

Sao Tome and Principe

Geography

Location: Western Africa, island in the Atlantic Ocean, straddling the equator, west of Gabon

Area:

total area: 960 sq km

land area: 960 sq km

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 209 km

Maritime claims: measured from claimed archipelagic baselines

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: tropical; hot, humid; one rainy season (October to May)

Terrain: volcanic, mountainous

Natural resources: fish

Land use:

arable land: 1%

permanent crops: 20%

meadows and pastures: 1%

forest and woodland: 75%

other: 3%

Environment:

current issues: deforestation; soil erosion and exhaustion

People

Population: 140,423 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 40% (female 27,995; male 28,452)
15-64 years: 55% (female 38,846; male 38,619)
65 years and over: 5% (female 3,615; male 2,896) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 2.62% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 34.94 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 8.7 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: 0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 62.1 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:
total population: 63.65 years
male: 61.76 years
female: 65.59 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 4.44 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:
noun: Sao Tomean(s)
adjective: Sao Tomean

Ethnic divisions: mestico, angolares (descendents of Angolan slaves), forros (descendents of freed slaves), servicais (contract laborers from Angola, Mozambique, and Cape Verde), tongas (children of servicais born on the islands), Europeans (primarily Portuguese)

Religions: Roman Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, Seventh-Day Adventist

Languages: Portuguese (official)

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1991)

total population: 73%

male: 85%

female: 62%

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe

conventional short form: Sao Tome and Principe

local long form: Republica Democratica de Sao Tome e Principe

local short form: Sao Tome e Principe

Type: republic

Capital: Sao Tome

Independence: 12 July 1975 (from Portugal)

National holiday: Independence Day, 12 July (1975)

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: three horizontal bands of green (top), yellow (double width), and green with two black five-pointed stars placed side by side in the center of the yellow band and a red isosceles triangle based on the hoist side; uses the popular pan-African colors of Ethiopia

Economy

Overview: This small poor island economy has remained dependent on cocoa since independence 20 years ago.

Industries: light construction, shirts, soap, beer, fisheries, shrimp processing

Agriculture: accounts for 25% of GDP; dominant sector of economy, primary source of exports; cash crops - cocoa, coconuts, palm kernels, coffee; food products - bananas, papaya, beans, poultry, fish; not self-sufficient in food grain and meat

Transportation

Railroads: 0 km

Highways:
total: 300 km

Ports: Santo Antonio, Sao Tome

Airports:
total: 2

Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Navy, National Police