

Argentina

Geography

Location: Southern South America, bordering the South Atlantic Ocean, between Chile and Uruguay.

Map references: South America.

Area:

total area: 2,766,890 sq km.

land area: 2,736,690 sq km.

Land boundaries: total 9,665 km, Bolivia 832 km, Brazil 1,224 km, Chile 5,150 km, Paraguay 1,880 km, Uruguay 579 km.

Coastline: 4,989 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: 12 nm.

International disputes: short section of the boundary with Uruguay is in dispute; short section of the boundary with Chile is indefinite; claims British-administered Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas); claims British-administered South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands; territorial claim in Antarctica.

Climate: mostly temperate; arid in southeast; subantarctic in southwest.

Terrain: rich plains of the Pampas in northern half, flat to rolling plateau of Patagonia in south, rugged Andes along western border.

Natural resources: fertile plains of the pampas, lead, zinc, tin, copper, iron ore, manganese, petroleum, uranium.

Land use:

arable land: 9%.

permanent crops: 4%.

meadows and pastures: 52%.

forest and woodland: 22%.

other: 13%.

Irrigated land: 17,600 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: erosion results from inadequate flood controls and improper land use practices; irrigated soil degradation; desertification; air pollution in Buenos Aires and other major cities; water pollution in urban areas; rivers becoming polluted due to increased pesticide and fertilizer use.

natural hazards: Tucuman and Mendoza areas in the Andes subject to earthquakes; pamperos are violent windstorms that can strike the Pampas and northeast; heavy flooding.

Note: second-largest country in South America (after Brazil); strategic location relative to sea lanes between South Atlantic and South Pacific Oceans (Strait of Magellan, Beagle Channel, Drake Passage).

People

Population: 34,292,742 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 28% (female 4,706,793; male 4,903,589).

15-64 years: 62% (female 10,680,074; male 10,689,728).

65 years and over: 10% (female 1,922,552; male 1,390,006) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 1.11% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 19.51 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 8.62 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: 0.19 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 28.8 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:
total population: 71.51 years.
male: 68.22 years.
female: 74.97 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 2.65 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:
noun: Argentine(s).
adjective: Argentine.

Ethnic divisions: white 85%, mestizo, Indian, or other nonwhite groups 15%.

Religions: nominally Roman Catholic 90% (less than 20% practicing), Protestant 2%, Jewish 2%, other 6%.

Languages: Spanish (official), English, Italian, German, French.

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

total population: 95%.

male: 96%.

female: 95%.

Labor force: 10.9 million.

by occupation: agriculture 12%, industry 31%, services 57% (1985 est.)

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Argentine Republic.

conventional short form: Argentina.

local long form: Republica Argentina.

local short form: Argentina.

Type: republic.

Capital: Buenos Aires.

Administrative divisions: 23 provinces (provincias, singular - provincia), and 1 federal district* (distrito federal); Buenos Aires; Catamarca; Chaco; Chubut; Cordoba; Corrientes; Distrito Federal*; Entre Rios; Formosa; Jujuy; La Pampa; La Rioja; Mendoza; Misiones; Neuquen; Rio Negro; Salta; San Juan; San Luis; Santa Cruz; Santa Fe; Santiago del Estero; Tierra del Fuego, Antartida e Islas del Atlantico Sur; Tucuman.

Independence: 9 July 1816 (from Spain).

National holiday: Revolution Day, 25 May (1810).

Constitution: 1 May 1853; revised August 1994.

Legal system: mixture of US and West European legal systems; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction.

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal.

Flag: three equal horizontal bands of light blue (top), white, and light blue; centered in the white band is a radiant yellow sun with a human face known as the Sun of May.

Economy

Overview: Argentina, rich in natural resources, benefits also from a highly literate population, an export-oriented agricultural sector, and a diversified industrial base. Nevertheless, following decades of mismanagement and statist policies, the economy in the late 1980s was plagued with huge external debts and recurring bouts of hyperinflation. Argentines have responded to the relative price stability by repatriating flight capital and investing in domestic industry. The economy registered an impressive 6% advance in 1994, fueled largely by inflows of foreign capital and strong domestic consumption spending. The government's major short term objective is encouraging exports, e.g., by reducing domestic costs of production.

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 34,572 km.

Highways:

total: 208,350 km.

Inland waterways: 11,000 km navigable.

Pipelines: crude oil 4,090 km; petroleum products 2,900 km; natural gas 9,918 km.

Ports: Bahia Blanca, Buenos Aires, Comodoro Rivadavia, Concepcion del Uruguay, La Plata, Mar del Plata, Necochea, Rio Gallegos, Rosario, Santa Fe, Ushuaia.

Airports:
total: 1,602.

Defence Forces

Branches: Argentine Army, Navy of the Argentine Republic, Argentine Air Force, National Gendarmerie, Argentine Naval Prefecture (Coast Guard only), National Aeronautical Police Force.