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American Samoa

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)



Amerika Sāmoa / Sāmoa Amelika
American Samoa



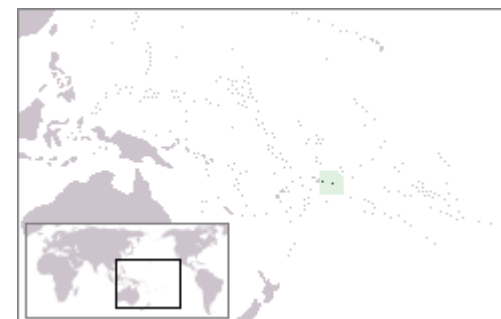
Flag



Coat of arms

Motto: *Samoa, Muamua Le Atua*" (Samoan)
 "Samoa, Let God Be First"

Anthem: The Star-Spangled Banner, Amerika Samoa



Capital	Pago Pago ¹
Official languages	English, Samoan
Demonym	American Samoan
Government	
- Head of State	George W. Bush (R)
- Governor	Togiola Tulafono (D)
Unincorporated territory of the United States	
- Treaty of Berlin	1899



- Deed of Cession of Tutuila	1900
- Deed of Cession of Manu'a	1904
Area	
- Total	199 km ² (212th) 76.83 sq mi
- Water (%)	0
Population	
- 2007 estimate	68,200
- 2000 census	57,291
- Density	353/km ² (33rd) 914/sq mi
Currency	US dollar (USD)
Time zone	(UTC-11)
Internet TLD	.as
Calling code	+1 684
¹ Fagatogo is identified as the seat of government.	



American Samoa [əˈmɛrɪkən sɑmoʊə] (Samoan: *Amerika Sāmoa* or *Sāmoa Amelika*) is an unincorporated territory of the United States located in the South Pacific Ocean, southeast of the sovereign state of Samoa, formerly known as Western Samoa. The main (largest and most populous) island is Tutuila, with the Manu'a Islands, Rose Atoll, and Swains Island also included in the territory. American Samoa is part of the Samoan Islands chain, located west of the Cook Islands, north of Tonga, and some 300 miles (500 km) south of Tokelau. To the west are the islands of the Wallis and Futuna group. The 2000 census showed a total population of 57,291. The total land area is 200.22 km² (77.305 sq mi).

History

Pre-Western contact

It is generally believed that the Samoan Islands were originally inhabited as early as 1000 BC. Samoa was not reached by European explorers until the eighteenth century.



The pre-Western history of Eastern Samoa (now American Samoa) is inextricably bound with the history of Western Samoa (now independent Samoa). The Manu'a Islands of American Samoa has one of the oldest histories of Polynesia, in connection with the Tui Manua title, connected with the histories of the archipelagos of Fiji, Tonga, the Cook Islands, Tokelau and elsewhere in the Pacific, all of which had once been under Manua's occupation. Tu'i Manu'a from Manu'a ruled most of the Pacific, including Tonga, long before the Tu'i Tonga Empire. While Tu'i Manu'a ruled Tonga, the external influences came in the form of imperial activities, beginning with the Tu'i Pulotu empire in Fiji and followed by the Tu'i Manu'a empire in Samoa. In other words, Tonga was under considerable influence from the imperialism of both Fiji and Samoa. However, Tonga was able to free itself through bitter and bloody wars from the imperial domination of the Tu'i Manu'a -- which eventually led to the formation of the Tu'i Tonga empire around AD 950 in the person of 'Aho'eitu, the first Tu'i Tonga -- whose father was a deified Samoan high chief, Tangaloa 'Eitumātupu'a, and mother a Tongan woman, Vā'epopua, of great noble birth. This double origin entitled the Tu'i Tonga to hold both divine and secular offices. In principle, the close cultural and historical

interlinkages between Fiji, Samoa and Tonga were essentially elitist, involving the intermarriage between regional aristocratic families. Many years later after Tonga freed herself from Samoa the Tongans took rule over Samoa until Samoa freed herself. Manu'a was the only island group that remained independent. The islands of Tutuila and Aunu'u were politically connected to 'Upolu island in what is now independent Samoa. It can be said that all the Samoa islands are politically connected today through the faamatai chiefly system and through family connections that are as strong as ever. This system of the faamatai and the customs of faasamoa originated with two of the most famous early chiefs of Samoa, who were both women and related, Nafanua and Salamasina.

Colonization

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Map of American Samoa.



Early Western contact included a battle in the eighteenth century between French explorers and islanders in Tutuila, for which the Samoans were blamed in the West, giving them a reputation for ferocity. Early nineteenth century Rarotongan missionaries to the Samoa islands were followed by a group of Western missionaries led by John Williams of the Congregationalist London Missionary Society in the 1830s, officially bringing Christianity to Samoa. Less than a hundred years later, the Samoan Congregationalist Church became the first independent indigenous church of the South Pacific.

In March 1889, a German naval force invaded a village in Samoa, and by doing so destroyed some American property. Three American warships then entered the Samoan harbour and were prepared to fire on the three German warships found there. Before guns were fired, a typhoon sank both the American and German ships. A compulsory armistice was called because of the lack of warships.

As a U.S. Territory

International rivalries in the latter half of the nineteenth century were settled by the 1899 Treaty of Berlin in which Germany and the U.S. divided the Samoan archipelago. The following year, the U.S. formally occupied its portion: a smaller group of eastern islands, one of which surrounds the noted harbour of Pago Pago. Since 1962, the western islands have been an independent nation, adopting the name *The Independent State of Samoa* in 1997.

After the U.S. took possession of Samoa, the U.S. Navy built a coaling station on Pago Pago Bay for its Pacific Squadron and appointed a local Secretary. The navy secured a Deed of Cession of Tutuila in 1900 and a Deed of Cession of Manu'a in 1904. The last sovereign of Manu'a, the Tui Manu'a Elisala, was forced to sign a Deed of Cession of Manu'a following a series of U.S. Naval trials, known as the "Trial of the Ipu", in Pago Pago, Ta'u, and aboard a Pacific Squadron gunboat.

After World War I, during the time of the Mau movement in Western Samoa (then a New Zealand protectorate), there was a corresponding American Samoa Mau movement, led by Samuel Sailele Ripley, who was from Leone village and was a WWI war veteran. After meetings in America, he was prevented from disembarking from the ship that brought him home to American Samoa and was not allowed to return. The American Samoa Mau movement having been suppressed by the U.S. Navy, in 1930 the U.S. Congress sent a committee to investigate the status of American Samoa, led by Americans who had had a part in the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

In 1938, famous aviator Ed Musick and his crew died on the Pan American World Airways S-42 Samoan Clipper over Pago Pago, on a survey flight to Auckland, New Zealand. Sometime after take-off the aircraft experienced trouble and Musick turned it back toward Pago Pago. As the crew began dumping fuel in preparation for an emergency landing a spark in the fuel pump caused an explosion that tore the aircraft apart in mid-air.

During World War II, U.S. Marines in Samoa outnumbered the local population, having a huge cultural influence. Young Samoan men from the age of 14 and above were combat trained by US military personnel. Samoans served in various capacities during WWII, including as combatants, medical personnel, code personnel, ship repair, and others.

After the war, Organic Act 4500, a U.S. Department of Interior-sponsored attempt to incorporate Samoa, was defeated in Congress, primarily through the efforts of Samoan chiefs, led by Tuiasosopo Mariota. These chiefs' efforts led to the creation of a local legislature, the American Samoa Fono which meets in the village of Fagatogo, often considered the territory's *de facto* and *de jure* capital (the United States regards Pago Pago as the official capital of the territory).



In time, the Navy-appointed governor was replaced by a locally elected one. Although technically considered "unorganized" in that the U.S. Congress has not passed an Organic Act for the territory, American Samoa is self-governing under a constitution that became effective on July 1, 1967. The U.S. Territory of American Samoa is on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, a listing which is disputed by territorial government officials.

As of May, 2008 seven members of the American Armed Forces from American Samoa have died in the Iraq War.

Politics



Governor Togiola
Tulafono

Politics of American Samoa takes place in a framework of a presidential representative democratic dependency, whereby the Governor is the head of government, and of a pluriform multi-party system. American Samoa is an unincorporated and unorganized territory of the United States, administered by the Office of Insular Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior. Its constitution was ratified in 1966 and came into effect in 1967. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in the two chambers of the legislature. The American political parties (Republican and Democratic) exist in American Samoa, but few politicians are aligned with the parties. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

There is also the traditional village politics of the Samoa Islands, the "fa'amatai" and the "fa'asamoa", which continues in American Samoa and in independent Samoa, and which interacts across these current boundaries. The Fa'asamoa is the language and customs, and the Fa'amatai the protocols of the "fono" (council) and the chiefly system. The Fa'amatai and the Fono take place at all levels of the Samoan body politic, from the family, to the village, to the region, to national matters. The "matai" (chiefs) are elected by consensus within the fono of the extended family and village(s) concerned. The matai and the fono (which is itself made of matai) decide on distribution of family exchanges and tenancy of communal lands. The majority of lands in American

Samoa and independent Samoa are communal. A matai can represent a small family group or a great extended family that reaches across islands, and to both American Samoa and independent Samoa.

Nationality

Persons born in American Samoa are American nationals, but not United States citizens. Such status is only conferred on people born in the districts of American Samoa and Swains Island, but not to people born in *unorganized* atolls. [Note: Swains Island is claimed by supporters of independence for Tokelau as part of that country.]

Samoans are entitled to elect one non-voting delegate to the United States House of Representatives. Their delegate since 1989 has been Democrat Eni Fa'aua'a Hunkin Faleomavaega, Jr. They also receive delegates to the Democratic and Republican National Conventions.

Administrative divisions



American Samoa is administratively divided into three districts and two "unorganized" atolls. The districts and unorganized atolls are subdivided into 74 villages. Pago Pago is the capital of American Samoa. It is one of the largest villages and is located on the eastern side of Tutuila island in Ma'oputasi County district #9. Some have mistakenly cited Fagatogo as the capital due to the fact that is listed in the Constitution of American Samoa as the official seat of government.

Geography

American Samoa is located within the geographical region of Oceania. With a total land area of 76.8 square miles (199 km²), it is slightly larger than the District of Columbia. Consisting of five, rugged volcanic islands and two coral atolls, it is frequently hit by typhoons between December and March, due to its positioning in the South Pacific Ocean. In addition, Rose Atoll, located in American Samoa, is the southernmost point in the territory of the United States.

Official protest to neighboring Samoa

In 1997 a protest was issued against Samoa, formerly named Western Samoa, for changing its official name to the shorter form. The official view in American Samoa is that such a form detracts from the Samoan identity of American Samoa, and public officials and documents from American Samoa still refer to Samoa as Western Samoa.



A view of one of American Samoa's beaches.

Territorial claim by Tokelau nationalists

Swains Island is claimed by supporters of independence for Tokelau as part of that country. Swains Islanders and Tokelauans enjoy linguistic and cultural affinities. Tokelauans refer to Swains as Olohega. In 2006 and 2007, unsuccessful, United Nations-sponsored referenda on independence for Tokelau, currently administered by New Zealand, revived a dormant source of tension. The American and New Zealand governments are not concerned to pursue any change of territorial status over the Swains Island issue. However, the existence of a clause in a draft independence treaty espoused by United Nations-driven Tokelauan nationalists is a matter which will be a potential source of diplomatic tension. In one direction or another, the way out of this impasse may depend on the extent that the United States government shows a willingness or otherwise to support the United Nations' decolonization efforts at the expense of the current territorial integrity of American Samoa.

Economy

Employment on the island falls into three relatively equally-sized categories of approximately 5,000 workers each: the public sector, the two tuna canneries, and the rest of the private sector. There are only a few federal employees in American Samoa and no active military personnel except members of the U.S. Coast Guard. (there is an Army Reserve unit, however); the overwhelming majority of public sector employees work for the American Samoa Government. The two



tuna canneries (StarKist and Samoa Packing) export several hundred million dollars worth of canned tuna to the United States. In early 2007 the Samoan economy was highlighted in the U.S. Congress as it was not mentioned in the minimum wage bill, at the request of the Samoan delegate to the United States House of Representatives, Eni Faleomavaega.

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 has, since inception, contained special provisions for American Samoa, citing its limited economy. Since the American set based on the recommendations of a Special Industry Committee meeting bi-annually. Originally, the Act contained provisions for other territories, which were phased out as those territories developed more diverse economies. In 2007, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 was passed, increasing minimum wage in American Samoa by \$0.50 per hour in 2007 and another \$0.50 per hour each year thereafter until the minimum wage in American Samoa equals that of the fifty states.

Demographics

American Samoa is small enough to have just one ZIP code, 96799. The island contains 23 primary schools and six secondary schools, all of which are operated by the American Samoa Department of Education. American Samoa Community College, founded in 1970, provides post-secondary education on the islands.

Culture

The culture in American Samoa is almost the same as in Western Samoa (Upolu). The U.S. military and agricultural occupation distinguishes the civilization of American Samoa from the sovereign Samoa.

Sports

About 30 ethnic Samoans, many from American Samoa, currently play in the National Football League. A 2002 article from ESPN estimated that a Samoan male (either an American Samoan, or a Samoan living in the 50 United States) is 40 times more likely to play in the NFL than a non-Samoan American. Pittsburgh Steelers safety Troy Polamalu, though born and raised in the mainland U.S., is perhaps the most famous Samoan in the NFL, having not gotten his haircut since 2000 (and only because a former USC coach told him he had to) and wearing it down during games in honour of his heritage.

A number have also ventured into professional wrestling (see especially Anoa'i family). World Wrestling Entertainment has employed many members from the Anoa'i family, most famously The Rock. The company currently employs Anoa'i member Eddie Fatu, better known to wrestling fans as **Umaga**, who has a traditional Samoan gimmick and is also known at times as the **Samoan Bulldozer**.



American Samoa's national soccer team is considered one of the newest teams in the world. It also has the distinction of suffering the worst loss in international soccer history: they lost to Australia 31 - 0 in a FIFA World Cup qualifying match on April 11, 2001.

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Australia

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

The **Commonwealth of Australia** is a country in the southern hemisphere comprising the mainland of the world's smallest continent, the major island of Tasmania, and numerous other islands in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The neighbouring countries are Indonesia, East Timor, and Papua New Guinea to the north, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia to the northeast, and New Zealand to the southeast. Australia is the only country that is also a continent.

The Australian mainland has been inhabited for more than 42,000 years by indigenous Australians. After sporadic visits by fishermen from the north and then European discovery by Dutch explorers in 1606, the eastern half of Australia was later claimed by the British in 1770 and initially settled through penal transportation to the colony of New South Wales, commencing on 26 January 1788. As the population grew and new areas were explored, another five largely self-governing Crown Colonies were established during the 19th century.

On 1 January 1901, the six colonies became a federation, and the Commonwealth of Australia was formed. Since federation, Australia has maintained a stable liberal democratic political system and remains a Commonwealth realm. The capital city is Canberra, located in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). The population is just over 21.3 million, with approximately 60% of the population concentrated in and around the mainland state capitals of Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, and Adelaide.

Etymology

Commonwealth of Australia



Flag



Coat of arms

Anthem: *Advance Australia Fair*



Capital	Canberra
Largest city	Sydney
Official languages	English (<i>de facto</i>)
Demonym	Australian
Government	Parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy, <i>see Government of Australia</i>
 - Monarch	Queen Elizabeth II
 - Governor-General	Michael Jeffery
 - Prime Minister	Kevin Rudd
Independence	from the United Kingdom



Artist's rendition of Port Jackson, the site where Sydney was established, viewed from the South Head. (From *A Voyage to Terra Australis*.)

The name "Australia" is derived from the Latin *Australis*, meaning "Southern". Legends of an "unknown land of the south" (*terra australis incognita*) date back to Roman times and were commonplace in medieval geography but were not based on any documented knowledge of the continent. In 1521 Spaniards were among the first Europeans to sail the Pacific Ocean. The first use of the word "Australia" in English was in 1625—the words "A note of Australia del Espiritu Santo, written by Master Hakluyt", published by Samuel Purchas in *Hakluytus Posthumus*. It is said that the name Australia originally came from the Spanish man Pedro Fernández de Quirós whose travels around the southern seas brought him close to the lands he named "Australia del Espiritu Santo" in honour of the House of Austria which, at the time, governed the Spanish Empire. The Dutch

adjectival form *Australische* was used by Dutch East India Company officials in Batavia to refer to the newly discovered land to the south in 1638. "Australia" was used in a 1693 translation of *Les Aventures de Jacques Sadeur dans la Découverte et le Voyage de la Terre Australe*, a 1676 French novel by Gabriel de Foigny under the pen name Jacques Sadeur. Alexander Dalrymple then used it in *An Historical Collection of Voyages and Discoveries in the South Pacific Ocean* (1771), to refer to the entire South Pacific region. In 1793, George Shaw and Sir James Smith published *Zoology and Botany of New Holland*, in which they wrote of "the vast island, or rather continent, of Australia, Australasia or New Holland."

The name "Australia" was popularised by the 1814 work *A Voyage to Terra Australis* by the navigator Matthew Flinders, the first recorded person to circumnavigate Australia. Though its title reflected the British Admiralty's usage, Flinders used the word "Australia" in his book, and because it was widely read it gave the term general currency. Governor Lachlan Macquarie of New South Wales subsequently used the word in his dispatches to England, and on 12 December 1817 recommended to the Colonial Office that it be officially adopted. In 1824, the Admiralty agreed that the continent should be known officially as "Australia".

The word "Australia" in Australian English is pronounced /əˈstræɪljə, -liːə, -jə/.

History

The first human habitation of Australia is estimated to have occurred between 42,000 and 48,000 years ago. These first Australians were possibly the ancestors of the current Indigenous Australians; they may have arrived via land bridges and short sea-crossings

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- Constitution	1 January 1901
- Statute of Westminster	11 December 1931
- Statute of Westminster Adoption Act	9 October 1942 (with effect from 3 September 1939)
- Australia Act	3 March 1986
Area	
- Total	7,741,220 km ² (6th) 2,988,888 sq mi
- Water (%)	1
Population	
- 2008 estimate	21,310,000 (53rd)
- 2006 census	19,855,288
- Density	2.6/km ² (224th) 6.7/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2007 estimate
- Total	US\$718.4 billion (IMF) (17th)
- Per capita	US\$34,359 (IMF) (14th)
GDP (nominal)	2008 estimate
- Total	US\$1046.8 billion (13th)
- Per capita	US\$49,271 (DFAT) (16th)
HDI (2007)	— 0.962 (high) (3rd)
Currency	Australian dollar (AUD)
Time zone	various (UTC+8 to +10.5)
- Summer (DST)	various (UTC+9 to +11.5)
Internet TLD	.au
Calling code	+61



from present-day South-East Asia. Most of these people were hunter-gatherers, with a complex oral culture and spiritual values based on reverence for the land and a belief in the Dreamtime. The Torres Strait Islanders, ethnically Melanesian, inhabited the Torres Strait Islands and parts of far-north Queensland; their cultural practices were and remain distinct from those of the Aborigines.



Lieutenant James Cook charted the east coast of Australia on HM Bark *Endeavour*, claiming the land for Great Britain in 1770. This replica was built in Fremantle in 1988; photographed in Cooktown Harbour where Cook spent seven weeks.

The first recorded European sighting of the Australian mainland was made by the Dutch navigator Willem Janszoon, who sighted the coast of Cape York Peninsula in 1606. During the 17th century, the Dutch charted the whole of the western and northern coastlines of what they called New Holland, but they made no attempt at settlement. In 1770, James Cook sailed along and mapped the east coast of Australia, which he named New South Wales and claimed for Great Britain. The expedition's discoveries provided impetus for the establishment of a penal colony there.

The British Crown Colony of New South Wales started with the establishment of a settlement at Port Jackson by Captain Arthur Phillip on 26 January 1788. This date was later to become Australia's national day, Australia Day. Van Diemen's Land, now known as Tasmania, was settled in 1803 and became a separate colony in 1825. The United Kingdom formally claimed the western part of Australia in 1829. Separate colonies were created from parts of New South Wales: South Australia in 1836, Victoria in 1851, and Queensland in 1859. The Northern Territory was founded in 1911 when it was excised from South Australia. South Australia was founded as a "free province"—that is, it was never a penal colony. Victoria and Western Australia were also founded "free" but later accepted transported convicts. The transportation of convicts to the colony of New South Wales ceased in 1848 after a campaign by the settlers.

The Indigenous Australian population, estimated at 350,000 at the time of European settlement, declined steeply for 150 years following settlement, mainly because of infectious disease combined with forced re-settlement and cultural disintegration. The removal of children from their families, which some historians and Indigenous Australians have argued could be considered to constitute genocide by some definitions, may have contributed to the decline in the indigenous population. Such interpretations of Aboriginal history are disputed by some commentators as being exaggerated or fabricated for political or ideological reasons. This debate is known within Australia as the History Wars. Following the 1967 referendum, the Federal government gained the power to implement policies and make laws with respect to Aborigines. Traditional ownership of land—native title—was not recognised until 1992, when the High Court case *Mabo v Queensland (No 2)* overturned the notion of Australia as *terra nullius* (lit. "land of none" or "empty land") at the time of European occupation.



Port Arthur, Tasmania was Australia's largest gaol for transported convicts.



The Last Post is played at an ANZAC Day ceremony in Port Melbourne, Victoria, 25 April 2005. Such ceremonies are held in virtually every suburb and town in Australia.

A gold rush began in Australia in the early 1850s, and the Eureka Stockade rebellion against mining licence fees in 1854 was an early expression of civil disobedience. Between 1855 and 1890, the six colonies individually gained responsible government, managing most of their own affairs while remaining part of the British Empire. The Colonial Office in London retained control of some matters, notably foreign affairs, defence, and international shipping. On 1 January 1901, federation of the colonies was achieved after a decade of planning, consultation, and voting. The Commonwealth of Australia was born as a Dominion of the British Empire. The Federal Capital Territory (later renamed the Australian Capital Territory) was formed from a part of New South Wales in 1911 to provide a location for the proposed new federal capital of Canberra (Melbourne was the temporary seat of government from 1901 to 1927 while Canberra was being constructed). The Northern Territory was transferred from the control of the South Australian government to the Commonwealth in 1911. Australia willingly participated in World War I. Many Australians regard the defeat of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACs) at Gallipoli as the birth of the nation—its first major military action. The Kokoda Track Campaign is regarded by many as an analogous nation-defining event during World War II.

The Statute of Westminster 1931 formally ended most of the constitutional links between Australia and the United Kingdom when Australia adopted it in 1942, but backdated it to the beginning of World War II to confirm the validity of legislation passed by the Australian Parliament during the war. The shock of the United Kingdom's defeat in Asia in 1942 and the threat of Japanese invasion caused Australia to turn to the United States as a new ally and protector. Since 1951, Australia has been a formal military ally of the US under the auspices of the ANZUS treaty. After World War II, Australia encouraged immigration from Europe; since the 1970s and the abolition of the White Australia policy, immigration from Asia and other non-European parts of the world was also encouraged. As a result, Australia's demography, culture and self-image have been transformed. The final constitutional ties between Australia and the UK were severed in 1986 with the passing of the Australia Act 1986, ending any British role in the government of the Australian States, and ending judicial appeals to the UK Privy Council. In 1999, Australian voters rejected by a majority of 54% a move to become a republic with a president appointed by two-thirds vote of both houses of the Australian Parliament. To alter the Australian constitution an Act of the Australian Parliament must occur as well as a referendum receiving not only a majority of votes across the country, but also a majority of votes in a majority of the six Australian states. The referendum of 1999 not only did not receive a majority of votes across the country, it also did not win one of the six Australian states. Since the election of the Whitlam Government in 1972, there has been an increasing focus on the expansion of ties with other Pacific Rim nations while maintaining close ties with Australia's traditional allies and trading partners.

Politics



The Commonwealth of Australia is a constitutional democracy based on a federal division of powers. The form of government used in Australia is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. Queen Elizabeth II is the Queen of Australia, a role that is distinct from her position as monarch of the other Commonwealth realms. The Queen is represented by the Governor-General at federal level and by the Governors at state level. Although the Constitution gives extensive executive powers to the Governor-General, these are normally exercised only on the advice of the Prime Minister. The most notable exercise of the Governor-General's reserve powers outside the Prime Minister's direction was the dismissal of the Whitlam Government in the constitutional crisis of 1975.

There are three branches of government:

- The legislature: the Commonwealth Parliament, comprising the Queen, the Senate, and the House of Representatives; the Queen is represented by the Governor-General, who by convention acts on the advice of his or her Ministers.
- The executive: the Federal Executive Council (the Governor-General as advised by the Executive Councillors); in practice, the councillors are the Prime Minister and Ministers of State.
- The judiciary: the High Court of Australia and other federal courts. Appeals from Australian courts to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the United Kingdom ceased when the *Australia Act* was passed in 1986.



Parliament House in Canberra was opened in 1988 replacing the provisional Parliament House building opened in 1927.

The bicameral Commonwealth Parliament consists of the Queen, the Senate (the upper house) of 76 senators, and a House of Representatives (the lower house) of 150 members. Members of the lower house are elected from single-member constituencies, commonly known as "electorates" or "seats". Seats in the House of Representatives are allocated to states on the basis of population, with each original state guaranteed a minimum of five seats. In the Senate, each state is represented by 12 senators, and each of the territories (the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory) by two. Elections for both chambers are held every three years; senators have overlapping six-year terms, and only half of the seats are put to each election unless the cycle is interrupted by a double dissolution. The party with majority support in the House of Representatives forms government and its leader becomes Prime Minister.

There are two major political groups that form government: the Australian Labor Party, and the Coalition which is a grouping of two parties: the Liberal Party and its minor partner, the National Party. Independent members and several minor parties—including the Greens and the Australian Democrats—have achieved representation in Australian parliaments, mostly in upper houses. Since 3 December 2007, shortly after the 2007 election, the Labor Party led by the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd has been in power in Canberra, and the party is now in power in every parliament in the country. In the 2004 election, the previous governing Coalition led by John Howard won control of the Senate—the first time in more than 20 years that a party (or a coalition) has done so while in government. Voting is compulsory for all enrolled citizens 18 years and over, in each state and territory and at the federal level. Enrolment to vote is compulsory in all jurisdictions except South Australia.

States and territories



Australia has six states, two major mainland territories, and other minor territories. The states are New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia. The two major mainland territories are the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT). In most respects, the territories function like the states, but the Commonwealth Parliament can override any legislation of their parliaments. By contrast, federal legislation only overrides state legislation in certain areas that are set out in Section 51 of the Australian Constitution; state parliaments retain all residual legislative powers, including powers over hospitals, education, police, the judiciary, roads, public transport, and local government.

One interesting difference between Australia and the United States is that because the land area of the Commonwealth has not changed since federation, crown land in the states is the property of the state governments, not the commonwealth. The crown land owned by the Commonwealth consists of crown land in the territories and isolated small parcels used as airports etc. In the United States, because of its major expansion since federation, this only applies in the original thirteen colonies and Texas.

Each state and territory has its own legislature: unicameral in the Northern Territory, the ACT, and Queensland, and bicameral in the remaining states. The lower house is known as the Legislative Assembly (House of Assembly in South Australia and Tasmania) and the upper house is known as the Legislative Council. The head of the government in each state is the Premier, and in each territory the Chief Minister. The Queen is represented in each state by a Governor; an Administrator in the Northern Territory and the Australian Governor-General in the ACT, have analogous roles.

Australia also has several minor territories; the federal government administers a separate area within New South Wales, the Jervis Bay Territory, as a naval base and sea port for the national capital. In addition Australia has the following inhabited external territories: Norfolk Island, Christmas Island, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, and several largely uninhabited external territories: Ashmore and Cartier Islands, Coral Sea Islands, Heard Island and McDonald Islands, and the Australian Antarctic Territory.

Foreign relations and military





Over recent decades, Australia's foreign relations have been driven by a close association with the United States through the ANZUS pact, and by a desire to develop relationships with Asia and the Pacific, particularly through ASEAN and the Pacific Islands Forum. In 2005 Australia secured an inaugural seat at the East Asia Summit following its accession to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation. Australia is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, in which the Commonwealth Heads of Government meetings provide the main forum for cooperation. Australia has energetically pursued the cause of international trade liberalisation. Australia led the formation of the Cairns Group and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation. It is a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and the World Trade Organization. There are several major bilateral free trade agreements Australia has pursued, most recently the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement and Closer Economic Relations with New Zealand. A founding member country of the United Nations, Australia also maintains an international aid program under which some 60 countries receive assistance. The 2005–06 budget provides A\$2.5 billion for development assistance; as a percentage of GDP, this contribution is less than that of the UN Millennium Development Goals.



The Australian War Memorial

Australia's armed forces—the Australian Defence Force (ADF)—comprise the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), the Australian Army, and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF), numbering about 51,000. All branches of the ADF have been involved in UN and regional peacekeeping (most recently in East Timor, the Solomon Islands and Sudan), disaster relief, and armed conflict, including the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The government appoints the Chief of the Defence Force from one of the armed services; the current Chief of the Defence Force is Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston. In the 2006–07 budget, defence spending is A\$22 billion. While the Governor-General is the Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Defence Force, he or she does not play an active part in the ADF's command structure; the elected Australian Government controls the ADF.

Geography

Australia's 7,617,930 square kilometres (2,941,299 sq. mi) landmass is on the Indo-Australian Plate. Surrounded by the Indian and Pacific oceans, Australia is separated from Asia by the Arafura and Timor seas. Australia has 34,218 kilometres (21,262 mi) of coastline (excluding all offshore islands) and claims an extensive exclusive economic zone of 8,148,250 square kilometres (3,146,057 sq. mi). This exclusive economic zone does not include the Australian Antarctic Territory.

The Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef, lies a short distance off the northeast coast and extends for over 2,000 kilometres (1,250 mi). Mount Augustus, claimed to be the world's largest monolith, is located in Western Australia. At 2,228 metres (7,310 ft), Mount Kosciuszko on the Great Dividing Range is the highest mountain on the Australian mainland, although Mawson Peak on the remote Australian territory of Heard Island is taller at 2,745 metres (9,006 ft).

