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Chapter 1

175

1.1 175.guide

Texified version of data for Nicaragua.

Texified using wfact from

Gerhard Leibrock
Neuhäuselerstr. 12
D-66459 Kirkel
Germany

Tel.: 06849 / 6134
INTERNET: leibrock@fsinfo.cs.uni-sb.de
fach5@cipsol.cs.uni-sb.de

Project Gutenberg

P. O. Box 2782

Champaign, IL 61825

When all other email fails try our Michael S. Hart, Executive Director:

hart@vmd.cso.uiuc.edu (internet) hart@uiucvmd (bitnet)

We would prefer to send you this information by email (Internet, Bitnet, Compuserve, ATTMAIL or MCI mail).

Nicaragua

1.2 175.guide/Nicaragua

Nicaragua

Geography (Nicaragua)
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1.3 175.guide/Geography (Nicaragua)

Geography (Nicaragua)

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Location:

Central America, between Costa Rica and Honduras

Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean, South America

Area:

total area:

129,494 km²

land area:

120,254 km²

comparative area:

slightly larger than New York State

Land boundaries:

total 1,231 km, Costa Rica 309 km, Honduras 922 km

Coastline:

910 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone:

25 nm security zone (status of claim uncertain)

continental shelf:

not specified

territorial sea:

200 nm

International disputes:

territorial disputes with Colombia over the Archipelago de San Andres y Providencia and Quita Sueno Bank; International Court of Justice (ICJ) referred the maritime boundary question in the Golfo de Fonseca to an earlier agreement in this century and advised that some tripartite resolution among El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua likely would be required

Climate:

tropical in lowlands, cooler in highlands

Terrain:

extensive Atlantic coastal plains rising to central interior mountains; narrow Pacific coastal plain interrupted by volcanoes

Natural resources:

gold, silver, copper, tungsten, lead, zinc, timber, fish

Land use:
 arable land:
 9%
 permanent crops:
 1%
 meadows and pastures:
 43%
 forest and woodland:
 35%
 other:
 12%
 Irrigated land:
 850 km2 (1989 est.)
 Environment:
 subject to destructive earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, and occasional
 severe hurricanes; deforestation; soil erosion; water pollution

1.4 175.guide/People (Nicaragua)

People (Nicaragua)

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Population:
 3,987,240 (July 1993 est.)
 Population growth rate:
 2.74% (1993 est.)
 Birth rate:
 35.61 births/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Death rate:
 6.94 deaths/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Net migration rate:
 -1.25 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1993 est.)
 Infant mortality rate:
 54.8 deaths/1,000 live births (1993 est.)
 Life expectancy at birth:
 total population:
 63.5 years
 male:
 60.7 years
 female:
 66.41 years (1993 est.)
 Total fertility rate:
 4.48 children born/woman (1993 est.)
 Nationality:
 noun:
 Nicaraguan(s)
 adjective:
 Nicaraguan
 Ethnic divisions:
 mestizo 69%, white 17%, black 9%, Indian 5%
 Religions:
 Roman Catholic 95%, Protestant 5%
 Languages:

Spanish (official)
 note:
 English- and Indian-speaking minorities on Atlantic coast
 Literacy:
 age 15 and over can read and write (1971)
 total population:
 57%
 male:
 57%
 female:
 57%
 Labor force:
 1.086 million
 by occupation:
 service 43%, agriculture 44%, industry 13% (1986)

1.5 175.guide/Government (Nicaragua)

Government (Nicaragua)

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Names:
 conventional long form: Republic of Nicaragua
 conventional short form:
 Nicaragua
 local long form:
 Republica de Nicaragua
 local short form:
 Nicaragua
 Digraph:
 NU
 Type:
 republic
 Capital:
 Managua
 Administrative divisions:
 17 departments (departamentos, singular - departamento); Boaco, Carazo, Chinandega, Chontales, Esteli, Granada, Jinotega, Leon, Madriz, Managua, Masaya, Matagalpa, North Atlantic Coast Autonomous Zone (RAAN), Nueva Segovia, Rio San Juan, Rivas, South Atlantic Coast Autonomous Zone (RAAS)
 Independence:
 15 September 1821 (from Spain)
 Constitution:
 January 1987
 Legal system:
 civil law system; Supreme Court may review administrative acts
 National holiday:
 Independence Day, 15 September (1821)
 Political parties and leaders:
 ruling coalition:
 National Opposition Union (UNO) is a 10-party alliance - moderate parties:
 National Conservative Party (PNC), Silviano MATAMOROS Lacayo, president;
 Liberal Constitutionalist Party (PLC), Jose Ernesto SOMARRIBA, Arnold

