includes the town of Soufriere, Mount Tabac, Mt. Gimie, Morne Bonin, and Gros Piton. At 10 km in diameter, though the western portion is open towards the Grenada basin, the depression formed as recently as 100 kyr ago. The depression is noted for its geothermal activity, especially at Sulphur Springs and Soufrière Estates, a phreatic eruption in 1776, and recent seismic activity (2000-2001).^[15]

Eroded andesitic stratovolcanoes to the north east of the depression include Mt. Gimie, Piton St Esprit, and Mt. Grand Magasin, all greater than 1 Ma in age. Andesitic and dacite pyroclastic flows from these volcanoes are found at Morne Tabac dome (532 ka), Morne Bonin dome (273 ka), and Bellevue (264 ka). Avalanche deposits from the formation of the Qualibou depression are found offshore, and in the massive blocks of Rabot, Pleissance, and Coubaril. The dacitic domes of Petit Piton (109 ka) and Gros Piton (71 ka) were then extruded onto the depression floor accompanied by the Anse John (104 ka) and La Pointe (59.8 ka) pyroclastic flows. Later pyroclastic flows include pumice-rich Belfond and Anse Noir (20 ka). Finally, the dacitic domes of Terre Blanche (15.3 ka) and Belfond (13.6 ka) formed within the depression.^[15]

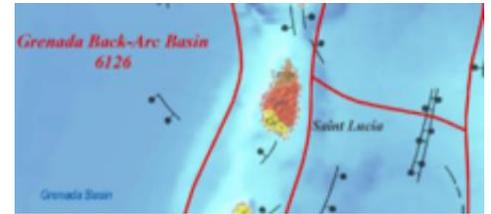
Government

Saint Lucia is a Commonwealth realm. Queen Elizabeth II is the Head of State, represented on the island by a Governor-General. The prime minister (<http://opm.govt.lc/>) is normally the head of the party commanding the support of the majority of the members of the House of Assembly, which has 17 seats.^[16] The other chamber of Parliament, the Senate, has 11 appointed members.

Saint Lucia is a two-party parliamentary democracy. Three political parties participated in the 6 June 2016 General Election. Allen Chastanet of the United Workers Party won eleven of the seventeen seats.^[17]

Foreign relations

Saint Lucia maintains friendly relations with the major powers active in the Caribbean, including the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and France. Saint Lucia has no extant international disputes.



Saint Lucia geologic map, where Tmov denotes Miocene/Oligocene volcanic rocks, Tplv are Pliocene calc-alkaline volcanic rocks, and Qv are Quaternary volcanic edifices, flows, and pyroclastic deposits.



Topography of the Soufriere Volcanic Complex

Saint Lucia is a full and participating member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and La Francophonie. Saint Lucia is a Commonwealth Realm.

The Organisation of American States (OAS)

The Charter of the OAS was signed in Bogota in 1948 and was amended by several Protocols which were named after the city and the year in which the Protocol was signed, such as Managua in 1993 forming part of the name of the Protocol.^[18]

Saint Lucia entered the OAS system on February 22, 1979.^[19]

Summits of the Americas

The last Summits of the Americas, the seventh, was held in Panama City, Panama in 2015 with the eighth summit being held in Lima, Peru in 2018 according to the website of the Summits of Americas.^[20]

Indigenous Leaders Summits of Americas (ILSA)

Three Indigenous Leaders Summits of Americas (ILSA) have been held with three past Summits, which were: Canada, Argentina and Panama. It was the intention of the leaders to have this Summit within the framework of that which was held in Trinidad and Tobago in 2009.^[21]

The position of the OAS with respect to indigenous persons appears to be developing over the years. The following statements appear to capture the position of the OAS with respect to the ILSA as at December 2016 according to the website of the Summit of Americas: "The "OAS has supported and participated in the organisation of Indigenous Leaders Summits of Americas (ILSA)" according to the OAS's website. The most recent "statement made by the Heads of State of the hemisphere was in the Declaration of Commitments of Port of Spain in 2009 – Paragraph 86" according to the OAS's website."^[22]

The Draft American Declaration of the Rights of the Indigenous Persons appears to be a working document. The last "Meeting for Negotiations in the Quest for Consensus on this area appeared to be Meeting Number (18) eighteen and is listed as being held in May 2015 according to the website.^[23]

Agreements which impact on Financial Relationships

The Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty 1994

At a CARICOM Meeting, representative of St. Lucia, Mr. John Compton signed The Double Taxation Relief (CARICOM) Treaty 1994 on the 6th July 1994.^[24]

The representatives of seven (7) CARICOM countries signed similar agreements at Sherbourne Conference Centre, St. Michael, Barbados.^[25] The countries whose representatives signed the treaties in Barbados were: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and

Trinidad and Tobago.^[26]

This treaty covered taxes, residence, tax jurisdictions, capital gains, business profits, interest, dividends, royalties and other areas."

FATCA

On June 30, 2014, Saint Lucia signed a Model 1 agreement with the United States of America in relation to Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA).^[27] As at September 1, 2016, the status of the agreement is listed as "In Force".

Preceding the 2014 FATCA agreement is one which was entered into on January 30, 1987 between the United States of America and Saint Lucia according to Paragraph 2 of the Model 1 agreement, the purpose of which was to exchange Tax Information.^[28]

Military

Saint Lucia has no regular military force. A Special Service Unit and the Coast Guard are both under the command of the Royal Saint Lucia Police.^{[29][30]}

Administrative divisions

The districts of the island, established by the French colonial government and continued by the British, are:

- Anse la Raye, 31.0 km²
- Canaries
- Castries, 79.5 km²
- Choiseul, 31.3 km²
- Dennery, 69.7 km²
- Gros Islet Laborie, 37.8 km²
- Micoud, 77.7 km²
- Soufrière, 50.5 km²
- Vieux Fort, 43.8 km²

An additional area is the Forest Reserve Area Quarter (78.3 km²).

Economy

An educated workforce and improvements in roads, communications, water supply, sewerage, and port facilities have attracted foreign investment in tourism and in petroleum storage and transshipment. However, with the US, Canada, and Europe in recession, tourism declined by double digits in early 2009. The recent change in the

European Union import preference regime and the increased competition from Latin American bananas have made economic diversification increasingly important in Saint Lucia.

Saint Lucia has been able to attract foreign business and investment, especially in its offshore banking and tourism industries, which is Saint Lucia's main source of revenue. The manufacturing sector is the most diverse in the Eastern Caribbean area, and the government is trying to revitalise the banana industry. Despite negative growth in 2011, economic fundamentals remain solid, and GDP growth should recover in the future.

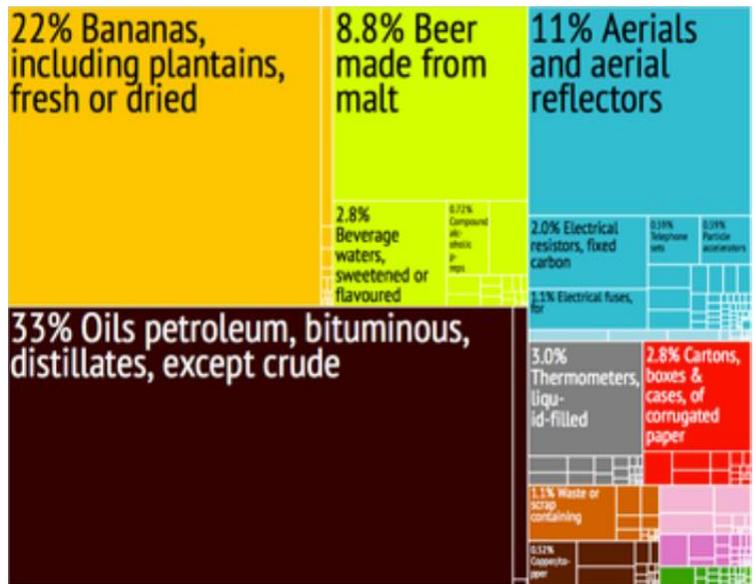
Inflation has been relatively low, averaging 5.5 percent between 2006 and 2008. Saint Lucia's currency is the East Caribbean Dollar (EC\$), a regional currency shared among members of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU). The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) issues the EC\$, manages monetary policy, and regulates and supervises commercial banking activities in member countries. In 2003, the government began a comprehensive restructuring of the economy, including elimination of price controls and privatisation of the state banana company.^[31]

Tourism

Tourism is vital to Saint Lucia's economy. Its economic importance is expected to continue to increase as the market for bananas becomes more competitive. Tourism tends to be more substantial during the dry season (January to April). Saint Lucia tends to be popular due to its tropical weather and scenery and its numerous beaches and resorts.

Other tourist attractions include a drive-in volcano, Sulphur Springs (in Soufrière), the Botanical Gardens, the Majestic twin Peaks "The Pitons", a world heritage site, the rain forests, and Pigeon Island National Park, which is home to Fort Rodney, an old British military base.

The majority of tourists visit Saint Lucia as part of a cruise. Most of their time tends to be spent in Castries, although Soufriere, Marigot Bay and Gros Islet are popular locations to visit.



A proportional representation of St. Lucia's exports.



A panorama of Marigot Bay



Gros Islet and Rodney Bay as seen from Pigeon Island

Demographics

Saint Lucia reported a population of 165,595 in the 2010 national census.^[7] In 2016, the United Nations Population Division estimated Saint Lucia's population at 178,015.^[3] The country's population is evenly divided between urban and rural areas, with more than a third living in the capital, Castries.

