

Vietnam

Geography

Location: Southeastern Asia, bordering the Gulf of Thailand, Gulf of Tonkin, and South China Sea, between China and Cambodia

Area:

total area: 329,560 sq km

land area: 325,360 sq km

Land boundaries: total 3,818 km, Cambodia 982 km, China 1,281 km, Laos 1,555 km

Coastline: 3,444 km (excludes islands)

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: 12 nm

Climate: tropical in south; monsoonal in north with hot, rainy season (mid-May to mid-September) and warm, dry season (mid-October to mid-March)

Terrain: low, flat delta in south and north; central highlands; hilly, mountainous in far north and northwest

Natural resources: phosphates, coal, manganese, bauxite, chromate, offshore oil deposits, forests

Land use:

arable land: 22%

permanent crops: 2%

meadows and pastures: 1%

forest and woodland: 40%

other: 35%

Irrigated land: 18,300 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: logging and slash-and-burn agricultural practices are contributing to deforestation; soil degradation; water pollution

and overfishing threatening marine life populations; inadequate supplies of potable water because of groundwater contamination
natural hazards: occasional typhoons (May to January) with extensive flooding

People

Population: 74,393,324 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 36% (female 13,225,916; male 13,918,321)

15-64 years: 59% (female 22,353,710; male 21,223,739)

65 years and over: 5% (female 2,236,453; male 1,435,185) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 1.71% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 26.25 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 7.6 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -1.51 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 44.6 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 65.72 years

male: 63.66 years

female: 67.91 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 3.21 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Vietnamese (singular and plural)

adjective: Vietnamese

Ethnic divisions: Vietnamese 85%-90%, Chinese 3%, Muong, Thai, Meo, Khmer, Man, Cham

Religions: Buddhist, Taoist, Roman Catholic, indigenous beliefs, Islam, Protestant

Languages: Vietnamese (official), French, Chinese, English, Khmer, tribal languages (Mon-Khmer and Malayo-Polynesian)

Literacy:

total population: 88%

male: 93%
female: 83%

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Socialist Republic of Vietnam

conventional short form: Vietnam

local long form: Cong Hoa Chu Nghia Viet Nam

local short form: Viet Nam

Type: Communist state

Capital: Hanoi

Independence: 2 September 1945 (from France)

National holiday: Independence Day, 2 September (1945)

Constitution: 15 April 1992

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: red with a large yellow five-pointed star in the center

Economy

Industries: food processing, textiles, machine building, mining, cement, chemical fertilizer, glass, tires, oil

Agriculture: accounts for 36% of GDP; paddy rice, corn, potatoes make up 50% of farm output; commercial crops (rubber, soybeans, coffee, tea, bananas) and animal products 50%; since 1989 self-sufficient in food staple rice; fish catch of 943,100 metric tons (1989 est.); note - the third largest exporter of rice in the World, behind the US and Thailand

Illicit drugs: opium producer and increasingly important transit point for Southeast Asian heroin destined for the US and Europe; growing opium addiction; small-scale heroin producer

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 3,059 km (

Highways:

total: 85,000 km

Inland waterways: 17,702 km navigable; more than 5,149 km navigable at all times by vessels up to 1.8 meter draft

Pipelines: petroleum products 150 km

Ports: Da Nang, Haiphong, Ho Chi Minh City, Hon Gai, Qui Nhon, Nha Trang

Airports:

total: 48

Defence Forces

Branches: People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN; includes Ground forces, Navy (includes Naval Infantry), and Air Force