By far the largest part of Australia is desert or semi-arid lands commonly known as the outback. Australia is the flattest continent, with the oldest and least fertile soils, and is the driest inhabited continent. Only the southeast and southwest corners of the continent have a temperate climate. Most of the population lives along the temperate southeastern coastline. The landscapes of the northern part of the country, with a tropical climate, consist of rainforest, woodland, grassland, mangrove swamps, and desert. The climate is significantly influenced by ocean currents, including the El Niño southern oscillation, which is correlated with periodic drought, and the seasonal tropical low



Climatic zones in Australia, based on Köppen classification.



pressure system that produces cyclones in northern Australia. In June 2008 it became known that an expert panel had warned of long term, maybe irreversible, severe ecological damage for the whole Murray-Darling basin if it does not receive sufficient water by October.

Ecology



The koala and the *eucalyptus* forming an iconic Australian pair.

Although most of Australia is semi-arid or desert, it includes a diverse range of habitats, from alpine heaths to tropical rainforests and is recognised as a megadiverse country. Because of the continent's great age (and consequent low levels of fertility), its extremely variable weather patterns, and its long-term geographic isolation, much of Australia's biota is unique and diverse. About 85% of flowering plants, 84% of mammals, more than 45% of birds, and 89% of in-shore, temperate-zone fish are endemic. Australia has the greatest number of reptiles of any country, with 755 species. Many of Australia's ecoregions, and the species within those regions, are threatened by human activities and introduced plant and animal species. The federal *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is a legal framework for the protection of threatened species. Numerous protected areas have been created under the national Biodiversity Action Plan to protect and preserve unique ecosystems; 64 wetlands are registered under the Ramsar Convention, and 16 World Heritage Sites have been established. Australia was ranked 13th in the world on the 2005 Environmental Sustainability Index. Australian forests often contain a wide variety of eucalyptus trees and are mostly located in higher rainfall regions.

Most Australian woody plant species are evergreen and many are adapted to fire and drought, including many eucalypts and acacias. Australia has a rich variety of endemic legume species that thrive in nutrient-poor soils because of their symbiosis with Rhizobia bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi. Among well-known Australian fauna are the monotremes (the platypus and the echidna); a host of marsupials, including the kangaroo, the koala, and the wombat; the saltwater and freshwater crocodiles; and birds such as the emu and the kookaburra. Australia is home to the largest number of venomous snakes in the world. The dingo was introduced by Austronesian people who traded with Indigenous Australians around 3000 BCE. Many plant and animal species became extinct soon after first human settlement, including the Australian megafauna; others have become extinct since European settlement, among them the Thylacine.

Economy



Australia has a prosperous, Western-style mixed economy, with a per capita GDP slightly higher than that of the UK, Germany, and France in terms of purchasing power parity. The country was ranked third in the United Nations' 2007 Human Development Index and sixth in *The Economist* worldwide quality-of-life index 2005. The absence of an export-oriented manufacturing industry has been considered a key weakness of the Australian economy. More recently, rising prices for Australia's commodity exports and increasing tourism have made this criticism less relevant. Nevertheless, Australia has the world's fourth largest current account deficit in absolute terms (in relative terms it is more than 7% of GDP). This is considered problematic by some economists, especially since it has coincided with the high terms of trade and low interest rates that make the cost of servicing the foreign debt low.

The Hawke Government started the process of economic reform by floating the Australian dollar in 1983 and partially deregulating the financial system. The Howard government continued the process of microeconomic reform, including a partial deregulation of the labour market and the privatisation of state-owned businesses, most notably in the telecommunications industry. The indirect tax system was substantially reformed in July 2000 with the introduction of a 10% Goods and Services Tax (GST), which has slightly reduced the heavy reliance on personal and company income tax that characterises Australia's tax system.

In January 2007, there were 10,033,480 people employed, with an unemployment rate of 4.6%. Over the past decade, inflation has typically been 2–3% and the base interest rate 5–6%. The service sector of the economy, including tourism, education and financial services, constitutes 69% of GDP. Agriculture and natural resources constitute 3% and 5% of GDP but contribute substantially to export performance. Australia's largest export markets include Japan, China, the U.S., South Korea and New Zealand.

Demography

Most of the estimated 21.3 million Australians are descended from colonial-era settlers and post-Federation immigrants from Europe, with almost 90% of the population being of European descent. For generations, the vast majority of both colonial-era settlers and post-Federation immigrants came almost exclusively from the British Isles, and the people of Australia are still mainly of British or Irish ethnic origin.

Australia's population has quadrupled since the end of World War I, spurred by an ambitious immigration program. Following World War II and through to 2000, almost 5.9 million of the total population settled in the country as new immigrants, meaning that nearly two out of every seven Australians were born overseas. Most immigrants are skilled, but the immigration quota includes categories for family members and refugees. In 2001, the five largest groups of the 23.1% of Australians who were born overseas were from the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Italy, Vietnam, and China. Following the abolition of the White Australia policy in 1973, numerous government initiatives have been established to encourage and promote racial harmony based on a policy of multiculturalism. In 2005–06, more than 131,000 people emigrated to Australia, mainly from Asia and Oceania. Migration target for 2006–07 was 144,000.



The Super Pit in Kalgoorlie, Australia's largest open cut gold mine

Historical populations		
Census	Pop.	%±
1900	3,765,400	—
1910	4,525,100	20.2%
1920	5,411,000	19.6%
1930	6,501,000	20.1%
1940	7,078,000	8.9%
1950	8,307,000	17.4%
1960	10,392,000	25.1%
1970	12,663,000	21.9%
1980	14,726,000	16.3%
1990	17,169,000	16.6%



Perth, Western Australia is the most isolated regional capital city in the world.

The Indigenous population—mainland Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders—was 410,003 (2.2% of the total population) in 2001, a significant increase from the 1976 census, which showed an indigenous population of 115,953. Indigenous Australians suffer from higher rates of imprisonment and unemployment, lower levels of education, and life expectancies for males and females that are 17 years lower than those of non-indigenous Australians.

2000	19,169,000	11.6%
Est. 2008	21,197,569	10.6%
http://populstat.info/Oceania/australc.htm		

In common with many other developed countries, Australia is experiencing a demographic shift towards an older population, with more retirees and fewer people of working age. A large number of Australians (759,849 for the period 2002–03) live outside their home country.

English is the national language; Australian English has its own distinctive accent and vocabulary. According to the 2001 census, English is the only language spoken in the home for around 80% of the population. The next most common languages spoken at home are Chinese (2.1%), Italian (1.9%), and Greek (1.4%). A considerable proportion of first- and second-generation migrants are bilingual. It is believed that there were between 200 and 300 Australian Aboriginal languages at the time of first European contact. Only about 70 of these languages have survived, and all but 20 of these are now endangered. An indigenous language remains the main language for about 50,000 (0.25%) people. Australia has a sign language known as Auslan, which is the main language of about 6,500 deaf people.



The Barossa Valley wine producing region of South Australia; fewer than 15% of Australians live in rural areas.

Australia has no state religion. In the 2006 census, 64% of Australians were listed as Christian of any denomination, including 26% as Roman Catholic and 19% as Anglican. Nineteen percent were listed as "No Religion" (which includes humanism, atheism, agnosticism, and rationalism); and a further 12% declined to answer or did not give a response adequate for interpretation. About 5% were of non-Christian religions. As in many Western countries, the level of active participation in church worship is much lower than this; weekly attendance at church services is about 1.5 million: about 7.5% of the population.

School attendance is compulsory throughout Australia, starting at 6 years and ending at 15 years (16 years in South Australia and Tasmania and 17 years in Western Australia and Queensland), contributing to an adult literacy rate that is assumed to be 99%. The Programme for International Student Assessment, coordinated by the OECD, currently ranks Australia's education as the 8th best in the world: a significantly better ranking than the OECD average. Government grants have supported the establishment of Australia's 38 universities and although several private universities have been established, the majority receive government funding. There is a state-based system of vocational training, higher than colleges, known as TAFE Institutes, and many trades conduct apprenticeships for training new tradespeople. Approximately 58% of Australians between the ages of 25 and 64 have vocational or tertiary qualifications, and the tertiary graduation rate of 49% is the highest among Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. The ratio of international to local students in tertiary education in Australia is the highest in the OECD countries.

Culture



Since 1788, the primary basis of Australian culture has been Anglo-Celtic, although distinctive Australian features soon arose from the country's unique environment and the pre-existing indigenous culture. Over the past 50 years, Australian culture has been strongly influenced by American popular culture (particularly television and cinema), large-scale immigration from non-English-speaking countries and Australia's Asian neighbours. The vigour and originality of the arts in Australia—literature, cinema, opera, music, painting, theatre, dance, and crafts—have achieved international recognition.

Australian visual arts have a long history, starting with the cave and bark paintings of its indigenous peoples. From the time of European settlement, a common theme in Australian art has been the Australian landscape, seen for example in the works of Arthur Streeton, Arthur Boyd, and Albert Namatjira. The traditions of indigenous Australians are largely transmitted orally and are closely tied to ceremony and the telling of the stories of the Dreamtime. Australian Aboriginal music, dance, and art have a palpable influence on contemporary Australian visual and performing arts. The National Gallery of Australia and the various state art galleries have strong collections of Australian and overseas artworks and are highly attended by Australians. Australia has an active tradition of music, ballet, and theatre; many of its performing arts companies receive public funding through the federal government's Australia Council. There is a symphony orchestra in each state's capital city, and a national opera company, Opera Australia, first made prominent by the renowned diva Dame Joan Sutherland. Dame Nellie Melba was her great predecessor. Australian music includes classical, jazz, and many popular genres. Ballet and dance are also represented across the nation by The Australian Ballet and various state dance companies. Sir Robert Helpmann featured as a great Australian dancer and has been followed by numerous others including the current artistic director of the Australian Ballet, David McAllister. Each state has a publicly funded theatre company. Australia has produced many great actors including Nicole Kidman and the current joint director of the Sydney Theatre Company, Cate Blanchett.



The Royal Exhibition Building in Melbourne was the first building in Australia to be listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2004.

Australian literature has also been influenced by the landscape; the works of writers such as Banjo Paterson and Henry Lawson captured the experience of the Australian bush. The character of colonial Australia, as embodied in early literature, resonates with modern Australia and its perceived emphasis on egalitarianism, mateship, and a perceived anti-authoritarianism. In 1973, Patrick White was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, the only Australian to have achieved this; he is recognised as one of the great English-language writers of the 20th century. Colleen McCullough, David Williamson and David Malouf are also writers of great renown. Australian English is a major variety of the language; its grammar and spelling are largely based on those of British English, overlaid with a rich vernacular of unique lexical items and phrases, some of which have found their way into standard English. Australian English has much less internal dialectal variation than either British or American English although pronunciation of words and word usage can vary amongst regions.



Australian rules football was developed in Victoria in the late 1850s and is played at amateur and professional levels. It is the most popular spectator sport in Australia, in terms of annual attendances and club memberships.

Australia has two public broadcasters (the Australian Broadcasting Corporation and the multicultural Special Broadcasting Service), three commercial television networks, several pay-TV services, and numerous public, non-profit television and radio stations. Australia's film industry has achieved many critical and commercial successes. Each major city has daily newspapers, and there are two national daily newspapers, *The Australian* and *The Australian Financial Review*. According to Reporters Without Borders in 2007, Australia was in 28th position on a list of countries ranked by press freedom, behind New Zealand (15th) and the United Kingdom (24th) but ahead of the United States (48th). This low ranking is primarily because of the limited diversity of commercial media ownership in Australia; in particular, most Australian print media are under the control of News Corporation and John Fairfax Holdings.

Sport plays an important part in Australian culture, assisted by a climate that favours outdoor activities; 23.5% Australians over the age of 15 regularly participate in organised sporting activities. At an international level, Australia has strong teams in cricket, field hockey, netball, rugby league, and rugby union, and it performs well in cycling, rowing, and swimming. Nationally, other popular sports include Australian rules football, horse racing, soccer, and motor racing. Australia has participated in every summer Olympic Games of the modern era, and every Commonwealth Games. Australia hosted the 1956 Summer Olympics in Melbourne and the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, and has ranked among the top five medal-takers since 2000. Australia has also hosted the 1938, 1962, 1982, and 2006 Commonwealth Games. Other major international events held in Australia include the Grand Slam Australian Open tennis tournament, international cricket matches, and the Formula

One Australian Grand Prix. Viewing televised sport is popular; the highest-rating television programs include the summer Olympic Games and the grand finals of local and international football (various codes) competitions.

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Christmas Island

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Asia; Asian Countries; Oceania (Australasia)

The **Territory of Christmas Island** is a small territory of Australia located in the Indian Ocean, 2600 kilometres (1600 mi) northwest of Perth in Western Australia, 500 kilometres (300 mi) south of Jakarta, Indonesia, and 975 km ENE of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands.

It maintains about 1,600 residents who live in a number of "settlement areas" on the northern tip of the island: Flying Fish Cove (also known as Kampong), Silver City, Poon Saan and Drumsite.

It has a unique natural topography and is of immense interest to scientists and naturalists due to the number of species of endemic flora and fauna which have evolved in isolation and undisturbed by human habitation.

While there has been mining activity on the island for many years, 65% of its 135 square kilometres (52 sq mi) are now National Park and there are large areas of pristine and ancient rainforest.

History

For centuries, Christmas Island's isolation and rugged coasts provided natural barriers to settlement. British and Dutch navigators first included the island on their charts from the early seventeenth century, and Captain William Mynors of the British East India Company vessel, the *Royal Mary*, named the island when he arrived on Christmas Day, 25 December 1643. The island first appears on a map produced by Pieter Goos and published in 1666. Goos had labelled the island *Moni*.

The earliest recorded visit was in March 1688 by William Dampier of the British ship *Cygnets*, who found it uninhabited. An account of the visit can be found in Dampier's *Voyages*, which describes how, when trying to reach Cocos from New Holland, his ship was pulled off course in an easterly direction and after 28 days arrived at Christmas Island. Dampier landed at the Dales (on the West Coast) and two of his crewmen were the first recorded people to set foot on Christmas Island.

The next visit was by Daniel Beekman, who described it in his 1718 book, *A Voyage to and from the Island of Borneo, in the East Indies*.

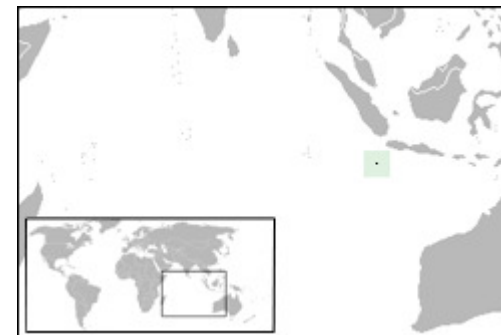
Territory of Christmas Island



Flag

Coat of arms

Anthem: *Advance Australia Fair*



Capital (and largest city)	Flying Fish Cove ("The Settlement")
Official languages	English (<i>de facto</i>)
Demonym	Christmas Island
Government	Federal constitutional monarchy
 - Queen of Australia	Elizabeth II
 - Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia	Michael Jeffery



In 1771, the Indian vessel, the *Pigot*, attempted to find an anchorage but was unsuccessful; the crew reported seeing wild pigs and coconut palms. However, pigs are not known to have been introduced to the island at the time, so the *Pigot* may have found a different island.

Exploration and annexation

- Administrator	Neil Lucas
- Shire President	Gordon Thomson
Territory of Australia	
- Sovereignty transferred to Australia	1957
Area	
- Total	135 km ² 52 sq mi
- Water (%)	0
Population	
- 2006 estimate	1,493 (n/a)
- Density	11.06/km ² (n/a) 28.7/sq mi
Currency	Australian dollar (AUD)
Time zone	(UTC+7)
Internet TLD	.cx
Calling code	+61



The first attempt at exploring the island was in 1857 by the crew of the *Amethyst*. They tried to reach the summit of the island, but found the cliffs impassable.

During the 1872-76 *Challenger* expedition to Indonesia, naturalist Dr John Murray carried out extensive surveys.

In 1887, Captain Maclear of HMS *Flying Fish*, having discovered an anchorage in a bay that he named Flying Fish Cove, landed a party and made a small but interesting collection of the flora and fauna. In the next year, Pelham Aldrich, on board HMS *Egeria*, visited it for ten days, accompanied by J. J. Lister, who gathered a larger biological and mineralogical collection.

Among the rocks then obtained and submitted to Sir John Murray for examination were many of nearly pure phosphate of lime, a discovery which led to annexation of the island by the British Crown on 6 June 1888..

Settlement and exploitation

Soon afterwards, a small settlement was established in Flying Fish Cove by G. Clunies Ross, the owner of the Keeling Islands (some 900 kilometres to the south west) to collect timber and supplies for the growing industry on Cocos.

Phosphate mining began in the 1890s using indentured workers from Singapore, China, and Malaysia.

The island was administered jointly by the British Phosphate Commissioners and District Officers from the United Kingdom Colonial Office through the Straits Settlements, and later the Crown Colony of Singapore.

Japanese invasion

Japan invaded and occupied the island in 1942, as the Indian garrison mutinied, and interned the residents until the end of World War II in 1945.

Transfer to Australia

At Australia's request, the United Kingdom transferred sovereignty to Australia; in 1957, the Australian government paid the government of Singapore £2.9 million in compensation, a figure based mainly on an estimated value of the phosphate forgone by Singapore.

The first Australian Official Representative arrived in 1958 and was replaced by an Administrator in 1968. Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands together are called the Australian Indian Ocean Territories and since 1997 share a single Administrator resident on Christmas Island.

Refugee and Immigration detention



Poon Saan in the evening



Poon Saan shops



From the late 1980s and early 1990s Christmas Island periodically received boatloads of refugees, mostly from Indonesia. During 2001, Christmas Island received a large number of asylum seekers travelling by boat, most of them from the Middle East and intending to apply for asylum in Australia. The arrival of the Norwegian cargo vessel MV *Tampa*, which had rescued people from the sinking Indonesian fishing-boat *Palapa* in international waters nearby, precipitated a diplomatic stand-off between Australia, Norway, and Indonesia. The vessel held 420 asylum seekers from Afghanistan, 13 from Sri Lanka, and five from Indonesia. In response to requests from the captain of the ship for Canberra to waive the Laws of the Sea and the Refugee Convention 1951, and have the refugees disembarked at Christmas Island, the Australian SAS boarded and took effective control. The stand-off eventually led to the asylum seekers being redirected to Nauru for processing. Another boatload of asylum seekers was taken from Christmas Island to Papua New Guinea for processing, after it was claimed that many of the adult asylum seekers threw their children into the water, apparently in protest at being turned away. This was later proven to be false. Many of the refugees were subsequently accepted by New Zealand.

Former Australian Prime Minister John Howard later secured the passage of legislation through the Australian Parliament which excised Christmas Island from Australia's migration zone, meaning that asylum seekers arriving on Christmas Island could not automatically apply to the Australian government for refugee status, allowing the Royal Australian Navy to relocate them to other countries (Papua New Guinea's Manus Island, and Nauru) as part of the so-called Pacific Solution. As of 2005, the Department of Immigration has begun construction of an "Immigration Reception and Processing Centre" and was completed in late 2007. The facility was originally estimated to cost \$210 million, but the final cost was over \$400 million and contains approximately 800 beds.

The current Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd has announced plans to decommission the Manus Island and Nauru centres now that the Australian Labor Party has assumed power in the Government of Australia. Processing would then occur on Christmas Island itself.

People

As of 2006, the estimated population is 1,493. (The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports a population of 1,508 as of the 2001 Census.)

The ethnic composition is 70% Chinese, 20% European and 10% Malay. Religions practised on Christmas Island include Buddhism 75%, Christianity 12%, Islam 10% and others 1%. English is the official language, but Chinese and Malay are also spoken.

Postage stamps

Postage stamps including first day cover albums have been issued by Christmas Island since 1958.

Government

Christmas Island is a non-self governing territory of Australia, administered by the Attorney-General's Department (before November 29, 2007 administration was carried out by the Department of Transport and Regional Services). The legal system is under the authority of the Governor-General of Australia and Australian law. An Administrator (Neil Lucas, since 28 January 2006) appointed by the Governor-General represents the monarch and Australia.

<http://cd3wd.com> wikipedia-for-schools <http://gutenberg.org> page no: 26 of 115



The Australian Government provides **Commonwealth-level government services** through the Christmas Island Administration and the Department of Infrastructure.

There is **no State Government**; instead, state government type services are provided by contractors, including departments of the Western Australian Government, with the costs met by the Australian (Commonwealth) Government.

A unicameral Shire of Christmas Island with 9 seats provides **local government services** and is elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms. Elections are held every two years, with half the members standing for election.

Christmas Island residents who are Australian citizens also vote in Commonwealth (federal) elections. Christmas Island residents are represented in the House of Representatives through the Northern Territory Division of Lingiari and in the Senate by Northern Territory Senators.

In early 1986, the Christmas Island Assembly held a design competition for an island flag; the winning design was adopted as the informal flag of the territory for over a decade, and in 2002 it was made the official flag of Christmas Island.

Economy

Phosphate mining had been the only significant economic activity, but in December 1987 the Australian Government closed the mine. In 1991, the mine was reopened by a consortium which included many of the former mine workers as shareholders. With the support of the government, a \$34 million casino opened in 1993, but was closed in 1998 and has not re-opened. The Australian Government in 2001 agreed to support the creation of a commercial spaceport on the island, however this has not yet been constructed, and appears that it will not proceed in the future. The Australian Government built a temporary immigration detention centre on the island in 2001 and plans to replace it with a larger, modern facility located at North West Point.

Geography



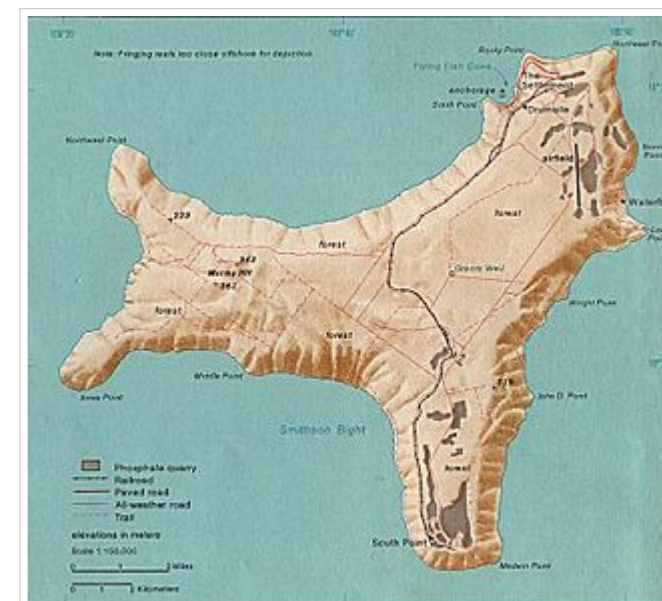
Located at , the island is a quadrilateral with hollowed sides, about 19 km (12 miles) in greatest length and 14.5 km (9 miles) in extreme breadth. The total land area is 135 km² (52 square miles), with 138.9 km (86.3 miles) of coastline. The island is the flat summit of a submarine mountain more than 4,572 m (15,000 feet) high, the depth of the platform from which it rises being about 14,000 feet (4267 m) and its height above the sea being upwards of 305 m (1,000 feet). The mountain was originally a volcano, and some basalt is exposed in places such as The Dales and Dolly Beach, but most of the surface rock is limestone accumulated from the growth of coral over millions of years.

The climate is tropical, with heat and humidity moderated by trade winds. Steep cliffs along much of the coast rise abruptly to a central plateau. Elevation ranges from sea level to 361 m (1,184 feet) at Murray Hill. The island is mainly tropical rainforest, of which 65% is National Park.

The narrow fringing reef surrounding the island can be a maritime hazard.

Christmas Island is 500 km south of Indonesia and about 2600 km northwest of Perth.

Flora and fauna



Christmas Island



Coconut crab



Christmas Island red crab



Christmas Island is of immense scientific value as it was uninhabited until the late nineteenth century, so many unique species of fauna and flora exist which have evolved independently of human interference. Two species of native rats, the Maclear's and Bulldog Rat have gone extinct since the island was settled, and one species of shrew may be already extinct. Two-thirds of the island has been declared a National Park which is managed by the Australian Department of Environment and Heritage through Parks Australia.

The dense rainforest has evolved in the deep soils of the plateau and on the terraces. The forests are dominated by twenty-five tree species. Ferns, orchids and vines grow on the branches in the humid atmosphere beneath the canopy. The 135 plant species include sixteen which are only found on Christmas Island.

The annual red crab mass migration (around 100 million animals) to the sea to spawn has been called one of the wonders of the natural world and takes place each year around November; after the start of the wet season and in synchronisation with the cycle of the moon.

The land crabs and sea birds are the most noticeable animals on the island. Twenty terrestrial and intertidal crabs (of which thirteen are regarded as true land crabs, only dependent on the ocean for larval development) have been described. Robber crabs, known elsewhere as coconut crabs, also exist in large numbers on the island.

Christmas Island is a focal point for sea birds of various species. Eight species or subspecies of sea birds nest on the island. The most numerous is the Red-footed Booby that nests in colonies, in trees, on many parts of the shore terrace. The widespread Brown Booby nests on the ground near the edge of the seacliff and inland cliffs. Abbott's Booby (listed as endangered) nests on tall emergent trees of the western, northern and southern plateau rainforest. The Christmas Island forest is the only nesting habitat of the Abbott's Booby left in the world. The endemic Christmas Island Frigatebird (listed as endangered) has nesting areas on the north-eastern shore terraces and the more widespread. Great Frigatebirds nest in semi-deciduous trees on the shore terrace with the greatest concentrations being in the North West and South Point areas. The Common Noddy and two species of bosuns or tropicbirds with their brilliant gold or silver plumage and distinctive streamer tail feathers also nest on the island. Of the ten native land birds and shorebirds, seven are endemic species or subspecies. Some 86 migrant bird species have been recorded.

Communications and transportation

Telephone services are provided by Telstra and are a part of the Australian network with the same prefix as Western Australia (08). A GSM mobile telephone system replaced the old analogue network in February 2005. Four free-to-air television stations from Australia are broadcast (ABC, SBS, GWN and WIN) in the same time-zone as Perth. Radio broadcasts from Australia include ABC Radio National, ABC Regional radio and Red FM. All services are provided by satellite links from the mainland. Broadband internet became available to subscribers in urban areas in mid 2005 through the local internet service provider, CIIA (formerly dotCX).



Red-footed Boobies



Common Noddy



Brown Booby



Christmas Island, due to its close proximity to Australia's northern neighbours, falls within many of the more 'interesting' satellite footprints throughout the region. This results in ideal conditions for receiving various Asian broadcasts which locals sometimes prefer to the West Australian provided content. Additionally, ionospheric conditions usually bode well for many of the more terrestrial radio transmissions - HF right up through VHF and sometimes in to UHF. The island plays home to a small array of radio equipment that, evidently, spans a good chunk of the usable spectrum. A variety of government owned and operated antenna systems are employed on the island to take advantage of this.

A container port exists at Flying Fish Cove with an alternative container unloading point to the south of the island at Norris Point for use during the December to March 'swell season" of seasonal rough seas. There are two weekly flights into Christmas Island Airport from Perth, Western Australia (via RAAF Learmonth) operated by National Jet Systems on Mondays and Fridays with additional Saturday flights almost fortnightly and a weekly charter flight from Malaysia operated by Malaysia Airlines on Mondays.

There is a new recreation centre at Phosphate Hill operated by the Shire of Christmas Island. There is also a taxi service. The road network covers most of the island and is generally good quality, although four wheel drive vehicles are needed to access some more distant parts of the rain forest or the more isolated beaches.

Tourism

The Christmas Island National Park covers 63% of the island. This means that for the visitor interested in flora and fauna there is a great deal to see. The same is true for the coastal waters where the marine life is equivalently spectacular.

Education

Christmas Island District High School is located on the island.

The island-operated crèche is located in the Recreation Centre.

The island includes one public library.

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Cocos (Keeling) Islands

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

The **Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands**, also called **Cocos Islands** and **Keeling Islands**, is a territory of Australia. There are two atolls and twenty-seven coral islands in the group. The islands are located in the Indian Ocean, about half way from Australia to Sri Lanka, at .

History



NASA picture of The Keeling Islands.

Captain William Keeling was the first European to see the islands, in 1609, but they remained uninhabited until the nineteenth century, when they became a possession of the Clunies-Ross Family. Slaves were brought to work the coconut plantation from Indonesia, the Cape of Good Hope and East Asia by Alexander Hare who had taken part in Stamford Raffles' takeover of Java in 1811. A Scottish merchant seaman called Captain John Clunies-Ross, who had also served under Raffles in the takeover, set up a compound and Hare's severely mistreated slaves soon escaped to work under better conditions for Clunies-Ross.

On April 1, 1836, HMS *Beagle* under Captain Robert FitzRoy arrived to take soundings establishing the profile of the atoll. To the young naturalist Charles Darwin, who was on the ship, the results supported a theory he had developed of how atolls formed. He studied the natural history of the islands and collected specimens. His assistant Syms Covington noted that *an Englishman (he was of course Scottish) and HIS family, with about sixty or seventy Mulattos from the Cape of Good Hope, live on one of the islands. Captain Ross, the governor, is now absent at the Cape.*"

The islands were annexed to the British Empire in 1857. In 1867, their administration was placed under the Straits Settlements, which included Penang, Malacca and Singapore. Queen Victoria granted the

Territory of the Cocos (Keeling) Islands



Flag



The Cocos (Keeling) Islands are one of Australia's territories

Capital	West Island
Largest village	Bantam (Home Island)
Official languages	English (<i>de facto</i>)
Demonym	Cocos Island
Government	Federal constitutional monarchy
 - Queen	Elizabeth II
 - Administrator	Neil Lucas



islands in perpetuity to the Clunies-Ross family in 1886. The Cocos Islands under the Clunies-Ross family have been cited as an example of a nineteenth century micronation.

On November 9, 1914, the islands became the site of the Battle of Cocos, one of the first naval battles of World War I. The telegraph station on Direction Island, a vital link between the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, was attacked by the German light cruiser SMS *Emden*, which was then in turn surprised and destroyed by the Australian cruiser, HMAS *Sydney* .

During World War II, the cable station was once again a vital link. Allied planners noted that the islands might be seized as a base for enemy German raider cruisers operating in the Indian Ocean. Following Japan's entry into the war, Japanese forces occupied neighbouring islands. To avoid drawing their attention to the Cocos cable station and its islands' garrison, the seaplane anchorage between Direction and Horsburgh islands was not used. Radio transmitters were also kept silent, except in emergencies.