Despite a high emigration rate the population is growing rapidly at about 1.2% per year. Migration from Saint Lucia is primarily to Anglophone countries, with the United Kingdom having almost 10,000 Saint Lucian-born citizens, and over 30,000 of Saint Lucian heritage. The second most popular destination for Saint Lucian émigrés is the United States, where a combined (foreign and national-born Saint Lucians) almost 14,000 reside. Canada is home to a few thousand Saint Lucians.^[33]

Ethnic groups

Saint Lucia's population is predominantly of African and mixed African-European descent, with a small Indo-Caribbean minority (3%). Members of other or unspecified ethnic groups, account for about 2% of the population.

Languages

The official language is English.^{[1][34]} Saint Lucian Creole French (Kwéyòl), which is colloquially referred to as *Patois* ("Patwa"), is spoken by 95% of the population.^[35] This Antillean Creole is used in literature and music, and is gaining official acknowledgement.^[35] As it developed during the early period of French colonisation, the creole is derived chiefly from French and West African languages, with some vocabulary from the Island Carib language and other sources. Saint Lucia is a member of *La Francophonie*.^[36]

Religion

About 61.5% of the population is Roman Catholic, a legacy of French colonisation of the island. Another 25.5% belong to Protestant denominations, (includes Seventh Day Adventist 10.4%, Pentecostal 8.9%, Baptist 2.2%, Anglican 1.6%, Church of God 1.5%, other Protestant 0.9%). Evangelicals comprise 2.3% of the population and 1.1% are Jehovah's Witnesses. In addition, about 1.9% of the population adheres to the Rastafari movement. Other religions include Islam, Bahá'í Faith, Judaism, Buddhism.

Health

Public expenditure on health was at 3.3% of the GDP in 2004, whereas private expenditure was at 1.8%.^[38] Health expenditure was at US\$302 (PPP) per capita in 2004.^[38] Infant mortality was at 12 per 100,000 births in 2005.^[38]

Rank	Quarter	Population
1	Castries	60,263
2	Gros Islet	22,647
3	Vieux Fort	14,632
4	Micoud	14,480
5	Dennery	11,874
6	Soufrière	7,747
7	Laborie	6,507
8	Anse la Raye	6,033
9	Choiseul	5,766
10	Canaries	1,915
Source: ^[32]		

Crime

In 2012, Saint Lucia had the world's 16th-highest murder rate – a recorded rate of 21.6 per 100,000 population.^[39] There were a total of 39 murders in Saint Lucia in 2012.^[39]

Culture

The culture of Saint Lucia has been influenced by African, East Indian, French and English heritage. One of the secondary languages is [[Saint Lucian French Creole or Kwéyòl], spoken by almost all of the population.^{[1][34]}

Saint Lucia boasts the second highest ratio of Nobel laureates produced with respect to the total population of any sovereign country in the world. Two winners have come from Saint Lucia: Sir Arthur Lewis won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1979, and the poet Derek Walcott received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1992.

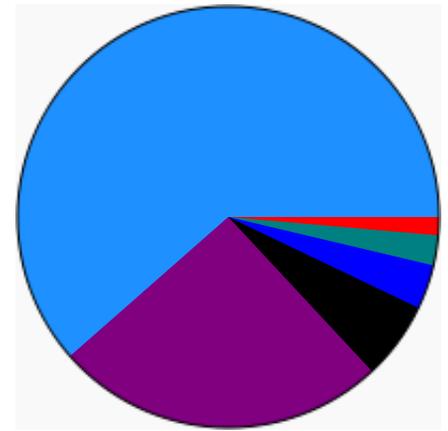
Festivals

Saint Lucian cultural festivals include La Rose and La Marguerite, the first representing a native Saint Lucian fraternal society known as the Order of the Rose that is fashioned in the mould of Rosicrucianism, and the second representing its traditional rival, the native Saint Lucian equivalent of Freemasonry known as the Order of the Marguerite.^[40] References to their origins as versions of pre-existing external secret societies can be seen in a mural painted by Dunstan St Omer, depicting the holy trinity of Osiris, Horus and Isis.

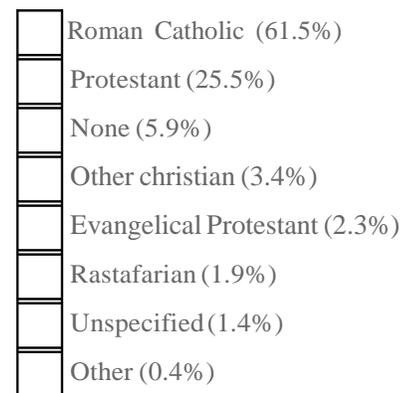
The biggest festival of the year is the Saint Lucia Jazz Festival. Held in early May at multiple venues throughout the island, it draws visitors and musicians from around the world. The grand finale or main stage is held at the Pigeon Island^[41] which is located to the North of the Island.

Traditionally in common with other Caribbean countries, Saint Lucia held a carnival before Lent. In 1999, the government moved Carnival to mid-July to avoid competing with the much larger Trinidad and Tobago carnival and so as to attract more overseas visitors.

In May 2009, Saint Lucians commemorated the 150th Anniversary of West Indian Heritage on the island.



Religion in Saint Lucia (2015)^[37]



The Saint Lucia Jazz Festival in Castries.

Sport

The Windward Islands cricket team includes players from Saint Lucia and plays in the West Indies regional tournament. Daren Sammy became the first Saint Lucian to represent the West Indies on his debut in 2007, and since 2010 has captained the side.^[42] In an international career spanning 2003 to 2008, and including 41 ODIs and one Test, Nadine George MBE became the first woman to score a Test century for the team.^[43] Sammy and George were recognised by the Saint Lucian government as Sportsman of the Year and Sportswoman of the Year respectively for 2004.^[44]

For sailing enthusiasts, the annual Atlantic Rally for Cruisers (ARC) race begins in the Canary Islands and ends in Saint Lucia. 2015 marked the ARC's 30th year of existence. Every November, the race attracts over 200 boats and 1200 people to sail across the Atlantic to the Caribbean.

Music and dance

Together with Caribbean music genres such as Calypso, Soca, Dancehall, Reggae, Compas, Zouk and Salsa, Saint Lucia has a strong indigenous folk music tradition. Each May since 1991, Saint Lucia has hosted an internationally renowned Jazz Festival. In 2013, the festival was rebranded The Saint Lucia Jazz & Arts Festival which encompassed culture, visual art, alternative music, education, fashion and food.

Dancing in Saint Lucia is inspired by Caribbean culture and enjoys an active following. A popular folk dance is the *Kwadril*.

Education

The Education Act provides for free and compulsory education in Saint Lucia from the ages of 5 to 15.^[38]^[45] Public spending on education was at 5.8% among the 2002–2005 GDP.^[38]

Saint Lucia has one university, the University of the West Indies Open Campus,^[46] and a few medical schools – American International Medical University, International American University – College of Medicine, Destiny University School of Medicine and Health Sciences, and the oldest of which is Spartan Health Sciences University.



Cricket is a popular sport in the country. Seen here is the Daren Sammy Cricket Ground which hosts international cricket matches for the West Indies.



Cricketer Daren Sammy.

Cuisine

Saint Lucia's national dish is green figs and saltfish.

The island's cuisine is a unique blend of West African, European (mainly British and French) and East Indian cuisine; this creates dynamic meal dishes such as macaroni pie, Stew chicken, rice and peas, fish broth or fish water, and soups packed full with fresh locally produced vegetables. Typical essential foodstuffs are potatoes, onions, celery, thyme, coconut milk, the very hot scotch bonnet peppers, flour and cornmeal. All mainstream meat and poultry are eaten in St. Lucia; meat and seafood are normally stewed and browned to create a rich gravy sometimes served over ground provisions or rice. The island is also home to the famous fried dough, known by many as a bake or Johnny Cake. These bakes can be served with different sides, such as saltfish which is either sautéed or lightly fried along with red, green peppers, onions, and seasoned well. This is the most common way for bake to be prepared, though it can also be served with meats such as stewed chicken or beef.

One popular Saint Lucian dessert is the pastry called turnover. The pastry is made with sweetened coconut that is boiled with spices, some sugar, and whatever is satisfying. It is boiled until cooked to a light or dark brown colour; then the mixture is separated into various size portions placed on a rolled out piece of dough. The dough size may vary too depending on how much is desired, and lastly, it is baked in the oven until the colour of the turnover is nicely browned.

Due to Saint Lucia's Indo-Caribbean population curry is very popular, however due to the blend of cooking styles, curry dishes have a distinct Caribbean twist. Roti is typically served as a fast food meal: the bread itself is very flat (sometimes very thin) and is wrapped around curried vegetables such as chickpeas and potato, seafoods such as shrimp and conch, or meats such as chicken, beef, goat and liver.

