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Chapter 1

240

1.1 240.guide

Texified version of data for Tunisia.

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Tunisia

1.2 240.guide/Tunisia

Tunisia

Geography (Tunisia)
 People (Tunisia)
 Government (Tunisia)
 Government (Tunisia 2. usage)
 Economy (Tunisia)
 Economy (Tunisia 2. usage)
 Communications (Tunisia)
 Defense Forces (Tunisia)

1.3 240.guide/Geography (Tunisia)

Geography (Tunisia)

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Location:

Northern Africa, 144 km from Italy across the Strait of Sicily, between Algeria and Libya

Map references:

Africa, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area:

total area:

163,610 km²

land area:

155,360 km²

comparative area:

slightly larger than Georgia

Land boundaries:

total 1,424 km, Algeria 965 km, Libya 459 km

Coastline:

1,148 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea:

12 nm

International disputes:

maritime boundary dispute with Libya; land boundary disputes with Algeria under discussion

Climate:

temperate in north with mild, rainy winters and hot, dry summers; desert in south

Terrain: mountains in north; hot, dry central plain; semiarid south merges into the ←

Sahara

Natural resources:

petroleum, phosphates, iron ore, lead, zinc, salt

Land use:

arable land:

20%

permanent crops:

10%

meadows and pastures:

19%

forest and woodland:
 4%
 other:
 47%
 Irrigated land:
 2,750 km² (1989)
 Environment:
 deforestation; overgrazing; soil erosion; desertification
 Note:
 strategic location in central Mediterranean

1.4 240.guide/People (Tunisia)

People (Tunisia)

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Population:
 8,570,868 (July 1993 est.)
 Population growth rate:
 1.84% (1993 est.)
 Birth rate:
 24.24 births/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Death rate:
 5.04 deaths/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Net migration rate:
 -0.79 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Infant mortality rate:
 35.9 deaths/1,000 live births (1993 est.)
 Life expectancy at birth:
 total population:
 72.54 years
 male:
 70.55 years
 female:
 74.62 years (1993 est.)
 Total fertility rate:
 3.02 children born/woman (1993 est.)
 Nationality:
 noun:
 Tunisian(s)
 adjective:
 Tunisian
 Ethnic divisions:
 Arab-Berber 98%, European 1%, Jewish less than 1%
 Religions:
 Muslim 98%, Christian 1%, Jewish 1%
 Languages:
 Arabic (official and one of the languages of commerce), French (commerce)
 Literacy:
 age 15 and over can read and write (1990)
 total population:
 65%
 male:

74%
 female:
 56%
 Labor force:
 2.25 million
 by occupation:
 agriculture 32%
 note:
 shortage of skilled labor

1.5 240.guide/Government (Tunisia)

Government (Tunisia)

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Names:
 conventional long form:
 Republic of Tunisia
 conventional short form:
 Tunisia
 local long form:
 Al Jumhuriyah at Tunisiyah
 local short form:
 Tunis
 Digraph:
 TS
 Type:
 republic
 Capital:
 Tunis
 Administrative divisions:
 23 governorates; Beja, Ben Arous, Bizerte, Gabes, Gafsa, Jendouba, Kairouan ↔
 ,
 Kasserine, Kebili, L'Ariana, Le Kef, Mahdia, Medenine, Monastir, Nabeul,
 Sfax, Sidi Bou Zid, Siliana, Sousse, Tataouine, Tozeur, Tunis, Zaghuan
 Independence:
 20 March 1956 (from France)
 Constitution:
 1 June 1959
 Legal system:
 based on French civil law system and Islamic law; some judicial review of
 legislative acts in the Supreme Court in joint session
 National holiday:
 National Day, 20 March (1956)
 Political parties and leaders:
 Constitutional Democratic Rally Party (RCD), President BEN ALI (official
 ruling party); Movement of Democratic Socialists (MDS), Mohammed MOUAADA;
 five other political parties are legal, including the Communist Party
 Other political or pressure groups:
 the Islamic fundamentalist party, An Nahda (Rebirth), is outlawed
 Suffrage: 20 years of age; universal
 Elections:
 President:

last held 2 April 1989 (next to be held NA March 1994); results - Gen. Zine el Abidine BEN ALI was reelected without opposition

Chamber of Deputies:
 last held 2 April 1989 (next to be held NA April 1994); results - RCD ←
 80.7%,
 independents/Islamists 13.7%, MDS 3.2%, other 2.4%; seats - (141 total) RCD 141

Executive branch:
 president, prime minister, Cabinet

Legislative branch:
 unicameral Chamber of Deputies (Majlis al-Nuwaab)

Judicial branch:
 Court of Cassation (Cour de Cassation)

Leaders:
 Chief of State:
 President Gen. Zine el Abidine BEN ALI (since 7 November 1987)

Head of Government:
 Prime Minister Hamed KAROUI (since 26 September 1989)

1.6 240.guide/Government (Tunisia 2. usage)

Government (Tunisia 2. usage)

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Member of:

ABEDA, ACCT, AfDB, AFESD, AL, AMF, AMU, CCC, ECA, FAO, G-77, GATT, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICFTU, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, ILO, IMF, IMO, INMARSAT, INTELSAT, INTERPOL, IOC, ISO, ITU, LORCS, MINURSO, NAM, OAPEC (withdrew ←
 from
 active membership in 1986), OAU, OIC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNPROFOR, UNTAC, UPU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in US:

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Flag:

red with a white disk in the center bearing a red crescent nearly ←
 encircling

a red five-pointed star; the crescent and star are traditional symbols of

Islam

1.7 240.guide/Economy (Tunisia)

Economy (Tunisia)

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Overview:

The economy depends primarily on petroleum, phosphates, tourism, and exports

of light manufactures. Following two years of drought-induced economic decline, the economy came back strongly in 1990-92 as a result of good harvests, continued export growth, and higher domestic investment. High unemployment has eroded popular support for the government, however, and forced Tunis to slow the pace of economic reform. Nonetheless, the government appears committed to implementing its IMF-supported structural adjustment program and to servicing its foreign debt.

National product:

GDP - exchange rate conversion - \$13.6 billion (1992 est.)

National product real growth rate:

8% (1992 est.)

National product per capita:

\$1,650 (1992 est.)

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

6% (1992 est.)

Unemployment rate:

15.7% (1992)

Budget:

revenues \$4.3 billion; expenditures \$5.5 billion, including capital expenditures of \$NA (1993 est.)

Exports:

\$3.7 billion (f.o.b., 1992)

commodities:

hydrocarbons, agricultural products, phosphates and chemicals

partners:

EC countries 74%, Middle East 11%, US 2%, Turkey, former USSR republics

Imports:

\$6.1 billion (c.i.f., 1992)

commodities:

industrial goods and equipment 57%, hydrocarbons 13%, food 12%, consumer goods

partners:

EC countries 67%, US 6%, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, Turkey, Algeria

External debt:

\$7.7 billion (1992 est.)

Industrial production:

growth rate 5% (1989); accounts for about 25% of GDP, including petroleum

Electricity:

1,545,000 kW capacity; 5,096 million kWh produced, 600 kWh per capita (1992)

Industries:

petroleum, mining (particularly phosphate and iron ore), tourism, textiles, footwear, food, beverages

Agriculture:

accounts for 15% of GDP and one-third of labor force; output subject to severe fluctuations because of frequent droughts; export crops - olives, dates, oranges, almonds; other products - grain, sugar beets, wine grapes, poultry, beef, dairy; not self-sufficient in food; fish catch of 99,200 metric tons (1987)

Economic aid:

US commitments, including Ex-Im (FY70-89), \$730 million; Western (non-US) countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970-89), \$5.2 billion; OPEC bilateral aid (1979-89), \$684 million; Communist countries (1970-89), \$410 million

Currency:

1 Tunisian dinar (TD) = 1,000 millimes

1.8 240.guide/Economy (Tunisia 2. usage)

Economy (Tunisia 2. usage)

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Exchange rates:

Tunisian dinars (TD) per US\$1 - 0.9931 (February 1993), 0.8844 (1992), 0.9246 (1991), 0.8783 (1990), 0.9493 (1989), 0.8578 (1988)

Fiscal year:

calendar year

1.9 240.guide/Communications (Tunisia)

Communications (Tunisia)

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Railroads:

2,115 km total; 465 km 1.435-meter (standard) gauge; 1,650 km 1.000-meter gauge

Highways:

17,700 km total; 9,100 km bituminous; 8,600 km improved and unimproved ↔ earth

Pipelines:

crude oil 797 km, petroleum products 86 km, natural gas 742 km

Ports:

Bizerte, Gabes, Sfax, Sousse, Tunis, La Goulette, Zarzis

Merchant marine:

22 ships (1,000 GRT or over) totaling 161,661 GRT/221,959 DWT; includes 1 short-sea passenger, 4 cargo, 2 roll-on/roll-off cargo, 2 oil tanker, 6 chemical tanker, 1 liquefied gas, 6 bulk

Airports:

total:

29

usable:

26
with permanent-surface runways:
13
with runways over 3,659 m:
0
with runways 2,440-3,659 m:
7
with runways 1,220-2,439 m:
7

note:

a new airport opened 6 May 1993, length and type of surface NA

Telecommunications:

the system is above the African average; facilities consist of open-wire lines, coaxial cable, and microwave radio relay; key centers are Sfax, Sousse, Bizerte, and Tunis; 233,000 telephones (28 telephones per 1,000 persons); broadcast stations - 7 AM, 8 FM, 19 TV; 5 submarine cables; satellite earth stations - 1 Atlantic Ocean INTELSAT and 1 ARABSAT with back-up control station; coaxial cable and microwave radio relay to Algeria and Libya

1.10 240.guide/Defense Forces (Tunisia)

Defense Forces (Tunisia)

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Branches:

Army, Navy, Air Force, paramilitary forces, National Guard

Manpower availability:

males age 15-49 2,164,686; fit for military service 1,244,683; reach military age (20) annually 90,349 (1993 est.)

Defense expenditures:

exchange rate conversion - \$618 million, 3.7% of GDP (1993 est.)