After the Fall of Singapore in 1942, the islands were administered from Ceylon (Sri Lanka), and West and Direction Islands were placed under Allied military administration. The islands' garrison initially consisted of a platoon from the British Army's King's African Rifles, located on Horsburgh Island, with 2 × 6 in (152 mm) guns to cover the anchorage. The local inhabitants all lived on Home Island. Despite the importance of the islands as a communication centre, the Japanese made no attempt either to raid or to occupy them and contented themselves with sending over a reconnaissance aircraft about once a month.

On the night of 8-9 May 1942, fifteen members of the garrison, from the Ceylon Defence Force mutinied, under the leadership of Gratien Fernando. The mutineers were said to have been provoked by the attitude of their British officers, and were also supposedly inspired by anti- imperialist beliefs. They attempted to take control of the gun battery on the islands.

The Cocos Islands Mutiny was crushed, although they killed one non-mutinous soldier and wounded one officer. Seven of the mutineers were sentenced to death at a trial which was later alleged to have been improperly conducted. Four of the sentences were commuted, but three men were executed, including Fernando. These were to be the only British Commonwealth soldiers to be executed for mutiny during the Second World War.

On December 25, 1942, the Japanese submarine I-166 bombarded the islands but caused no damage.

Later in the war two airstrips were built and three bomber squadrons were moved to the islands to conduct raids against Japanese targets in South East Asia and to provide support during the reinvasion of Malaya and reconquest of Singapore. The first aircraft to arrive were Supermarine Spitfire Mk VIII's of No. 136 Squadron RAF. They included some Liberator bombers from No. 321 (Netherlands) Squadron RAF (members of exiled Dutch forces serving with the Royal Air Force), which were also stationed on the islands. When in July 1945, No. 99 and No. 356 RAF squadrons arrived on West Island they brought with them a daily newspaper called Atoll which contained news of what was happening in the outside world. Run by airmen in their off-duty hours, it achieved fame when

- Shire President	Mohammad Said Chongkin
Territory of Australia	
- Annexed by British Empire	1857
- Transferred to Australian control	1955
Area	
- Total	14 km² 5.3 sq mi
- Water (%)	0
Population	
- 2004 estimate	628 (n/a)
- Density	n/a/km² (n/a) n/a/sq mi
Currency	Australian dollar (AUD)
Time zone	(UTC+6½)
Internet TLD	.cc
Calling code	+61 891



dropped by Liberator bombers on POW camps over the heads of the Japanese guards. In 1946 the administration of the islands reverted to Singapore.

On November 23, 1955, the islands were transferred to Australian control under the *Cocos (Keeling) Islands Act 1955*. In the 1970s, the Australian government's dissatisfaction with the Clunies-Ross feudal style of rule of the island increased. In 1978, Australia forced the family to sell the islands for the sum of AU\$6,250,000, using the threat of compulsory acquisition. By agreement the family retained ownership of Oceania House, their home on the island. However, in 1983 the Australian government moved to dishonour this agreement, and told the former last ruler, John Clunies-Ross, that he should leave the Cocos. The following year the High Court of Australia ruled that resumption of Oceania House was unlawful, but the Australian government ordered that no government business was to be granted to his shipping company, an action which contributed to his bankruptcy. John Clunies-Ross lives in exile in Perth, Australia, but his successors still live on the Cocos.

Geography



The Cocos (Keeling) Islands consist of two flat, low-lying coral atolls with an area of 14.2 km² (5.4 sq. mi), 2.6 km (1.6 mi) of coastline, a highest elevation of 5 m (16 ft) and thickly covered with coconut palms and other vegetation. The climate is pleasant, moderated by the southeast trade winds for about nine months of the year and with moderate rainfall. Cyclones may occur in the early months of the year.

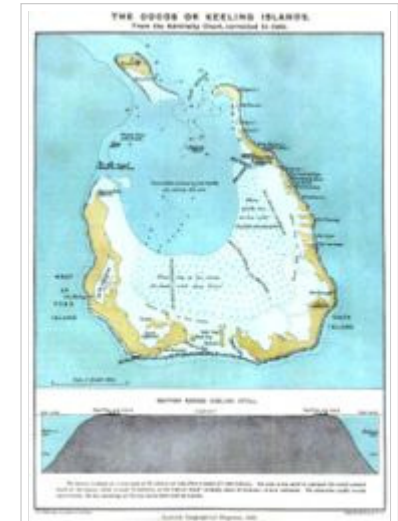
North Keeling Island is an atoll consisting of just one C-shaped island, a nearly closed atoll ring with a small opening into the lagoon, about 50 m (165 ft) wide, on the East side. The island measures 1.1 km² (272 acres) in land area and is uninhabited. The lagoon is about 0.5 km² (124 acres). North Keeling Island and the surrounding sea to 1.5 km from shore form the Pulu Keeling National Park, established on 12 December 1995. It is home to the only surviving population of the endemic, and endangered, Cocos Buff-banded Rail.

South Keeling Islands is an atoll consisting of twenty-six individual islets forming an incomplete atoll ring, with a total land area of 13.1 km² (5.1 sq mi). Only Home Island and West Island are populated. People from Home Island maintain weekend shacks on the lagoon shore of South Island and on some of the smaller islands.

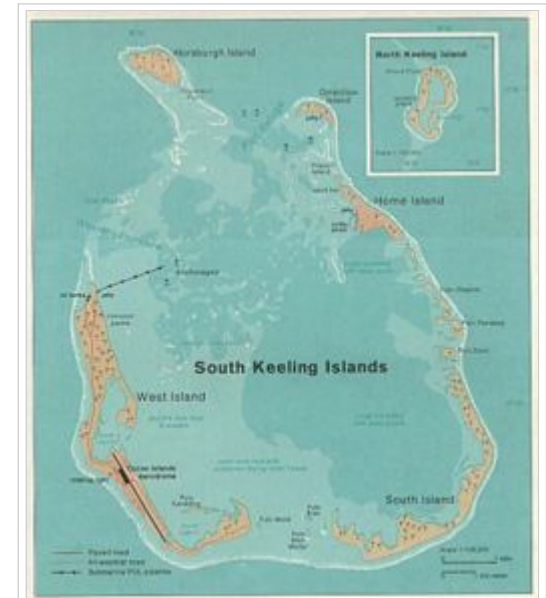
Table of the islets, with areas, numbered islets clockwise starting in the north:



No.	Islet		Area (km ²)
	Malay name	English name	
1	Pulu Luar	Horsburgh Island	1.04
2	Pulu Tikus	Direction Island	0.34
3	Pulu Pasir	Workhouse Island	0.00
4	Pulu Beras	Prison Island	0.02
5		Button Islets	0.00
7	Pulu Gangsa		<0.01
8	Pulu Selma	Home Island	0.95
9	Pulu Ampang Kechil	Scaevola Islet	<0.01
10	Pulu Ampang		0.06
11	Pulu Wa-idas	Ampang Minor	0.02
12	Pulu Blekok		0.03
13	Pulu Kembang		0.04
14	Pulu Cheplok	Gooseberry Island	<0.01
15	Pulu Pandan	Misery Island	0.24
16	Pulu Siput	Goat Island	0.10
17	Pulu Jambatan		<0.01
18	Pulu Labu		0.04
19	Pulu Atas	South Island	3.63
20	Pulu Kelapa Satu		0.02
21	Pulu Blan	East Cay	0.03
22	Pulu Blan Madar	Burial Island	0.03
23	Pulu Maria	West Cay	0.01
24	Pulu Kambling	?Turtle Island	<0.01



Map of South Keeling Islands
(1889)



Map of South Keeling Islands



25	Pulu Panjang	West Island	6.23
26	Pulu Wak Bangka	?Turtle Island	0.22

The islands with zero areas have vanished.

There are no rivers or lakes on either atoll; fresh water resources are limited to rainwater accumulations in natural underground reservoirs.

Cocos (Keeling) Island is located on almost exactly the opposite side of the globe as Cocos Island, Costa Rica.

Fauna

Demographics

In 2007, there are an estimated 596 inhabitants of the islands. The population on the two inhabited islands generally is split between the ethnic Europeans on West Island (est. pop. 120) and the ethnic Malays on Home Island (est. pop. 500). A Cocos dialect of Malay and English are the main languages spoken and 80% of Cocos Islanders are Sunni Muslim.

Government

The capital of the Territory of Cocos (Keeling) Islands is West Island while the largest settlement is the village of Bantam (Home Island). Governance of the islands is based on the *Cocos (Keeling) Islands Act 1955* and depends heavily on the laws of Australia. The islands are administered from Canberra by the Attorney-General's Department (before November 29, 2007 administration was carried out by the Department of Transport and Regional Services), through a non-resident Administrator appointed by the Governor-General. The current Administrator is Neil Lucas PSM , who was appointed on 30 January 2006 and is also the Administrator of Christmas Island. These two Territories comprise Australia's Indian Ocean Territories. There also exists a unicameral Cocos (Keeling) Islands Shire Council with seven seats. A full term lasts four years, though elections are held every two years; approximately half the members retire each two years. Federally, Cocos (Keeling) Islanders form the electorate of Lingiari with Christmas Island and outback Northern Territory.

The islands have a five-person police force but their defence remains the responsibility of Australia.

Economy

Grown throughout the islands, coconuts are the sole cash crop. Copra and fresh coconuts are the major export earners. Small local gardens and fishing



contribute to the food supply, but additional food and most other necessities must be imported from Australia. There is a small but growing tourist industry.

The Cocos Islands Cooperative Society Ltd. employs construction workers, stevedores, and lighterage worker operations. Tourism employs others. The unemployment rate was estimated at 60% in 2000.

The islands are connected within Australia's telecommunication system (with number range +61 8 9162 xxxx) and postal system (post code: 6799). There is one paved airport on the West Island, Cocos (Keeling) Island International Airport, to which National Jet Systems operate scheduled jet services from Perth, Western Australia) and a lagoon anchorage.

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Cook Islands

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

The **Cook Islands** (Cook Islands Māori: *Kūki 'Āirani*) are a self-governing parliamentary democracy in free association with New Zealand. The fifteen small islands in this South Pacific Ocean country have a total land area of 240 square kilometres (92.7 sq mi), but the Cook Islands Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) covers 1.8 million square kilometres (0.7 million sq mi) of ocean.

The main population centres are on the island of Rarotonga (c.10,000), where there is an international airport. There is also a much larger population of Cook Islanders in New Zealand, particularly the North Island; in the 2006 census, 58,008 self-identified as being of ethnic Cook Island Māori descent.

With over 90,000 visitors travelling to the islands in 2006, tourism is the country's number one industry, and the leading element of the economy, far ahead of offshore banking, pearls, marine and fruit exports.



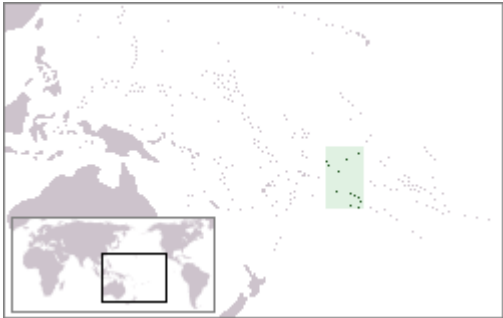
Defence is the responsibility of New Zealand, in consultation with the Cook Islands and at its request. In recent times, the Cook Islands have adopted an increasingly independent foreign policy.

Politics

The politics of the Cook Islands takes place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic associated state, whereby the Queen of New Zealand, represented in the Cook Islands by the Queen's Representative, is Head of State and the Chief Minister is the head of government. There is a pluriform multi-party system and the islands are self-governing in free association with New Zealand and fully responsible for both internal and external affairs. New Zealand no longer has any responsibility for external affairs. As of 2005, it has diplomatic relations in its own name with eighteen other countries. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the Parliament of the Cook Islands.

The Cook Islands are not United Nations full members but participate in WHO and UNESCO.

The Judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

Cook Islands <i>Kūki 'Āirani</i>	
	
Flag	Coat of arms
Anthem: <i>Te Atua Mou E</i> <i>God is Truth</i>	
	
Capital (and largest city)	Avarua
Official languages	English Cook Islands Māori
Demonym	Cook Islander



Historical dates

1595 — Spaniard Álvaro de Mendaña de Neira is the first European to sight the islands.

1606 — Spaniard Pedro Fernández de Quirós made the first recorded European landing in the islands when he set foot on Rakahanga.

1773 — Captain James Cook explores the islands and names them the Hervey Islands. Fifty years later they are renamed in his honour by Russian admiral and explorer Krusenstern.

1821 — English and Tahitian missionaries arrive, become the first non-native settlers.

1858 — The Cook Islands become united as a state, the Kingdom of Rarotonga.

1888 — Cook Islands are proclaimed a British protectorate and a single federal parliament is established.

1901 — The Cook Islands are annexed to New Zealand.

1924 — The All Blacks *Invincibles* stop in Rarotonga on their way to the United Kingdom and play a friendly match against a scratch Rarotongan team.

1946 — Legislative Council is established. For the first time since 1912, the territory has direct representation.

1965 — The Cook Islands become a self-governing territory in free association with New Zealand. Albert Henry, leader of the Cook Islands Party, is elected as the territory's first prime minister.

1974 — Albert Henry is knighted by Queen Elizabeth II

1979 — Sir Albert Henry is found guilty of electoral fraud and stripped of his premiership and his knighthood. Tom Davis becomes Premier.

1981 — Constitution is amended. Parliament grows from 22 to 24 seats and the parliamentary term is extended from four to five years. Tom Davis is knighted.

1985 — Rarotonga Treaty is open for signing in the Cook Islands creating a nuclear free zone in the South Pacific.

Government	Constitutional monarchy
- Head of State	Queen Elizabeth II
- Queen's Representative	Sir Frederick Goodwin
- Prime Minister	Jim Marurai
Associated state	
- Self-government in free association with New Zealand	4 August 1965
Area	
- Total	236 km² (209th) 91 sq mi
Population	
- Mar 2006 estimate	18,700 (218th (2005))
- 2001 census	18,027
- Density	76/km² (117th) 197/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2005 estimate
- Total	\$183.2 million (not ranked)
- Per capita	\$9,100 (not ranked)
Currency	New Zealand dollar (Cook Islands dollar also used) (NZD)
Time zone	(UTC-10)
Internet TLD	.ck
Calling code	+682



1986 — In January 1986, following the rift between New Zealand and the USA in respect of the ANZUS security arrangements Prime Minister Tom Davis declared the Cook Islands a neutral country, because he considered that New Zealand (which has control over the islands' defence and foreign policy) was no longer in a position to defend the islands. The proclamation of neutrality meant that the Cook Islands would not enter into a military relationship with any foreign power, and, in particular, would prohibit visits by US warships. Visits by US naval vessels were allowed to resume by Henry's Government.

1991 — The Cook Islands signed a treaty of friendship and co-operation with France, covering economic development, trade and surveillance of the islands' EEZ. The establishment of closer relations with France was widely regarded as an expression of the Cook Islands' Government's dissatisfaction with existing arrangements with New Zealand which was no longer in a position to defend the Cook Islands.

1995 — The French Government resumed its Programme of nuclear-weapons testing at Mururoa Atoll in September 1995 upsetting the Cook Islands. Henry was fiercely critical of the decision and dispatched a vaka (traditional voyaging canoe) with a crew of Cook Islands' traditional warriors to protest near the test site. The tests were concluded in January 1996 and a moratorium was placed on future testing by the French government.

1997 — Full diplomatic relations established with China.

1997 — In November, Cyclone Martin in Manihiki kills at least six people; 80% of buildings are damaged and the black pearl industry suffered severe losses.

2000 — Full diplomatic relations concluded with France.

2002 — Prime Minister Terepai Maoate is ousted from government following second vote of no-confidence in his leadership.

2004 — Prime Minister Robert Woonton visits China; Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao grants \$16 m in development aid.

2006 — Parliamentary elections held. The Democratic Party keeps majority of seats in parliament, but parliament is unable to meet due to petitions filed by the Cook Islands Party over alleged voting irregularities.

Geography

The Cook Islands are in the South Pacific Ocean, north-east of New Zealand, between French Polynesia and Fiji. There are fifteen major islands, spread over 2.2 million square kilometres of ocean, divided into two distinct groups: the Southern Cook Islands, and the Northern Cook Islands of coral atolls.

The islands were formed by volcanic activity; the northern group is older and consists of six atolls (sunken volcanoes topped by coral growth). The climate is moderate to tropical.



The fifteen islands are grouped as follows:

- Southern Group
 - Aitutaki
 - Atiu (Enua-Manu or Island of Birds)
 - Mangaia
 - Ma'uke (Akatokamanava)
 - Rarotonga (with capital, Avarua)
 - Palmerston Island
 - Manuae
 - Mitiaro
 - Takutea
- Northern Group
 - Manihiki
 - Nassau
 - Penrhyn Island also known as Tongareva
 - Pukapuka
 - Rakahanga
 - Suvarrow also called Suvorov



History

The Cook Islands were first settled in the 6th century A.D. by Polynesian people who migrated from nearby Tahiti, to the southeast.

Spanish ships visited the islands in the late sixteenth century; the first written record of contact with the Islands came with the sighting of Pukapuka by Spanish sailor Álvaro de Mendaña in 1595 who called it *San Bernardo* ("Saint Bernard"). Another Spaniard, Pedro Fernández de Quirós, made the first recorded European landing in the islands when he set foot on Rakahanga in 1606, calling it *Gente Hermosa* ("Beautiful People").

British navigator Captain James Cook arrived in 1773 and 1779 and named the islands the *Hervey Islands*; the name "Cook Islands", in honour of Cook, appeared on a Russian naval chart published in the 1820s.

In 1813, John Williams, a missionary on the *Endeavour* (not the same ship as that of Cook), made the first official sighting of the island of Rarotonga.

The first recorded landing on Rarotonga by Europeans was in 1814 by the *Cumberland*; trouble broke out between the sailors and the Islanders and many were



Beach on Rarotonga.



killed on both sides.

The islands saw no more Europeans until missionaries arrived from England in 1821. Christianity quickly took hold in the culture and many islanders continue to be Christian believers today.

The Cook Islands became a British protectorate at their own request in 1888, mainly to thwart French expansionism. They were transferred to New Zealand in 1901. They remained a New Zealand protectorate until 1965, at which point they became a self-governing territory in free association with New Zealand. In that year, Albert Henry of the Cook Islands Party was elected as the first Prime Minister. Sir Albert Henry led the country until he was accused of vote-rigging. He was succeeded in 1978 by Tom Davis of the Democratic Party.

Today, the Cook Islands are essentially independent ("self-governing in free association with New Zealand") but New Zealand is tasked with overseeing the country's defence.

On June 11, 1980, the United States signed a treaty with New Zealand specifying the maritime border between the Cook Islands and American Samoa and also relinquishing its claim to the islands of Penrhyn Island, Pukapuka (Danger), Manihiki, and Rakahanga.

Culture



Float parade during the annual Maeva Nui celebrations.



Holidays

Date	Name
January 1	New Year's Day
January 2	Day after New Year's Day
The Friday before Easter Sunday	Good Friday
The day after Easter Sunday	Easter Monday
April 25	ANZAC Day
The first Monday in June	Queen's Birthday
during July	Rarotonga Gospel Day
August 4	Constitution Day
October 26	Gospel Day
December 25	Christmas
December 26	Boxing Day

Art

Carving - Woodcarving is a common art form in the Cook Islands. Sculpture in stone is much rarer although there are some excellent carvings in basalt by Mike Taveoni. The proximity of islands in the southern group helped produce a homogeneous style of carving but which had special developments in each island. Rarotonga is known for its fisherman's gods and staff-gods, Atiu for its wooden seats, Mitiaro, Mauke and Atiu for mace and slab gods and Mangaia for its ceremonial adzes. Most of the original wood carvings were either spirited away by early European collectors or were burned in large numbers by missionary zealots. Today, carving is no longer the major art form with the same spiritual and cultural emphasis given to it by the Maori in New Zealand. However, there are continual efforts to interest young people in their heritage and some good work is being turned out under the guidance of older carvers. Atiu, in particular, has a strong tradition of crafts both in carving and local fibre arts such as tapa. Mangaia is the source of many fine adzes carved in a distinctive, idiosyncratic style with the so-called double-k design. Mangaia also produces food pounders carved from the heavy calcite found in its extensive limestone caves.

Weaving - The outer islands produce traditional weaving of mats, basketware and hats. Particularly fine examples of rito hats are worn by women to church on Sundays. They are made from the uncurled fibre of the coconut palm and are of very high quality. The Polynesian equivalent of Panama hats, they are highly valued and are keenly sought by Polynesian visitors from Tahiti. Often, they are decorated with hatbands made of minuscule pupu shells which are painted and



stitched on by hand. Although pupu are found on other islands the collection and use of them in decorative work has become a speciality of Mangaia.

Tivaevae - A major art form in the Cook Islands is tivaevae. This is, in essence, the art of making handmade patchwork quilts. Introduced by the wives of missionaries in the 19th century, the craft grew into a communal activity and is probably one of the main reasons for its popularity.

National Flower

The National Flower of the Cook Islands is the Tiare Māori or Tiale Māoli.

Sport

Rugby union is the most popular sport in the Cook Islands with association football (soccer) and rugby league also popular.

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Fiji

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

Fiji (Fijian: *Matanitu ko Viti*; Fijian Hindustani: फ़िजी), officially the **Republic of the Fiji Islands** (Fijian: *Matanitu Tu-Vaka-i-koya ko Viti*; Fijian Hindustani: फ़िजी द्वीप समूह गणराज्य), is an island nation in the South Pacific Ocean east of Vanuatu, west of Tonga and south of Tuvalu. The country occupies an archipelago of about 322 islands, of which 106 are permanently inhabited, and 522 islets. The two major islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, account for 87% of the population.



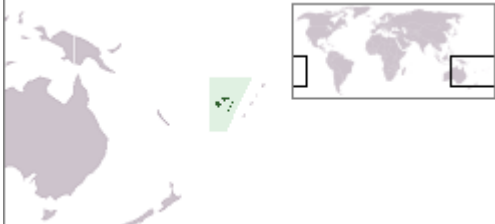
Etymology

Fiji's main island is known as Viti Levu and it is from this that the name "Fiji" is derived, through the pronunciation of their island neighbours in Tonga. Its emergence was best described as follows:

Fijians first impressed themselves on European consciousness through the writings of the members of the expeditions of Cook who met them in Tonga. They were described as formidable warriors and ferocious cannibals, builders of the finest vessels in the Pacific, but not great sailors. They inspired awe amongst the Tongans, and all their Manufactures, especially bark cloth and clubs, were highly esteemed and much in demand. They called their home Viti, but the Tongans called it Fisi, and it was by this foreign pronunciation, Fiji, first promulgated by Captain James Cook, that these islands are now known.

History

The first inhabitants of Fiji arrived long before contact with European explorers in the seventeenth century. Pottery excavated from Fijian towns shows that Fiji was settled before or around 1000 BC, although the question of Pacific migration still lingers. The Dutch explorer Abel Tasman visited Fiji in 1643 while looking for the Great Southern Continent. It was not until the nineteenth century, however, that Europeans settled the islands permanently. The islands came under British control as a colony in 1874, and the British brought over Indian contract labourers. It was granted independence in 1970. Democratic rule was interrupted by two military coups in 1987 because the government was perceived as dominated by the Indo-Fijian (Indian) community. The second 1987 coup saw the British monarchy and the Governor General replaced by a non-executive President, and the country changed the long form of

<p><i>Matanitu Tu-Vaka-i-koya ko Viti</i> फ़िजी द्वीप समूह गणराज्य Republic of the Fiji Islands</p>	
	
Flag	Coat of arms
<p>Motto: <i>Rerevaka na Kalou ka Doka na Tui</i> Fear God and honour the Queen</p>	
<p>Anthem: <i>God Bless Fiji</i></p>	
	
Capital (and largest city)	Suva
Official languages	English, Bau Fijian, and Hindi
Demonym	Fijian / Fiji Islander
Government	Republic under military rule



its name from *Dominion of Fiji* to *Republic of Fiji* (and to *Republic of the Fiji Islands* in 1997). The coups and accompanying civil unrest contributed to heavy Indian emigration; the population loss resulted in economic difficulties but ensured that Melanesians became the majority.

In 1990, the new Constitution institutionalised the ethnic Fijian domination of the political system. The Group Against Racial Discrimination (GARD) was formed to oppose the unilaterally imposed constitution and restore the 1970 constitution. Sitiveni Rabuka, the Lieutenant Colonel who carried out the 1987 coup became Prime Minister in 1992, following elections held under the new constitution. Three years later, Rabuka established the Constitutional Review Commission, which in 1997 led to a new Constitution, which was supported by most leaders of the indigenous Fijian and Indo-Fijian communities. Fiji is re-admitted to the Commonwealth of Nations.

- President	Ratu Josefa Iloilovatu Uluivuda (Josefa Iloilo)
- Prime Minister	Commodore Josaia Voreqe (Frank) Bainimarama
- GCC Chairman	Ratu Ovinia Bokini
- Great Chief of Fiji	Queen Elizabeth II ¹
Independence	from the United Kingdom
- Date	10 October 1970
Area	
- Total	18,274 km ² (155th) 7,056 sq mi
- Water (%)	negligible
Population	
- December 2006 estimate	853,445 (156th)
- Density	46/km ² (148th) 119/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2007 estimate
- Total	\$5.079 billion (N/A)
- Per capita	\$5,500 (98th)
HDI (2007)	▲ 0.762 (medium) (92nd)
Currency	Fijian dollar (FJD)
Time zone	(UTC+12)
Internet TLD	.fj
Calling code	+679
¹ Recognised by the Great Council of Chiefs.	

History of Fiji



Levuka, 1842.

The new millennium brought along another coup, instigated by George Speight, that effectively toppled the government of Mahendra Chaudhry, who became Prime Minister following the 1997 constitution. Commodore Frank Bainimarama assumed executive power after the resignation, possibly forced, of President Mara. Fiji was rocked by two mutinies at Suva's Queen Elizabeth Barracks, later in 2000 when rebel soldiers went on the rampage. The High Court ordered the reinstatement of the constitution, and in September 2001, a general election was held to restore democracy, which was won by interim Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase's Soqosoqo Duavata ni Lewenivanua party.

In 2005, amid much controversy, the Qarase government proposed a Reconciliation and Unity Commission, with power to recommend compensation for victims of the 2000 coup, and amnesty for its perpetrators. However, the military strongly opposed this bill, especially the army's commander, Frank Bainimarama. He agreed with detractors who said that it was a sham to grant amnesty to supporters of the present government who played roles in the coup. His attack on the legislation, which continued unrelentingly throughout May and into June and July, further strained his already tense relationship with the government. In late November 2006 and early December 2006, Bainimarama was instrumental in the 2006 Fijian coup d'état. Bainimarama handed down a list of demands to Qarase after a bill was put forward to parliament, part of which would have offered pardons to participants in the 2000 coup attempt. He gave Qarase an ultimatum date of 4 December to accede to these demands or to resign from his post. Qarase adamantly refused to either concede or resign and on 5 December President, Ratu Josefa Iloilo, was said to have signed a legal order dissolving Parliament after meeting with Bainimarama.

For a country of its size, Fiji has a large armed forces, and has been a major contributor to UN peacekeeping missions in various parts of the world. In addition, a significant number of former military personnel have served in the lucrative security sector in Iraq following the 2003 US-led invasion.

Politics

Politics of Fiji normally take place in the framework of a parliamentary representative democratic republic, whereby the Prime Minister of Fiji is the head of government, the President the head of state, and of a multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the Parliament of Fiji. The Judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature.

Since independence there have been four coups in Fiji, two in 1987, one in 2000 and one in late 2006. The military has been either ruling directly, or heavily influencing governments since 1987.

2006 military takeover

Citing corruption in the government, Commodore Josaia Voreqe (Frank) Bainimarama, Commander of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces, staged a military

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takeover on December 5, 2006 against the Prime Minister that he himself had installed after the 2000 coup. There had been two military coups in 1987 and one in 2000 when the military had taken over from elected governments led by or dominated by Indo Fijians. On this occasion the military took over from an indigenous Fijian government which it alleged was corrupt and racist. The Commodore took over the powers of the President and dissolved the parliament, paving the way for the military to continue the take over.

The coup was the culmination of weeks of speculation following conflict between the elected Prime Minister, Laisenia Qarase, and Commodore Bainimarama. Bainimarama had repeatedly issued demands and deadlines to the Prime Minister. At particular issue was previously pending legislation to pardon those involved in the 2000 coup. Despite intervention to reconcile the parties by the President, Vice President and Helen Clark, Prime Minister of New Zealand there was no willingness to make concessions on either side. This therefore failed to resolve the crisis.

Bainimarama named Jona Senilagakali caretaker Prime Minister. The next week Bainimarama said he would ask the Great Council of Chiefs to restore executive powers to President, Ratu Josefa Iloilo. On December 6, Bainimarama declared a state of emergency, and warned that he would not tolerate any violence or unrest.

Following the coup, the Commonwealth of Nations held an emergency meeting in London, where they declared Fiji's membership had been suspended. On December 9, the military rulers advertised for positions in the Government, including cabinet posts, in a national newspaper. They stated people wishing to apply must be "of outstanding character", have no criminal record, and never have been bankrupt.

Also on December 9 the IFNA withdrew the right of Fiji to host the 2007 World Netball Championships as a consequence of the Military takeover. The withdrawal is expected to have a significant impact in Fiji due to the popularity of sports such as Netball.

On January 4, 2007, the military announced that it was restoring executive power to President Iloilo, who made a broadcast endorsing the actions of the military. The next day, Iloilo named Bainimarama as the interim Prime Minister, indicating that the Military was still effectively in control.

In the wake of the take over, reports have emerged of intimidation of some of those critical of the interim regime. It is alleged that two individuals have died in military custody since December 2006. These deaths have been investigated and suspects charged but not yet brought to court.

Following ongoing criticism from neighbours, specifically Australia and New Zealand, the New Zealand High Commissioner Michael Green was expelled from Fiji in mid June 2007, in the aftermath of restrictive emergency regulations having been lifted (recognised as a generally positive development by outside observers).

On September 6, 2007, Commodore Frank Bainimarama said Fiji's military declared again a state of emergency as he believed ousted Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase was engaged in destabilization efforts when he returned to Suva after 8 months of exile on his home island Vanuabalavu in Lau, Elections were tentatively set on March 2009.