Gallery



Toraille Waterfall - July 2016



Gros Piton seen from the Ladera Hotel restaurant – September 2007



Petit Piton seen from the Ladera Hotel restaurant – December 2004



Soufrière Bay – February 2006



Hilltop view of resort – June 2006



Typical sight in Canaries: houses on hills, June 2006



St Lucia beach – February 2006



View from the Le Sport resort – March 2006

See also

-  *Saint Lucia* – Wikipedia book
- Outline of Saint Lucia
- List of colonial governors and administrators of Saint Lucia
- Governor-General of Saint Lucia
- Index of Saint Lucia-related articles
- Saint Lucian British
- Windward Islands
- LGBT rights in Saint Lucia
- Chief Justices

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-  Wikimedia Atlas of Saint Lucia
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- Guide to the island of St. Lucia (<http://allaboutstlucia.com/>)

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Trinidad and Tobago

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Trinidad and Tobago (/ˈtrɪnɪ.dædəntəˈbeɪtzoʊ/, /-toʊˈ-/),^[10] officially the **Republic of Trinidad and Tobago**, is a twin island country situated off the northern edge of the South American mainland, lying just 11 kilometres (6.8 miles) off the coast of northeastern Venezuela and 130 kilometres (81 miles) south of Grenada. Bordering other Caribbean nations to the north, it shares maritime boundaries with other nations including Barbados to the northeast, Grenada to the northwest, Guyana to the southeast, and Venezuela to the south and west.^{[11][12]}

The island of Trinidad was a Spanish colony from the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1498 to the capitulation of the Spanish Governor, Don José María Chacón, on the arrival of a British fleet of 18 warships on 18 February 1797.^[13] During the same period, the island of Tobago changed hands among Spanish, British, French, Dutch and Courlander colonizers, more times than any other island in the Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago (remaining separate until 1889) were ceded to Britain in 1802 under the Treaty of Amiens.^[14] The country Trinidad and Tobago obtained independence in 1962, becoming a republic in 1976.

Trinidad and Tobago is the third richest country by GDP (PPP) per capita in the Americas after the United States and Canada. Furthermore, it is recognised as a high-income economy by the World Bank. Unlike most of the English-speaking Caribbean, the country's economy is primarily industrial,^[15] with an emphasis on petroleum and petrochemicals. The country's wealth is attributed to its large reserves and exploitation of oil and natural gas.^{[16][17]}

Trinidad and Tobago is known for its Carnival and is the birthplace of steelpan, limbo, and the music styles of calypso, soca, parang, chutney, chutney soca, chutney parang, cariso, extempo, kaiso, parang soca, pichakaree, and rapso. Trinidad and Tobago is famous for its many foods, including the famous doubles.^[18]

Contents

- 1 Etymology

Republic of Trinidad and Tobago



Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: Together We Aspire, Together We Achieve^[1]

Anthem: "Forged from the Love of Liberty"

0:00

MENU



Capital Port of Spain
10°40′N 61°31′W﻿ / ﻿10.667°N 61.517°W﻿ / 10.667; -61.517

Largest city Chaguanas^[2]
10°30′N 61°02′W﻿ / ﻿10.5°N 61.033°W﻿ / 10.5; -61.033

Official languages English

Vernacular language Trinidadian Creole and Tobagonian Creole

Ethnic groups (2011^[3])
 35.43% Indian
 34.22% African
 15.16% Multiracial (non-Douglas)
 7.66% Douglas (African-Indian)

- 2 Geography
 - 2.1 Geology
 - 2.2 Climate
 - 2.3 Biodiversity
- 3 History
 - 3.1 Prehistory
 - 3.2 Age of Discovery
 - 3.2.1 Spanish settlement
 - 3.2.2 Influx of French people
 - 3.2.3 British rule
 - 3.2.4 Influx of East Indians
 - 3.2.5 Economic depression
 - 3.3 Independence
- 4 Politics
 - 4.1 Political culture
 - 4.2 Business culture
 - 4.3 Foreign relations
 - 4.4 Military
 - 4.5 Administrative divisions
 - 4.6 International and regional relationships
 - 4.6.1 Organisation of American States
- 5 Economy
 - 5.1 Communications Infrastructure
 - 5.2 Transport
- 6 Demographics
 - 6.1 Ethnic groups
 - 6.2 Languages
 - 6.3 Religion
 - 6.4 Education
 - 6.5 Women
- 7 Culture
 - 7.1 Music
- 8 Sports
 - 8.1 Olympic Sports
 - 8.2 Cricket
 - 8.3 Football
 - 8.4 Basketball
 - 8.5 Other sports
- 9 National symbols
 - 9.1 Flag
 - 9.2 Coat of arms
 - 9.3 Orders and decorations
 - 9.4 National songs
 - 9.5 National birds
 - 9.6 National instrument
- 10 See also
- 11 References

	0.59% European (non-Portuguese)
	0.30% Chinese
	0.11%
	Indigenous Amerindian
	0.08% Arab
	0.06%
	Portuguese
	0.17% Other
	6.22%
	Undeclared
Religion	49.6% Christian
	18.2% Hindu
	5.7% Spiritual (Shouter) Baptist
	5.0% Muslim
	1.2% Bahá'í
	0.9% Yoruba (Orisha)
	0.3% Rastafarian
	5.8% Other
	11.1% Not stated
	2.2% None
	[3][4]
Demonym	Trinidadian Trini (colloquial) Tobagonian
Government	Unitary parliamentary constitutional republic
• President	Anthony Carmona
• Prime Minister	Keith Rowley
• Leader of the Opposition	Kamla Persad-Bissessar
• Speaker of the House of Representatives	Brigid Annisette-George
• President of the Senate	Christine Kangaloo
• Chief Justice	Ivor Archie
Legislature	Parliament
• Upper house	Senate
• Lower house	House of Representatives
Establishment	
• Trinidad and Tobago	1498

- 12 Cited sources
- 13 Further reading
- 14 External links

Etymology

Historian E. L. Joseph claimed that Trinidad's Amerindian name was *Cairi* or "Land of the Humming Bird", derived from the Arawak name for hummingbird, *ierèttê* or *yerettê*. However, Boomert claims that neither *cairi* nor *caeri* means hummingbird and *tukusi* or *tucuchi* does.^[19] Others have reported that *kairi* and *iere* simply mean *island*. Christopher Columbus renamed it "La Isla de la Trinidad" ("The Island of the Trinity"), fulfilling a vow made before setting out on his third voyage of exploration.^[20] Tobago's cigar-like shape may have given it its Spanish name (*cabaco*, *tavaco*, *tobacco*) and possibly its Amerindian names of Aloubaéra (black conch) and Urupaina (big snail),^[19] although the English pronunciation is /təˈbeɪɡoʊ/, rhyming with *lumbago*, *sago*, and "may go".

Geography

Trinidad and Tobago are islands situated between 10° 2' and 11° 12' N latitude and 60° 30' and 61° 56' W longitude. At the closest point, Trinidad is just 11 kilometres (6.8 mi) from Venezuelan territory. Covering an area of 5,128 km² (1,980 sq mi),^[21] the country consists of the two main islands, Trinidad and Tobago, and numerous smaller landforms, including Chacachacare, Monos, Huevos, Gaspar Grande (or Gasparee), Little Tobago, and St. Giles Island.

Trinidad is 4,768 km² (1,841 sq mi) in area (comprising 93.0% of the country's total area) with an average length of 80 km (50 mi) and an average width of 59 kilometres (37 mi). Tobago has an area of about 300 km² (120 sq mi), or 5.8% of the country's area, is 41 km (25 mi) long and 12 km (7.5 mi) at its greatest width. Trinidad and Tobago lie on the continental shelf of South America, and are thus geologically considered to lie entirely in South America.^[22]

(separately) discovered by the Spanish	
• Colonized by the Spanish	1530
• Spain cedes Trinidad and Tobago (as separate colonies) to the United Kingdom at the Treaty of Amiens	25 March 1802
• Unification of Trinidad and Tobago	1889
• Part of the West Indies Federation	3 January 1958 to 31 May 1962
• Independence from the United Kingdom becoming the Commonwealth Realm of Trinidad and Tobago	31 August 1962
• Joins CARICOM at the Treaty of Chaguaramas	1 August 1973
• Republic	1 August 1976

Area

• Total	5,131 km ² (1,981 sq mi) (165th)
• Water (%)	negligible

Population

• 2016 estimate	1,353,895 ^[5] (152)
• 2011 census	1,328,019 ^[6]
• Density	254.4/km ² (658.9/sq mi)

GDP (PPP)

• Total	2017 estimate \$44.654 billion ^[7] (110th)
• Per capita	\$32,520 ^[7] (36th)

GDP (nominal)	2017 estimate
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The terrain of the islands is a mixture of mountains and plains. The highest point in the country is found on the Northern Range at El Cerro del Aripo, which is 940 metres (3,080 ft) above sea level.

As the majority of the population live in the island of Trinidad, this is the location of most major towns and cities. There are four major municipalities in Trinidad: Port of Spain, the capital, San Fernando, Arima and Chaguanas. The main town in Tobago is Scarborough. Trinidad is made up of a variety of soil types, the majority being fine sands and heavy clays. The alluvial valleys of the Northern Range and the soils of the East-West Corridor are the most fertile.

Geology

The Northern Range consists mainly of Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous metamorphic rocks. The Northern Lowlands (East-West Corridor and Caroni Plains) consist of younger shallow marine clastic sediments. South of this, the Central Range fold and thrust belt consists of Cretaceous and Eocene sedimentary rocks, with Miocene formations along the southern and eastern flanks. The Naparima Plains and the Nariva Swamp form the southern shoulder of this uplift.

The Southern Lowlands consist of Miocene and Pliocene sands, clays, and gravels. These overlie oil and natural gas deposits, especially north of the Los Bajos Fault. The Southern Range forms the third anticlinal uplift. It consists of several chains of hills, most famous being the Trinity Hills. The rocks consist of sandstones, shales, siltstones and clays formed in the Miocene and uplifted in the Pleistocene. Oil sands and mud volcanoes are especially common in this area.

