

Dominican Republic

Geography

Location: Caribbean, eastern two-thirds of the island of Hispaniola, between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, east of Haiti

Area:

total area: 48,730 sq km

land area: 48,380 sq km

Land boundaries: total 275 km, Haiti 275 km

Coastline: 1,288 km

Maritime claims:

contiguous zone: 24 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 6 nm

Climate: tropical maritime; little seasonal temperature variation;
seasonal variation in rainfall

Terrain: rugged highlands and mountains with fertile valleys
interspersed

Natural resources: nickel, bauxite, gold, silver

Land use:

arable land: 23%

permanent crops: 7%

meadows and pastures: 43%

forest and woodland: 13%

other: 14%

Irrigated land: 2,250 sq km (1989)

Environment:

current issues: water shortages; soil eroding into the sea damages
coral reefs; deforestation

natural hazards: occasional hurricanes (July to October)

Note: shares island of Hispaniola with Haiti (eastern two-thirds is
the Dominican Republic, western one-third is Haiti)

People

Population: 7,511,263 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 35% (female 1,288,210; male 1,336,162)

15-64 years: 61% (female 2,246,791; male 2,312,555)

65 years and over: 4% (female 178,388; male 149,157) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 1.17% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 23.92 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 6.15 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -6.04 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 49.5 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 68.73 years
male: 66.57 years
female: 70.99 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.72 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Dominican(s)

adjective: Dominican

Ethnic divisions: white 16%, black 11%, mixed 73%

Religions: Roman Catholic 95%

Languages: Spanish

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1990 est.)

total population: 83%

male: 85%

female: 82%

Labor force: 2.3 million to 2.6 million

by occupation: agriculture 49%, services 33%, industry 18% (1986)

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Dominican Republic

conventional short form: none

local long form: Republica Dominicana

local short form: none

Capital: Santo Domingo

Independence: 27 February 1844 (from Haiti)

National holiday: Independence Day, 27 February (1844)

Constitution: 28 November 1966

Legal system: based on French civil codes

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal and compulsory for married persons regardless of age

note: members of the armed forces and police cannot vote

Flag: a centered white cross that extends to the edges, divides the flag into four rectangles - the top ones are blue (hoist side) and red, the bottom ones are red (hoist side) and blue; a small coat of arms is at the center of the cross

Economy

Industries: tourism, sugar processing, ferronickel and gold mining, textiles, cement, tobacco

Agriculture: accounts for 15% of GDP and employs 49% of labor force; commercial crops - sugarcane, coffee, cotton, cocoa, and tobacco; food crops - rice, beans, potatoes, corn, bananas; animal output - cattle, hogs, dairy products, meat, eggs; not self-sufficient in food

Illicit drugs: transshipment point for South American drugs destined for the US and Europe

Transportation

Railroads:
total: 1,655 km

Highways:
total: 12,000 km

Pipelines: crude oil 96 km; petroleum products 8 km

Ports: Barahona, La Romana, Puerto Plata, San Pedro de Macoris,
Santo Domingo

Airports:
total: 36

Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy, Air Force, National Police