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Chapter 1

55

1.1 55.guide

Texified version of data for Comoros.

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Comoros

1.2 55.guide/Comoros

Comoros

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

1.3 55.guide/Geography (Comoros)

Geography (Comoros)

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Location:

in the extreme northern Mozambique Channel, about two-thirds of the way
between northern Madagascar and northern Mozambique

Map references:

Africa, Standard Time Zones of the World

Area:

total area:

2,170 km²

land area:

2,170 km²

comparative area:

slightly more than 12 times the size of Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

340 km

Maritime claims:

exclusive economic zone:

200 nm

territorial sea:

12 nm

International disputes:

claims French-administered Mayotte

Climate:

tropical marine; rainy season (November to May)

Terrain:

volcanic islands, interiors vary from steep mountains to low hills

Natural resources:

negligible

Land use: arable land:

35%

permanent crops:

8%

meadows and pastures:

7%

forest and woodland:

16%

other:
 34%
 Irrigated land:
 NA km2
 Environment:
 soil degradation and erosion; deforestation; cyclones possible during rainy season
 Note:
 important location at northern end of Mozambique Channel

1.4 55.guide/People (Comoros)

People (Comoros)

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Population:
 511,651 (July 1993 est.)
 Population growth rate:
 3.54% (1993 est.)
 Birth rate:
 46.75 births/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Death rate:
 11.31 deaths/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Net migration rate:
 0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Infant mortality rate:
 81.8 deaths/1,000 live births (1993 est.)
 Life expectancy at birth:
 total population:
 57.35 years
 male:
 55.23 years
 female:
 59.55 years (1993 est.)
 Total fertility rate:
 6.86 children born/woman (1993 est.)
 Nationality:
 noun:
 Comoran(s)
 adjective:
 Comoran
 Ethnic divisions:
 Antalote, Cafre, Makoa, Oimatsaha, Sakalava
 Religions:
 Sunni Muslim 86%, Roman Catholic 14%
 Languages:
 Arabic (official), French (official), Comoran (a blend of Swahili and Arabic)
 Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1980)
 total population:
 48%
 male:
 56%

female:
 40%
 Labor force:
 140,000 (1982)
 by occupation:
 agriculture 80%, government 3%
 note:
 51% of population of working age (1985)

1.5 55.guide/Government (Comoros)

Government (Comoros)

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Names:
 conventional long form:
 Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros
 conventional short form:
 Comoros
 local long form:
 Republique Federale Islamique des Comores
 local short form:
 Comores
 Digraph:
 CN
 Type:
 independent republic
 Capital:
 Moroni
 Administrative divisions:
 three islands; Njazidja (Grand Comore), Nzwani (Anjouan), and Mwali (Moheli ↔
)
 note:
 there are also four municipalities named Domoni, Fomboni, Moroni, and
 Mutsamudu
 Independence:
 6 July 1975 (from France)
 Constitution:
 7 June 1992
 Legal system:
 French and Muslim law in a new consolidated code
 National holiday:
 Independence Day, 6 July (1975)
 Political parties and leaders:
 over 20 political parties are currently active, the most important of which
 are; Comoran Union for Progress (UDZIMA), Omar TAMOU; Islands' Fraternity
 and Unity Party (CHUMA), Said Ali KEMAL; Comoran Party for Democracy and
 Progress (PCDP), Ali MROUDJAE; Realizing Freedom's Capability (UWEZO),
 Mouazair ABDALLAH; Democratic Front of the Comoros (FDR), Moustapha CHELKH;
 Dialogue Proposition Action (DPA/MWANGAZA), Said MCHAWGAMA; Rally for ↔
 Change
 and Democracy (RACHADE), Hassan HACHIM; Union for Democracy and
 Decentralization (UNDC), Mohamed Taki Halidi IBRAHAM; Maecha Bora, leader

NA; MDP/NGDC (expansion NA), leader NA; Comoran Popular Front (FPC), ←
 Mohamed
 HASSANALI, Mohamed El Arif OUKACHA, Abdou MOUSTAKIM (Secretary General)
 Suffrage:
 18 years of age; universal
 Elections:
 Federal Assembly:
 last held November-December 1992 (next to be held NA March 1997); results -
 percent of vote by party NA; seats - (42 total) UNDC 7, CHUMA 3, ADP 2,
 MDP/NGDC 5, FDC 2, MAECHA BORA 2, FPC 2, RACHADE 1, UWEZO 1, MWANGAZA 1, 16
 other seats to smaller parties
 President:
 last held 11 March 1990 (next to be held March 1996); results - Said ←
 Mohamed
 DJOHAR (UDZIMA) 55%, Mohamed TAKI Abdulkarim (UNDC) 45%
 Executive branch:
 president, Council of Ministers (cabinet), prime minister
 Legislative branch:
 unicameral Federal Assembly (Assemblée Federale)
 Judicial branch:
 Supreme Court (Cour Supreme)

1.6 55.guide/Government (Comoros 2. usage)

Government (Comoros 2. usage)