Climate

The climate is tropical. There are two seasons annually: the dry season for the first five months of the year, and the rainy season in the remaining seven of the year. Winds are predominantly from the northeast and are dominated by the northeast trade winds. Unlike most of the other Caribbean islands, both Trinidad and Tobago have frequently escaped the wrath of major devastating hurricanes, including Hurricane Ivan, the most powerful storm to have passed

• Total	\$21.748 billion ^[7]
• Per capita	\$15,838 ^[7]
Gini (2012)	39.0 ^[8] medium
HDI (2014)	▲ 0.772 ^[9] high · 64th
Currency	Trinidad and Tobago dollar (TTD)
Time zone	Atlantic Standard Time (UTC-4)
• Summer (DST)	not observed (UTC-4)
Date format	dd/mm/yyyy
Drives on the	left
Calling code	+1 (868)
ISO 3166 code	TT
Internet TLD	.tt
	a. Holiday celebrated on 24 September.



A map of Trinidad and Tobago

close to the islands in recent history, in September 2004. In the Northern Range, the climate is often different in contrast to the sweltering heat of the plains below. With constant cloud and mist cover, and heavy rains in the mountains, the temperature is much cooler.

Record temperatures for Trinidad and Tobago are 39 °C (102 °F)^[23] for the high in Port of Spain, and a low of 12 °C (54 °F).^[24]

Biodiversity

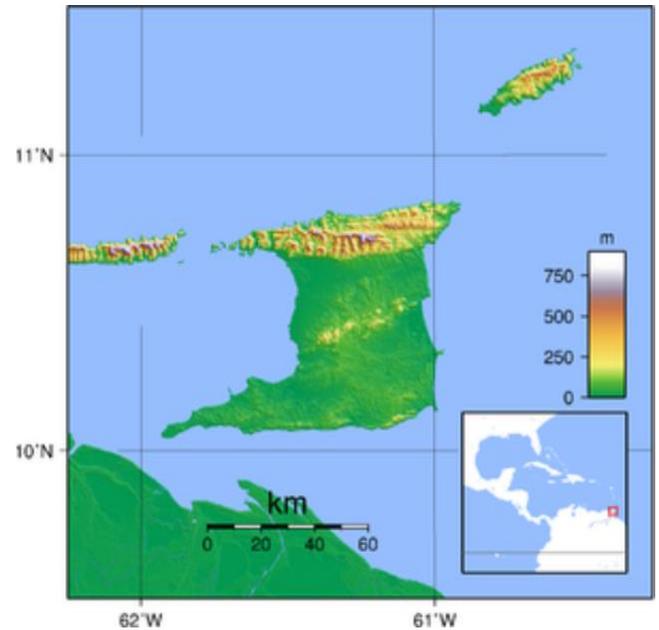
Because Trinidad and Tobago lie on the continental shelf of South America, their biological diversity is unlike that of most other Caribbean islands, and has much in common with that of Venezuela. The main ecosystems are: coastal and marine (coral reefs, mangrove swamps, open ocean and seagrass beds); forest; freshwater (rivers and streams); karst; man-made ecosystems (agricultural land, freshwater

dams, secondary forest); and savanna. On 1 August 1996, Trinidad and Tobago ratified the 1992 Rio Convention on Biological Diversity, and it has produced a biodiversity action plan and four reports describing the country's contribution to biodiversity conservation. The reports formally acknowledged the

importance of biodiversity to the well-being of the country's people through provision of ecosystem services.^[25]

Information about vertebrates is good, with 472 bird species (2 endemics), about 100 mammals, about 90 reptiles (a few endemics), about 30 amphibians (a few endemics), 50 freshwater fish and at least 950 marine fish.^[26] Information about invertebrates is dispersed and very incomplete. About 650 butterflies,^[26] at least 672 beetles (from Tobago alone)^[27] and 40 corals^[26] have been recorded.^[26]

Although the list is far from complete, 1647 species of fungi, including lichens, have been recorded.^{[28][29][30]} The true total number of fungi is likely to be far higher, given the generally accepted estimate that only about 7% of all fungi worldwide have so far been discovered.^[31] A first effort to estimate the number of endemic fungi tentatively listed 407 species.^[32]



Trinidad and Tobago's topography



Trinidad and Tobago is a major nesting site for Leatherback Turtles.



Mayaro Beach, in the southeastern area of Trinidad

Information about micro-organisms is dispersed and very incomplete. Nearly 200 species of marine algae have been recorded.^[26] The true total number of micro-organism species must be much higher.

Thanks to a recently published checklist, plant diversity in Trinidad and Tobago is well documented with about 3,300 species (59 endemic) recorded.^[26]

History

Prehistory

Both Trinidad and Tobago were originally settled by Amerindians of South American origin. Trinidad was first settled by pre-agricultural Archaic people at least 7,000 years ago, making it the earliest settled part of the Caribbean. Ceramic-using agriculturalists settled Trinidad around 250 BC, and then moved further up the Lesser Antillean chain. It was known as 'Land of the Humming Bird' by the indigenous peoples. At the time of European contact, Trinidad was occupied by various Arawakan-speaking groups including the Nepoya and Suppoya, and Cariban-speaking groups such as the Yao, while Tobago was occupied by the Island Caribs and Galibi.

Age of Discovery

Columbus reported seeing Tobago on the distant horizon in 1498, naming it *Bellaforma*, but did not land on the island.^[33] The present name of Tobago is thought to be a corruption of its old name, "Tobaco".^[20]



French attack on the British island of Tobago in 1781

The Dutch and the Courlanders (people from the small Duchy of Courland and Semigallia belonging to Polish Commonwealth – modern-day Latvia) established themselves in Tobago in the 16th and 17th centuries and produced tobacco and cotton. Over the centuries, Tobago changed hands between Spanish, British, French, Dutch and Courlander colonizers. Britain consolidated its hold on both islands during the Napoleonic Wars, and they were combined into the colony of Trinidad and Tobago in 1889.^[34]



Greenstone ceremonial axe, Mount Irvine Bay, Tobago



Christopher Columbus monument at Moruga. Columbus landed here on his third voyage in 1498.

As a result of these colonial struggles, Amerindian, Spanish, French and English place names are all common in the country. African slaves and Chinese, Indian, Tamil and free African indentured labourers, as well as Portuguese from Madeira, arrived to supply labour in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Emigration from Barbados and the other Lesser Antilles, Venezuela, Syria and Lebanon also impacted on the ethnic make-up of the country.

Spanish settlement

Christopher Columbus encountered the island of Trinidad on 31 July 1498. In the 1530s, Antonio de Sedeño, a Spanish soldier intent on conquering the island of Trinidad, landed on its southwest coast with a small army of men. He intended to subdue the Orinoco and the Warao, the two major Amerindian peoples of the island, and rule over them in the name of the Spanish king. Sedeño and his men fought the native Carib Indians on many occasions, and subsequently built a fort. The next few decades were generally spent in warfare with the natives, until in 1592, the 'Cacique' (native chief) Wannawanare (also known as Guanaguanare) granted the area later known as "St. Josephs" to Domingo de Vera e Iburgüen, and withdrew to another part of the island.^[19] The settlement of San José de Oruña (St. Joseph) was established by Antonio de Berrío on this land. Only a couple of years later, Sir Walter Raleigh arrived in Trinidad on 22 March 1595. He was in search of the long-rumoured "City of Gold" supposedly located in South America. He soon attacked San José, captured and interrogated Antonio de Berrío, and obtained much information from him and from the Cacique Topiawari. Raleigh then went on his way, and the Spanish authority was restored.

The next century (the 1600s) passed without major incident but sustained attempts by the Spaniards to control and rule over the Amerindians, and especially the exertions of the missionaries, were preparing grounds for an outburst. In 1687, the Catholic Catalan Capuchin friars were given responsibility for the conversions of the indigenous people of Trinidad and the Guianas. After 1687, they founded several missions in Trinidad, supported and richly funded by the state, which also granted *encomienda* over the native people to them. One such mission was *Santa Rosa de Arima*, established in 1789, when Amerindians from the former *encomiendas* of Tacarigua and *Arauca* (Arouca) were relocated further west.



Sir Walter Raleigh raiding Spanish settlement in Trinidad in 1595

The missions aimed at conversion and cultural deracination, which were naturally unwelcome to the target population. Escalating tensions between the Spaniards and Amerindians culminated in the Arena Massacre which took place in 1699. Amerindians bound to the Church's *encomienda* at the mission at Arena/Arima revolted, killing the priests and desecrating the church. They then ambushed the governor and his party, who were on their way to visit the church. The uprising resulted in the death of several hundred Amerindians, of the Roman Catholic priests connected with the mission of San Francisco de los Arenales, of the Spanish Governor José de León y Echales and of all but one member of his party. Among those killed in the governor's party was Fr. Juan Mazien de Sotomayor, O.P., missionary priest to the Nepuyo villages of Cuara, Tacarigua and Arauca.

Order was eventually restored and the Spanish authority was re-established. Another century passed, and during the 1700s, Trinidad was an island province belonging to the Viceroyalty of New Spain, together with Central America, present-day Mexico and the Southwestern United States.^[35] However, Trinidad in this period was still mostly forest, populated by a few Spaniards with their handful of slaves and a few thousand Amerindians.^[35] Indeed, the population in 1777 was only 1400, and Spanish colonisation in Trinidad remained tenuous.