The interim Government set up an anti corruption Commission which have received numerous complaints and allegations, also there have been a number of high profile dismissals from government and associated industry. The anti corruption body however, has yet to successfully prosecute anyone for alleged



corruption.

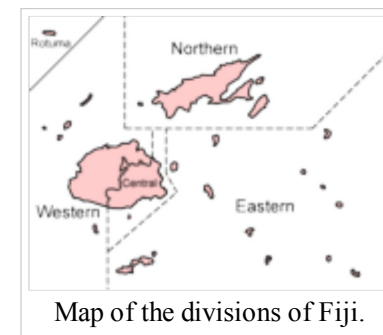
During November 2007 there were a number of people brought in for questioning in regard to an assassination Plot directed at the Interim Prime Minister, senior army officers and members of the Interim Cabinet.

Political Divisions

Fiji is divided into 4 divisions:

- Central
- Eastern
- Northern
- Western

These divisions are further divided into 14 districts.



Map of the divisions of Fiji.

Geography



Map of Fiji

Fiji consists of 322 islands (of which 106 are inhabited) and 522 smaller islets. The two most important islands are Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The islands are mountainous, with peaks up to 1,300 metres (4,250 ft), and covered with tropical forests. Viti Levu hosts the capital city of Suva, and is home to nearly three quarters of the population. Other important towns include Nadi (the location of the international airport), and Lautoka (the location of a large sugar mill and a sea-port). The main towns on Vanua Levu are Labasa and Savusavu. Other islands and island groups include Taveuni and Kadavu (the third and fourth largest islands respectively), the Mamanuca Group (just outside Nadi) and Yasawa Group, which are popular tourist destinations, the Lomaiviti Group, outside of Suva, and the remote Lau Group. Rotuma, some 500 kilometres (310 mi) north of the archipelago, has a special administrative status in Fiji. Fiji's nearest neighbour is Tonga. The climate in Fiji is tropical and warm most of the year round.

Economy

Fiji, endowed with forest, mineral, and fish resources, is one of the more developed of the Pacific island economies, though still with a large subsistence sector. Fiji experienced a period of rapid growth in the 1960s and 1970s but stagnated in the early 1980s. The coups of 1987 caused further contraction. Economic liberalisation in the years following the coup created a boom in the garment industry and a

Islands of Fiji

Principal islands

Viti Levu
Vanua Levu

Significant outliers

Conway Reef
Kadavu
Taveuni
Rotuma

Archipelagos

Kadavu Group
Lau Islands
Lomaiviti Islands
Mamanuca Islands



steady growth rate despite growing uncertainty of land tenure in the sugar industry. The expiration of leases for sugar cane farmers (along with reduced farm and factory efficiency) has led to a decline in sugar production despite a subsidised price. Subsidies for sugar have been provided by the EU and Fiji has been the second largest beneficiary after Mauritius.

Moala Islands
Ringgold Isles
Rotuma Group
Vanua Levu Group
Viti Levu Group
Yasawa Islands

Urbanization and expansion in the service sector have contributed to recent GDP growth. Sugar exports and a rapidly growing tourist industry — with 430,800 tourists in 2003 and increasing in the subsequent years — are the major sources of foreign exchange. Fiji is highly dependent on tourism for revenue. Sugar processing makes up one-third of industrial activity. Long-term problems include low investment and uncertain property rights. The political turmoil in Fiji has had a severe impact on the economy, which shrank by 2.8% in 2000 and grew by only 1% in 2001. The tourism sector recovered quickly, however, with visitor arrivals reaching pre-coup levels again during 2002, which has since resulted in a modest economic recovery. This recovery continued into 2004 but grew by 1.7% in 2005 and is projected to grow by 2.0% in 2006. Although inflation is low, the policy indicator rate of the Reserve Bank of Fiji was raised by 1% to 3.25% in February 2006 due to fears of excessive consumption financed by debt. Lower interest rates have so far not produced greater investment for exports. However, there has been a housing boom from declining commercial mortgage rates.

The tallest building in Fiji is the fourteen-storey Reserve Bank of Fiji Building in Suva, which opened in 1984. The Suva Central Commercial Centre, which opened in November 2005, was planned to outrank the Reserve Bank building at seventeen stories, but last-minute design changes meant the Reserve Bank building remains the tallest.

Demographics

Ethnic groups

The population of Fiji is mostly made up of native Fijians, who are Melanesians (54.3%), although a few also have Polynesian ancestry, and Indo-Fijians (38.1%), descendants of Indian contract labourers brought to the islands by the British in the nineteenth century. The percentage of the population of Indian descent has declined significantly over the last two decades due to migration for various reasons. There is also a small but significant group of descendants of indentured labourers from Solomon Islands.

About 1.2% are Rotuman — natives of Rotuma Island, whose culture has more in common with countries such as Tonga or Samoa than with the rest of Fiji. There are also small, but economically significant, groups of Europeans, Chinese and other minorities.

Relationships between ethnic Fijians and Indo-Fijians at a political level have often been strained, and the tension between the two communities has dominated politics in the islands for the past generation. The level of tension varies between different regions of the country. There are also good indications of racial harmony with the recognition of cultural and religious holidays by all races in Fiji.

Religion



Religion is one of the primary differences between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijians, with the former overwhelmingly Christian (97.2% at the 1996 census), and the latter mostly Hindu (70.7%) and Muslim (17.9%).

The largest Christian denomination is the Methodist Church of Fiji and Rotuma. With 36.2% of the total population (including almost two-thirds of ethnic Fijians), its share of the population is higher in Fiji than in any other nation. Roman Catholics (8.9%), the Assemblies of God (4%), and Seventh-day Adventists (2.9%) are also significant. Fiji is also the base for the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia (part of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia). These and other denominations also have small numbers of Indo-Fijian members; Christians of all kinds comprise 6.1% of the Indo-Fijian population. Much major Roman Catholic missionary activity was conducted through the Vicariate Apostolic of Fiji.

Hindus belong mostly to the Sanatan sect (74.3% of all Hindus) or else are unspecified (22%). The small Arya Samaj sect claims the membership of some 3.7% of all Hindus in Fiji. Muslims are mostly Sunni (59.7%) and Shia (36.7%), with an Ahmadiya minority (3.6%) regarded as heretical by more orthodox Muslims. The Sikh religion comprises 0.9% of the Indo-Fijian population, or 0.4% of the national population in Fiji. Their ancestors came from the Punjab region of India. The Bahá'í Faith has over 21 Local Spiritual Assemblies throughout Fiji and Baha'is live in more than 80 localities. The first Baha'i on the island was a New Zealander who arrived in 1924. There is also a small Jewish population on the island. Every year the Israeli Embassy organises a Passover celebration with approximately 100 people attending.

Sport

The national sport of Fiji is considered to be rugby union (see rugby union in Fiji), however rugby league is also widely played. The national team is very successful given the size of the population of the country, and has competed at four Rugby World Cups, the first being in 1987, where they reached the quarter-finals. The Fiji national side did not match that feat again until the 2007 Rugby World Cup when they upset Wales 38-34 to progress to the quarter-finals. Fiji also competes in the Pacific Tri-Nations and the Pacific Nations Cup. The sport is governed by the Fiji Rugby Union which is a member of the Pacific Islands Rugby Alliance, and contributes to the Pacific Islanders rugby union team. At the club level there are the Colonial Cup and Pacific Rugby Cup. The Fiji sevens team is one of the most successful rugby sevens teams in the world, having won the two world cup titles and the 2006 IRB Series.

Following is a list of Notable Fijians in Sport:

- Jimmy Snuka, a Hall of Fame professional wrestler.
- Vijay Singh, A professional golfer.
- Waisale Serevi, a world-renowned sevens rugby player, is from Fiji. Commentators often refer to him as either "the Magician", "Maestro" or also "the King of Sevens".
- Lote Tuqiri, dual code international for Australia in rugby league and rugby union, and former captain of the Fiji national rugby league team.
- Petero Civoniceva, representative footballer for the Australia national rugby league team.
- Sitiveni Sivivatu and Joe Rokocoko are Fijians who play for New Zealand's All Blacks.
- Rupeni Caucau plays for a French rugby union club.
- David Rodan and Alipate Carlile, professional Australian rules footballers in the Australian Football League.



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French Polynesia

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

French Polynesia (French: *Polynésie française*, Tahitian: *Pōrīnetia Farāni*) is a French overseas collectivity in the southern Pacific Ocean. It is made up of several groups of Polynesian islands, the most famous island being Tahiti in the Society Islands group, which is also the most populous island and the seat of the capital of the territory (Papeete). Although not an integral part of its territory, Clipperton Island was administered from French Polynesia until 2007.

History

The French Polynesian island groups do not share a common history before the establishment of the French protectorate in 1889. The first French Polynesian islands to be settled by Polynesians were the Marquesas Islands in AD 300 and the Society Islands in AD 800. The Polynesians were organized in petty chieftainships.

European discovery began in 1521 when the Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan sighted Pukapuka in the Tuamotu Archipelago. Dutchman Jacob Roggeveen discovered Bora Bora in the Society Islands in 1722, and the British explorer Samuel Wallis visited Tahiti in 1767. The French explorer Louis Antoine de Bougainville visited Tahiti in 1768, while the British explorer James Cook visited in 1769. Christian missions began with Spanish priests who stayed in Tahiti for a year from 1774; Protestants from the London Missionary Society settled permanently in Polynesia in 1797.

King Pomare II of Tahiti was forced to flee to Moorea in 1803; he and his subjects were converted to Protestantism in 1812. French Catholic missionaries arrived on Tahiti in 1834; their expulsion in 1836 caused France to send a gunboat in 1838. In 1842, Tahiti and Tahuata were declared a French protectorate, to allow Catholic missionaries to work undisturbed. The capital of Papeete was founded in 1843. In 1880, France annexed Tahiti, changing the status from that of a protectorate to that of a colony.

In the 1880s, France claimed the Tuamotu Archipelago, which formerly belonged to the Pomare dynasty, without formally annexing it. Having declared a protectorate over Tahuatu in 1842, the French regarded the entire Marquesas Islands as French. In 1885, France appointed a governor and established a general council, thus giving it the proper administration for a colony. The islands of Rimatara and Rurutu

<i>Polynésie française</i> French Polynesia	
	
Overseas collectivity flag	Coat of arms
Motto: <i>Tahiti Nui Mare'are'a"</i> <i>"Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité"</i>	
Anthem: <i>La Marseillaise</i>	
Capital	Papeete
Largest city	Faaa
Official languages	French, Tahitian
Demonym	French Polynesian
Government	Dependent territory
 - President of France	Nicolas Sarkozy
 - President of French Polynesia	Gaston Tong Sang
 - High Commissioner of the Republic	Anne Boquet
Overseas collectivity of France	
 - protectorate	1842
 - Overseas territory	1946
 - overseas collectivity	2004



unsuccessfully lobbied for British protection in 1888, so in 1889 they were annexed by France. Postage stamps were first issued in the colony in 1892. The first official name for the colony was *Etablissements De L'Océanie* (Settlements in Oceania); in 1903 the general council was changed to an advisory council and the colony's name was changed to *Etablissements Françaises De L'Océanie* (French Settlements in Oceania).

In 1940 the administration of French Polynesia recognised the Free French Forces and many Polynesians served in World War II. Unknown at the time to French and Polynesians, the Konoé Cabinet in Imperial Japan on September 16, 1940 included French Polynesia among the many territories which were to become Japanese possessions in the post-war world - though in the course of the war in the Pacific the Japanese were not able to launch an actual invasion of the French islands.

In 1946, Polynesians were granted French citizenship and the islands' status was changed to an overseas territory; the islands' name was changed in 1957 to *Polynésie Française* (French Polynesia). In 1962, France's early nuclear testing ground of Algeria became independent and the Mururoa Atoll in the Tuamotu Archipelago was selected as the new testing site; tests were conducted underground after 1974. In 1977, French Polynesia was granted partial internal autonomy; in 1984, the autonomy was extended. French Polynesia became a full overseas collectivity of France in 2004.

In September 1995, France stirred up widespread protests by resuming nuclear testing at Fangataufa atoll after a three-year moratorium. The last test was on January 27, 1996. On January 29, 1996, France announced it would accede to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and no longer test nuclear weapons.

Politics

Politics of French Polynesia takes place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic French overseas collectivity, whereby the President of French Polynesia is the 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 Assembly of French Polynesia (the territorial assembly).

Political life in French Polynesia has been marked by great instability since the mid-2000s. On September 14, 2007, the pro-independence leader Oscar Temaru, 63, was elected president of French Polynesia for the 3rd time in 3 years (with 27 of 44 votes cast in the territorial assembly). He replaced former President Gaston Tong Sang, opposed to independence, who lost a no-confidence vote in the Assembly of French Polynesia on 31 August after the longtime former president of French Polynesia, Gaston Flosse, hitherto opposed to independence, sided with his long enemy Oscar Temaru to topple the government of Gaston Tong Sang. Oscar Temaru, however, had no stable majority in the Assembly of French Polynesia, and new territorial elections were held in February 2008 to solve the political crisis.

Area	
 - Total	4,167 km ² (173rd)
 - Water (%)	1,609 sq mi
Population	
 - Aug. 2007 census	259,596 (176th)
 - Density	62/km ² (130th)
	166/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2003 estimate
 - Total	\$4.58 billion (not ranked)
 - Per capita	\$17,500 ¹ (not ranked)
HDI (n/a)	n/a (n/a) (n/a)
Currency	CFP franc (₣PF)
Time zone	(UTC-10)
Internet TLD	.pf
Calling code	+689
¹ 2003 estimate.	



The party of Gaston Tong Sang won the territorial elections, but that didn't solve the political crisis: the two minority parties of Oscar Temaru and Gaston Flosse, who together have one more member in the territorial assembly than the political party of Gaston Tong Sang, allied to prevent Gaston Tong Sang from becoming president of French Polynesia. Gaston Flosse was then elected president of French Polynesia by the territorial assembly on February 23, 2008 with the support of the pro-independence party led by Oscar Temaru, while Oscar Temaru was elected speaker of the territorial assembly with the support of the anti-independence party led by Gaston Flosse. Both formed a coalition cabinet. Many observers doubted that the alliance between the anti-independence Gaston Flosse and the pro-independence Oscar Temaru, designed to prevent Gaston Tong Sang from becoming president of French Polynesia, could last very long.

At the French municipal elections held in March 2008, several prominent mayors who are member of the Flosse-Temaru coalition lost their offices in key municipalities of French Polynesia, which was interpreted as a disapproval of the way Gaston Tong Sang, whose party French Polynesian voters had placed first in the territorial elections the month before, had been prevented from becoming president of French Polynesia by the last minute alliance between Flosse and Temaru's parties. Eventually, on April 15, 2008 the government of Gaston Flosse was toppled by a constructive vote of no confidence in the territorial assembly when two members of the Flosse-Temaru coalition left the coalition and sided with Tong Sang's party. Gaston Tong Sang was elected president of French Polynesia as a result of this constructive vote of no confidence, but his majority in the territorial assembly is very narrow. He offered posts in his cabinet to Flosse and Temaru's parties which they both refused. Gaston Tong Sang has called all parties to help end the instability in local politics, a prerequisite to attract foreign investors needed to develop the local economy.

Despite a local assembly and government, French Polynesia is not in a free association with France, like the Cook Islands with New Zealand or Puerto Rico with the United States. As a French overseas collectivity, the local government has no competence in justice, education, security and defense, directly provided and administered by the French State, the Gendarmerie and the French Military. The highest representant of the State in the territory is the High Commissioner of the Republic (French: *Haut commissaire de la République*).

French Polynesia also sends two deputies to the French National Assembly, one representing the Leeward Islands administrative subdivision, the Austral Islands administrative subdivision, the commune (municipality) of Moorea-Maiao, and the westernmost part of Tahiti (including the capital Papeete), and the other representing the central and eastern part of Tahiti, the Tuamotu-Gambier administrative division, and the Marquesas Islands administrative division. French Polynesia also sends one senator to the French Senate.

French Polynesians vote in the French presidential elections and at the 2007 French presidential election, in which the pro-independence leader Oscar Temaru openly called to vote for the Socialist candidate Ségolène Royal while the parties opposed to independence generally supported the centre-right candidate Nicolas Sarkozy, the turnout in French Polynesia was 69.12% in the first round of the election and 74.67% in the second round. French Polynesians voters placed Nicolas Sarkozy ahead of Ségolène Royal in both rounds of the election (2nd round: Nicolas Sarkozy 51.9%; Ségolène Royal 48.1%).

Administration

Between 1946 and 2003, French Polynesia had the status of an overseas territory (French: *territoire d'outre-mer*, or *TOM*). In 2003 it became an overseas collectivity (French: *collectivité d'outre-mer*, or *COM*). Its statutory law of 27 February 2004 gives it the particular designation of overseas province (French:



province *d'outre-mer*, or POM), but without legal modification of its status.

Administrative divisions

French Polynesia has five administrative subdivisions (French: *subdivisions administratives*):

- Windward Islands (French: *(les) Îles du Vent* or officially *la subdivision administrative des Îles du Vent*) (the two *subdivisions administratives* Windward Islands and Leeward Islands are part of the Society Islands)
- Leeward Islands (French: *(les) Îles Sous-le-Vent* or officially *la subdivision administrative des Îles Sous-le-Vent*) (the two *subdivisions administratives* Windward Islands and Leeward Islands are part of the Society Islands)
- Marquesas Islands (French: *(les) (Îles) Marquises* or officially *la subdivision administrative des (Îles) Marquises*)
- Austral Islands (French: *(les) (Îles) Australes* or officially *la subdivision administrative des (Îles) Australes*) (including the Bass Islands)
- Tuamotu-Gambier (French: *(les) (Îles) Tuamotu-Gambier* or officially *la subdivision administrative des (Îles) Tuamotu-Gambier*) (the Tuamotus and the Gambier Islands)

Geography



The islands of French Polynesia have a total land area of 4,167 square kilometres (1,622 sq. mi) scattered over 2,500,000 square kilometres (965,255 sq. mi) of ocean.

It is made up of several groups of islands, the largest and most populated of which is Tahiti.

The island groups are:

- Austral Islands
- Bass Islands *often considered part of the Austral Islands*
- Gambier Islands *often considered part of the Tuamotu Archipelago*
- Marquesas Islands
- Society Islands (including Tahiti)
- Tuamotu Archipelago

Aside from Tahiti, some other important atolls, islands, and island groups in French Polynesia are: Ahe, Bora Bora, Hiva `Oa, Huahine, Maiao, Maupiti, Mehetia, Moorea, Nuku Hiva, Raiatea, Tahaa, Tetiaroa, Tubuai, and Tupai.

Economy

French Polynesia has a moderately developed economy, which is dependent on imported goods, tourism, and the financial assistance of mainland France. Tourist facilities are well developed and are available on the major islands. Also, as the noni fruit from these islands is discovered for its medicinal uses, people have been able to find jobs related to this agricultural industry.

The legal tender of French Polynesia is the CFP Franc.

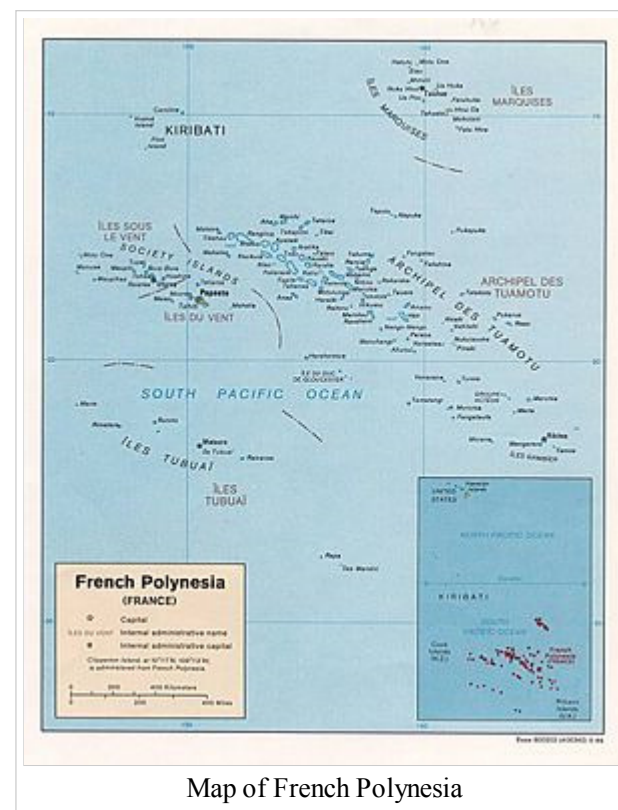
Agriculture: coconuts, vanilla, vegetables, fruits.

Natural resources: timber, fish, cobalt.

The major export of French Polynesia is their famous black Tahitian pearls.

Demographics

Total population at the August 2007 census was 259,596 inhabitants. At the 2007 census, 68.6% of the population of French Polynesia lived on the island of



Map of French Polynesia



Tahiti alone. The urban area of Papeete, the capital city, has 131,695 inhabitants (2007 census).

At the November 2002 census, 87.2% of people were born in French Polynesia, 9.5% were born in metropolitan France, 1.4% were born in overseas France outside of French Polynesia, and 1.9% were born in foreign countries. At the 1988 census, the last census which asked questions regarding ethnicity, 66.5% of people were ethnically unmixed Polynesians, 7.1 % were Polynesians with light European or East Asian mixing, 11.9% were Europeans, 9.3% were people of mixed European and Polynesian descent, the so-called Demis (literally meaning "Half"), and 4.7% were East Asians (mainly Chinese). The Europeans, the Demis and the East Asians are essentially concentrated on the island of Tahiti, particularly in the urban area of Papeete, where their share of the population is thus much more important than in French Polynesia overall. Race mixing has been going on for more than a century already in French Polynesia, resulting in a rather mixed society. For example Gaston Flosse, the long-time leader of French Polynesia, is a Demi (European father from Lorraine and Polynesian mother). His main opponent Gaston Tong Sang is a member of the East Asian (in his case Chinese) community. Oscar Temaru, the pro-independence leader, is ethnically Polynesian (father from Tahiti, mother from the Cook Islands), but he has admitted to also have Chinese ancestry.

Despite a long tradition of race mixing, racial tensions have been growing in recent years, with politicians using a xenophobic discourse and fanning the flame of racial tensions. The pro-independence politicians have long pointed the finger at the European community (Oscar Temaru, pro-independence leader and former president of French Polynesia, was for example found guilty of "racial discrimination" by the criminal court of Papeete in 2007 for having referred to the Europeans living in French Polynesia as "trash", "waste"). More recently, the Chinese community which controls many businesses in French Polynesia has been targeted in verbal attacks by the newly allied Gaston Flosse and Oscar Temaru in their political fight against Gaston Tong Sang, whose Chinese origins they emphasize in contrast with their Polynesian origins, despite the fact that they both have mixed origins (European and Polynesian for Flosse; Polynesian and Chinese for Temaru). In April 2008, after the government of Gaston Flosse was toppled in the Assembly of French Polynesia and Gaston Tong Sang became the new president of French Polynesia, two French Polynesian labor union leaders made anti-Chinese remarks ("I'm not hiding from the fact that I wouldn't like our country to be ruled by someone who's not a Polynesian"; "a Chinese only thinks of the business leaders, because he is a businessman"). These anti-Chinese remarks caused a political furor and were widely condemned in French Polynesia.

Historical population

1907	1911	1921	1926	1931	1936	1941	1946	1951
30,600	31,900	31,600	35,900	40,400	44,000	51,200	58,200	63,300
1956	1962	1971	1977	1983	1988	1996	2002	2007
76,323	84,551	119,168	137,382	166,753	188,814	219,521	245,516	259,596
Official figures from past censuses.								

Languages

French is the official language of French Polynesia. An organic law of April 12, 1996 states that "French is the official language, Tahitian and other Polynesian

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languages can be used." At the 2002 census, among the population whose age was 14 and older, 65.0% of people reported that the language they speak the most at home is French, 33.4% reported that the language they speak the most at home is any of the Polynesian languages, 1.2% reported an East Asian language, and 0.4% another language. At the same census, 92.9% of people whose age was 14 or older reported that they could speak, read and write French, whereas only 4.8% reported that they had no knowledge of French.

Religion

Christianity is the main religion of the islands, a majority (54%) belonging to various Protestant churches and a large minority (30%) being Roman Catholic.

Transportation

While most major roads are paved and well-maintained, many secondary roads are not. Traffic is brisk and all types of vehicles and pedestrians jockey for space on narrow streets. Crosswalks are marked and the law requires that motor vehicles stop for pedestrians; however, this is not always done. Tourists should exercise caution when driving, particularly at night.

There are 51 airports in French Polynesia, 39 are paved.

Famous people of French Polynesia

- Henri Hiro (1944-1991), Film director & script writer, poet, ecologist, activist
- Marco Namouro, writer (1889-1968)
- Célestine Hitiura Vaite, writer (born 1966)
- Ella Koon, model (born 1979)
- Pascal Vahirua, former French international footballer (born 1966)
- Marama Vahirua, footballer, cousin of Pascal Vahirua (born 1980)

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List of Oceanian countries


2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

This is an alphabetical list of sovereign states and *dependencies* (listed in *italic*) that have at least some territory lying within Oceania



 <i>American Samoa</i>	 New Zealand
 <i>Ashmore and Cartier Islands</i>	 <i>Niue</i>
 Australia	 <i>Norfolk Island</i>
 <i>Cook Islands</i>	 <i>Northern Mariana Islands</i>
 <i>Coral Sea Islands</i>	 Palau
 <i>Easter Island</i>	 Papua New Guinea
 Fiji	 <i>Pitcairn Islands</i>
 <i>French Polynesia</i>	 Samoa
 <i>Guam</i>	 Solomon Islands
 <i>Hawaii</i>	 Timor-Leste
 Indonesia	 <i>Tokelau</i>
 Kiribati	 Tonga
 Marshall Islands	 Tuvalu
 Federated States of Micronesia	 Vanuatu
 Nauru	 <i>Wallis and Futuna</i>
 <i>New Caledonia</i>	

 *United States Minor Outlying Islands*
Baker Island · *Howland Island* · *Jarvis Island* · *Johnston Atoll* ·
Kingman Reef · *Midway Atoll* · *Palmyra Atoll* · *Wake Island*

 Ogasawara Islands (Japan)
 Bonin Islands · Marcus Island · Okino-tori-shima · Volcano Islands

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New Zealand

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New Zealand is an island nation in the south-western Pacific Ocean comprising two main landmasses (the North Island and the South Island) and numerous smaller islands, most notably Stewart Island/Rakiura and the Chatham Islands. The indigenous Māori named New Zealand **Aotearoa**, which is commonly translated into English as *The Land of the Long White Cloud*. The Realm of New Zealand also includes the Cook Islands and Niue, which are self-governing but in free association; Tokelau; and the Ross Dependency (New Zealand's territorial claim in Antarctica).

New Zealand is notable for its geographic isolation, situated about 2000 km (1250 miles) southeast of Australia across the Tasman Sea, and its closest neighbours to the north are New Caledonia, Fiji and Tonga. During its long isolation New Zealand developed a distinctive fauna dominated by birds, many of which became extinct after the arrival of humans and the mammals they introduced.

The population is mostly of European descent, with the indigenous Māori being the largest minority. Asians and non-Maori Polynesians are also significant minorities, especially in the cities. Elizabeth II, as the Queen of New Zealand, is the Head of State and, in her absence, is represented by a non-partisan Governor-General. The Queen 'reigns but does not rule.' She has no real political influence, and her position is essentially symbolic. Political power is held by the democratically elected Parliament of New Zealand under the leadership of the Prime Minister, who is the Head of Government.

Etymology

It is unknown whether Māori had a name for New Zealand as a whole before the arrival of Europeans, although they referred to the North Island as Te Ika a Māui (the fish of Māui) and the South Island as Te Wai Pounamu (the waters of greenstone) or Te Waka o Aoraki (the canoe of Aoraki). Until the early 20th century, the North Island was also referred to as Aotearoa (colloquially translated "land of the long white cloud"); in modern Māori usage, this name refers to the whole country. Aotearoa is also commonly used in this sense in New Zealand English.

The first European name for New Zealand was *Staten Landt*, the name given to it by the Dutch explorer Abel Tasman, who in 1642 became the first European to see the islands. Tasman assumed it was part of a

New Zealand <i>Aotearoa</i> (Māori)	
	
Flag	Coat of arms
Anthem: " God Defend New Zealand" " God Save the Queen" ¹	
	
Capital	Wellington
Largest city	Auckland ²
Official languages	English (98%) ³ Māori (4.2%) ³ NZ Sign Language (0.6%) ³
Demonym	New Zealander, Kiwi (colloquial)
Government	Parliamentary democracy and Constitutional monarchy
 - Head of State	HM Queen Elizabeth II



southern continent connected with land discovered in 1615 off the southern tip of South America by Jacob Le Maire. The name *New Zealand* originated with Dutch cartographers, who called the islands *Nova Zeelandia*, after the Dutch province of Zeeland. No-one is certain exactly who first coined the term, but it first appeared in 1645 and may have been the choice of cartographer Johan Blaeu. British explorer James Cook subsequently anglicised the name to New Zealand. There is no connection to the Danish Zealand.

History

New Zealand is one of the most recently settled major land masses. The first settlers of New Zealand were Eastern Polynesians who came to New Zealand, probably in a series of migrations, sometime between around AD 800 and 1300. Over the next few centuries these settlers developed into a distinct culture now known as Māori. The population was divided into Iwi (tribes) and hapū (subtribes) which would co-operate, compete and sometimes fight with each other. At some point a group of Māori migrated to the Chatham Islands where they developed their own distinct Moriori culture.

The first Europeans known to have reached New Zealand were Dutch explorer Abel Janszoon Tasman and his crew in 1642. Several of the crew were killed by Māori and no Europeans returned to New Zealand until British explorer James Cook's voyage of 1768–71. Cook reached New Zealand in 1769 and mapped almost all of the coastline. Following Cook, New Zealand was visited by numerous European and North American whaling, sealing and trading ships. They traded European food and goods, especially metal tools and weapons, for Māori timber, food, artefacts and water. On occasion, Europeans traded goods for sex. Māori agriculture and warfare were transformed by the potato and the musket, although the resulting Musket Wars died out once the tribal imbalance of arms had been rectified. From the early nineteenth century, Christian missionaries began to settle New Zealand, eventually converting most of the Māori population, who had become disillusioned with their indigenous faith by the introduction of Western culture.

