

Algeria

Geography

Location: Northern Africa, bordering the Mediterranean Sea, between Morocco and Tunisia.

Map references: Africa.

Area:

total area: 2,381,740 sq km.

land area: 2,381,740 sq km.

Land boundaries: total 6,343 km, Libya 982 km, Mali 1,376 km, Mauritania 463 km, Morocco 1,559 km, Niger 956 km, Tunisia 965 km, Western Sahara 42 km.

Coastline: 998 km.

Maritime claims:

exclusive fishing zone: 32-52 nm.

territorial sea: 12 nm.

Climate: arid to semiarid; mild, wet winters with hot, dry summers along coast; drier with cold winters and hot summers on high plateau; sirocco is a hot, dust/sand-laden wind especially common in summer.

Terrain: mostly high plateau and desert; some mountains; narrow, discontinuous coastal plain.

Natural resources: petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, phosphates, uranium, lead, zinc.

Land use:

arable land: 3%.

permanent crops: 0%.

meadows and pastures: 13%.

forest and woodland: 2%.

other: 82%.

Irrigated land: 3,360 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: soil erosion from overgrazing and other poor farming practices; desertification; dumping of raw sewage, petroleum refining wastes, and other industrial effluents is leading to the pollution of rivers and coastal waters; Mediterranean Sea, in

particular, becoming polluted from oil wastes, soil erosion, and fertilizer runoff; inadequate supplies of potable water.
natural hazards: mountainous areas subject to severe earthquakes; mudslides.

Note: second-largest country in Africa (after Sudan)

People

Population: 28,539,321 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 41% (female 5,678,879; male 5,885,246).

15-64 years: 56% (female 7,887,885; male 8,033,508).

65 years and over: 3% (female 557,636; male 496,167) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 2.25% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 29.02 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 6.05 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -0.49 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 50.3 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:
total population: 68.01 years.
male: 66.94 years.
female: 69.13 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 3.7 children born/woman (1995 est.)

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

Ethnic divisions: Arab-Berber 99%, European less than 1%.

Religions: Sunni Muslim (state religion) 99%, Christian and Jewish 1%.

Languages: Arabic (official), French, Berber dialects.

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1990 est.)
total population: 57%.
male: 70%.
female: 46%.

Labor force: 6.2 million (1992 est.)

by occupation: government 29.5%, agriculture 22%, construction and public works 16.2%, industry 13.6%, commerce and services 13.5%, transportation and communication 5.2% (1989).

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria.

conventional short form: Algeria.

local long form: Al Jumhuriyah al Jaza'iriyah ad Dimuqratiyah ash Shabiyah.

local short form: Al Jaza'ir.

Type: republic.

Capital: Algiers.

Administrative divisions: 48 provinces (wilayas, singular - wilaya); Adrar, Ain Defla, Ain Temouchent, Alger, Annaba, Batna, Bechar, Bejaia, Biskra, Blida, Bordj Bou Arreridj, Bouira, Boumerdes, Chlef, Constantine, Djelfa, El Bayadh, El Oued, El Tarf, Ghardaia, Guelma, Illizi, Jijel, Khenchela, Laghouat, Mascara, Medea, Mila, Mostaganem, M'Sila, Naama, Oran, Ouargla, Oum el Bouaghi,

Relizane, Saida, Setif, Sidi Bel Abbes, Skikda, Souk Ahras, Tamanghasset, Tebessa, Tiaret, Tindouf, Tipaza, Tissemsilt, Tizi Ouzou, Tlemcen.

Independence: 5 July 1962 (from France).

National holiday: Anniversary of the Revolution, 1 November (1954).

Legal system: socialist, based on French and Islamic law; judicial review of legislative acts in ad hoc Constitutional Council composed of various public officials, including several Supreme Court justices.

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal.

Flag: two equal vertical bands of green (hoist side) and white with a red five-pointed star within a red crescent; the crescent, star, and color green are traditional symbols of Islam (the state religion).

Economy

Overview: The hydrocarbons sector is the backbone of the economy, accounting for roughly 57% of government revenues, 25% of GDP, and almost all export earnings; Algeria has the fifth largest reserves of natural gas in the world and ranks fourteenth for

oil. Algiers' efforts to reform one of the most centrally planned economies in the Arab world began after the 1986 collapse of world oil prices plunged the country into a severe recession. In 1989, the government launched a comprehensive, IMF-supported program to achieve macroeconomic stabilization and to introduce market mechanisms into the economy. Despite substantial progress toward macroeconomic adjustment, in 1992 the reform drive stalled as Algiers became embroiled in political turmoil. In September 1993, a new government was formed, and one priority was the resumption and acceleration of the structural adjustment process.

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 4,733 km.

Highways:

total: 95,576 km.

Pipelines: crude oil 6,612 km; petroleum products 298 km; natural gas 2,948 km.

Ports: Algiers, Annaba, Arzew, Bejaia, Beni Saf, Dellys, Djendjene, Ghazaouet, Jijel, Mostaganem, Oran, Skikda, Tenes.

Airports:
total: 139.

Defence Forces

Branches: National Popular Army, Navy, Air Force, Territorial Air
Defense, National Gendarmerie.