Influx of French people

Since Trinidad was considered underpopulated, Roume de St. Laurent, a Frenchman living in Grenada, was able to obtain a *Cédula de Población* from the Spanish king Charles III on 4 November 1783. A *Cédula de Población* had previously been granted in 1776 by the king, but had not shown results, and therefore the new *Cédula* was more generous. It granted free land and tax exemption for 10 years to Roman Catholic foreign settlers who were willing to swear allegiance to the King of Spain.^[36] The land grant was 30 fanegas (13 hectares/32 acres) for each free man, woman and child and half of that for each slave that they brought with them.

It was fortuitous that the *Cédula* was issued only a few years before the French Revolution. During that period of upheaval, French planters with their slaves, free coloureds and mulattos from the neighbouring islands of Martinique, Saint Lucia, Grenada, Guadeloupe and Dominica migrated to Trinidad, where they established an agriculture-based economy (sugar and cocoa).^[35] These new immigrants established local communities in Blanchisseuse, Champs Fleurs, Paramin,^[37] Cascade, Carenage and Laventille.

Trinidad's population jumped to over 15,000 by the end of 1789, from just under 1,400 in 1777. By 1797, the population of Port of Spain had increased from under 3,000 to 10,422 in five years, and consisted of people of mixed race, Spaniards, Africans, French republican soldiers, retired pirates and French nobility.^[35] The total population of Trinidad was 17,718, of which 2,151 were of European ancestry, 4,476 were "free blacks and people of colour", 10,009 were slaves and 1,082 Amerindians. The sparse settlement and slow rate of population-increase during Spanish rule (and even during British rule) made Trinidad one of the less populated colonies of the West Indies, with the least developed plantation infrastructure.^[38]

British rule

In 1797, a British force led by General Sir Ralph Abercromby launched the invasion of Trinidad. His squadron sailed through the Bocas and anchored off the coast of Chaguaramas. The Spanish Governor Chacón decided to capitulate without fighting. Trinidad thus became a British crown colony, with a French-speaking population and Spanish laws.^[35] British rule was formalized under the Treaty of Amiens (1802).



Spanish Governor José María Chacón signed the *Cédula de Población*.

British rule led to an influx of settlers from the United Kingdom and the British colonies of the Eastern Caribbean. English, Scots, Irish, German and Italian families arrived. Under British rule, new estates were created and the import of slaves did increase, but this was the period of abolitionism in England and the slave trade was under attack.^{[38][39]} Slavery was abolished in 1833, after which former slaves served an "apprenticeship" period which ended on 1 August 1838 with full emancipation. An overview of the populations



A medallion showing the capture of Trinidad and Tobago by the British in 1797

statistics in 1838, however, clearly reveals the contrast between Trinidad and its neighbouring islands: upon emancipation of the slaves in 1838, Trinidad had only 17,439 slaves, with 80% of slave owners having fewer than 10 slaves each.^{[39]:84–85} In contrast, at twice the size of Trinidad, Jamaica had roughly 360,000 slaves.^[40]



Protector of Slaves Office (Trinidad), Richard Bridgens, c. 1833

Influx of East Indians

After slaves were emancipated, plantation owners were in severe need of labour. The British authorities filled this need by instituting a system of indentureship. Various nationalities were contracted under this system, including East Indians, Chinese and Portuguese. Of these, the East Indians were imported in the largest numbers, starting from 1 May 1845, when 225 Indians were brought in the first shipment to Trinidad on the *Fatel Razack*, a Muslim-owned vessel.^[41] Indentureship of the East Indians lasted from 1845 to 1917, during which more than 147,000 Indians were brought to Trinidad to work on sugarcane plantations.^[42] They added what was initially the second-largest population grouping to the young nation, and their labour developed previously underdeveloped plantation lands.



Newly arrived indentured East Indian labourers in Trinidad and Tobago

The indentureship contract was exploitative, such that historians including Hugh Tinker were to call it "a new system of slavery". People were contracted for a period of five years, with a daily wage as low as 25 cents in the early 20th century, and they were guaranteed return passage to India at the end of their contract period. However, coercive means were often used to retain labourers, and the indentureship contracts were soon extended to 10 years after the planters complained that they were losing their labour too early.^[38] In lieu of the return passage, the British authorities soon began offering portions of land to encourage settlement; however, the numbers of people who did receive land grants is unclear.^[43] East Indians entering the colony were also subject to particular crown laws which segregated them from the rest of Trinidad's population, such as the

requirement that they carry a pass with them once off the plantations, and that if freed, they carry their "Free Papers" or certificate indicating completion of the indenture period.^[44] The ex-Indentureds came to constitute a vital and significant section of the population, as did the ex-slaves.

Economic depression

Alongside sugarcane, the cacao (cocoa) crop also contributed greatly to economic earnings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1920–1930 period, the collapse of the sugarcane industry concomitant with the failure of the cocoa industry resulted in widespread depression among the rural and agricultural workers in Trinidad, and encouraged the rise of the Labour movement. This movement was led by Arthur Cipriani and Tubal Uriah "Buzz" Butler, who, in combination with his Indian partners (notably Adrian Cola Rienzi), aimed to unite the working class and agricultural labour class to achieve a better standard of living for them, as well as to hasten the departure of the British. This effort was severely undermined by the British Home Office and by the British-educated Trinidadian elite, many of whom were descended from the plantocracy themselves. They instigated a vicious race politicking in Trinidad aimed at dividing the class-based movement on race-based lines, and they succeeded, especially since Butler's support had collapsed from the top down.

Petroleum had been discovered in 1857, but became economically significant only in the 1930s and afterwards,^[34] as a result of the collapse of sugarcane and cocoa, and increasing industrialization. By the 1950s, petroleum had become a staple in Trinidad's export market, and was responsible for a growing middle class among all sections of the Trinidad population. The collapse of Trinidad's major agricultural commodities, followed by the Depression, and the rise of the oil economy, led to major changes in the country's social structure.

Independence

Trinidad and Tobago gained its independence from the United Kingdom on 31 August 1962.^[34] Elizabeth II remained head of state as Queen of Trinidad and Tobago. Eric Williams, a noted Caribbean historian, widely regarded as *The Father of The Nation*, was the first Prime Minister; he served from 1956 to 1959, before independence as Chief Minister, from 1959 to 1962, before independence as Premier, from 1962 to 1976, after independence as Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Trinidad and Tobago, then from 1976 to his death in 1981 as Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Rudranath Capildeo was the first Leader of the Opposition post-independence; he served from 1962 to 1967.

The presence of American military bases in Chaguaramas and Cumuto in Trinidad during World War II profoundly changed the character of society. In the post-war period, the wave of decolonisation that swept the British Empire led to the formation of the West Indies Federation in 1958 as a vehicle for independence. Chaguaramas was the proposed site for the federal capital. The Federation dissolved after the Jamaican Federation of the West Indies membership referendum of 1961, and the resulting withdrawal of the Province of Jamaica. The government of Trinidad and Tobago then also chose to seek independence from the United Kingdom on its own.^[45]

In 1976, the country became a republic within the Commonwealth, though it retained the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as its final Court of Appeal. Between the years 1972 and 1983, the republic profited greatly from the rising price of oil, as the oil-rich country increased its living standards greatly. In 1990, 114 members of the Jamaat al Muslimeen, led by Yasin Abu Bakr, formerly known as Lennox Phillip, stormed the Red House (the seat of Parliament), and Trinidad and Tobago Television, the only television station in the country at the time, and held the country's government hostage for six days before surrendering.^[46]

Since 2003, the country has entered a second oil boom, a driving force which the government hopes to use to turn the country's main export back to sugar and agriculture. Great concern was raised in August 2007 when it was predicted that this boom would last only until 2018. Petroleum, petrochemicals and natural gas continue to be the backbone of the economy. Tourism and the public service are the mainstay of the economy of Tobago, though authorities have begun to diversify the island.^[47] The bulk of tourist arrivals on the islands are from the United States.^[48]

The country is also a recognised transshipment point for illegal narcotics, with the cocaine distribution from the South American continent to the United States Eastern seaboard. With the most recent seizure of \$100 million US dollar shipment by United States Authorities on 17 January 2014.^[49]



Eric Williams

Politics

Trinidad and Tobago is a republic with a two-party system and a bicameral parliamentary system based on the Westminster System. The head of state of Trinidad and Tobago is the President, currently Anthony Carmona. The head of government is the Prime Minister, currently Keith Rowley. The President is elected by an Electoral college consisting of the full membership of both houses of Parliament.

The Prime Minister is elected from the results of a general election which takes place every five years. The President is required to appoint the leader of the party who in his opinion has the most support of the members of the House of Representatives to this post; this has generally been the leader of the party which won the most seats in the previous election (except in the case of the 2001 General Elections). Tobago also has its own elections, separate from the general elections. In these elections, members are elected and serve in the Tobago House of Assembly.

Parliament consists of the Senate (31 seats) and the House of Representatives (41 seats).^[50] The members of the Senate are appointed by the president. Sixteen Government Senators are appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister, six Opposition Senators are appointed on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and nine Independent Senators are appointed by the President to represent other sectors of civil society. The 41 members of the House of Representatives are elected by the people for a maximum term of five years in a "first past the post" system.