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Leaders:
 Chief of State and Head of Government:
 President Said Mohamed DJOHAR (since 11 March 1990); Prime Minister Ibrahim
 HALIDI (since 1 January 1992)
 Member of:
 ACCT, ACP, AfDB, ECA, FAO, FZ, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, ILO,
 IMF, ITU, NAM, OAU, OIC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO, WMO
 Diplomatic representation in US:
 chief of mission:
 Ambassador Amini Ali MOUMIN
 chancery:
 (temporary) at the Comoran Permanent Mission to the UN, 336 East 45th
 Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10017
 telephone:
 (212) 972-8010
 US diplomatic representation:
 chief of mission:
 Ambassador Kenneth N. PELTIER
 embassy:
 address NA, Moroni
 mailing address:
 B. P. 1318, Moroni
 telephone:
 [269] 73-22-03, 73-29-22
 FAX:
 no service available at this time

Flag:

green with a white crescent placed diagonally (closed side of the crescent points to the upper hoist-side corner of the flag); there are four white five-pointed stars placed in a line between the points of the crescent; the crescent, stars, and color green are traditional symbols of Islam; the four stars represent the four main islands of the archipelago - Mwali, Njazidja, Nzwani, and Mayotte (which is a territorial collectivity of France, but claimed by the Comoros)

1.7 55.guide/Economy (Comoros)

Economy (Comoros)

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Overview:

One of the world's poorest countries, Comoros is made up of several islands that have poor transportation links, a young and rapidly increasing population, and few natural resources. The low educational level of the labor force contributes to a low level of economic activity, high unemployment, and a heavy dependence on foreign grants and technical assistance. Agriculture, including fishing, hunting, and forestry, is the leading sector of the economy. It contributes 40% to GDP, employs 80% of the labor force, and provides most of the exports. The country is not self-sufficient in food production, and rice, the main staple, accounts for 90% of imports. During the period 1982-86 the industrial sector grew at an annual average rate of 5.3%, but its contribution to GDP was only 5% in 1988. Despite major investment in the tourist industry, which accounts for about 25% of GDP, growth has stagnated since 1983. A sluggish growth rate of 1.5% during 1985-90 has led to large budget deficits, declining incomes, and balance-of-payments difficulties. Preliminary estimates for FY92 show a moderate increase in the growth rate based on increased exports, tourism, and government investment outlays.

National product:

GDP - exchange rate conversion - \$260 million (1991 est.)

National product real growth rate:

2.7% (1991 est.)

National product per capita:

\$540 (1991 est.)

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

4% (1991 est.)

Unemployment rate:

over 16% (1988 est.)

Budget:

revenues \$96 million; expenditures \$88 million, including capital expenditures of \$33 million (1991 est.)

Exports:

\$16 million (f.o.b., 1990 est.)

commodities:

vanilla, cloves, perfume oil, copra, ylang-ylang

partners:

US 53%, France 41%, Africa 4%, FRG 2% (1988)

Imports:

\$41 million (f.o.b., 1990 est.)

commodities:

rice and other foodstuffs, cement, petroleum products, consumer goods

partners:

Europe 62% (France 22%), Africa 5%, Pakistan, China (1988)

External debt:

\$196 million (1991 est.)

Industrial production:

growth rate -6.5% (1989 est.); accounts for 10% of GDP

Electricity:

16,000 kW capacity; 25 million kWh produced, 50 kWh per capita (1991)

Industries: perfume distillation, textiles, furniture, jewelry, ←

construction materials,

soft drinks

Agriculture:

accounts for 40% of GDP; most of population works in subsistence ←

agriculture

and fishing; plantations produce cash crops for export - vanilla, cloves, perfume essences, copra; principal food crops - coconuts, bananas, cassava; world's leading producer of essence of ylang-ylang (for perfumes) and second-largest producer of vanilla; large net food importer

1.8 55.guide/Economy (Comoros 2. usage)

Economy (Comoros 2. usage)

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Economic aid:

US commitments, including Ex-Im (FY80-89), \$10 million; Western (non-US) countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970-89), \$435 million; OPEC bilateral aid (1979-89), \$22 million; Communist countries (1970-89), \$18 million

Currency:

1 Comoran franc (CF) = 100 centimes

Exchange rates:

Comoran francs (CF) per US\$1 - 274.06 (January 1993), 264.69 (1992), 282.11 (1991), 272.26 (1990), 319.01 (1989), 297.85 (1988)); note - linked to the French franc at 50 to 1 French franc

Fiscal year:

calendar year

1.9 55.guide/Communications (Comoros)

Communications (Comoros)

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Highways:

750 km total; about 210 km bituminous, remainder crushed stone or gravel

Ports:

Mutsamudu, Moroni

Airports:

total:

4

usable:

4

with permanent-surface runways:

4

with runways over 3,659 m:

0

with runways 2,440-3,659 m:

1

with runways 1,220-2,439 m:

3

Telecommunications:

sparse system of radio relay and high-frequency radio communication ↔ stations

for interisland and external communications to Madagascar and Reunion; over 1,800 telephones; broadcast stations - 2 AM, 1 FM, no TV

1.10 55.guide/Defense Forces (Comoros)

Defense Forces (Comoros)

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Branches:

Comoran Defense Force (FDC)

Manpower availability:

males age 15-49 108,867; fit for military service 65,106 (1993 est.)

Defense expenditures:

\$NA, NA% of GDP