ALEMAN; Christian Democratic Union (UDC), Luis Humberto GUZMAN, Agustin JARQUIN, Azucena FERREY, Roger MIRANDA, Francisco MAYORGA; National Democratic Movement (MDN), Roberto URROZ; National Action Party (PAN), Duilio BALTODANO; NOU - hardline parties: Independent Liberal Party (PLI), Wilfredo NAVARRO, Virgilio GODOY Reyes; Social Democratic Party (PSD), Guillermo POTOY, Alfredo CESAR Aguirre, secretary general; Conservative Popular Alliance Party (PAPC), Myriam ARGUELLO; Communist Party of Nicaragua (PCdeN), Eli ALTIMIRANO Perez; Neo-Liberal Party (PALI), Adolfo GARCIA Esquivel

opposition parties:

Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN), Daniel ORTEGA; Central American Unionist Party (PUCA), Blanca ROJAS; Democratic Conservative Party of Nicaragua (PCDN), Jose BRENES; Liberal Party of National Unity (PLUIN), Eduardo CORONADO; Movement of Revolutionary Unity (MUR), Francisco SAMPER; Social Christian Party (PSC), Erick RAMIREZ; Revolutionary Workers' Party (PRT), Bonifacio MIRANDA; Social Conservative Party (PSOC), Fernando AGUERRO; Popular Action Movement - Marxist-Leninist (MAP-ML), Isidro TELLEZ

; Popular Social Christian Party (PPSC), Mauricio DIAZ

1.6 175.guide/Government (Nicaragua 2. usage)

Government (Nicaragua 2. usage)

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Other political or pressure groups:

National Workers Front (FNT) is a Sandinista umbrella group of eight labor unions: Sandinista Workers' Central (CST); Farm Workers Association (ATC); Health Workers Federation (FETASALUD); National Union of Employees (UNE); National Association of Educators of Nicaragua (ANDEN); Union of Journalists

of Nicaragua (UPN); Heroes and Martyrs Confederation of Professional Associations (CONAPRO); and the National Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG); Permanent Congress of Workers (CPT) is an umbrella group of four non-Sandinista labor unions: Confederation of Labor Unification (CUS); Autonomous Nicaraguan Workers' Central (CTN-A); Independent General Confederation of Labor (CGT-I); and Labor Action and Unity Central (CAUS); Nicaraguan Workers' Central (CTN) is an independent labor union; Superior Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP) is a confederation of business groups

Suffrage:

16 years of age; universal

Elections:

President:

last held on 25 February 1990 (next to be held February 1996); results - Violeta Barrios de CHAMORRO (UNO) 54.7%, Daniel ORTEGA Saavedra (FSLN) 40.8%, other 4.5%

National Assembly:

last held on 25 February 1990 (next to be held February 1996); results - UNO 53.9%, FSLN 40.8%, PSC 1.6%, MUR 1.0%; seats - (92 total) UNO 42, FSLN 39, PSC 1, MUR 1, "Centrist" (Dissident UNO) 9

Executive branch:

president, vice president, Cabinet

Legislative branch:

unicameral National Assembly (Asamblea Nacional)

Judicial branch:

Supreme Court (Corte Suprema)

Leaders:

Chief of State and Head of Government:

President Violeta Barrios de CHAMORRO (since 25 April 1990); Vice President Virgilio GODOY Reyes (since 25 April 1990)

Member of:

BCIE, CACM, ECLAC, FAO, G-77, GATT, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, IDA, IFAD, IFC, ILO, IMF, IMO, INTELSAT, INTERPOL, IOC, IOM, ITU, LAES, LAIA (observer), LORCS, NAM, OAS, OPANAL, PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UPU, WCL, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in US:

chief of mission:

Ambassador Roberto MAYORGA (since January 1993)

chancery:

1627 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009

telephone:

(202) 939-6570

US diplomatic representation:

chief of mission:

Charge d'Affaires Ronald GODARD

embassy:

Kilometer 4.5 Carretera Sur., Managua

mailing address:

APO AA 34021

telephone:

[505] (2) 666010 or 666013, 666015 through 18, 666026, 666027, 666032 through 34

FAX:

[505] (2) 666046

1.7 175.guide/Government (Nicaragua 3. usage)

Government (Nicaragua 3. usage)

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Flag:

three equal horizontal bands of blue (top), white, and blue with the national coat of arms centered in the white band; the coat of arms features a triangle encircled by the words REPUBLICA DE NICARAGUA on the top and AMERICA CENTRAL on the bottom; similar to the flag of El Salvador, which features a round emblem encircled by the words REPUBLICA DE EL SALVADOR EN LA AMERICA CENTRAL centered in the white band; also similar to the flag of Honduras, which has five blue stars arranged in an X pattern centered in the white band ↔

1.8 175.guide/Economy (Nicaragua)

Economy (Nicaragua)

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Overview:

Government control of the economy historically has been extensive, although the CHAMORRO government has pledged to greatly reduce intervention. Four private banks have been licensed, and the government has liberalized ← foreign

trade and abolished price controls on most goods. In early 1993, fewer than 50% of the agricultural and industrial firms remain state owned. Sandinista economic policies and the war had produced a severe economic crisis. The foundation of the economy continues to be the export of agricultural commodities, largely coffee and cotton. Farm production fell by roughly 7% in 1989 and 4% in 1990, and remained about even in 1991-92. The ← agricultural

sector employs 44% of the work force and accounts for 15% of GDP and 80% of export earnings. Industry, which employs 13% of the work force and contributes about 25% to GDP, showed a drop of 7% in 1989, fell slightly in 1990, and remained flat in 1991-92; output still is below pre-1979 levels. External debt is one of the highest in the world on a per capita basis. In 1992 the inflation rate was 8%, down sharply from the 766% of 1991.

National product:

GDP - exchange rate conversion - \$1.7 billion (1992 est.)

National product real growth rate:

0.5% (1992 est.)

National product per capita:

\$425 (1992 est.)

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

8% (1992)

Unemployment rate:

13% underemployment 50% (1991)

Budget:

revenues \$347 million; expenditures \$499 million, including capital expenditures of \$NA million (1991)

Exports:

\$280 million (f.o.b., 1992 est.)

commodities:

coffee, cotton, sugar, bananas, seafood, meat, chemicals

partners:

OECD 75%, USSR and Eastern Europe 15%, other 10%

Imports:

\$720 million (c.i.f., 1992 est.)

commodities:

petroleum, food, chemicals, machinery, clothing

partners:

Latin America 30%, US 25%, EC 20%, USSR and Eastern Europe 10%, other 15% (1990 est.)

External debt:

\$10 billion (December 1991)

Industrial production:

growth rate NA%; accounts for about 25% of GDP

Electricity:

434,000 kW capacity; 1,118 million kWh produced, 290 kWh per capita (1992)

Industries:

food processing, chemicals, metal products, textiles, clothing, petroleum refining and distribution, beverages, footwear

Agriculture:

accounts for 15% of GDP and 44% of work force; cash crops - coffee, bananas ↔

sugarcane, cotton; food crops - rice, corn, cassava, citrus fruit, beans; variety of animal products - beef, veal, pork, poultry, dairy; normally self-sufficient in food

Illicit drugs:

minor transshipment point for cocaine destined for the US

1.9 175.guide/Economy (Nicaragua 2. usage)

Economy (Nicaragua 2. usage)

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Economic aid:

US commitments, including Ex-Im (FY70-89), \$294 million; Western (non-US) countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970-89), \$1,381 million; Communist countries (1970-89), \$3.5 billion

Currency:

1 cordoba (C\$) = 100 centavos

Exchange rates:

cordobas (C\$) per US\$1 - 6 (10 January 1993), 25,000,000 (March 1992), 21,354,000 (1991), 15,655 (1989), 270 (1988), 102.60 (1987); note - new ↔
gold

cordoba issued in 1992

Fiscal year:

calendar year

1.10 175.guide/Communications (Nicaragua)

Communications (Nicaragua)

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Railroads:

373 km 1.067-meter narrow gauge, government owned; majority of system not operating; 3 km 1.435-meter gauge line at Puerto Cabezas (does not connect with mainline)

Highways:

25,930 km total; 4,000 km paved, 2,170 km gravel or crushed stone, 5,425 km earth or graded earth, 14,335 km unimproved; Pan-American highway 368.5 km

Inland waterways:

2,220 km, including 2 large lakes

Pipelines:

crude oil 56 km

Ports:

Corinto, El Bluff, Puerto Cabezas, Puerto Sandino, Rama
Merchant marine:
2 cargo ships (1,000 GRT or over) totaling 2,161 GRT/2,500 DWT
Airports:
total:
226
usable:
151
with permanent-surface runways:
11
with runways over 3,659 m:
0
with runways 2,440-3,659 m:
2
with runways 1,220-2,439 m:
12
Telecommunications:
low-capacity radio relay and wire system being expanded; connection into
Central American Microwave System; 60,000 telephones; broadcast stations -
45 AM, no FM, 7 TV, 3 shortwave; earth stations - 1 Intersputnik and 1
Atlantic Ocean INTELSAT

1.11 175.guide/Defense Forces (Nicaragua)

Defense Forces (Nicaragua)

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Branches:

Ground Forces, Navy, Air Force

Manpower availability:

males age 15-49 911,397; fit for military service 561,448; reach military
age (18) annually 44,226 (1993 est.)

Defense expenditures:

exchange rate conversion - \$40 million, 2.7% of GDP (1992 budget)