Political culture

From 24 December 2001 to 24 May 2010, the governing party has been the People's National Movement (PNM) led by Patrick Manning; the Opposition party was the United National Congress (UNC) led by Basdeo Panday. Another recent party was the Congress of the People, or COP, led by Winston Dookeran. Support for these parties appears to fall along ethnic lines with the PNM consistently obtaining a majority of Afro-Trinidadian vote, and the UNC gaining a majority of Indo-Trinidadian support. COP gained 23% of the votes in the 2007 general elections but failed to win a seat. Prior to 24 May 2010, the PNM held 26 seats in the House of Representatives and the UNC Alliance (UNC-A) held 15 seats, following elections held on 5 November 2007.

After two and a half years, Prime Minister Patrick Manning dissolved Parliament in April 2010, and called a general election on 24 May 2010. After these general elections, the new governing coalition is the People's Partnership led by Kamla Persad-Bissessar. Persad-Bissessar and "the People's Partnership" wrested power from the Patrick Manning-led PNM, taking home 29 seats to the PNM's 12 seats, based on preliminary results.

Business culture

It is estimated that 20% – 30% of measured GDP represents the hidden economy.^[51] Within the Trinidadian and Tobagonian business structure illicit activities and licit activities work side by side, with many business and political organisations being funded by institutionalised drug smugglers. Within Trinidad and Tobago there are two main drug cartels, the Syrian/Lebanese drug cartels and the Indo Trinidadian drug cartels. The Syrian Lebanese drug cartels are the longest tenured drug cartel on the islands, having ridden the wave of cocaine exportation from the 1970s to the current day. The Syrian Drug Cartels control the vast sway of financing and business interest on the island and exhibit monopolistic tendencies which limit free market policies in insurance, health, finance, heavy and light manufacturing, and land distribution.^[52]

Foreign relations

Modern Trinidad and Tobago maintains close relations with its Caribbean neighbours and major North American and European trading partners. As the most industrialised and second-largest country in the English-speaking Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago has taken a leading role in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and strongly supports CARICOM economic integration efforts. It also is active in the Summit of the Americas process and supports the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, lobbying other nations for seating the Secretariat in Port of Spain.

As a member of CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago strongly backed efforts by the United States to bring political stability to Haiti, contributing personnel to the Multinational Force in 1994. After its 1962 independence, Trinidad and Tobago joined the United Nations and Commonwealth of Nations. In 1967, it became the first



Rudranath Capildeo

Commonwealth country to join the Organization of American States (OAS). In 1995, Trinidad played host to the inaugural meeting of the Association of Caribbean States and has become the seat of this 35-member grouping, which seeks to further economic progress and integration among its states.

In international forums, Trinidad and Tobago has defined itself as having an independent voting record, but often supports US and EU positions.

Military

The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF) is the military organisation responsible for the defence of the twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It consists of the Regiment, the Coast Guard, the Air Guard and the Defence Force Reserves. Established in 1962 after Trinidad and Tobago's independence from the United Kingdom, the TTDF is one of the largest military forces in the English-speaking Caribbean.

Its mission statement is to "defend the sovereign good of The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, contribute to the development of the national community and support the State in the fulfillment of its national and international objectives". The Defence Force has been engaged in domestic incidents, such as the 1990 Coup Attempt, and international missions, such as the United Nations Mission in Haiti between 1993 and 1996.

Administrative divisions

Trinidad is split into 14 regional corporations and municipalities, consisting of 9 regions and 5 municipalities, which have a limited level of autonomy. The various councils are made up of a mixture of elected and appointed members. Elections are due to be held every three years, but have not been held since 2003, four extensions having been sought by the government. The island of Tobago is governed by the Tobago House of Assembly:



The Red House, Trinidad and Tobago's Parliament Buildings, 2008 (undergoing renovations)



President's House, Trinidad



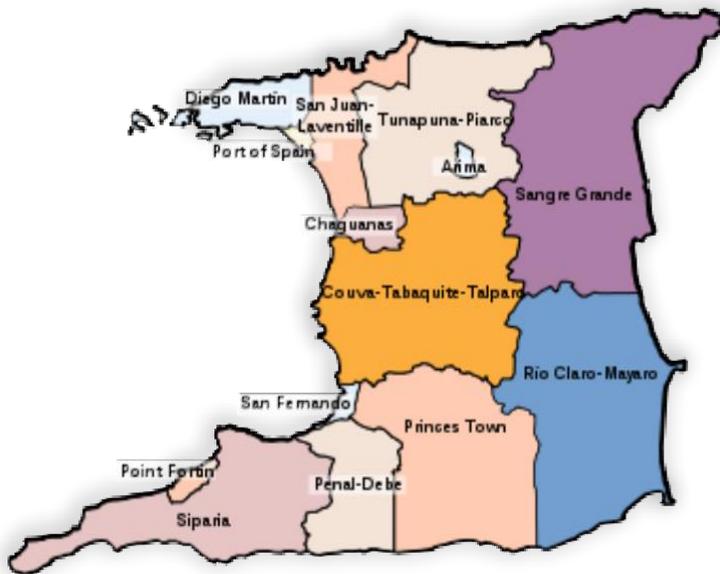
Coast Guard vessel in action



Basdeo Panday became the first Indo-Trinidadian prime minister in 1995.



Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard members during a practice exercise at Staubles Bay in Chaguaramas for the arrival of Prince Charles in 2008



Regional corporations and municipalities of Trinidad and Tobago

International and regional relationships

Organisation of American States

Trinidad and Tobago is one of the 35 states which has ratified the OAS charter and is a member of the Organisation.^[53] The Charter of the Organisation of American States was signed in Bogota in 1948 and was amended by several protocols which were agreed to in different countries. The naming convention which is used with respect to the naming of the protocols is to include in the name of the Protocol the name of the city and the year in which the Protocol was signed, such as Cartagena de Indias in 1985, Managua 1993.^[54]

Trinidad and Tobago entered into the Inter-American system in 1967.^[53]

Economy

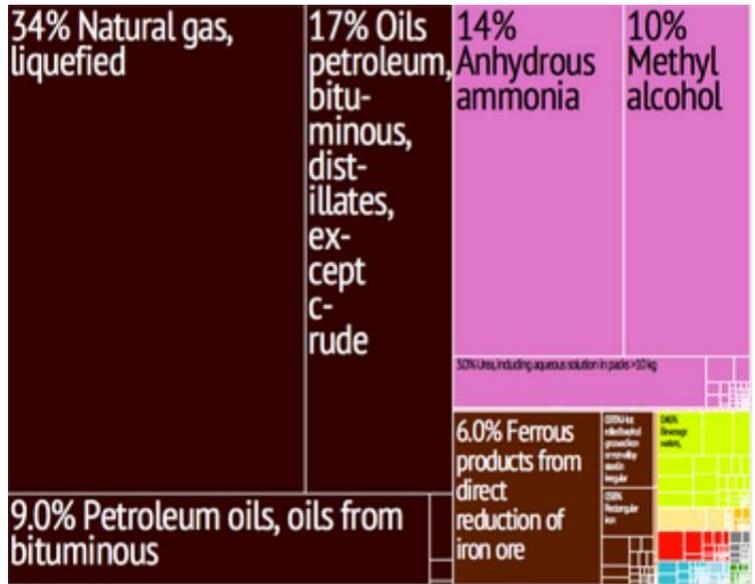
Trinidad and Tobago is one of the wealthiest and most developed nations in the Caribbean and is listed in the top 40 (2010 information) of the 70 High Income countries in the world. Its GNI per capita of US\$20,070^[55] (2014 GNI at Atlas Method) is one of the highest in the Caribbean.^[56] In November 2011, the OECD removed Trinidad and Tobago from its list of Developing Countries.^[57] Trinidad's economy is strongly influenced by the petroleum industry. Tourism and manufacturing are also important to the local economy. Tourism is a growing sector, although not as proportionately important as in many other Caribbean islands. Agricultural products include citrus and cocoa.

Recent growth has been fuelled by investments in liquefied natural gas (LNG), petrochemicals, and steel. Additional petrochemical, aluminium, and plastics projects are in various stages of planning. Trinidad and Tobago is the leading Caribbean producer of oil and gas, and its economy is heavily dependent upon these resources but it also supplies manufactured goods, notably food, beverages, and cement, to the Caribbean region.

Oil and gas account for about 40% of GDP and 80% of exports, but only 5% of employment. The country is also a regional financial centre, and the economy has a growing trade surplus.^[21] The expansion of Atlantic LNG over the past six years created the largest single-sustained phase of economic growth in Trinidad and Tobago. It has become the leading exporter of LNG to the United States, and now supplies some 70% of US LNG imports.^[58]

Trinidad and Tobago has transitioned from an oil-based economy to a natural gas based economy. In 2007, natural gas production averaged 4 billion cubic feet per day (110,000,000 m³/d), compared with 3.2×10^6 cu ft/d (91,000 m³/d) in 2005. In December 2005, the Atlantic LNG's fourth production module or "train" for liquefied natural gas (LNG) began production. Train 4 has increased Atlantic LNG's overall output capacity by almost 50% and is the largest LNG train in the world at 5.2 million tons/year of LNG.