- Governor-General	Anand Satyanand
- Prime Minister	Helen Clark
Independence	from the United Kingdom
- Dominion	26 September 1907 ⁴
- Statute of Westminster	11 December 1931 (adopted 25 November 1947)
- Constitution Act 1986	13 December 1986
Area	
- Total	268,680 km ² (75th) 103,738 sq mi
- Water (%)	2.1
Population	
- December 2007 estimate	4,268,000 ⁵ (122nd (2008))
- 2006 census	4,143,279 ⁶
- Density	15/km ² (204th) 39/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2008 IMF estimate
- Total	\$117.696 billion ⁷ (58th)
- Per capita	\$27,785 (28th)
GDP (nominal)	2008 IMF estimate
- Total	\$128.071 billion ⁸ (53rd)
- Per capita	\$30,234 (27th)
Gini (1997)	36.2 (medium)
HDI (2007)	▲ 0.943 (high) (19th)
Currency	New Zealand dollar (NZD)
Time zone	NZST ⁹ (UTC+12)
- Summer (DST)	NZDT (UTC+13)



Signing of the Treaty of Waitangi

Becoming aware of the lawless nature of European settlement and increasing interest in the territory by the French, the British government sent William Hobson to New Zealand to claim sovereignty and negotiate a treaty with Māori. The Treaty of Waitangi was first signed in the Bay of Islands on 6 February 1840. The drafting was done hastily and confusion and disagreement continues to surround the translation. The Treaty is regarded as New Zealand's foundation as a nation and is revered by Māori as a guarantee of their rights. Hobson initially selected Okiato as the capital in 1840, before moving the seat of government to Auckland in 1841.

Under British rule, the islands of New Zealand had been part of the colony of New South Wales. In 1840 New Zealand became its own dominion, which signalled increasing numbers of European settlers particularly from the British Isles. At first, Māori were eager to trade with the 'Pakeha', as they called them, and many iwi (tribes) became wealthy. As settler numbers increased, conflicts over land led to the New Zealand Land Wars of the 1860s and 1870s, resulting in the loss of much Māori land. The detail of European settlement and the acquisition of land from Māori remain controversial.

Representative government for the colony was provided for by the passing of the 1852 New Zealand Constitution Act by the United Kingdom. The 1st New Zealand Parliament met for the first time in 1854. In 1856 the colony became effectively self-governing with the grant of responsible government over all domestic matters other than native policy. Power in this respect would be transferred to the colonial administration in the 1860s. In 1863 Premier Alfred Domett moved a resolution that the capital transfer to a locality in Cook Strait, apparently due to concern the South Island could form a separate colony. Commissioners from Australia (chosen for their neutral status) advised Wellington as suitable because of its harbour and central location, and parliament officially sat there for the first time in 1865. In 1893, the country became the first nation in the world to grant women the right to vote. In 1907, New Zealand became an independent Dominion and a fully independent nation in 1947 when the Statute of Westminster (1931) was ratified, although in practice Britain had ceased to play any real role in the government of New Zealand much earlier than this. As New Zealand became more politically independent it became more dependent economically; in the 1890s, refrigerated shipping allowed New Zealand to base its entire economy on the export of meat and dairy products to Britain.

New Zealand was an enthusiastic member of the British Empire, fighting in the Boer War, World War I and World War II and supporting Britain in the Suez Crisis. The country was very much a part of the world economy and suffered as others did in the Great Depression of the 1930s. The depression led to the election of the first Labour government, which established a comprehensive welfare state and a protectionist economy.

	(Sep to Apr)
Internet TLD	.nz ¹⁰
Calling code	+64
¹ "God Save the Queen" is officially a national anthem but is generally used only on regal and vice-regal occasions. ² Auckland is the largest urban area; Auckland City is the largest incorporated city. ³ Percentages do not add to 100% because some people speak more than one language. They exclude unusable responses and those who spoke no language (e.g. too young to talk). ⁴ There is a multitude of dates that could be considered to mark independence (see Independence of New Zealand). ⁵ Estimated resident population of New Zealand on 22 June 2008 NZ Population Clock ⁶ New Zealand census 2006 final figures, including overseas visitors. PDF (370 KB) ⁷ IMF GDP PPP Report for selected countries. ⁸ IMF GDP report for selected countries. ⁹ The Chatham Islands have a separate time zone, 45 minutes ahead of the rest of New Zealand. ¹⁰ The territories of Niue, the Cook Islands and Tokelau have their own cctlds, .nu, .ck and .tk respectively.	



Gustavus von Tempsky is shot during the land wars



Tino rangatiratanga (Māori sovereignty) flag

New Zealand experienced increasing prosperity following World War II. However, some social problems were developing; Māori had begun to move to the cities in search of work and excitement rather than the traditional rural way of life. A Māori protest movement would eventually form, criticising Eurocentrism and seeking more recognition of Māori culture and the Treaty of Waitangi, which they felt had not been fully honoured. In 1975 a Waitangi Tribunal was set up to investigate alleged breaches of the Treaty and in 1985 it was enabled to investigate historic grievances. In common with all other developed countries, social developments accelerated in the 1970s and social and political mores changed. By the 1970s, the traditional trade with Britain was threatened because of Britain's membership of the European Economic Community. Great economic and social changes took place in the 1980s under the 4th Labour government largely led by Finance Minister Roger Douglas, and commonly referred to as " Rogernomics."

Politics

Government

New Zealand is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary democracy. Although it has no codified constitution, the Constitution Act 1986 is the principal formal statement of New Zealand's constitutional structure. Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state and is titled Queen of New Zealand under the Royal Titles Act 1974. She is represented by the Governor-General, whom she appoints on the exclusive advice of the Prime Minister. The current Governor-General is Anand Satyanand.

The Governor-General exercises the Crown's prerogative powers, such as the power to appoint and dismiss ministers and to dissolve Parliament, and in rare situations, the reserve powers. The Governor-General also chairs the Executive Council, which is a formal committee consisting of all ministers of the Crown. Members of the Executive Council are required to be Members of Parliament, and most are also in Cabinet. Cabinet is the most senior policy-making body and is led by the Prime Minister, who is also, by convention, the Parliamentary leader of the governing party or coalition. The current Prime Minister is Helen Clark, the leader of the Labour Party.

The New Zealand Parliament has only one chamber, the House of Representatives, which usually seats 120 Members of Parliament. Parliamentary general elections are held every three years under a form of proportional representation called Mixed Member Proportional. The 2005 General Election created an 'overhang' of one extra seat, occupied by the Māori Party, due to that party winning more seats in electorates than the number of seats its proportion of the party vote would have given it.



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of New Zealand



New Zealand government "Beehive" and the Parliament Buildings, in Wellington.

Since 17 October 2005, Labour has been in formal coalition with Jim Anderton, the Progressive Party's only MP. In addition to the parties in formal coalition, New Zealand First and United Future provide confidence and supply in return for their leaders being ministers outside cabinet. A further arrangement has been made with the Green Party, which has given a commitment not to vote against the government on confidence and supply. Since early 2007, Labour has also had the proxy vote of Taito Phillip Field, a former Labour MP. These arrangements assure the government of a majority of seven MPs on confidence votes.

The Leader of the Opposition is National Party leader John Key. The ACT party and the Māori Party are also in opposition. The Greens, New Zealand First and United Future each vote against the government on some legislation.

The highest court in New Zealand is the Supreme Court of New Zealand, which was established in 2004 following the passage of the Supreme Court Act 2003. The act also abolished the option to appeal to the Privy Council in London. The current Chief Justice is Dame Sian Elias. New Zealand's judiciary also includes the Court of Appeal; the High Court, which deals with serious criminal offences and civil matters at the trial level and with appeals from lower courts and tribunals; and subordinate courts.

New Zealand is the only country in the world in which all the highest offices in the land have been occupied simultaneously by women: Queen Elizabeth II, Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright, Prime Minister Helen Clark, Speaker of the House of Representatives Margaret Wilson and Chief Justice Dame Sian Elias were all in office between March 2005 and August 2006 (also of note New Zealand's largest listed company: Telecom New Zealand had a woman - Theresa Gattung as its CEO at the time).

Foreign relations and the military

New Zealand maintains a strong profile on environmental protection, human rights and free trade, particularly in agriculture.

New Zealand is a member of the following geopolitical organisations: APEC, East Asia Summit, Commonwealth of Nations, OECD and the United Nations. New Zealand has signed up to a number of free trade agreements, of which the most important are the China-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement & Closer Economic Relations with Australia.

For its first hundred years, New Zealand followed the United Kingdom's lead on foreign policy. In declaring war on Germany on 3 September 1939, Prime Minister Michael Savage proclaimed, "Where she goes, we go; where she stands, we stand". After the war, however, the United States exerted an increased influence on culture and the New Zealand people gained a clearer sense of national identity. New Zealand joined with Australia and the United States in the ANZUS security treaty in 1951, and later fought alongside the United States in both the Korean and the Vietnam Wars. In contrast, the United Kingdom became increasingly focused on its European interests following the Suez Crisis, and New Zealand was forced to develop new markets after the UK joined the EEC in 1973.



Anand Satyanand,
Governor-General



Helen Clark,
Prime Minister



New Zealand House,
High Commission of
New Zealand in London

New Zealand has traditionally worked closely with Australia, whose foreign policy followed a similar historical trend. In turn, many Pacific Islands such as Western Samoa have looked to New Zealand's lead. The American influence on New Zealand was weakened by the disappointment with the Vietnam War, the sinking of the Rainbow Warrior by France, and by disagreements over environmental and agricultural trade issues and New Zealand's nuclear-free policy.

While the ANZUS treaty was once fully mutual between Australia, New Zealand and the United States, this is no longer the case. In February 1985, New Zealand refused nuclear-powered or nuclear-armed ships access to its ports. New Zealand became a Nuclear-free zone in June 1987, the first Western-allied state to do so. In 1986 the United States announced that it was suspending its treaty security obligations to New Zealand pending the restoration of port access. The New Zealand Nuclear Free Zone, Disarmament, and Arms Control Act 1987 prohibits the stationing of nuclear weapons on the territory of New Zealand and the entry into New Zealand waters of nuclear armed or propelled ships. This legislation remains a source of contention and the basis for the United States' continued suspension of treaty obligations to New Zealand.

Within New Zealand, there have been various wars between iwi, and between the British settlers and iwi. New Zealand has fought in the Second Boer War, World War I, World War II, the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency (and committed troops, fighters and bombers to the subsequent confrontation with Indonesia), the Vietnam War, the Gulf War and the Afghanistan War. It has also sent a unit of army engineers to help rebuild Iraqi infrastructure for one year during the Iraq War. As of 2008, New Zealand forces are still active in Afghanistan.

The New Zealand Defence Force has three branches: the New Zealand Army, the Royal New Zealand Navy, and the Royal New Zealand Air Force. New Zealand considers its own national defence needs to be modest; it dismantled its air combat capability in 2001. New Zealand has contributed forces to recent regional and global peacekeeping missions, including those in Cyprus, Somalia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Sinai, Angola, Cambodia, the Iran/Iraq border, Bougainville, East Timor, and the Solomon Islands.

Local government and external territories



HMNZS *Canterbury* is a multi-role vessel (MRV) of the Royal New Zealand Navy.



Major cities and towns in New Zealand

The early European settlers divided New Zealand into provinces. These were abolished in 1876 so that government could be centralised, for financial reasons. As a result, New Zealand has no separately represented subnational entities such as provinces, states or territories, apart from its local government. The spirit of the provinces, however, still lives on, and there is fierce rivalry exhibited in sporting and cultural events. Since 1876, local government has administered the various regions of New Zealand. In 1989, the government completely reorganised local government, implementing the current two-tier structure of regional councils and territorial authorities which are constituted under the revised Local Government Act 2002 (New Zealand). In 1991, the Resource Management Act 1991 replaced the Town and Country Planning Act as the main planning legislation for local government.

Today, New Zealand has twelve regional councils for the administration of regional environmental and transport matters and seventy-three territorial authorities that administer roading, sewerage, building consents, and other local matters. The territorial authorities are sixteen city councils, fifty-seven district councils, and the Chatham Islands County Council. Four of the territorial councils (one city and three districts) and the Chatham Islands County Council also perform the functions of a regional council and thus are known as unitary authorities. Territorial authority districts are not subdivisions of regional council districts, and a few of them straddle regional council boundaries.

The regions are (asterisks denote unitary authorities): Northland, Auckland, Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne*, Hawke's Bay, Taranaki, Manawatu-Wanganui, Wellington, Marlborough*, Nelson*, Tasman*, West Coast, Canterbury, Otago, Southland, Chatham Islands*.

As a major South Pacific nation, New Zealand has a close working relationship with many Pacific Island nations, and continues a political association with the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau. New Zealand operates Scott Base in its Antarctic territory, the Ross



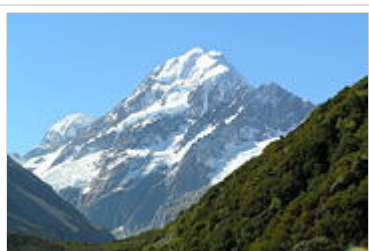
Realm of New Zealand

Dependency. Other countries also use Christchurch to support their Antarctic bases and the city is sometimes known as the "Gateway to Antarctica".

Geography and environment



New Zealand comprises two main islands (called the North and South Islands in English, *Te Ika a Maui* and *Te Wai Pounamu* in Māori) and a number of smaller islands located near the centre of the water hemisphere. The North and South Islands are separated by the Cook Strait, which is 20km wide at its narrowest point. The total land area, 268,680 square kilometres (103,738 sq mi), is a little less than that of Italy and Japan, and a little more than the United Kingdom. The country extends more than 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles) along its main, north-north-east axis, with approximately 15,134 km (9,404 mi) of coastline. The most significant of the smaller inhabited islands include Stewart Island/Rakiura; Waiheke Island, in Auckland's Hauraki Gulf; Great Barrier Island, east of the Hauraki Gulf; and the Chatham Islands, named *Rēkohu* by Moriori. The country has extensive marine resources, with the seventh-largest Exclusive Economic Zone in the world, covering over four million square kilometres (1.5 million sq mi), more than 15 times its land area.



Aoraki/Mount Cook is the tallest mountain in New Zealand

The South Island is the largest land mass of New Zealand, and is divided along its length by the Southern Alps, the highest peak of which is Aoraki/Mount Cook at 3754 metres (12,320 ft). There are 18 peaks over 3,000 metres (10,000 ft) in the South Island. The North Island is less mountainous than the South, but is marked by volcanism. The highest North Island mountain, Mount Ruapehu (2,797 m / 9,177 ft), is an active cone volcano. The dramatic and varied landscape of New Zealand has made it a popular location for the production of television programmes and films, including the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy and the *The Last Samurai*.

The country owes its varied topography, and perhaps even its emergence above the waves, to the dynamic boundary it straddles between the Pacific and Indo-Australian Plates. New Zealand is part of Zealandia, a continent nearly half the size of Australia that is otherwise almost completely submerged. About 25 million years ago, a shift in plate tectonic movements began to pull Zealandia apart forcefully, with this now being most evident along the Alpine Fault and in the highly active Taupo volcanic zone.





New Zealand is culturally and linguistically part of Polynesia, and constitutes the south-western anchor of the Polynesian Triangle.

The latitude of New Zealand (ranging from approximately 34 to 47°S) corresponds closely to that of Italy in the Northern Hemisphere. However, its isolation from continental influences and exposure to cold southerly winds and ocean currents gives the climate a much milder character. The climate throughout the country is mild and temperate, mainly maritime, with temperatures rarely falling below 0 °C (32 °F) or rising above 30 °C (86 °F) in populated areas. Temperature maxima and minima throughout the historical record are 42.4 °C (108.3 °F) in Rangiora, Canterbury and -21.6 °C (-6.9 °F) in Ophir, Otago. Conditions vary sharply across regions from extremely wet on the West Coast of the South Island to semi-arid (Köppen BSh) in the Mackenzie Basin of inland Canterbury and subtropical in Northland. Of the main cities, Christchurch is the driest, receiving only 640 mm (25 in) of rain per year; Auckland, the wettest, receives almost twice that amount. Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch all receive a yearly average in excess of 2000 hours of sunshine per annum. The southern and south-western parts of South Island have a cooler and cloudier climate, with around 1400–1600 sunshine hours per annum; whilst the northern and north-eastern parts of the South Island are the sunniest areas of the country and receive approximately 2400–2500 sunshine hours per annum.

Biodiversity



Pōhutukawa trees

Because of its long isolation from the rest of the world and its island biogeography, New Zealand has extraordinary flora and fauna, descended from Gondwanan wildlife or since arriving by flying, swimming or being carried across the sea. About 80% of New Zealand's flora is endemic, including 65 endemic genera. The two main types of forest are those dominated by podocarps and/or the giant kauri, and in cooler climates the southern beech. The remaining vegetation types in New Zealand are grasslands of tussock and other grasses, usually in sub-alpine areas, and the low shrublands between grasslands and forests.

Until the arrival of humans, 80% of the land was forested. Until 2006, it was thought, barring three species of bat (one now extinct), there were no non-marine native mammals. However, in 2006, scientists discovered bones that belonged to a long-extinct, unique, mouse-sized land animal in the Otago region of the South Island.. New Zealand's forests were inhabited by a diverse range of megafauna, including the flightless moas (now extinct), four species of kiwi, the kakapo and the takahē, all endangered by human actions. Unique birds capable of flight included the Haast's eagle, which was the world's largest bird of prey (now extinct), and the large kākā and kea parrots. Reptiles present in New Zealand include skinks, geckos and living fossil tuatara. There are four endemic species of primitive frogs. There are no snakes and there is only one venomous spider, the katipo, which is rare and restricted to coastal regions. However, there are many endemic species of insects, including the weta, one species of which may grow as large as a house mouse and is the heaviest insect in the world.

New Zealand has suffered a high rate of extinctions, including the moa species, the huia, laughing owl and flightless wrens (which formerly occupied the roles elsewhere occupied by mice). This is due to human activities such as hunting and pressure from



New Zealand from space. The snow-capped Southern Alps dominate the South Island, while the North Island's Northland Peninsula stretches towards the subtropics



The endemic flightless kiwi is a national icon



introduced feral animals, such as weasels, stoats, cats, goats, deer and brushtailed possums. Five indigenous vascular plant species are now believed to be extinct, including Adam's mistletoe and a species of forget-me-not.

However, New Zealand has led the world in island restoration projects where offshore islands are cleared of introduced mammalian pests and native species are reintroduced. Several islands located near to the three main islands are wildlife reserves where common pests such as possums and rodents have been eradicated to allow the reintroduction of endangered species to the islands. A more recent development is the mainland ecological island.

Economy

New Zealand has a modern, prosperous, developed economy with an estimated nominal Gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$128.1 billion (as of 2008). The country has a relatively high standard of living with an estimated GDP per capita of US\$30,234 in 2008 which is comparable to Southern Europe; e.g. Spain US\$33,385, but lower than the United States at US\$46,820. Since 2000 New Zealand has made substantial gains in median household income. New Zealand, along with Australia, largely escaped the early 2000s recession that impacted upon most other advanced countries.

New Zealanders have a high level of life satisfaction as measured by international surveys; this is despite lower GDP per-head levels than many other OECD countries. The country was ranked 20th on the 2006 Human Development Index and 15th in *The Economist's* 2005 world-wide quality-of-life index. The country was further ranked 1st in life satisfaction and 5th in overall prosperity in the 2007 Legatum Institute prosperity index. In addition, the 2007 Mercer Quality of Living Survey ranked Auckland 5th place and Wellington 12th place in the world on its list.



Auckland, the economic centre of the country, with the Sky Tower in the background

The tertiary sector is the largest sector in the economy (68.8% of GDP), followed by the secondary sector (26.9% of GDP) and the primary sector (4.3% of GDP).

New Zealand is a country heavily dependent on trade, particularly in agricultural products. Exports account for around 24% of its output, which is a relatively high figure (it is around 50% for many smaller European countries). This makes New Zealand particularly vulnerable to international commodity prices and global economic slowdowns. Its principal export industries are agriculture, horticulture, fishing and forestry. These make up about half of the country's exports. Its major export partners are Australia 20.5%, US 13.1%, Japan 10.3%, China 5.4%, UK 4.9% (2006).

Tourism plays a significant role in New Zealand's economy. Tourism contributes \$12.8 billion (or 8.9%) to New Zealand's total GDP and supports nearly 200,000 full-time equivalent jobs (9.9% of the total workforce in New Zealand). Tourists to New Zealand are expected to increase at a rate of 4% annually up to 2013.

Recent trends

<http://cd3wd.com> wikipedia-for-schools <http://gutenberg.org> page no: 71 of 115



Milford Sound, New Zealand's most famous tourist destination

Historically New Zealand enjoyed a high standard of living which relied on its strong relationship with the United Kingdom, and the resulting stable market for its commodity exports. New Zealand's economy was also built upon on a narrow range of primary products, such as wool, meat and dairy products. High demand for these products - such as the New Zealand wool boom of 1951 created sustained periods of economic prosperity. However, in 1973 the United Kingdom joined the European Community which effectively ended this particularly close economic relationship between the two countries. During the 1970s other factors such as the oil crises undermined the viability of the New Zealand economy; which for periods before 1973 had achieved levels of living standards exceeding both Australia and Western Europe. But these events led to a protracted and very severe economic crisis, during which living standards in New Zealand fell behind those of Australia and Western Europe, and by 1982 New Zealand was the lowest in per-capita income of all the developed nations surveyed by the World Bank.

Since 1984, successive governments have engaged in major macroeconomic restructuring, transforming New Zealand from a highly protectionist and regulated economy to a liberalised free-trade economy. These changes are commonly known as Rogernomics and Ruthanasia after Finance Ministers Roger Douglas and Ruth Richardson. A recession began after the 1987 share market crash and caused unemployment to reach 10% in the early 1990s. However the economy recovered and New Zealand's unemployment rate is now the second lowest of the twenty-seven OECD nations with comparable data (3.7%).

The current government's economic objectives are centred on pursuing free-trade agreements and building a "knowledge economy". On April 7th 2008, New Zealand and China signed the New Zealand China Free Trade Agreement, the first such agreement China has signed with a developed country. Ongoing economic challenges for New Zealand include a current account deficit of 7.9% of GDP, slow development of non-commodity exports and tepid growth of labour productivity. New Zealand has experienced a series of "brain drains" since the 1970s, as well educated youth leaving permanently for Australia, Britain or the United States. "Kiwi lifestyle" and family/ whanau factors motivates some of the expatriates to return, while career, culture, and economic factors tend to be predominantly 'push' components, keeping these people overseas. In recent years, however, a brain gain brought in educated professionals from poor countries, as well as Europe, as permanent settlers.

Agriculture

Agriculture has been and continues to be the main export industry in New Zealand. In the year to June 2007, dairy products accounted for 21% (\$7.5 billion) of total merchandise exports, and the largest company of the country, Fonterra, a dairy cooperative, controls almost one-third of the international dairy trade. Other agricultural items were meat 13.2%, wood 6.3%, fruit 3.5% and fishing 3.3%. New Zealand also has a thriving wine industry.

Livestock are rarely housed, but feeding of small quantities of supplements such as hay and silage can occur, particularly in winter. Grass growth is seasonal, largely dependent on location and climatic fluctuations but normally occurs for between 8-12 months of the year. Stock are grazed in paddocks, often with moveable electric fencing around the farm. Lambing and calving are carefully managed to take full advantage of spring grass growth.



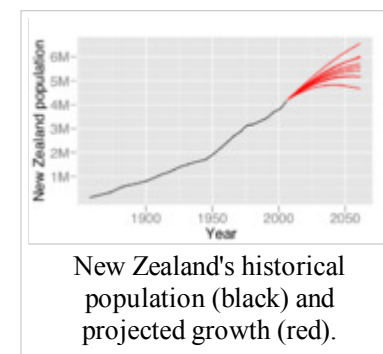
A Romney ewe with her two lambs.

Demography

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New Zealand has a population of about 4.2 million, of which approximately 78% identify with European ethnic groups. New Zealanders of European descent are collectively known as *Pākehā*; this term generally refers to New Zealanders of European descent but some Māori use it to refer to all non-Māori New Zealanders. Most European New Zealanders are of British and Irish ancestry, although there has been significant Dutch, Dalmatian, Italian, and German immigration together with indirect European immigration through Australia, North America, South America and South Africa. According to the 2001 census projections, by 2021 European children will make up 63% of all New Zealand children, compared with 74% in 2001. The birthrate is very high for a developed country. The birthrate as of February 2008 was 2.2 per woman, compared to approximately 2 for the previous 30 years, with the total number of births higher than at any point since 1961. The life expectancy of a child born in 2008 was 81.9 years for a girl, and 77.9 years for a boy.



Indigenous Māori people are the largest non-European ethnic group, accounting for 14.6% of the population in the 2006 census. While people could select more than one ethnic group, slightly more than half (53%) of all Māori residents identified solely as Māori. People identifying with Asian ethnic groups account for 9.2% of the population, increasing from 6.6% in the 2001 census, while 6.9% of people are of Pacific Island origin.

While the demonym is New Zealander, New Zealanders informally call themselves Kiwi or Kiwis.

New Zealand is also a predominantly urban country, with 72.2% of the population living in 16 main urban areas and more than half living in the four largest cities of Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington and Christchurch.

New Zealand immigration policy is relatively open; its government is committed to increasing its population by about 1% annually. In 2004–05, a target of 45,000 was set by the New Zealand immigration Service. Twenty three percent of the population was born overseas, one of the highest rates anywhere in the world. At present, immigrants from the United Kingdom and Ireland constitute the largest single group, accounting for 29% of those born overseas but immigrants are drawn from many nations, and increasingly from East Asia (mostly China, but with substantial numbers also from Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and Hong Kong).

New Zealand religious beliefs

Christianity	56%
No religion	35%
Others	5%

According to the 2006 census, Christianity is the predominant religion in New Zealand, held by 55.6% of the population, a decrease from 60.6% at the 2001 census. Another 34.7% indicated that they had no religion, up from 29.6% in 2001, and 5% affiliated with other religions. The main Christian denominations are Anglicanism, Roman Catholicism, Presbyterianism and Methodism. There are also significant numbers who identify themselves with Pentecostal and Baptist churches and with the LDS (Mormon) church. The New Zealand-based Ratana church has adherents among Māori. According to census figures, other significant minority religions include Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam.

Until 1987, English was New Zealand's only official language, and remains predominant in most settings; Māori became an official language under the 1987 Māori Language Act and New Zealand Sign Language under the 2006 New Zealand Sign Language Act. The two official languages are the most widely spoken; English by 98% of the population and Māori by 4.1%. Samoan is the most widely spoken non-official language (2.3%), and French, Hindi, Yue and Northern Chinese are also widely spoken.



New Zealand has an adult literacy rate of 99%, and 14.2% of the adult population has a bachelor's degree or higher. For 30.4% of the population, some form of secondary qualification is their highest, while 22.4% of New Zealanders have no formal qualification.

Culture



Late twentieth-century house-post depicting the navigator Kupe fighting two sea creatures

Overview

Much of contemporary New Zealand culture is derived from British roots. It also includes significant influences from American, Australian and Māori cultures, along with those of other European cultures and – more recently – non-Māori Polynesian and Asian cultures. Large festivals in celebration of Diwali and Chinese New Year are held in several of the larger centres. The world's largest Polynesian festival, Pasifika, is an annual event in Auckland. Cultural links between New Zealand and the United Kingdom and Ireland are maintained by a common language, sustained migration from the United Kingdom and Ireland, and many young New Zealanders spending time in the United Kingdom/Ireland on their "overseas experience" (OE). The music and cuisine of New Zealand are similar to that of Britain and the United States, although both have some distinct New Zealand and Pacific qualities.

Māori culture has undergone considerable change since the arrival of Europeans; in particular the introduction of Christianity in the early 19th century brought about fundamental change in everyday life. Nonetheless the perception that most Māori now live similar lifestyles to their Pākehā neighbours is a superficial one. In fact, Māori culture has significant differences, for instance the important role which the marae and the extended family continues to play in communal and family life. As in traditional times, karakia are habitually performed by Māori today to ensure the favorable outcome of important undertakings, but today the prayers used are generally Christian. Māori still regard their allegiance to tribal groups as a vital part of personal identity, and Māori kinship roles resemble those of other Polynesian peoples. As part of the resurgence of Māori culture that came to the fore in the late 20th century, the tradition-based arts of kapa haka (song and dance), carving and weaving are now more widely practiced, and the architecture of the marae maintains strong links to traditional forms. Māori also value their connections to Polynesia, as attested by the increasing popularity of waka ama (outrigger canoe racing), which is now an international sport involving teams from all over the Pacific.

Te Reo Māori

Use of the Māori language (Te Reo Māori) as a living, community language remained only in a few remote areas in the post-war years, but is currently undergoing a renaissance, thanks in part to Māori language immersion schools and two Māori Television channels. This is the only nationwide television channel to have the majority of its prime-time content delivered in Māori, primarily because only 4% of the population speak Te Reo Maori.



Twilight bagpipe band practice, Napier



Chinese dancers welcome the new year in Dunedin



However, partly in recognition of the importance of Māori culture to New Zealand, the language was declared one of New Zealand's official languages in 1987.

Movies

Although films have been made in New Zealand since the 1920s, it was only from the 1970s that New Zealand films began to be produced in significant numbers. Films such as *Sleeping Dogs* and *Goodbye Pork Pie* achieved local success and launched the careers of actors and directors including Sam Neill, Geoff Murphy and Roger Donaldson. In the early 1990s, New Zealand films such as Jane Campion's Academy Award-winning film *The Piano*, Lee Tamahori's *Once Were Warriors* and Peter Jackson's *Heavenly Creatures* began to garner international acclaim. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Jackson filmed The Lord of the Rings film trilogy in New Zealand, using a mostly New Zealand crew and many New Zealand actors in minor parts. Whale Rider, originally a novel by Witi Ihimaera, was produced in 2002 and received recognition from various festivals and awards. Many non-New Zealand productions, primarily from Hollywood but also from Bollywood, have been made in New Zealand.

Sports

Sport has a major role in New Zealand's culture, with the unofficial national sport of rugby union being particularly influential. Other popular participatory sports include cricket, bowls, netball, soccer, golf, swimming and tennis. New Zealand has strong international teams in several sports including rugby union, netball, cricket, rugby league, and softball. New Zealand also does traditionally well in the sports of rowing, yachting and cycling. The country is internationally recognised for performing well on a medals-to-population ratio at Olympic Games and Commonwealth Games.

