

Swaziland

Geography

Location: Southern Africa, between Mozambique and South Africa

Area:

total area: 17,360 sq km

land area: 17,200 sq km

Land boundaries: total 535 km, Mozambique 105 km, South Africa 430 km

Coastline: 0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims: none; landlocked

Climate: varies from tropical to near temperate

Terrain: mostly mountains and hills; some moderately sloping plains

Natural resources: asbestos, coal, clay, cassiterite, hydropower, forests, small gold and diamond deposits, quarry stone, and talc

Land use:

arable land: 10.9%

permanent crops: 0.2%

meadows and pastures: 62.2%

forest and woodland: 6.9%

other: 19.8%

Irrigated land: 640 sq km (1993 est.)

Environment:

current issues: limited access to potable water; wildlife populations being depleted because of excessive hunting; overgrazing; soil degradation; soil erosion

Note: landlocked; almost completely surrounded by South Africa

People

Population: 966,977 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 46% (female 222,544; male 221,003)

15-64 years: 52% (female 261,973; male 238,726)

65 years and over: 2% (female 13,291; male 9,440) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 3.23% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 43.06 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 10.8 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

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

Infant mortality rate: 90.7 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 56.84 years

male: 52.83 years

female: 60.96 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 6.1 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Swazi(s)

adjective: Swazi

Ethnic divisions: African 97%, European 3%

Religions: Christian 60%, indigenous beliefs 40%

Languages: English (official; government business conducted in English), siSwati (official)

Literacy:

total population: 67%

male: 70%

female: 65%

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Kingdom of Swaziland

conventional short form: Swaziland

Type: monarchy; independent member of Commonwealth

Capital: Mbabane (administrative); Lobamba (legislative)

Independence: 6 September 1968 (from UK)

National holiday: Somhlolo (Independence) Day, 6 September (1968)

Suffrage: none

Flag: three horizontal bands of blue (top), red (triple width), and blue; the red band is edged in yellow; centered in the red band is a large black and white shield covering two spears and a staff decorated with feather tassels, all placed horizontally

Economy

Industries: mining (coal and asbestos), wood pulp, sugar

Agriculture: accounts for over 60% of labor force; mostly subsistence agriculture; cash crops - sugarcane, cotton, maize, tobacco, rice, citrus fruit, pineapples; other crops and livestock - corn, sorghum, peanuts, cattle, goats, sheep; not self-sufficient in grain

Transportation

Railroads:
total: 297 km

Highways:
total: 2,853 km

Ports: none

Airports:
total: 18

Defence Forces

Branches: Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force (Army), Royal Swaziland Police Force