Trinidad and Tobago, in an effort to undergo economic transformation though diversification formed InvesTT in 2012 to serve as the country's sole investment promotion agency. This agency is aligned to the Ministry of Trade and Industry and is to be the key agent in growing the country's non-oil and gas sectors significantly and sustainably.^[59]



A proportional representation of Trinidad and Tobago's exports



The oil refinery at Pointe-à-Pierre

Trinidad and Tobago's infrastructure is good by regional standards. The international airport in Trinidad was expanded in 2001. There is an extensive network of paved roads with several good four and six lane highways including one controlled access expressway. The Ministry of Works estimates that an average Trinidadian spends about four hours in traffic per day. Emergency services are reliable, but may suffer delays in rural districts. Private hospitals are available and reliable. Utilities are fairly reliable in the cities. Some areas, however, especially rural districts, still suffer from water shortages.

Communications Infrastructure

Trinidad and Tobago has a well developed communications sector. The Telecommunications and Broadcasting sectors generated an estimated TT\$5.63 billion(US\$0.88 billion) in 2014, which as a percentage of GDP equates to 3.1 percent. This represented a 1.9 percent increase in total revenues generated by this industry compared to last year. Of total telecommunications and broadcasting revenues, mobile voice services accounted for the majority of revenues with TT\$2.20 billion (39.2 percent). This was followed by Internet services which contributed TT\$1.18 billion or 21.1 percent. The next highest revenue earners for the industry were Fixed Voice services and Pay TV services whose contributions totalled TT\$0.76 billion and TT\$0.70 billion respectively (13.4 percent and 12.4 percent). International voice services was next in line, generating, TT\$0.27 billion 4.7 percent) in revenues. Free-to Air radio and television services contributed TT\$0.18 billion and TT\$0.13 billion respectively (3.2 percent and 2.4 percent). Finally, other contributors included “other revenues”and “leased line services” with earnings of TT\$0.16 billion and TT\$0.05 billion respectively, with 2.8 percent and 0.9 percent.^[60]

There are several providers for each segment of the telecommunications market. Fixed Lines Telephone service is provided by TSTT and Cable & Wireless Communications operating as FLOW; cellular service is provided by TSTT (operating as bmobile) and Digicel whilst internet service is provided by TSTT, FLOW, Digicel, Green Dot and Lisa Communications.

Transport

The transport system in Trinidad and Tobago consists of a dense network of highways and roads across both major islands, ferries connecting Port of Spain with Scarborough and San Fernando, and international airports on both islands. The Uriah Butler Highway, Churchill Roosevelt Highway and the Sir Solomon Hochoy Highway links the nation together. Public transportation options on land are public buses, private taxis and minibuses. By sea, the options are inter-island ferries and inter-city water taxis.^[61]

The island of Trinidad is served by Piarco International Airport located in Piarco. It was opened on 8 January 1931. Elevated at 17.4 metres (57 ft) above sea level it comprises an area of 680 hectares (1,700 acres) and has a runway of 3,200 metres (10,500 ft). The airport consists of two



An intersection of Churchill–Roosevelt Highway and Uriah Butler Highway, 2009

terminals, the North Terminal and the South Terminal. The older South Terminal underwent renovations in 2009 for use as a VIP entrance point during the 5th Summit of the Americas. The North Terminal was completed in 2001, and consists of^[62] 14 second-level aircraft gates with jetways for international flights, two ground-level domestic gates and 82 ticket counter positions.



State-owned Caribbean Airlines is the largest in the region.

Piarco International Airport was voted the Caribbean's leading airport for customer satisfaction and operational efficiency at the prestigious World Travel Awards (WTA),^[63] held in the Turks and Caicos in 2006.^[64] In 2008 the passenger throughput at Piarco International Airport was approximately 2.6 million.

Piarco International Airport is the seventh busiest airport in the Caribbean and the third busiest in the English-speaking Caribbean, after Sangster International Airport and Lynden Pindling International Airport.

As of December 2006, nineteen international airlines operated out of Piarco and offered flights to twenty-seven international destinations. Caribbean Airlines, the national airline, operates its main hub at the Piarco International Airport and services the Caribbean, the United States, Canada and South America. The airline is wholly owned by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. After an additional cash injection of US\$50 million, the Trinidad and Tobago government acquired the Jamaican airline Air Jamaica on 1 May 2010, with a 6–12 month transition period to follow.^[65]

Caribbean Airlines, the national and state-owned airline of Trinidad and Tobago, is the largest in the Caribbean. After the acquisition of the now defunct Air Jamaica, it became the largest airline and was voted as the Caribbean's leading airline.

The Island of Tobago is served by the A.N.R. Robinson International Airport in Crown Point. This airport has regular services to North America and Europe. There are regular flights between the two islands, with fares being heavily subsidised by the Government.

Demographics

Ethnic groups

The ethnic composition of Trinidad and Tobago reflects a history of conquest and immigration.^[66] While the earliest inhabitants were of Amerindian heritage, since the 20th century the two dominant groups in the country were those of South Asian and of African heritage. Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonians make up the country's largest ethnic group (approximately 37.6%). They are primarily descendants from indentured workers from India, brought to replace freed African slaves who refused to continue working on the sugar plantations. Through cultural preservation some residents of Indian descent continue to maintain traditions from their ancestral homelands.

Afro-Trinidadians and Tobagonians make up the country's second largest ethnic group, with approximately 36.3% of the population identifying as being of African descent. People of African background were brought to the island as slaves as early as the 16th century. 24.4% of the population identified in the 2011 census as being of "mixed" ethnic heritage. There are small but significant minorities of people of Amerindian, European, Chinese, and Arab descent.

Languages

English is the country's official language (the local variety of standard English is Trinidadian English or more properly, Trinidad and Tobago Standard English, abbreviated as "TTSE"), but the main spoken language is either of two English-based creole languages (Trinidadian Creole or Tobagonian Creole), which reflects the Amerindian, European, African, and Asian heritage of the nation. Both creoles contain elements from a variety of African languages; Trinidadian English Creole, however, is also influenced by French and French Creole (Patois).^[67] Spanish is estimated to be spoken by around 5% of the population^[68] and has been promoted by recent governments as a "first foreign language".^[69]

A majority of the early Indian immigrants spoke Trinidadian Hindustani (a form of the Bhojpuri dialect of Hindustani), which later became the *lingua franca* of Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonians. Attempts are being made to preserve the Trinidaian Hindustani language in the country, including the promotion of Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonian musical forms called Pichakaree and Chutney, which are typically sung in a mixture of English and Trinidadian Hindustani.^[70]

The indigenous languages were Yao on Trinidad and Karina on Tobago, both Cariban, and Shebaya on Trinidad, which was Arawakan.

Religion

Many different religions are practised in Trinidad and Tobago.

According to the 2011 census,^[72] Roman Catholics were the largest religious group in Trinidad and Tobago with 21.60% of the total population. Hindus were the second largest group with 18.15%, while the Pentecostal/Evangelical/Full Gospel denominations were the third largest group with 12.02% of the population. Significantly, respondents who did not state a religious affiliation represented 11.1% of the population. The remaining population is made of Spiritual Shouter Baptists (5.67%), Anglicans (5.67%), Muslims (4.97%), Seventh-day Adventists (4.09%), Presbyterians or Congregationalists (2.49%), Irreligious (2.18%), Jehovah's Witnesses (1.47%), other Baptists (1.21%), Trinidad Orisha believers (0.9%), Methodists (0.65%), Rastafarians (0.27%) and the Moravian Church (0.27%).

Two African syncretic faiths, the Shouter or Spiritual Baptists and the Orisha faith (formerly called Shangos, a less than complimentary term) are among the fastest growing religious groups. Similarly, there is a noticeable



Temple in the Sea

Religion in Trinidad and Tobago (2011 census)^[71]

Religion	Percent
Christianity	55.3%
Hinduism	18.1%

increase in numbers of Evangelical Protestant and Fundamentalist churches usually lumped as "Pentecostal" by most Trinidadians, although this designation is often inaccurate. A small Jewish community exists on the island. Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Bahá'í, and Buddhism are practiced by a minority of Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonians. Several eastern religions such as Buddhism and Taoism are followed by the Chinese community. There is also a small Bahá'í community.

None/not shared	13.3%
Islam	5.0%

Education

Children generally start pre-school at two and a half years but this is not mandatory. They are however, expected to have basic reading and writing skills when they commence primary school. Students proceed to a primary school at the age of five years. Seven years are spent in primary school. The seven classes of primary school consists of First Year and Second Year, followed by Standard One through Standard Five. During the final year of primary school, students prepare for and sit the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) which determines the secondary school the child will attend.

Students attend secondary school for a minimum of five years, leading to the CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate) examinations, which is the equivalent of the British GCSE O levels. Children with satisfactory grades may opt to continue high school for a further two-year period, leading to the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE), the equivalent of GCE A levels. Both CSEC and CAPE examinations are held by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Public Primary and Secondary education is free for all, although private and religious schooling is available for a fee.



University of the West Indies, St. Augustine

Tertiary education for tuition costs are provided for via GATE (The Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses), up to the level of the bachelor's degree, at the University of the West Indies (UWI), the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), the University of the Southern Caribbean (USC), the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) and certain other local accredited institutions. Government also currently subsidizes some Masters programmes. Both the Government and the private sector also provide financial assistance in the form of academic scholarships to gifted or needy students for study at local, regional or international universities.

Women

Women have a key role in Trinidadian demographics. While women account for only 49% of the population, they constitute nearly 55% of the workforce in the country.^[73]

Culture

Trinidad and Tobago claims two Nobel Prize-winning authors, V. S. Naipaul and St Lucian-born Derek Walcott (who founded the Trinidad Theatre Workshop, working and raising a family in Trinidad for much of his career).