Rugby union, which is commonly referred to as simply *rugby* in New Zealand, is closely linked to the country's national identity. The national rugby team, the All Blacks, have the best win to loss record of any national team, and are well known for the haka (a traditional Māori challenge) that they perform before the start of international matches. New Zealand is also well known for its extreme sports and adventure tourism. Its reputation in extreme sports extends from the establishment of the world's first commercial bungee jumping site at Queenstown in the South Island of New Zealand in November 1988; its roots in adventure tourism can be traced all the way back to Sir Edmund Hillary, the first person to reach the summit of Mount Everest.



The All Blacks perform a haka before a match against France in 2006

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Norfolk Island



2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

Norfolk Island (Norfuk: **Norfuk Ailen**) is a small inhabited island in the Pacific Ocean located between Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia. It and two neighbouring islands form one of Australia's external territories.

The Norfolk Island pine, a symbol of the island pictured in its flag, is an evergreen tree native to the island and is quite popular in Australia, where two related species also grow.

Geography

Norfolk Island is located in the South Pacific Ocean, east of the Australian mainland. Norfolk Island is the main island of the island group the territory encompasses and is located at . It has an area of 34.6 km² (13.3 mi²), with no large-scale internal bodies of water but 32 km of coastline. The island's highest point is Mt Bates (319 m above sea level), located in the northwest quadrant of the island. The majority of the terrain is suitable for farming and other agricultural uses. Phillip Island, the second largest island of the territory, is located at , several kilometres south of the main island.

The coastline of Norfolk Island consists, to varying degrees, of cliff faces. A downward slope exists towards Sydney Bay and Emily Bay, the site of the original colonial settlement of Kingston. There are no safe harbour facilities on Norfolk Island, with loading jetties existing at Kingston and Cascade Bay. All goods not domestically produced are brought in by ship, usually to Cascade Bay. Emily Bay, protected from the Pacific Ocean by a small coral reef, is the only safe area for recreational swimming, although surfing waves can sometimes be found in Ball Bay.

The climate is subtropical and mild, with little seasonal differentiation. The island is the eroded remnant of a basaltic volcano active around 2.3 to 3 million years ago, with inland areas now consisting mainly of rolling plains. It forms the highest point on the Norfolk Ridge, part of the submerged continent Zealandia.

The area surrounding Mt Bates is preserved as the Norfolk Island National Park. The park, covering around 10% of the land of the island, contains remnants of the forests which originally covered the island, including stands of subtropical rainforest.

Norfolk Island Territory of Norfolk Island



Flag

Coat of arms

Motto: "Inasmuch"

Anthem: Pitcairn Anthem



Capital	Kingston
Largest city	Burnt Pine
Official languages	English, Norfuk
Government	Self-governing territory
 - Head of State	Queen Elizabeth II represented by the Governor-General of Australia
 - Acting administrator	Owen Walsh (2007-)
 - Chief Minister	Andre Neville Nobbs (2007-)



The park also includes the two smaller islands to the south of Norfolk Island, Nepean Island and Phillip Island. The vegetation of Phillip Island was devastated due to the introduction during the penal era of pest animals such as pigs and rabbits, giving it a red-brown colour as viewed from Norfolk; however, pest control and remediation work by park staff has recently brought some improvement to the Phillip Island environment.

The major settlement on the Island is Burnt Pine, located predominantly along Taylor's Road, where the shopping centre, post office, liquor store, telephone exchange and community hall are located. Settlement also exists over much of the island, consisting largely of widely-separated homesteads.

Government House, the official residence of the Administrator, is located on Quality Row in what was the penal settlement of Kingston. Other government buildings, including the court, Legislative Assembly and Administration, are also located there. Kingston's role is largely a ceremonial one, however, with most of the economic impetus coming from Burnt Pine.

Environment

Self-governing territory

- Norfolk Island Act 1979

Area

- Total 34.6 km² (227th)
13.3 sq mi

- Water (%) 0

Population

- 2007 estimate 2114

- Density 61.1/km²
158.9/sq mi

Currency Australian dollar (AUD)

Time zone NFT (Norfolk Island Time)
(UTC+11:30)

Internet TLD .nf

Calling code +6723





Norfolk Island has 174 native plants; 51 of them are endemic. At least 18 of the endemic species are rare or threatened. The Norfolk Island Palm (*Rhopalostylis baueri*) and the Smooth Tree-fern (*Cyathea brownii*), the tallest tree-fern in the world, are common in the Norfolk Island National Park but rare elsewhere on the island. 15 bird species were originally present; 6 are extinct and three species and two subspecies are highly endangered. Norfolk island has only one native mammal, Gould's wattled bat (*Chalinolobus gouldii*), which is very rare or may be extinct. Before European colonization, most of Norfolk Island was covered with subtropical rain forest, the canopy of which was made of *Araucaria heterophylla* (Norfolk Island Pine) in exposed areas, and the palm *Rhopalostylis baueri* and tree ferns *Cyathea brownii* and *C. australia* in moister protected areas. The understory was thick with lianas and ferns covered the forest floor. Only one small tract (5km²) of rainforest remains, which was declared as the Norfolk Island National Park in 1986. This forest has been infested with several introduced plants. The cliffs and steep slopes of Mt. Pitt supported a community of shrubs, herbaceous plants, and climbers. A few tracts of clifftop and seashore vegetation have been preserved. The rest of the island has been cleared for pasture and housing. Grazing and introduced weeds currently threaten the native flora, displacing it in some areas. In fact, there are more weed species than native species on Norfolk Island.

History

Early history

Norfolk Island was first settled by East Polynesian seafarers either from the Kermadec Islands north of New Zealand or from the North Island of New Zealand. They arrived in the fourteenth or fifteenth century, and survived for several generations before disappearing. Their main village site has been excavated at Emily Bay, and they also left behind stone tools, the Polynesian Rat, and banana trees as evidence of their sojourn. The final fate of these early settlers remains a mystery.

The first European known to have sighted the island was Captain James Cook, in 1774, on his second voyage to the South Pacific on HMS *Resolution*. He named it after the Duchess of Norfolk, wife of Edward Howard, 9th Duke of Norfolk (1685-1777). The Duchess was dead at the time of the island's sighting by Cook, but Cook had set out from England in 1772 and could not have known of her May 1773 death.

Cook went ashore on Tuesday 11 October 1774, and is said to have been impressed with the tall straight trees and New Zealand flax plants, which, like the Northern Hemisphere flax plants after which they are named, produce fibres of economic importance. He took samples back to the United Kingdom and reported on their potential uses for the Royal Navy.

Andrew Kippis as the biographer of this voyage puts it as follows:

As the Resolution pursued her course from New Caledonia, land was discovered, which, on a nearer approach, was found to be an island, of good height, and five leagues in circuit. Captain Cook named it Norfolk Isle, in honour of the noble family of Howard (Fn.: It is situated in the latitude of 29° 2' 30" south, and in the longitude of 168° 16' east). It was uninhabited; and the first persons that ever set foot on it were unquestionably our English navigators. Various



Rhopalostylis baueri, a native palm.



trees and plants were observed that are common at New Zealand; and in particular, the flax plant, which is rather more luxuriant here than in any other part of that country. The chief produce of the island is a kind of spruce pine, exceedingly straight and tall, which grows in great abundance. Such is the size of many of the trees that, breast high, they are as thick as two men can fathom. Among the vegetables of the place, the palm-cabbage afforded both a wholesome and palatable refreshment; and, indeed, proved the most agreeable repast that our people had for a considerable time enjoyed...

At the time, the United Kingdom was heavily dependent on flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) (for sails) and hemp (*Cannabis* sp.) (for ropes) from the shores of the Baltic Sea ports. Any threat to their supply endangered the United Kingdom's sea power. The UK also relied on timbers from New England for mainmasts, and these were not supplied after the American War of Independence. The alternative source of Norfolk Island for these, (or in the case of flax and hemp, similar) supplies is argued by some historians, notably Geoffrey Blainey in *The Tyranny of Distance*, as being a major reason for the founding of the convict settlement of New South Wales by the First Fleet in 1788.

James Cook said that, “except for New Zealand, in no other island in the South Sea was wood and mast-timber so ready to hand”.

John Call, member of Parliament and the Royal Society, and former chief engineer of the East India Company, stated the advantages of Norfolk Island in a proposal for colonization he put to the Home Office in August 1784: “This Island has an Advantage not common to New Caledonia, New Holland and New Zealand by not being inhabited, so that no Injury can be done by possessing it to the rest of Mankind...there seems to be nothing wanting but Inhabitants and Cultivation to make it a delicious Residence. The Climate, Soil, and Sea provide everything that can be expected from them. The Timber, Shrubs, Vegetables and Fish already found there need no Embellishment to pronounce them excellent samples; but the most invaluable of all is the Flax-plant, which grows more luxuriant than in New Zealand.”

George Forster, who had been on Cook's second voyage to the Pacific and had been with him when he landed on Norfolk Island, was at the time professor of natural history at the University of Vilna (or Vilnius) in Polish Lithuania: Forster discussed the proposed Botany Bay colony in an article written in November 1786, “Neuholland, und die brittische Colonie in Botany Bay”. Though unaware of the British intention to settle Norfolk Island, which was not announced until 5 December 1786, Forster referred to “the nearness of New Zealand; the excellent flax plant (*Phormium*) that grows so abundantly there; its incomparable shipbuilding timber”, as among the advantages of the new colony.

The proposal written by James Matra under the supervision of Sir Joseph Banks for establishing a settlement in New South Wales, stated that Botany Bay was: “no further than a fortnight from New Zealand, which is covered with timber even to the water's edge. The trees are so big and tall that a single tree is enough to make a mast of a first rate man of war. New Zealand produces in addition flax, which is an object equally of utility and curiosity. Any quantity of it might be raised in the colony, as this plant grows naturally in New Zealand. It can be made to serve the various purposes of cotton, hemp and linen, and is easier manufactured than any of them. In naval affairs, it could not fail of being of the utmost consequence; a cable of ten inches (250 mm) being supposed to be of equal strength and durability to one of European hemp of eighteen inches.

In 1786 the British Government included Norfolk Island as an auxiliary settlement, as proposed by John Call, in its plan for colonization of New South Wales. The flax and ship timber of New Zealand were attractive, but these prospective advantages were balanced by the obvious impossibility of forming a settlement there in the face of undoubted opposition from the native Maori. There was no native population to oppose a settlement on Norfolk Island, which also possessed those desirable natural resources, but the island was too small of itself to sustain a colony. Hence the ultimate decision for a dual colonization along the lines



proposed by Call.

The decision to settle Norfolk Island was taken under the impetus of the shock Britain had just received from the Empress Catherine of Russia. Practically all the hemp and flax required by the Royal Navy for cordage and sailcloth was imported from the Russian dominions through the ports of St. Petersburg (Kronstadt) and Riga. Comptroller of the Navy Sir Charles Middleton explained to Prime Minister Pitt in a letter of 5 September 1786: "It is for Hemp only we are dependent on Russia. Masts can be procured from Nova Scotia, and Iron in plenty from the Ores of this Country; but as it is impracticable to carry on a Naval War without Hemp, it is materially necessary to promote the growth of it in this Country and Ireland". In the summer of 1786 the Empress Catherine, in the context of tense negotiations on a renewed treaty of commerce, had emphasized her control over this vital commodity by asking the merchants who supplied it to restrict sales to English buyers: "the Empress has contrary to Custom speculated on this Commodity", complained the author of a subsequent memorandum to the Home Secretary. "It is unnecessary", said the memorandum, "to remark the Consequences which might result from a prohibition of supply from that Quarter altogether". This implicit threat to the viability of the Royal Navy became apparent in mid-September (a month after the decision had been taken to settle Botany Bay) and caused the Pitt Administration to begin an urgent search for new sources of supply, including from Norfolk Island, which was then added to the plan to colonize New South Wales.

The need for an alternative source of supply of naval stores to Russia is indicated by the information from the British Ambassador in Copenhagen, Hugh Elliott, who wrote to Foreign Secretary, Lord Carmarthen on 12 August 1788: "There is no Topick so common in the Mouths of the Russian Ministers, as to insist on the Facility with which the Empress, when Mistress of the Baltic, either by Conquest, Influence, or Alliance with the other two Northern Powers, could keep England in a State of Dependence for its Baltic Commerce and Naval Stores".

On 6 December 1786, an order-in-council was issued designating "the Eastern Coast of New South Wales, or some one or other of the Islands adjacent" as the destination for transported convicts, as required by the Transportation Act of 1784 (24 Geo.III, c.56) that authorized the sending of convicted felons to any place appointed by the King in Council. Norfolk Island was thereby brought officially within the bounds of the projected colony.

An article in *The Universal Daily Register* (the forerunner of *The Times*) of 23 December 1786 revealed the plan for a dual colonization of Norfolk Island and Botany Bay: "The ships for Botany Bay are not to leave all the convicts there; some of them are to be taken to Norfolk Island, which is about eight hundred miles East of Botany Bay, and about four hundred miles short of New Zealand".

The advantage of Britain's new colony providing an alternative source to Russia for naval supplies of flax and hemp was referred to in an article in *Lloyd's Evening Post* of 5 October 1787 which urged: "It is undoubtedly the interest of Great-Britain to remain neutral in the present contest between the Russians and the Turks" and observed, "Should England cease to render her services to the Empress of Russia, in a war against the Turks, there can be little of nothing to fear from her ill-will. England will speedily be enabled to draw from her colony of New South Wales, the staple of Russia, hemp and flax."

First penal settlement

Before the First Fleet sailed to found a convict settlement in New South Wales, Governor Arthur Phillip's final instructions, received less than three weeks before sailing, included the requirement to colonize Norfolk Island to prevent it falling into the hands of France, whose naval leaders were also showing interest in the Pacific.

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Phillip's instructions given him in April 1787 included an injunction to send a party to secure Norfolk Island "as soon as Circumstances may admit of it.... to prevent its being occupied by the Subjects of any other European Power". This could only have been a reference to the expedition then in the Pacific commanded by Jean-François de Galaup, comte de La Pérouse. *The Daily Universal Register* of 11 November 1786 had stated: "the Botany Bay scheme is laid aside, as there is a strong presumption that a squadron from Brest are now, or soon will be, in possession of the very spot we meant to occupy in New Holland". This may have been a reference to a report from the British Ambassador in Paris, who had believed that when Lapérouse's expedition set out from Brest in August 1785 it had as one of its objectives the establishment of a settlement in New Zealand to forestall the British.

Lapérouse did attempt to visit Norfolk Island, but only to investigate, not to take possession. He had instructions to investigate any colonies the English may have established and learned of the intention to settle Botany Bay and Norfolk Island from despatches sent to him from Paris through St. Petersburg and by land across Siberia to Petropavlovsk in Kamchatka, where he received them on 26 September 1787, just four days before his departure from that port. His ships, the *Boussole* and *Astrolabe*, anchored off the northern side of the island on 13 January 1788, but at the time high seas were running that made it too dangerous for the two ships' boats that were put out to attempt a landing: "It was obvious that I would have had to wait maybe for a very long time for a moment suitable for a landing and a visit to this island was not worth this sacrifice", he recorded in his journal. Having noted that the island was still uninhabited, he was presumably the less inclined to risk a landing when there was no English settlement there to report on.

When the First Fleet arrived at Port Jackson in January 1788, Phillip ordered Lieutenant Philip Gidley King to lead a party of fifteen convicts and seven free men to take control of the island and prepare for its commercial development. They arrived on 6 March 1788.

A "Letter from an Officer of Marines at New South Wales, 16 November 1788", published in the London newspaper, *The World*, 15 May 1789, reported the glowing description of the island and its prospects by Philip Gidley King, but also drew attention to the fatal defect of the lack of a safe port: "The said Island lies near Port Jackson, and is nearly as large as the Isle of Wight. Lieutenant King, who was sent with a detachment of marines and some convicts, to settle there, gives the most flattering portrayal of it. The island is fully wooded. Its timber is in the opinion of everyone the most beautiful and finest in the world...they are most suitable for masts, yards, spars and such. The New Zealand flax-plant grows there in abundance. European grains and seeds also thrive wonderfully well on Norfolk Island. It only lacks a good port and suitable landing places, without which the island is of no use, but with them it would be of the greatest importance for Great Britain. How far these deficiencies can be improved by art and the hand of man, time must decide."

It was soon found that the flax was difficult to prepare for manufacturing and no one had the necessary skills. An attempt was made to bring two Māori men to teach the skills of dressing and weaving flax, but this failed when it was discovered that weaving was considered women's work and the two men had little knowledge of it. The pine timber was found to be not resilient enough for masts and this industry was also abandoned.

More convicts were sent, and the island was seen as a farm, supplying Sydney with grain and vegetables during its early years of near-starvation. However, crops often failed due to the salty wind, rats, and caterpillars. The lack of a natural safe harbour hindered communication and the transport of supplies and produce.

Manning Clark observed that "at first the convicts behaved well, but as more arrived from Sydney Cove, they renewed their wicked practices". These included an attempted overthrow of King in January 1789 by convicts described by Margaret Hazzard as "incorrigible rogues who took his 'goodwill' for weakness". While some convicts responded well to the opportunities offered to become respectable, most remained "idle and miserable wretches" according to Clark,



despite the climate and their isolation from previous haunts of crime.

The impending starvation at Sydney led to a great translocation of convicts and marines to Norfolk Island in March 1790 on HMS *Sirius*. This attempt to relieve the pressure on Sydney turned to disaster when *Sirius* was wrecked and, although there was no loss of life, some stores were destroyed, and the ship's crew was marooned for ten months. This news was met in Sydney with "unspeakable consternation". Norfolk Island was now further cut off from Sydney which, with the arrival of the Second Fleet with its cargo of sick and abused convicts, had more pressing problems with which to contend.

In spite of this the settlement grew slowly as more convicts were sent from Sydney. Many convicts chose to remain as settlers on the expiry of their sentence, and the population grew to over 1000 by 1792.

Norfolk Island was governed by a succession of short-term commandants for the next eleven years, starting with King's replacement, Robert Ross 1789-1790. When Joseph Foveaux arrived as Lieutenant Governor in 1800, he found the settlement quite run down, little maintenance having been carried out in the previous four years, and he set about building it up, particularly through public works and attempts to improve education.

As early as 1794 King suggested its closure as a penal settlement as it was too remote and difficult for shipping, and too costly to maintain. By 1803, the Secretary of State, Lord Hobart, called for the removal of part of the Norfolk Island military establishment, settlers and convicts to Van Diemen's Land, due to its great expense and the difficulties of communication between Norfolk Island and Sydney. This was achieved more slowly than anticipated, due to reluctance of settlers to uproot themselves from the land they had struggled to tame, and compensation claims for loss of stock. It was also delayed by King's insistence on its value for providing refreshment to the whalers. The first group of 159 left in February 1805 and comprised mainly convicts and their families and military personnel, only four settlers departing. Between November 1807 and September 1808, five groups of 554 people departed. Only about 200 remained, forming a small settlement until the remnants were removed in 1813. A small party remained to slaughter stock and destroy all buildings so that there would be no inducement for anyone, especially from another European power, to visit that place.

From 15 February 1814 to 6 June 1825 the island lay abandoned.

Second penal settlement

Lieutenant governors of the first settlement:

- 6 March 1788– 24 March 1790: Lieutenant Philip Gidley King (1758–1808)
- 24 March 1790–Nov 1791: Major Robert Ross (c.1740–1794)
- 4 November 1791–Oct 1796: Lieutenant Philip Gidley King
- October 1796–Nov 1799: Captain John Townson (1760–1835)
- November 1799–Jul 1800: Captain Thomas Rowley (c.1748–1806)
- 26 June 1800– 9 September 1804: Major Joseph Foveaux (1765–1846)
- 9 September 1804–January 1810: Lieutenant John Piper (1773–1851)
- January 1810– 15 February 1813: Lieutenant Thomas Crane (caretaker)
- 15 February 1813– 15 February 1814: Superintendent William Hutchinson



In 1824 the British government instructed the Governor of New South Wales Thomas Brisbane to occupy Norfolk Island as a place to send “the worst description of convicts”. Its remoteness, seen previously as a disadvantage, was now viewed as an asset for the detention of the “twice-convicted” men, who had committed further crimes since arriving in New South Wales. Brisbane assured his masters that “the felon who is sent there is forever excluded from all hope of return” He saw Norfolk Island as “the nec plus ultra of Convict degradation”.

His successor, Governor Ralph Darling, was even more severe than Brisbane, wishing that “every man should be worked in irons that the example may deter others from the commission of crime” and “to hold out [Norfolk Island] as a place of the extremest punishment short of death”. Governor George Arthur, in Van Diemen's Land, likewise believed that “when prisoners are sent to Norfolk Island, they should on no account be permitted to return. Transportation thither should be considered as the ultimate limit and a punishment short only of death”. Reformation of the convicts was not seen as an objective of the Norfolk Island penal settlement.

The evidence that has passed down through the years points to the creation of a "Hell in Paradise". A widespread and popular notion of the harshness of penal settlements, including Norfolk Island, has come from the novel *For the Term of His Natural Life* by Marcus Clarke, which appears to be based on the writings and recollections of witnesses and from the fictional writings of Price Warung.

Following a convict mutiny in 1834, Father William Ullathorne, Vicar general of Sydney, visited Norfolk Island to comfort the mutineers due for execution. He found it “the most heartrending scene that I ever witnessed”. Having the duty of informing the prisoners as to who was reprieved and who was to die, he was shocked to record as “a literal fact that each man who heard his reprieve wept bitterly, and that each man who heard of his condemnation to death went down on his knees with dry eyes, and thanked God.”

The 1846 report of magistrate Robert Pringle Stuart exposed the scarcity and poor quality of food, inadequacy of housing, horrors of torture and incessant flogging, insubordination of convicts, and corruption of overseers.

Bishop Robert Willson visited Norfolk Island from Van Diemen's Land on three occasions. Following his first visit in 1846 he reported to the House of Lords who, for the first time, came to realise the enormity of atrocities perpetrated under the British flag and attempted to remedy the evils. Willson returned in 1849 and found that many of the reforms had been implemented. However, rumours of resumed atrocities brought him back in 1852, and this visit resulted in a damning report, listing atrocities and blaming the system, which invested one man at this remote place with absolute power over so many people.

Commandants of the second settlement:

- 6 June 1825–March 1826: Captain Richard Turton
- March 1826–August 1827: Captain Vance Young Donaldson (1791–?)
- August 1827–November 1828: Captain Thomas Edward Wright
- November 1828–February 1829: Captain Robert Hunt
- February 1829– 29 June 1829: Captain Joseph Wakefield
- 29 June 1829–1834: Lieutenant-Colonel James Thomas Morisset (1782–1852)
- 1834: Captain Foster Fyans (1790–1870) (Acting)
- 1834–April 1839: Major Joseph Anderson (1790–1877)
- April - July 1839: Major Thomas Bunbury (b. c1791)
- July 1839 - March 1840: Major Thomas Ryan (b.c1790) (Acting)
- 17 March 1840–1844: Captain Alexander Maconochie (1787–1860)
- 8 February 1844– 5 August 1846: Major Joseph Childs
- 6 August 1846– 18 January 1853: John Giles Price (1808–1857)
- January 1853–September 1853: Captain Rupert Deering
- September 1853– 5 May 1855: Captain H. Day
- 5 May 1855– 8 June 1856: T.S. Stewart (Caretaker)



Only a handful of convicts left any written record and their descriptions (as quoted by Hazzard and Hughes) of living and working conditions, food and housing, and, in particular, the punishments given for seemingly trivial offences, are unremittingly horrifying, describing a settlement devoid of all human decency, under the iron rule of the tyrannical autocratic commandants.

The actions of some of the commandants, such as Morisset and particularly Price appear to be excessively harsh. All but one were military officers, brought up in a system where discipline was inhumanely severe throughout the period of transportation. In addition, the commandants relied on a large number of military guards, civil overseers, ex-convict constables, and convict informers to provide them with intelligence and carry out their orders.

Of the Commandants, only Alexander Maconochie appeared to reach the conclusion that brutality would breed defiance, as demonstrated by the mutinies of 1826, 1834 and 1846, and he attempted to apply his theories of penal reform, providing incentives as well as punishment. His methods were criticised as being too lenient and he was replaced, a move that returned the settlement to its harsh rule.

The second penal settlement began to be wound down by the British Government after 1847 and the last convicts were removed to Tasmania in May 1855. It was abandoned because transportation to Van Diemen's Land had ceased in 1853 and was replaced by penal servitude in the United Kingdom.

Settlement by Pitcairn Islanders

On 8 June 1856, the next settlement began on Norfolk Island. These were the descendants of Tahitians and the Bounty mutineers, resettled from the Pitcairn Islands, which had become too small for their growing population. The British government had permitted the transfer of the Pitcairners to Norfolk, which was thus established as a colony separate from New South Wales but under the administration of that colony's governor. They left Pitcairn Islands on the May 3, 1856 and arrived with 194 persons on June 8.

The Pitcairners occupied many of the buildings remaining from the penal settlements, and gradually established their traditional farming and whaling industries on the island. Although some families decided to return to Pitcairn in 1858 and 1863, the island's population continued to slowly grow as the island accepted settlers, often arriving with whaling fleets.

In 1867, the headquarters of the Melanesian Mission of the Church of England were established on the island, and in 1882 the church of St. Barnabas was erected to the memory of the Mission's head Bishop John Coleridge Patteson, with windows designed by Edward Burne-Jones and executed by William Morris. In 1920 the Mission was relocated from the island to the Solomon Islands to be closer to its target population.

Twentieth century



After the creation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, Norfolk Island was placed under the authority of the new Commonwealth government to be administered as an external territory.

During World War II, the island became a key airbase and refuelling depot between Australia and New Zealand, and New Zealand and the Solomon Islands. Since Norfolk Island fell within New Zealand's area of responsibility it was garrisoned by a New Zealand Army unit known as N Force at a large Army camp which had the capacity to house a 1,500 strong force. N Force relieved a company of the Second Australian Imperial Force. The island proved too remote to come under attack during the war and N Force left the island in February 1944.

In 1979, Norfolk was granted limited self-government by Australia, under which the island elects a government that runs most of the island's affairs. As such, residents of Norfolk Island are not represented in the Commonwealth Parliament of Australia, making them the only group of residents of an Australian state or territory not represented there.

In 2006, a formal review process took place, in which the Australian Government considered revising this model of government. The review was completed on December 20, 2006, when it was decided that there would be no changes in the governance of Norfolk Island.

Politics

Norfolk Island is the only non-mainland Australian territory to have achieved self-governance. The *Norfolk Island Act*, passed by the Parliament of Australia in 1979, is the Act under which the island is governed. The Australian Government maintains authority on the island through an Administrator (currently Owen Walsh as Acting Administrator), who is appointed by the Governor-General of Australia. A Legislative Assembly is elected by popular vote for a term of not more than three years, although legislation passed by the Australian Parliament can extend its laws to the territory at will, including the power to override any laws made by the Norfolk Island Legislative Assembly.

The Assembly consists of nine seats, with electors casting nine equal votes, of which no more than two can be given to any individual candidate. It is a method of voting called a "weighted first past the post system". Four of the members of the Assembly form the Executive Council, which devises policy and acts as an advisory body to the Administrator. The current Chief Minister of Norfolk Island is Andre Nobbs. All seats are held by independent candidates. Norfolk Island has yet to embrace party politics. In 2007 a branch of the Australian Labor Party was formed on Norfolk Island, with the aim of reforming the system of government.

The island's official capital is Kingston; it is, however, more a centre of government than a sizeable settlement.

The most important local holiday is Bounty Day, celebrated on 8 June, in memory of the arrival of the Pitcairn Islanders in 1856.



This stamp was issued in 1981 to commemorate the first landing of an aircraft at the island, Sir Francis Chichester's Gypsy Moth "Mme Elijah", at Cascade Bay on March 28, 1931.



Local ordinances and acts apply on the island, where most laws are based on the Australian legal system. Australian common law applies when not covered by either Australian or Norfolk Island law. Suffrage is universal at age eighteen.

As a territory of Australia, Norfolk Island does not have diplomatic representation abroad, or within the territory, and is also not a participant in any international organisations, other than sporting organisations.

The flag is three vertical bands of green (hoist side), white, and green with a large green Norfolk Island pine tree centered in the slightly wider white band.

Constitutional status

The exact status of Norfolk Island is controversial. Despite the island's status as a self-governing territory of Australia administered by the Attorney-General's Department, some Islanders claim that it was actually granted independence at the time Queen Victoria granted permission to Pitcairn Islanders to re-settle on the island. These views have been repeatedly rejected by the Australian parliament's joint committee on territories, most recently in 2004, and were also rejected by the High Court of Australia in *Berwick Limited v R R Gray Deputy Commissioner of Taxation*.

Disagreements over the island's relationship with Australia were put in sharper relief by a 2006 review undertaken by the Australian Government. Under the more radical of two models proposed in the review, the island's legislative assembly would have been reduced to the status of a local council. However, in December 2006, citing the "significant disruption" that changes to the governance would impose on the island's economy, the Australian Government ended the review leaving the existing governance arrangements unaltered.

Immigration and citizenship

The island is subject to separate immigration controls from the remainder of the nation.

Australian citizens and residents from other parts of the nation do not have automatic right of residence on the island. Australian citizens must carry either a passport or a Document of Identity to travel to Norfolk Island. Citizens of all other nations must carry a passport to travel to Norfolk Island even if arriving from other parts of Australia. Holders of Australian visas who travel to Norfolk Island have departed the Australian Migration Zone. Unless they hold a multiple-entry visa, the visa will have ceased; in which case they will require another visa to re-enter mainland Australia.

Residency on Norfolk Island requires sponsorship by an existing resident of Norfolk Island or a business operating on the island. Temporary residency may also be granted to skilled workers necessary for the island's services (for example, medical, government and teaching staff).

Non-Australian citizens who are permanent residents of Norfolk Island may apply for Australian citizenship after meeting normal residence requirements and are eligible to take up residence in mainland Australia at any time through the use of a Permanent Resident of Norfolk Island visa. Children born on Norfolk Island are Australian citizens as specified by Australian nationality law.

Non-Australian citizens who are Australian permanent residents should be aware that during their stay on Norfolk Island they are "outside of Australia" for the

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purposes of the Migration Act. This means that not only will they need a still-valid migrant visa or Resident return visa to return from Norfolk Island to the mainland, but also the time spent in Norfolk Island won't be counted for satisfying the residence requirement for obtaining a Resident return visa in the future. On the other hand, as far as Australian nationality law is concerned, Norfolk Island is a part of Australia, and any time spent by an Australian permanent resident on Norfolk Island apparently would count as time spent in Australia for the purposes of applying for Australian citizenship.

Medicare

Medicare does not cover Norfolk Island. All visitors to Norfolk Island, including Australians, are recommended to purchase travel insurance. Serious medical conditions are not treated on the island; rather, the patient is flown back to mainland Australia. Air charter transport can cost in the order of \$25,000.

Crime

Though usually peaceful, Norfolk Island has been the site of two murders in the 21st century. In 2002, Janelle Patton, an Australian living on the island, was murdered. Two years later, the Deputy Chief Minister of the island, Ivens Buffett, was found shot dead, becoming the first Australian minister to be murdered in office. Crime incidence is generally low on the island, although recent reports indicate that petty theft and dangerous driving are becoming more prevalent.

The Patton murder prompted considerable debate, with some residents arguing that traditional loyalties would prevent a local being charged. In February 2006, however, 28-year-old New Zealand chef Glenn McNeill was arrested and charged with Patton's murder. McNeill had been working on Norfolk at the time, and claimed at hearings in Australia and on Norfolk Island that he accidentally hit Patton with his car, a statement he later retracted. His trial ended on March 9, 2007, when the 11-person jury returned a guilty verdict.

On July 25, 2007, McNeill was sentenced to a maximum 24 years in jail. Norfolk Island's Chief Justice Mark Weinberg, in a sentence handed down in a Sydney courthouse and broadcast live to Norfolk Island's court, said McNeill may be eligible for release after a minimum 18 years in prison. McNeill will serve his sentence in Australia.

Economy

Tourism, the primary economic activity, has steadily increased over the years. As Norfolk Island prohibits the importation of fresh fruit and vegetables, most produce is grown locally. Beef is both produced locally and imported.

The Australian Government controls the exclusive economic zone extending 200 nautical miles (370 km) around Norfolk Island (370 km) and territorial sea claims to three nautical miles (6 km) from the island. The exclusive economic zone provides the islanders with fish, its only major natural resource. Norfolk Island has no direct control over any marine areas but has an agreement with the Commonwealth through the Australian Fisheries Management Authority (AFMA) to fish "recreationally" in a small section of the EEZ known locally as "the Box". While there is speculation that the zone may include oil and gas deposits this is not proven.



There are no major arable lands or permanent farmlands, though about 25 per cent of the island is a permanent pasture. There is no irrigated land.

The island uses the Australian dollar as its currency.

Taxes

Residents of Norfolk Island do not pay Australian federal taxes, creating a tax haven for locals and visitors alike. Since there is no income tax, the island's legislative assembly raises money through an import duty.

Demographics

The population of Norfolk Island was estimated in July 2003 to be 1,853, with an annual population growth rate of -0.01%. In July 2003, 20.2% of the population were 14 years and under, 63.9% were 15 to 64 years and 15.9% were 65 years and over.

Most Islanders are of either European-only or combined European- Tahitian ancestry, being descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers as well as more recent arrivals from Australia and New Zealand. About half of the islanders can trace their roots back to Pitcairn Island.

This common heritage has led to a limited number of surnames amongst the Islanders — a limit constraining enough that the island's telephone directory lists people by nickname (such as Cane Toad, Dar Bizziebee, Kik Kik, Lettuce Leaf, Mutty, Oot, Paw Paw, Snoop, Tarzan, and Wiggy).

The majority of Islanders are Protestant Christians. In 1996, 37.4% identified as Anglican, 14.5% as Uniting Church, 11.5% as Roman Catholic and 3.1% as Seventh-day Adventist.

Literacy is not recorded officially, but it can be assumed to be roughly at a par with Australia's literacy rate, as Islanders attend a school which uses a New South Wales curriculum, before traditionally moving to the mainland for further study.

Islanders speak both English and a creole language known as Norfuk, a blend of 1700s English and Tahitian. The Norfuk language is decreasing in popularity as more tourists travel to the island and more young people leave for work and study reasons; however, there are efforts to keep it alive via dictionaries and the renaming of some tourist attractions to their Norfuk equivalents. In April 2005, it was declared a co-official language of the island.

Emigration is growing as many Islanders take advantage of the close ties between Norfolk and Australia and New Zealand. The sole school on the island provides education to Australian Year 12; therefore, any student seeking to complete tertiary study must travel overseas. Additionally, the small economy of the island causes many skilled workers to emigrate as well.

Transport and communications



There are no railways, waterways, ports or harbours on the island. Loading jetties are located at Kingston and Cascade, but ships cannot get close to either of them. When a supply ship arrives, it is emptied by whaleboats towed by launches, five tonnes at a time. Which jetty is used depends on the prevailing weather on the day. The jetty on the leeward side of the island is often used. If the wind changes significantly during unloading/loading, the ship will move around to the other side. Visitors often gather to watch the activity when a supply ship arrives.

There is one airport, Norfolk Island Airport.

There are 80 kilometres (50 mi) of roads on the island, "little more than country lanes", but local law gives cows the right of way.

As of 2004, 2532 telephone main lines are in use, a mix of analog (2500) and digital (32) circuits. Satellite service is planned.

There is one TV station featuring local programming Norfolk TV, plus transmitters for ABC TV and Southern Cross Television.

The Internet country code top-level domain (ccTLD) is .nf.

Culture

While there was no "indigenous" culture on the Island at the time of settlement, the Tahitian influence of the Pitcairn settlers has resulted in some aspects of Polynesian culture being adapted to that of Norfolk, including the hula dance. Local cuisine also shows influences from the same region.

Islanders traditionally spend a lot of time outdoors, with fishing and other aquatic pursuits being common pastimes, an aspect which has become more noticeable as the island becomes more accessible to tourism. Most island families have at least one member involved in primary production in some form.

As all the Pitcairn settlers were related to each other, Islanders have historically been informal both to each other and to visitors. The most noticeable aspect of this is the "Norfolk Wave", with drivers waving to each other (ranging from a wave using the entire arm through to a raised index finger from the steering wheel) as they pass.

Religious observance remains an important part of life for most Islanders, particularly the older generations. Businesses tend to be closed on Mondays, for example.

One of the island's residents is the novelist Colleen McCullough, whose works include *The Thorn Birds* and the *Masters of Rome* series as well as *Morgan's Run*, set, in large part, on Norfolk Island.

Helen Reddy also moved to the island for a period but was denied a long term entry permit.

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Papua New Guinea




2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

Papua New Guinea (pronounced /ˈpæpuːə njuː ˈɡɪni/, /ˈpæpjuːə/), in Tok Pisin: *Papua Niugini*, officially the **Independent State of Papua New Guinea**, is a country in Oceania, occupying the eastern half of the island of New Guinea and numerous offshore islands (the western portion of the island is a part of Indonesian provinces of Papua and West Papua). It is located in the southwestern Pacific Ocean, in a region defined since the early 19th century as Melanesia. Its capital, and one of its few major cities, is Port Moresby. It is one of the most diverse countries on Earth, with over 850 indigenous languages and at least as many traditional societies, out of a population of just under 6 million. It is also one of the most rural, with only 18 per cent of its people living in urban centres. The country is also one of the world's least explored, culturally and geographically, and many undiscovered species of plants and animals are thought to exist in the interior of Papua New Guinea.

The majority of the population live in traditional societies and practise subsistence-based agriculture. These societies and clans have some explicit acknowledgement within the nation's constitutional framework. The PNG Constitution (Preamble 5(4)) expresses the wish for *traditional villages and communities to remain as viable units of Papua New Guinean society*, and for active steps to be taken in their preservation. The PNG legislature has enacted various laws in which a type of tenure called "customary land title" is recognised, meaning that the traditional lands of the indigenous peoples have some legal basis to inalienable tenure. This customary land notionally covers most of the usable land in the country (some 97% of total land area); alienated land is either held privately under State Lease or is government land. Freehold Title (also known as fee simple) can only be held by Papua New Guinea citizens.

The country's geography is similarly diverse and, in places, extremely rugged. A spine of mountains runs the length of the island of New Guinea, forming a populous highlands region. Dense rainforests can be found in the lowland and coastal areas. This terrain has made it difficult for the country to develop transportation infrastructure. In some areas, planes are the only mode of transport. After being ruled by three external powers since 1884, Papua New Guinea gained its independence from Australia in 1975.

History

Papua Niugini Independent State of Papua New Guinea	
	
Flag	Coat of arms
Motto: <i>Unity in diversity</i>	
Anthem: <i>O Arise, All You Sons</i>	
	
Capital (and largest city)	Port Moresby
Official languages	English, Tok Pisin, Hiri Motu
Demonym	Papua New Guinean
Government	Constitutional monarchy
 - Queen	Elizabeth II
 - Governor-General	Sir Paulias Matane



Human remains have been found which have been dated to about 50,000 years ago. These ancient inhabitants probably had their origins in Southeast Asia. Agriculture was independently developed in the New Guinea highlands around 9,000 years ago, making it one of the few areas of original plant domestication in the world. A major migration of Austronesian speaking peoples came to coastal regions roughly 2,500 years ago, and this is correlated with the introduction of pottery, pigs, and certain fishing techniques. More recently, some 300 years ago, the sweet potato entered New Guinea having been introduced to the Moluccas from South America by the then-locally dominant colonial power, Portugal. The far higher crop yields from sweet potato gardens radically transformed traditional agriculture; sweet potato largely supplanted the previous staple, taro, and gave rise to a significant increase in population in the highlands.

Little was known in the West about the island until the nineteenth century, although traders from Southeast Asia had been visiting New Guinea as long as 5,000 years ago collecting bird of paradise plumes, and European explorers had encountered it as early as the sixteenth century. The country's dual name results from its complex administrative history prior to Independence. The word *papua* is derived from a Malay word describing the frizzy Melanesian hair, and "New Guinea" (*Nueva Guinea*) was the name coined by the Spanish explorer Yñigo Ortiz de Retez, who in 1545 noted the resemblance of the people to those he had earlier seen along the Guinea coast of Africa.

The northern half of the country came into German hands in 1884 as German New Guinea. During World War I, it was occupied by Australia, which had begun administering British New Guinea, the southern part, as the re-named Papua in 1904 once Britain was assured by the federation of the Australian colonies that Queensland, with its equivocal history of race relations, would not have a direct hand in the administration of the territory. After World War I, Australia was given a mandate to administer the former German New Guinea by the League of Nations. Papua, by contrast, was deemed to be an External Territory of the Australian Commonwealth, though as a matter of law it remained a British possession, an issue which had significance for the country's post-Independence legal system after 1975. This difference in legal status meant that Papua and New Guinea had entirely separate administrations, both controlled by Australia.

The two territories were combined into the Territory of Papua and New Guinea after World War II, which later was simply referred to as "Papua New Guinea". The Administration of Papua was now also open to United Nations oversight. However, certain statutes continued (and continue) to have application only in one of the two territories, a matter considerably complicated today by the adjustment of the former boundary among contiguous provinces with respect to road access and language groups, so that such statutes apply on one side only of a boundary which no longer exists.

- Prime Minister	Sir Michael Somare
Independence	From Australia
- Self-governing	December 1, 1973
- Independence	September 16, 1975
Area	
- Total	462,840 km² (54th) 178,703 sq mi
- Water (%)	2
Population	
- 2007 estimate	6,300,000 (104th)
- Density	13/km² (201st) 34/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2005 estimate
- Total	\$14.363 billion (126th)
- Per capita	\$2,418 (131st)
Gini (1996)	50.9 (high)
HDI (2007)	▲ 0.530 (medium) (145th)
Currency	Papua New Guinean kina (PGK)
Time zone	AEST (UTC+10)
- Summer (DST)	<i>not observed (as of 2005)</i> (UTC+10)
Internet TLD	.pg
Calling code	+675



Peaceful independence from Australia, the de facto metropolitan power occurred on September 16, 1975, and close ties remain (Australia remains the largest bilateral aid donor to Papua New Guinea).

A secessionist revolt in 1975-76 on the island of Bougainville resulted in an eleventh-hour modification of the draft Constitution of Papua New Guinea to allow for Bougainville and the other eighteen districts of pre-Independence Papua New Guinea to have quasi-federal status as provinces. The revolt recurred and claimed 20,000 lives from 1988 until it was resolved in 1997. Autonomous Bougainville recently elected Joseph Kabui as president.

Law

The unicameral Parliament enacts legislation in the same manner as in other jurisdictions having "cabinet," "responsible government," or "parliamentary democracy": it is introduced by the executive government to the legislature, debated and, if passed, becomes law when it receives royal assent by the Governor-General. Most legislation is actually regulation implemented by the bureaucracy under enabling legislation previously passed by Parliament.

All ordinary statutes enacted by Parliament must be consistent with the Constitution and the courts have jurisdiction to rule on the constitutionality of statutes, both in disputes before them and on a reference where there is no dispute but only an abstract question of law. Unusual among developing countries, the judicial branch of government in Papua New Guinea has remained remarkably independent and successive executive governments have continued to respect its authority.

The "underlying law" — that is, the common law of Papua New Guinea — consists of English common law as it stood on September 16, 1975 (the date of Independence), and thereafter the decisions of PNG's own courts. The courts are directed by the Constitution and, latterly, the *Underlying Law Act*, to take note of the "custom" of traditional communities, with a view to determining which customs are common to the whole country and may be declared also to be part of the underlying law. In practice, this has proved extremely difficult and has been largely neglected. Statutes are largely adopted from overseas jurisdictions, primarily Australia and England. Advocacy in the courts follows the adversarial pattern of other common law countries.



A girl with a dog at Island of Wagifa

Politics

Papua New Guinea is a member of the Commonwealth of Nations and Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state. It had been expected by the constitutional convention, which prepared the draft constitution, and by Australia, the outgoing metropolitan power, that Papua New Guinea would choose not to retain its link with the British monarchy. The founders, however, considered that imperial honours had a cachet that the newly independent state would not be able to confer with a purely indigenous honours system — the Monarchy was thus maintained. The Queen is represented in Papua New Guinea by the Governor-General, currently Sir Paulias Matane. Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands are unusual among Commonwealth realms in that their Governors-General are effectively selected by the legislature rather than by the executive, as in some parliamentary democracies within or formerly within the Commonwealth



whose non-executive ceremonial president is similarly chosen and as would have been the case had the link with the monarchy been severed at independence such that the governor-general was an autochthonous head of state.

Actual executive power lies with the Prime Minister, who heads the cabinet. The unicameral National Parliament has 109 seats, of which 20 are occupied by the governors of the 19 provinces and the NCD. Candidates for members of parliament are voted upon when the prime minister calls a national election, a maximum of five years after the previous national election. In the early years of independence, the instability of the party system led to frequent votes of no-confidence in Parliament with resulting falls of the government of the day and the need for national elections, in accordance with the conventions of parliamentary democracy. In recent years, successive governments have passed legislation preventing such votes sooner than 18 months after a national election. This has arguably resulted in greater stability though, perhaps, at a cost of reducing the accountability of the executive branch of government.

Elections in PNG attract large numbers of candidates. After independence in 1975, members were elected by the first past the post system, with winners frequently gaining less than 15% of the vote. Electoral reforms in 2001 introduced the Limited Preferential Vote system (LPV), a version of the Alternative Vote. The 2007 general election was the first to be conducted using LPV.

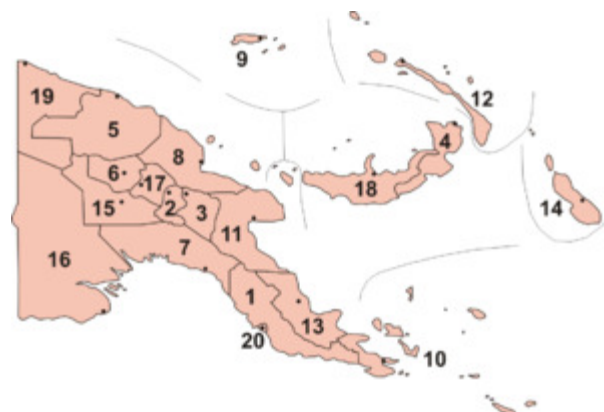
Regions, provinces and districts

Papua New Guinea is divided into four regions, which are not the primary administrative divisions, but are quite significant in many aspects of government, commercial, sporting and other activities.

The nation has 20 province-level divisions: eighteen provinces, the autonomous province of North Solomons (Bougainville) and the National Capital District. Each province is divided into one or more districts, which in turn are divided into one or more Local Level Government areas.

Provinces are the primary administrative divisions of the country. Provincial governments are branches of the national government — Papua New Guinea is not a federation of provinces. The province-level divisions are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Central | 11. Morobe |
| 2. Chimbu (Simbu) | 12. New Ireland |
| 3. Eastern Highlands | 13. Northern (Oro Province) |
| 4. East New Britain | 14. Bougainville (North Solomons) |
| 5. East Sepik | 15. Southern Highlands |
| 6. Enga | 16. Western Province (Fly) |
| 7. Gulf | 17. Western Highlands |
| 8. Madang | 18. West New Britain |
| 9. Manus | 19. West Sepik (Sandaun) |
| 10. Milne Bay | 20. National Capital District |





Geography

At 462,840 km² (178,704 sq mi), Papua New Guinea is the world's fifty-fourth largest country (after Cameroon). It is comparable in size to Sweden, and somewhat larger than the US state of California.

Papua New Guinea is mostly mountainous (highest peak: Mount Wilhelm at 4,509 m; 14,793 ft) and mostly covered with tropical rainforest, as well as very large wetland areas surrounding the Sepik and Fly rivers. Papua New Guinea is surrounded by coral reefs which are under close watch to preserve them.

The country is situated on the Pacific Ring of Fire, at the point of collision of several tectonic plates. There are a number of active volcanoes and eruptions are frequent. Earthquakes are relatively common, sometimes accompanied by tsunamis.

The mainland of the country is the eastern half of New Guinea island, where the largest towns are also located, including the capital Port Moresby and Lae; other major islands within Papua New Guinea include New Ireland, New Britain, Manus and Bougainville.

Papua New Guinea is one of the few regions close to the equator that experience snowfall, which occurs in the most elevated parts of the mainland.

Ecology

Papua New Guinea is part of the Australasia ecozone, which also includes Australia, New Zealand, eastern Indonesia, and several Pacific island groups, including the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Geologically, the island of New Guinea is a northern extension of the Indo-Australian tectonic plate, forming part of a single landmass Australia-New Guinea (also called *Sahul* or *Meganesia*). It is connected to the Australian segment by a shallow continental shelf across the Torres Strait, which in former ages had lain exposed as a land bridge — particularly during ice ages when sea levels were lower than at present.



Map of Papua New Guinea



The green jungle of Papua New Guinea bears a stark contrast to the nearby desert of Australia

Consequently, many species of birds and mammals found on New Guinea have close genetic links with corresponding species found in Australia. One notable feature in common for the two landmasses is the existence of several species of marsupial mammals, including some kangaroos and possums, which are not found elsewhere.

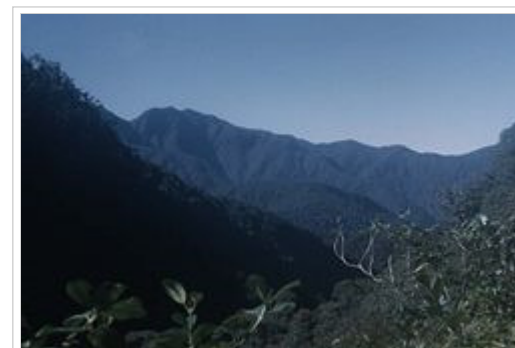
Many of the other islands within PNG territory, including New Britain, New Ireland, Bougainville, the Admiralty Islands, the Trobriand Islands, and the Louisiade Archipelago, were never linked to New Guinea by land bridges, and they lack many of the land mammals and flightless birds that are common to New Guinea and Australia.

Australia and New Guinea are portions of the ancient supercontinent of Gondwana, which started to break into smaller continents in the Cretaceous era, 130–65 million years ago. Australia finally broke free from Antarctica about 45 million years ago. All the Australasian lands are home to the Antarctic flora, descended from the flora of southern Gondwana, including the coniferous podocarps and *Araucaria* pines, and the broadleafed southern beech (*Nothofagus*). These plant families are still present in Papua New Guinea.

As the Indo-Australian Plate (which includes landmasses of India, Australia, and the Indian Ocean floor in-between) drifts north, it collides with the Eurasian Plate, and the collision of the two plates pushed up the Himalayas, the Indonesian islands, and New Guinea's Central Range. The Central Range is much younger and higher than the mountains of Australia, so high that it is home to rare equatorial glaciers. New Guinea is part of the humid tropics, and many Indomalayan rainforest plants spread across the narrow straits from Asia, mixing together with the old Australian and Antarctic floras.

PNG includes a number of terrestrial ecoregions:

- Admiralty Islands lowland rain forests
- Central Range montane rain forests
- Huon Peninsula montane rain forests
- Louisiade Archipelago rain forests
- New Britain-New Ireland lowland rain forests
- New Britain-New Ireland montane rain forests
- New Guinea mangroves
- Northern New Guinea lowland rain and freshwater swamp forests
- Northern New Guinea montane rain forests
- Solomon Islands rain forests (includes Bougainville and Buka)
- Southeastern Papuan rain forests
- Southern New Guinea freshwater swamp forests
- Southern New Guinea lowland rain forests
- Trobriand Islands rain forests



Densely forested mountains in the Ekuti range of Central Papua



- Trans Fly savanna and grasslands
- Central Range sub-alpine grasslands

Economy

Papua New Guinea is richly endowed with natural resources, but exploitation has been hampered by rugged terrain, the high cost of developing infrastructure, serious law and order problems and the system of land title, which makes identifying the owners of land for the purpose of negotiating appropriate agreements problematic. Agriculture provides a subsistence livelihood for 85% of the population. Mineral deposits, including oil, copper, and gold, account for 72% of export earnings. Former Prime Minister Sir Mekere Morauta tried to restore integrity to state institutions, stabilize the kina, restore stability to the national budget, privatize public enterprises where appropriate, and ensure ongoing peace on Bougainville following the 1997 agreement which ended Bougainville's secessionist unrest. The Morauta government had considerable success in attracting international support, specifically gaining the backing of the IMF and the World Bank in securing development assistance loans. Significant challenges face the current Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare, including gaining further investor confidence, continuing efforts to privatize government assets, and maintaining the support of members of Parliament. The third quarter (September, 2004) Reserve Bank Report by the Governor of Bank of PNG showed positive economic stance by the Government, with inflation at zero. However, in March 2006 the United Nations Committee for Development Policy called for Papua New Guinea's designation of developing country to be downgraded to least-developed country because of protracted economic and social stagnation.



Port Moresby

Land tenure

Only some 3% of the land of Papua New Guinea is in private hands; it is privately held under 99 year State Lease, or it is held by the State. There is virtually no freehold title; the few existing freeholds are automatically converted to State Lease when they are transferred between vendor and purchaser. Unalienated land is owned under customary title by traditional landowners. The precise nature of the seisin varies from one culture to another. Many writers portray land as in the communal ownership of traditional clans; however, closer studies usually show that the smallest portions of land whose ownership cannot be further divided are held by the individual heads of extended families and their descendants, or their descendants alone if they have recently died. This is a matter of vital importance because a problem of economic development is identifying who the membership of customary landowning groups is, and thus who the owners are. Disputes between mining and forestry companies and landowner groups often devolve on the issue of whether the companies entered into contractual relations for the use of land with the true owners. Customary property — usually land — cannot be devised by will; it can only be inherited according to the custom of the deceased's people.

Demographics



Papua New Guinea is one of, if not the most heterogeneous nations in the world. There are hundreds of ethnic groups indigenous to Papua New Guinea, the majority being from the group known as Papuans, whose ancestors arrived in the New Guinea region tens of thousands of years ago. The others are Austronesians, their ancestors having arrived in the region less than four thousand years ago. There are also numerous people from other parts of the world now resident, including Chinese, Europeans, Australians, Filipinos, Polynesians and Micronesians.

Papua New Guinea has more languages than any other country, with over 820 indigenous languages, representing twelve percent of the world's total. Indigenous languages are classified into two large groups: Austronesian languages and non-Austronesian (or Papuan languages). There are three official languages for Papua New Guinea. English is an official language, and is the language of government and the education system, but it is not widely spoken. The primary lingua franca of the country is Tok Pisin, in which much of the debate in Parliament is conducted, many information campaigns and advertisements are presented, and until recently a national newspaper, *Wantok*, was published. The only area where Tok Pisin is not prevalent is the southern region of Papua, where people often use the third official language, Hiri Motu. Although it lies in the Papua region, Port Moresby has a highly diverse population which primarily uses Tok Pisin, and to a lesser extent English, with Motu spoken as the indigenous language in outlying villages. With an average of only 7,000 speakers per language, Papua New Guinea has a greater density of languages than any other nation on earth except Vanuatu.

PNG has the highest incidence of HIV and AIDS in the Pacific region and is the fourth country in the Asia Pacific region to fit the criteria for a generalised HIV/AIDS epidemic. Lack of HIV/AIDS awareness is a major problem, especially in rural areas.

Culture



Resident of Bago-bago, an island in the southeast of Papua New Guinea

The culture of Papua New Guinea is multi-faceted and complex. It is estimated that more than a thousand different cultural groups exist in PNG. Because of this diversity, many different styles of cultural expression have emerged; each group has created its own expressive forms in art, dance, weaponry, costumes, singing, music, architecture and much more.

Most of these different cultural groups have their own language. People typically live in villages that rely on subsistence farming. In some areas people hunt and collect wild plants (such as yam roots) to supplement their diets. Those who become skilled at hunting, farming and fishing earn a great deal of respect.

On the Sepik river, there is a famous tradition of wood carving, often in the form of plants or animals, representing ancestor spirits.



Huli Wigman from the Southern Highlands



Sea shells are no longer the currency of Papua New Guinea, as they were in some regions — sea shells were abolished as currency in 1933. However, this heritage is still present in local customs; in some cultures, to get a bride, a groom must bring a certain number of golden-edged clam shells as a bride price. In other regions, bride price is paid in lengths of shell money, pigs, cassowaries or cash; elsewhere, bride price is unknown and it is brides who must pay dowry.

People of the highlands engage in colourful local rituals that are called "sing sings". They paint themselves, and dress up with feathers, pearls and animal skins to represent birds, trees or mountain spirits. Sometimes an important event, such as a legendary battle, is enacted at such a musical festival. (See also Music of Papua New Guinea.)

Education

The University of Papua New Guinea based in the National Capital District offers various degrees to national and international students. Teaching language is English.

Sport

Sport is an important part of PNG culture. The national sport, although not official, is considered to be rugby league. In a nation where communities are far apart and many people live at a minimal subsistence level, rugby league has been described as a replacement for tribal warfare as a way of explaining the local enthusiasm for the game (a matter of life and death). Many Papua New Guineans have become instant celebrities by representing their country or playing in an overseas professional league. Even Australian rugby league players who have played in the annual (Australian) State of Origin clash, which is celebrated feverishly every year in PNG, are among the most well known identities throughout the nation. The Papua New Guinea national rugby league team usually play against the Australian national rugby league team each year in Port Moresby. It is such a popular fixture that thousands of people can't get into the ground once it's full, causing people to climb onto the stadium roof or up trees outside the ground in order to see the match. The limited capacity of the stadium for this fixture often sparks riots. Spectators clashed with riot police during this fixture in 2006.

Australian Rules football has experienced considerable growth over the past decade, now being Papua New Guinea's second most popular sport. They also boast the second highest number of players in the world. The Papua New Guinea national Australian rules football team competed at both the 2002 and 2005 International Cups and were runners-up both times (to Ireland and New Zealand respectively). AFL-PNG is the governing body of the sport in Papua New Guinea. Mal Michael is a famous Papua New Guinean footballer in the AFL, and his popularity has helped increase awareness of the game in his homeland.

Other major sports which have a part in the PNG sporting landscape are soccer, rugby union and, in eastern Papua, cricket. The national rugby union team have in the past attempted to qualify for the Rugby World Cup, but have yet to debut.

Religion



The courts and government practice uphold the constitutional right to freedom of speech, thought, and belief, and no legislation to curb those rights has been adopted, though Sir Arnold Amet, the immediately previous Chief Justice of Papua New Guinea and an outspoken proponent of Pentecostal Christianity, frequently urged legislative and other curbs on the activities of Muslims in the country.

The 2000 census showed 96 percent of citizens were members of a Christian church; however, many citizens combine their Christian faith with some pre-Christian traditional indigenous practices. The census percentages were as follows:

- Roman Catholic Church (27.0%)
- Evangelical Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea (19.5%)
- United Church (11.5%)
- Seventh-day Adventist Church (10.0%)
- Pentecostal (8.6%)
- Evangelical Alliance (5.2%)
- Anglican Church of Papua New Guinea (3.2%)
- Baptist (2.5%)
- Church of Christ (0.4%)
- Jehovah's Witnesses (0.3%)
- Salvation Army (0.2%)
- Other Christian (8.0%)

Minority religions include the Bahá'í Faith (15,000 or 0.3%), while Islam in Papua New Guinea accounts for approximately 1,000 to 2,000 or about 0.04%, (largely foreign residents of African and Southeast Asian origin, but with some Papua New Guinean converts in the towns). Non-traditional Christian churches and non-Christian religious groups are active throughout the country. The Papua New Guinea Council of Churches has stated that both Muslim and Confucian missionaries are active, and foreign missionary activity in general is high.

Traditional religions were often animist and some also tended to have elements of ancestor worship though generalisation is suspect given the extreme heterogeneity of Melanesian societies. For a discussion of one (West Papuan) society's traditional religion by way of example, see the article on the Korowai of West Papua.

Transport

Transport in Papua New Guinea is heavily limited by the country's mountainous terrain. Port Moresby, is not linked by road to any of the other major towns and many remote villages can only be reached by light aircraft or on foot. As a result, air travel is the single most important form of transport. Papua New Guinea has 578 airstrips, with 557 of them being unpaved.