Masqueraders during Carnival celebrations

Designer Peter Minshall is renowned not only for his Carnival costumes but also for his role in opening ceremonies of the Barcelona Olympics, the 1994 FIFA World Cup, the 1996 Summer Olympics, and the 2002 Winter Olympics, for which he won an Emmy Award.



A tadjah at Hosay in Port-of-Spain during the 1950s

Geoffrey Holder (brother of Boscoe Holder) and Heather Headley are two Trinidad-born artists who have won Tony Awards for theatre. Holder also has a distinguished film career, and Headley has won a Grammy Award as well. Recording artists Billy Ocean and Nicki Minaj are also Trinidadian.

Interestingly, three actors who appeared on Will Smith's sitcom *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* are of Trinidadian descent: Tatyana Ali and Alfonso Ribeiro were series regulars as Will's cousins Ashley and Carlton, respectively, while Nia Long played Will's girlfriend Lisa. Foxy Brown, Dean Marshall, Sommore, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Gabrielle Reece, pop singer Haddaway, Tracy Quan, Mike Bibby, Lauryn Williams, Fresh Kid Ice, and Roy Hibbert are all of Trinidadian descent.^[74]

Trinidad and Tobago also has the distinction of being the smallest country to have two Miss Universe titleholders and the first black woman ever to win: Janelle Commissiong in 1977, followed by Wendy Fitzwilliam in 1998; the country has also had one Miss World titleholder, Giselle LaRonde.

Music



Steelpan was invented in Trinidad.

Trinidad and Tobago is the birthplace of calypso music and the steelpan, which is widely claimed in Trinidad and Tobago to be the only acoustic musical instrument invented during the 20th century.^{[75][76][77]} Trinidad is also the birthplace of soca music, chutney music, parang. The diverse cultural and religious background also allows for many festivities and ceremonies throughout the year such as Carnival, Diwali, and Eid festivities.^[78]

Sports

Olympic Sports

Hasely Crawford won the first Olympic gold medal for Trinidad and Tobago in the men's 100 metre dash in the 1976 Summer Olympics. Nine different athletes from Trinidad and Tobago have won twelve medals at the Olympics, beginning with a silver medal in weightlifting, won by Rodney Wilkes in 1948,^[79] and most recently, a gold medal by Keshorn Walcott in the men's javelin throw in 2012. Ato Boldon has won the most Olympic and World Championship medals for Trinidad and Tobago in athletics, with eight in total – four from the Olympics and four from the World Championships. Boldon is the only world champion Trinidad and Tobago has produced to date in athletics. He won the 1997 200 m sprint World Championship in Athens. Swimmer George Bovell III won a bronze medal in the men's 200 m IM in 2004.

Also in 2012 Lalonde Gordon competed in the XXX Summer Olympics where he won a Bronze Medal in the 400 metres (1,300 feet), being surpassed by Luguelin Santos of the Dominican Republic and Kirani James of Grenada. Keshorn Walcott (as stated above) came first in javelin and earned a gold medal, making him the second Trinidadian in the country's history to receive one. This also makes him the first Western athlete in 40 years to receive a gold medal in the javelin sport, and the first athlete from Trinidad and Tobago to win a gold medal in a field event in the Olympics. Sprinter Richard Thompson is also from Trinidad and Tobago. He came second place to Usain Bolt in the Beijing Olympics in the 100 metres (330 feet) with a time of 9.89s.

Cricket

Cricket is a popular sport of Trinidad and Tobago, with intense inter-island rivalry with its Caribbean neighbours. Cricket is the national sport of the country. Trinidad and Tobago is represented at Test cricket, One Day International as well as Twenty20 cricket level as a member of the West Indies team. The national team plays at the first-class level in regional competitions. Trinidad and Tobago along with other islands from the Caribbean co-hosted the 2007 Cricket World Cup. The Queen's Park Oval located in Port of Spain is the largest cricket ground in the West Indies. Brian Lara, world record holder for the most runs scored both in a Test and in a First Class innings and other records, was born in a small town of Santa Cruz, Trinidad and Tobago and is often referred to as the Prince of Port of Spain or simply the Prince. This legendary West Indian batsman is widely regarded (along with Sir Donald Bradman, Sunil Gavaskar and Sachin Tendulkar) as one of the best batsmen ever to have played the game, and is one of the most famous sporting icons in the country.



Brian Lara batting for the West Indies against India

Football

Association football is also a popular sport in Trinidad and Tobago. The men's national football team qualified for the 2006 FIFA World Cup for the first time by beating Bahrain in Manama on 16 November 2005, making them the smallest country ever (in terms of population) to qualify. The team, coached by Dutchman Leo Beenhakker, and led by Tobagonian-born captain Dwight Yorke, drew their first group game – against Sweden in Dortmund, 0–0, but lost the second game to England on late goals, 0–2. They were eliminated after losing 2–0 to Paraguay in the last game of the Group Stage. Prior to the 2006 World Cup qualification, Trinidad and Tobago came agonisingly close in a controversial qualification campaign for the 1974 FIFA World Cup.

Following the match, the referee of their critical game against Haiti was awarded a lifetime ban for his actions.^[80] Trinidad and Tobago again fell just short of qualifying for the World Cup in 1990, needing only a draw at home against the United States but losing 1–0.^[81] They play their home matches at the Hasely Crawford Stadium. Trinidad and Tobago hosted the 2001 FIFA U-17 World Championship, and hosted the 2010 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup.

The TT Pro League is the country's primary football competition and is the top level of the Trinidad and Tobago football league system. The Pro League serves as a league for professional football clubs in Trinidad and Tobago. The league began in 1999 as part of a need for a professional league to strengthen the country's national team and improve the development of domestic players. The first season took place in the same year beginning with eight teams.

Basketball

Basketball is commonly played in Trinidad and Tobago in colleges, universities and throughout various urban basketball courts. Its national team is one of the most successful teams in the Caribbean. At the Caribbean Basketball Championship it won four straight gold medals from 1986–1990.

Other sports

Netball has long been a popular sport in Trinidad and Tobago, although it has declined in popularity in recent years. At the Netball World Championships they co-won the event in 1979, were runners up in 1987, and second runners up in 1983.

Rugby is played in Trinidad and Tobago and continues to be a popular sport, and horse racing is regularly followed in the country.

There is also the Trinidad and Tobago national baseball team which is controlled by the Baseball/Softball Association of Trinidad and Tobago, and represents the nation in international competitions. The team is a provisional member of the Pan American Baseball Confederation.

There are a number of 9 and 18-hole golf courses on Trinidad and Tobago. The most established is the St Andrews Golf Club, Maraval in Trinidad (commonly referred to as Moka), and there is a newer course at Trincity, near Piarco Airport called Millennium Lakes. There are 18-hole courses at Chaguramas and Point-a-Pierre and 9-hole courses at Couva and St Madeline. Tobago has two 18-hole courses. The older of the two is at Mount Irvine, with the Magdalena Hotel & Golf Club (formerly Tobago Plantations) being built more recently.

Although a minor sport, bodybuilding is of growing interest in Trinidad and Tobago. Heavyweight female bodybuilder Kashma Maharaj is of Trinidadian descent.

National symbols

Flag

The flag was chosen by the Independence committee in 1962. Red, black and white symbolise the warmth of the people, the richness of the earth and water respectively.^{[82][83]}

Coat of arms

The coat of arms was designed by the Independence committee, and features the scarlet ibis (native to Trinidad), the cocrico (native to Tobago) and hummingbird. The shield bears three ships, representing both the Trinity, and the three ships that Columbus sailed.^[82]



The Flag of Trinidad and Tobago.

Orders and decorations

There are five categories and thirteen classes of National Awards:^[84]

- The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (formerly The Trinity Cross Medal of the Order of the Trinity) in Gold only.
- The Chaconia Medal, in Gold, Silver and Bronze.
- The Hummingbird Medal, in Gold, Silver and Bronze.
- The Public Service Medal of Merit, in Gold, Silver and Bronze.
- The Medal for the Development of Women, in Gold, Silver and Bronze



The Coat of arms of Trinidad and Tobago

National songs

The National Anthem of the twin-island state is "**Forged From The Love of Liberty**".^{[85][86]}

Other national songs include '*God Bless Our Nation*'^[87] and "*Our Nation's Dawning*".^[88]

National birds

The national birds for Trinidad and Tobago are the scarlet ibis and the cocrico. The Scarlet Ibis is kept safe by the government by living in the Caroni Bird Sanctuary which was set up by the government for the protection of these birds. The Cocrico is more indigenous to the island of Tobago and are more likely to be seen in the forest.^[89]

National instrument

The national instrument of Trinidad and Tobago is the Steelpan which was created in Trinidad and Tobago. It is the only musical instrument to be manufactured in the 20th century.^[90]



The Chaconia (*Warszewiczia coccinea*) is the national flower of Trinidad and Tobago.

See also

- Index of Trinidad and Tobago-related articles
- List of Trinidad and Tobago-related topics
- Outline of Trinidad and Tobago
- Driver's licenses in Trinidad and Tobago
- Vehicle registration plates of Trinidad and Tobago

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External links

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- Key Development Forecasts for Trinidad and Tobago (http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=TT) from International Futures
- Guanaguanare – the Laughing Gull. Carib Indians in Trinidad – includes 2 videos (http://guanaguanaresin.gsatspot.com.au/2011_07_01_archive.html)

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