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A woman and a baby at the island of Wagifa



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Pitcairn Islands

2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

The **Pitcairn Islands** (Pitkern: *Pitkern Ailen*), officially named the **Pitcairn, Henderson, Ducie and Oeno Islands**, are a group of four volcanic islands in the southern Pacific Ocean. The islands are a British overseas territory (formerly a British colony), the last remaining in the Pacific. Only **Pitcairn Island** — the second largest — is inhabited.

The islands are best known for being the home of the descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers and the Tahitians who accompanied them, an event retold in numerous books and films. This story is still apparent in the surnames of many of the islanders. With only 48 inhabitants (from nine families), Pitcairn is also notable for being the least populated jurisdiction in the world (although it is not a sovereign nation). The United Nations Committee on Decolonisation includes the Pitcairn Islands on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories.

History



The mutineers turning Lt Bligh and part of the officers and crew adrift from the *Bounty*, 29 April 1789

The original settlers of the Pitcairn Islands (Ducie, Henderson, Oeno, and Pitcairn) were Polynesians who appear to have lived on Pitcairn and Henderson for several centuries. However, although archaeologists believe that Polynesians were living on Pitcairn as late as the 15th century, the islands were uninhabited when they were discovered by Europeans.

Ducie and Henderson Islands are believed to have been discovered by Europeans on 26 January 1606 by Portuguese sailor Pedro Fernandes de Queirós, sailing for the Spanish crown, who named them La Encarnación (" Incarnation") and San Juan Bautista (" Saint John the Baptist"), respectively. However, some sources express doubt about exactly which of the islands were visited and named by Queirós,

suggesting that Queirós' La Encarnación may actually have been Henderson Island, and San Juan Bautista may have been Pitcairn Island.

Pitkern Ailen Pitcairn Islands



Flag



Coat of arms

Anthem: " Come ye Blessed"
" God Save the Queen"



Capital
(and largest city)

Adamstown

Official languages

English, Pitkern



Ducie Island was rediscovered in 1791 by the British Capt. Edwards aboard HMS *Pandora* and named after Francis, Lord Ducie, a captain in the Royal Navy. It was annexed by Britain on 19 December 1902, and in 1938 it was formally incorporated into Pitcairn to become part of a single administrative unit (the "Pitcairn Group of Islands").

Henderson Island was rediscovered on 17 January 1819 by a British Captain Henderson of the British East India Company ship *Hercules*. On 2 March 1819, Captain Henry King, sailing aboard the *Elizabeth*, landed on the island to find the king's colours already flying. His crew scratched the name of their ship into a tree, and for some years the island's name was Elizabeth or Henderson, interchangeably. Henderson Island was annexed by Britain and incorporated into Pitcairn in 1938.

Oeno Island was discovered on 26 January 1824 by U.S. Captain George Worth aboard the whaler *Oeno*. On 10 July 1902, Oeno was annexed by Britain. It was incorporated into Pitcairn in 1938.

Pitcairn Island itself was discovered on 3 July 1767 by the crew of the British sloop *HMS Swallow*, commanded by Captain Philip Carteret (though according to some it had perhaps been visited by Queirós in 1606). It was named after Midshipman Robert Pitcairn, a fifteen-year-old crewmember who was the first to sight the island. Robert Pitcairn was the son of British Marine Officer John Pitcairn.

Government	British Overseas Territory
- Sovereign	Elizabeth II
- Governor	George Fergusson
- Mayor	Mike Warren
Area	
- Total	47 km ² 18.1 sq mi
Population	
- July 1 2007 estimate	48 (221st)
- Density	1/km ² (197th) 2.7/sq mi
Currency	New Zealand dollar (NZD)
Time zone	(UTC-8)
Internet TLD	.pn
Calling code	+64



Bounty Bay



Carteret, who sailed without the newly invented accurate marine chronometer, charted the island at 25° 2' south 133° 21' west of Greenwich and although the latitude was reasonably accurate the longitude was incorrect by about 3° (during the age of sail about two day voyage under fair conditions). This made Pitcairn difficult to find, as highlighted by the failure of Captain James Cook to locate the island in July 1773.

In 1790, the mutineers of the *Bounty* and their Tahitian companions, some of whom may have been kidnapped from Tahiti, settled on Pitcairn Island and set fire to the *Bounty*. The wreck is still visible underwater in Bounty Bay. The ship itself was discovered in 1957 by National Geographic explorer Luis Marden. Although the settlers were able to survive by farming and fishing, the initial period of settlement was marked by serious tensions among the settlers. Alcoholism, murder, disease and other ills took the lives of most mutineers and Tahitian men. John Adams and Ned Young turned to the Scriptures using the ship's Bible as their guide for a new and peaceful society. Young eventually died of an asthmatic infection. The Pitcairners also converted to Christianity; later they would convert from their existing form of Christianity to Adventism after a successful Adventist mission in the 1890s. After the rediscovery of Pitcairn John Adams was granted amnesty for his mutiny.



Geodesy Collection on Pitcairn Island

The islanders reported that it was not until 27 December 1795 that the first ship since the *Bounty* was seen from the island, but as she did not approach the land, they could not make out to what nation she belonged. A second appeared some time in 1801, but did not attempt to communicate with them. A third came sufficiently near to see their habitations, but did not venture to send a boat on shore. The American trading ship *Topaz* under the command of Mayhew Folger was the first to visit the island and communicate with them when they spent 10 hours at Pitcairn in February 1808. A report of Folger's find was forwarded to The Admiralty mentioning the mutineers and a more precise location of the island—latitude 25° 2' S and 130° longitude/,—however this rediscovery was not known to Sir Thomas Staines who commanded a Royal Navy flotilla of two ships (HMS *Briton* and HMS *Tagus*) which found the island at 25°.4' S. (by meridian observation) on 17 September 1814. Staines sent a party ashore and wrote a detailed report for the Admiralty.



Church of Adamstown

The island became a British colony in 1838 and was among the first territories to extend voting rights to women. By the mid-1850s the Pitcairn community was outgrowing the island and its leaders appealed to the British government for assistance. They were offered Norfolk Island and on 3 May 1856, the entire community of 193 people set sail for Norfolk on board the *Morayshire*, arriving on 8 June after a miserable five-week trip. But after eighteen months on Norfolk, seventeen of the Pitcairners returned to their home island; five years later another twenty-seven did the same.

Since a population peak of 233 in 1937, the island has been suffering from emigration, primarily to New Zealand, leaving some fifty people living on Pitcairn.

Military

The Pitcairn Islands are an overseas territory of the United Kingdom, meaning defence is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and Her Majesty's Armed Forces.



Geography

The Pitcairn Islands form the southeasternmost extension of the geological archipelago of the Tuamotus of French Polynesia and consist of five islands: Pitcairn Island, Sandy Island (the last one found), Oeno Island (atoll with five islets), Henderson Island and Ducie Island (atoll with four islets).

The only permanently inhabited island, Pitcairn, is accessible only by boat through Bounty Bay.

Henderson Island, covering about 67% of the territory's total land area and supporting a rich variety of animals in its nearly inaccessible interior, is also capable of supporting a small human population, but access is difficult, its outer shores comprising steep limestone cliffs of sharp coral.

The Pitcairn Islands were formed by a centre of upwelling magma called the Pitcairn hotspot.

The other islands are at a distance of more than 100 km (60 miles) and are not habitable.

The Pitcairn Islands are one of two places in the world in which the plant species *Glochidion pitcairnense* occurs.

Island or atoll	Type	Land area (km ²)	Total area (km ²)	Pop. July 2007	Coordinates
Ducie Island	Atoll	0.7	3.9	-	
Henderson Island	uplifted coral island	37.3	37.3	-	
Oeno Island	Atoll	0.65	16.65	-	
Pitcairn Island	volcanic island	4.6	4.6	50	
Pitcairn Islands	island group	43.25	62.45	50	23°55'26" to 25°04'00"S, 124°47'11" to 130°44'03"W



Satellite photo of Pitcairn Island

^ Includes reef flat and lagoon of the atolls

Economy

The fertile soil of the Pitcairn valleys produces a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, including citrus, sugarcane, watermelons, bananas, yams, and beans. The inhabitants of this tiny economy exist on fishing, subsistence farming, and handicrafts, with barter being an important part of the economy. The major sources of revenue are the sale of postage stamps to collectors, honey, and the sale of handicrafts to passing ships, most of which are plying the United Kingdom to New



Zealand route via the Panama Canal. Trade is restricted by the jagged geography of the island, which lacks a harbour or airstrip, forcing all trade to be made by longboat to visiting ships. Occasionally, passengers from expedition-type cruise ships will come ashore for a day, weather permitting.

The island has a labour force of 15 men and women (as of 2004).

Demographics

The majority of the resident Pitcairn Islanders are descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers, as their surnames show, and also have Tahitian ancestry. Most Pitcairners are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Pitkern is a creole language derived from eighteenth century English, with elements of the Tahitian language. It is spoken as a first language by the population and is taught alongside standard English at the island's only school. It is closely related to the creole language Norfolk spoken on Norfolk Island, because Norfolk was repopulated in the mid nineteenth century by Pitcairners.

In September 2003, the first baby was born on the islands in 17 years. Another child, Adrianna Tracey Christian, was born on Pitcairn on 3 March 2007.

In February 2005, Shirley and Simon Young became the first married outsider couple in recorded history to obtain citizenship on Pitcairn.

Culture and society

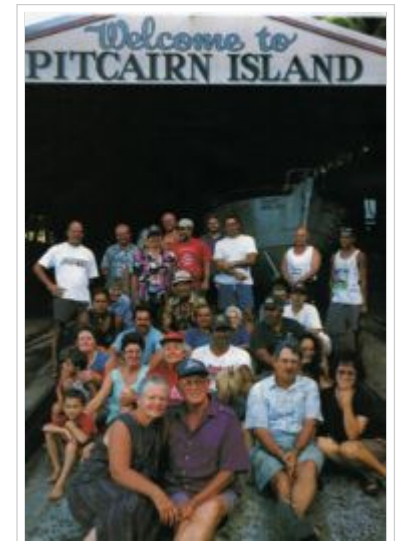
Pitcairn culture, like its language, is a mix of English and Tahitian influences. A successful Seventh-day Adventist mission in the 1890s was important in shaping Pitcairn society, though the inhabitants were already observing the Seventh-day Sabbath before the arrival of Adventism. In recent years, the church has declined, with only about eight islanders worshipping regularly, but most of them still attend church on special occasions. The Sabbath is observed as a day of rest and as a mark of respect for observant Adventists.

The once-strict moral codes, which prohibited dancing, public displays of affection, and consumption of alcohol, have been relaxed in recent years. Islanders may now obtain a six-month license to purchase alcohol; the licence fee is NZ\$10.00 for residents and NZ\$25.00 for tourists.

Education is free and compulsory between the ages of five and 15. All of the island's seven children were enrolled in school in 2000.

Communications

- **Telephones:** There are only satellite phones on the island, replacing a single wired party line. A single pay phone also exists. Islanders call between homes and ships via VHF radio.



Pitcairn residents



- **Radio:** There is no broadcast station. Marine band walkie-talkie radios are used to maintain contact among people in different areas of the island. Foreign stations can be picked up on Shortwave Radio.
- **Television:** There is no broadcast TV; most houses have a VCR/DVD to watch videos. Free-To-Air satellite dishes can be used to watch foreign TV.
- **Internet:** There is one Government-sponsored satellite internet connection, networked to all houses on the island. Pitcairn's country code (top level domain) is *.pn*.

Transport

The settlers of the Pitcairns all arrived by some form of boat or ship; the most famous was the *Bounty*, on which the mutiny occurred and which was burned in Bounty Bay.

Pitcairn Island does not have an airport or seaport; the islanders rely on longboats to ferry people and goods between ship and shore through Bounty Bay. To get to Pitcairn it is necessary to fly to Tahiti, then Mangareva, then embark on a further 30-hour boat ride. There is one boat every several months. Alternatively, passage can be obtained aboard a few freighters out of New Zealand; it is a seven-day trip via freighter. Leaving the island is hit-and-miss; one leaves when transportation happens by, not necessarily when one wishes to go.

There is one 6.4-kilometre (4 mi) paved road and there are no railways. On land, walking has historically been the way of getting around.

In the early 1970s it was decided to bring the first vehicle to the island (a Mini Moke) to make it easier to transport the elderly, but the harsh terrain and heavy rain were too much for the diminutive car and a second and eventually a third had to be sent out to replace it. More suitable all-terrain vehicles have become common in more recent years.

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Pitcairn Island



Samoa



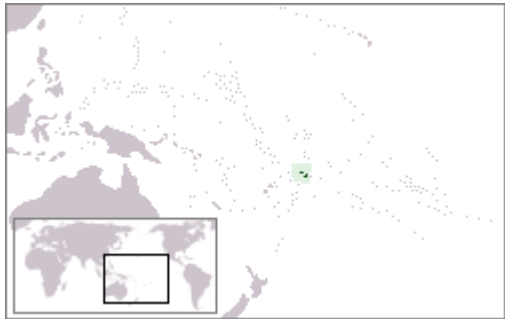
2008/9 Schools Wikipedia Selection. Related subjects: Oceania (Australasia)

Samoa, officially the **Independent State of Samoa**, is a country governing the western part of the Samoan Islands archipelago in the South Pacific Ocean. Previous names were **Samoa** from 1900 to 1919, and **Western Samoa** from 1914 to 1997. It was admitted to the United Nations on 15 December 1976. The entire island group, inclusive of American Samoa, was known as **Navigators Islands** before the 20th century because of the Samoans' seafaring skills.

History

Contact with Europeans began in the early 18th century. Jacob Roggeveen, a Dutchman, was the first European to sight the Samoan islands in 1722. This visit was followed by a French Explorer by the name of Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, the man who named them the *Navigator Islands* in 1768. Contact was limited before the 1830s which is when English missionaries and traders began arriving. Mission work in Samoa had begun in late 1830 by John Williams, of the London Missionary Society. By that time, the Samoans had gained a reputation of being savage and warlike, as they had clashed with French, British, German and American forces, who, by the late nineteenth century, valued Samoa as a refueling station for coal-fired shipping.

As the Germans began to show more interest in the Samoan Islands, the United States laid its own claim to them. Britain also sent troops to express its interest. There followed an eight-year civil war, where each of the three powers supplied arms, training, and in some cases combat troops, to the warring Samoan parties. All three sent warships into Apia harbour, and a larger-scale war seemed imminent, until a massive storm damaged or destroyed the warships, ending the military conflict. At the turn of the twentieth century, the Treaty of Berlin split the Samoan Islands into two parts: the eastern group became a territory of the United States (the Tutuila Islands in 1900 and officially Manu'a in 1905), and are today known as American Samoa; the western islands, by far the greater landmass, became known as German Samoa after the British gave up claims to the islands in return for Fiji and some Melanesian territories. The first German Governor was Wilhelm Solf who later went on to become Secretary for the Colonies of Imperial Germany. New Zealand troops landed in 'Upolu on August 29, 1914 and seized control from the German authorities, following a request by Britain that New Zealand forces take over a German radio

<i>Malo Sa'oloto Tuto'atasi o Samoa</i> Independent State of Samoa	
	
Flag	Coat of arms
Motto: <i>Fa'avae i le Atua Samoa</i> (Samoan: "Samoa is founded on God")	
Anthem: <i>The Banner of Freedom</i>	
	
Capital (and largest city)	Apia
Official languages	Samoan, English
Demonym	Samoan
Government	Parliamentary republic



station there.

From the end of World War I until 1962, New Zealand controlled Samoa as a Class "C" Mandate under trusteeship through the League of Nations. There followed a series of New Zealand administrators who were responsible for two major incidents. In the first incident, approximately one fifth of the Samoan population died in the Influenza epidemic of 1918-1919. In 1919 The Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Epidemic concluded that there had been no epidemic of pneumonic influenza in Western Samoa before the arrival of the 'Tahune' from Auckland on the 7th November, 1918 [which was allowed to berth by the NZ administration in breach of quarantine]; that within seven days of this ship's arrival pneumonic influenza had become epidemic in Upolu and had then spread rapidly throughout the rest of the territory.

The second major incident arose out of an initially peaceful protest by the *Mau* (literally translates as "Strongly held Opinion"), a non-violent popular movement which arose in the early 1920s to protest the mistreatment of the Samoan people by the New Zealand administration. The Mau was initially lead by Olaf Nelson, who was half Samoan and half Swedish. Nelson was eventually exiled during the late 1920s and early 1930s but he continued to assist the organization financially and politically. In following the Mau's non-violent philosophy, the newly elected leader, High Chief Tupua Tamasese Lealofi, led his fellow uniformed Mau in a peaceful demonstration in downtown Apia on December 28, 1929. The New Zealand police attempted to arrest one of the leaders in the demonstration. When he resisted, a struggle developed between the police and the Mau. The officers began to fire randomly into the crowd and a Lewis machine gun, mounted in preparation for this demonstration, was used to disperse the Mau. Chief Tamasese was shot from behind and killed while trying to bring calm and order to the Mau demonstrators, screaming "Peace, Samoa". Ten others died that day and approximately 50 were injured by gunshot wounds and police batons. That day would come to be known in Samoa as Black Saturday. The Mau grew, remaining steadfastly non-violent, and expanded to include a highly influential women's branch. After repeated efforts by the Samoan people, Western Samoa gained independence in 1962 and signed a Friendship Treaty with New Zealand. Samoa was the second or third Pacific Island country to become independent, after New Zealand and arguably Tonga.

In 2002, New Zealand's prime minister Helen Clark, on a trip to Samoa, formally apologised for New Zealand's role in these two incidents.

In July 1997, the constitution was amended to change the country's name from *Western Samoa* to *Samoa*, as it had been designated by the United Nations since joining the organization in 1976. The U.S. territory of American Samoa protested the move, asserting that the change diminished its own identity. American Samoans still use the terms *Western Samoa* and *Western Samoans* to describe the independent State of Samoa and its inhabitants. While the two Samoas share language and ethnicity, their cultures have recently followed different paths, with American Samoans often emigrating to Hawai'i and the U.S. mainland, and

- O le Ao o le Malo	Tufuga Efi
- Prime Minister	Tuilaepa Aiono Sailele Malielegaoi
Independence	from New Zealand
- Date	01 January 1962
Area	
- Total	2,831 km ² (174th) 1,093 sq mi
- Water (%)	0.3%
Population	
- July 2007 estimate	214,265 (185th)
- Density	65/km ² (126th) 169/sq mi
GDP (PPP)	2006 estimate
- Total	\$1.218 billion (166th)
- Per capita	\$6,344 (94th)
HDI (2007)	▲ 0.785 (medium) (77th)
Currency	Tala (WST)
Time zone	(UTC-11)
Internet TLD	.ws
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adopting many U.S. customs, such as the playing of American football and baseball. Western Samoans have tended to emigrate instead to New Zealand, whose influence has made the sports of rugby and cricket more popular in the western islands. Travel writer Paul Theroux noted that there were marked differences between the societies in Samoa and American Samoa. In Samoa the inhabitants, although poorer in terms of material wealth, were more content and retained a keen sense of Samoan identity, while American Samoans retained only the rhetoric of ethnic identity and in reality had sublimated their culture to western norms.

Politics

The 1960 Constitution, which formally came into force with independence, is based on the British pattern of parliamentary democracy, modified to take account of Samoan customs. Two of Samoa's four princely titles (paramount chiefs) at the time of independence were given lifetime appointments to jointly hold the office of head of state. Malietoa Tanumafili II had held this post alone since the death of his colleague (Tupua Tamasese Mea'ole) in 1963. Malietoa Tanumafili II died 11 May 2007. He was the oldest living monarch at the time of his death. His successor, Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi was selected by the legislature on the 17 June 2007 for a 5-year term.



Government buildings in Apia.

The unicameral legislature (Fono) consists of 49 members serving 5-year terms. Forty-seven are elected from territorial districts by ethnic Samoans; the other two are chosen by non-Samoans with no chiefly affiliation on separate electoral rolls. Universal suffrage was extended in 1990, but only chiefs (matai) may stand for election to the Samoan seats. There are more than 25,000 matais in the country, about 5% of whom are women. The prime minister is chosen by a majority in the Fono and is appointed by the head of state to form a government. The prime minister's choices for the 12 cabinet positions are appointed by the head of state, subject to the continuing confidence of the Fono.

The judicial system is based on English common law and local customs. The Supreme Court of Samoa is the court of highest jurisdiction. Its chief justice is appointed by the head of state upon the recommendation of the prime minister.

Political Districts

Samoa is made up of eleven *itūmālō* (political districts). These are the traditional eleven districts that were established well before European arrival. Each district has its own constitutional foundation (faavae) based on the traditional order of title precedence found in each district's faalupega (traditional salutations).

The capital village of each district administers and coordinates the affairs of the district and confers each districts' paramount title, amongst other responsibilities. For example, the District of A'ana has its capital at Leulumoega. The paramount title of A'ana is the TuiA'ana. The orator group which confers this title - the Faleiva (House of Nine) - is based at Leulumoega. This is also the same for the other districts. In the district of Tuamasaga, the paramount title of the district - The Malietoa title - is conferred by the FaleTuamasaga based in Afega.



Upolu (including minor islands)

1. Tuamasaga (Afega)
2. A'ana (Leulumoega)
3. Aiga-i-le-Tai (Mulifanua)¹
4. Atua (Lufilufi)²
5. Va'a-o-Fonoti (Samamea)

■ Savai'i

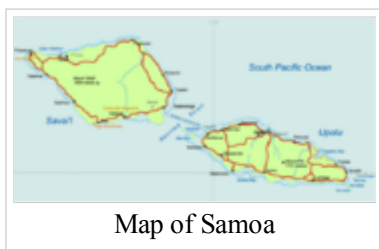
6. Fa'asaleleaga (Safotulafai)
7. Gaga'emauga (Saleaula)³
8. Gaga'ifomauga (Safotu)
9. Vaisigano
10. Satupa'itea (Satupa'itea)
11. Palauli (Vailoa i Palauli)

¹ including islands Manono, Apolima and Nu'ulopa

² including the Aleipata Islands and Nu'usafe'e Island

³ smaller parts also on Upolu (Salamumu (incl. Salamumu-Utu) and Leauvaa villages)

Geography



Map of Samoa

The country is located east of the international date line and south of the equator, about halfway between Hawai'i and New Zealand in the Polynesian region of the Pacific Ocean. The total land area is 2934 km² (slightly smaller than the U.S. state of Rhode Island), consisting of the two large islands of Upolu and Savai'i which account for 99% of the total land area, and eight small islets: the three islets in the Apolima Strait (Manono Island, Apolima and Nu'ulopa), the four Aleipata Islands off the eastern end of Upolu (Nu'utele, Nu'ulua, Namua, and Fanuatapu), and Nu'usafe'e (less than 0.01 km² in area and about 1.4 km off the south coast of Upolu at the village of *Vaovai*). The main island of Upolu is home to nearly three-quarters of Samoa's population, and its capital city is Apia. The climate is tropical, with an average annual temperature of 26.5 °C, and a rainy season from November to April. Savai'i is the largest of the Samoan islands and the third largest Polynesian Island after Tahiti

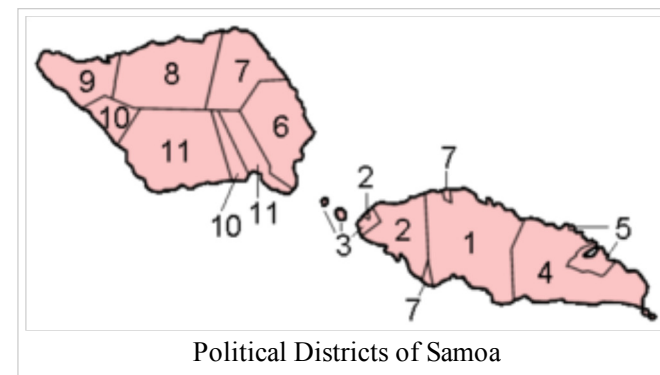
and New Zealand. The population of Savai'i is 42,000 people.

Geology

The Samoan islands have been produced by volcanism, the source of which is a geologic hotspot which is the probable result of a mantle plume. While all of the islands have volcanic origins, only Savai'i has had recent eruptions and could be considered volcanically active. The last major eruption occurred in the 1700s, and smaller eruptions occurred between 1904 - 1906. The highest point in Samoa is Mauga Silisili, at 1858 m. The Saleaula Lava Fields were produced by Mt. Matavanu during its eruption 102 years ago leaving 52 square kilometres of solidified lava.

Economy

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Political Districts of Samoa



The economy of Samoa has traditionally been dependent on development aid, private family remittances from overseas, and agricultural exports. Agriculture employs two-thirds of the labor force, and furnishes 90% of exports, featuring coconut cream, coconut oil, noni (juice of the *nonu* fruit, as it is known in Samoan), and copra. Outside of a large automotive wire-harness factory (Yazaki Corporation), the manufacturing sector mainly processes agricultural products. Tourism is an expanding sector which now accounts for 25% of GDP. Tourist arrivals have been increasing over the years with more than 100,000 tourists visiting the islands in 2005, up from 70,000 in 1996. The Samoan government has called for deregulation of the financial sector, encouragement of investment, and continued fiscal discipline. Observers point to the flexibility of the labor market as a basic strength for future economic advances. The sector has been helped enormously by major capital investment in hotel infrastructure, political instability in neighboring Pacific countries, and the 2005 launch of Polynesian Blue a joint-venture between the government and Virgin Airlines.

Samoa is a fertile, fruitful, productive island. In the period before German colonization, it produced mostly copra. German merchants and settlers were active in introducing large scale plantation operations and developing new industries, notably cocoa and rubber, relying on imported laborers from China and Melanesia. When the value of natural rubber fell drastically, about the end of the Great War (World War I), the New Zealand government encouraged the production of bananas, for which there is a large market in New Zealand.

Because of variations in altitude, a large range of tropical and subtropical crops can be cultivated, but land is not generally available to outside interests. Of the total land area of 2,934 km² (725,000 acres), about 24.4% is in permanent crops and another 21.2% is arable. About 4.4% is Western Samoan Trust Estates Corporation (WSTEC).

The staple products of Samoa are copra (dried coconut meat), cocoa (for chocolate), and bananas. The annual production of both bananas and copra has been in the range of 13,000 to 15,000 metric tons. If the rhinoceros beetle in Samoa were eradicated, Samoa could produce in excess of 40,000 metric tons of copra. Cocoa is of very high quality and used in fine New Zealand chocolates. Most cocoa trees are Criollo-Forastero hybrids. Coffee grows well, but production has been uneven. WSTEC is the biggest coffee producer. Rubber has been produced in Samoa for many years, but its export value has little impact on the economy.

Other agricultural industries have been less successful. Sugarcane production, originally established by Germans in the early 20th century, could be successful. Old train tracks for transporting cane can be seen at some plantations east of Apia. Pineapples grow well in Samoa, but beyond local consumption have not been a major export.

Components of the economy

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in purchasing power parity (PPP) in 2006 was estimated at \$1.218 billion USD. The industrial sector is the largest component of GDP at 58.4%, followed by the services sector at 30.2% (2004 est.). Agriculture represents only 11.4% of GDP (2004 est.). Samoan labor force is estimated at 90,000.



Taro, a root crop, traditionally was Samoa's largest export, generating more than half of all export revenue in 1993. But a fungal blight decimated the plants, and in each year since 1994 taro exports have accounted for less than 1% of export revenue.



Demographics

According to the CIA World Factbook, Samoa has a population of 214,265 of which 92.6% are Samoans, 7% Euronesians (persons of European and Polynesian blood) and 0.4% are Europeans. About three-quarters of the population live on the main island of Upolu. Only the Māori of New Zealand outnumber Samoans among Polynesian groups, but a larger portion of Māori identify with more than one ethnic group.

Roughly 98% of Samoans are Christians, divided among many different churches, including: Congregationalist 35.5%, Roman Catholic 19.6%, Methodist 15%, Latter-Day Saints 12.7%, Assembly of God 6.6%, Seventh-day Adventist 3.5%, other Christian 4.0%, Worship Centre 1.3%, unspecified 0.8% (2001 census). The Head of State until 2007, His Highness Malietoa Tanumafili II, was a Bahá'í convert. Samoa hosts one of seven Bahá'í Houses of Worship in the world; completed in 1984 and dedicated by the Head of State, it is located in Tiapapata, 8 km from Apia.



A Samoan family.

Sport

The main sports played in Samoa are rugby league, rugby union and Samoan cricket. About 30 ethnic Samoans, many from American Samoa, currently play in the National Football League. A 2002 article from ESPN estimated that a Samoan male (either an American Samoan, or a Samoan living in mainland United States) is 40 times more likely to play in the NFL than a non-Samoan American.



Samoa (blue) vs. South Africa at the 2007 Rugby World Cup.

Rugby union is very popular in Samoa and the national team nicknamed the Manu Samoa, is consistently competitive against teams from vastly more populous nations. Samoa have competed at every Rugby World Cup since 1991, and have made the quarter finals in 1991 (where they beat Wales and came close to upsetting eventual world champions Australia), 1995 and the second round of the 1999 world cup. At the 2003 world cup, Manu Samoa came close to beating eventual world champions, England. Samoa also played in the Pacific Nations Cup and the Pacific Tri-Nations. The sport is governed by the Samoa Rugby Football Union, who are members of the Pacific Islands Rugby Alliance, and thus, also contribute to the international Pacific Islanders rugby union team. At club level there is the National Provincial Championship and Pacific Rugby Cup. Prominent Samoan players include Pat Lam and Brian Lima. In addition there are many Samoans that have played for or are playing for the All Blacks.

Rugby league is also popular amongst Samoans, with Samoa reaching the quarter finals of the 2000 Rugby League World Cup. They also took home the cup at Wellington and the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens in 2007 - for which the Prime Minister of Samoa, also Chairman of the national rugby union, Tuila'epa Sa'ilele Malielegaoi, declared a national holiday. Many Samoans and New Zealanders or Australians of Samoan descent play in the Super League and National Leagues in Britain. Examples are Va'aiga Lealuga Tuigamala who represented the New Zealand All Blacks, then became the first million dollar player to be contract out to Rugby League to play for Wigan, then played Rugby Union for Newcastle Falcons before representing Samoa. Ta'ane Lavulavu of Workington Town, Maurie Fa'asavalu of St Helens and David Fatialofa of Whitehaven.



Samoaans have been very visible in boxing, kickboxing and sumo; some Samoan sumos have reached the highest rank of *Ozeki* and *yokozuna*. Despite the relatively small population of the islands many Samoaans and people of Samoan descent have reached high ranks in many professional sports leagues.

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