

## Comoros (Ngazidja, Mwali, Nzwani)

### Overview:

The archipelago consists of three of the four main islands in the region: Ngazidja (Grande Comore), Mwali (Moheli) and Nzwani (Anjouan). The official Swahili names of the islands are followed by the French names by which they are still widely known.

### Territory:

Southern Africa, group of islands at the northern mouth of the Mozambique Channel, about two-thirds of the way between northern Madagascar and northern Mozambique. Coastline = 340 KM; highest point = Le Kartala 2,360 m

### Location:

The Comoros Islands are a group of islands in the Mozambique Channel, about two-thirds of the way between northern Madagascar and northern Mozambique. Grande Comore (Ngazidja) is the largest island in the Comoros Union. Anjouan (Nzwani) is about two-thirds of the way between northern Madagascar and northern Mozambique.

### Latitude and Longitude:

11.67° S 43.35° E Ngazidja (Grande Comore) 12.22° S 44.43° E Nzwani (Anjouan) 12.30° S 43.73° E Mwali (Moheli)

### Time Zone:

GMT +3

### Total Land Area:

2170

### EEZ:

200

### Climate:

Anjouan: The climate is tropical marine, with maximum temperatures ranging from 27° to 32°. The weather is warm and humid from December to April, then cooler and dry from May to November. Grande Comore: Monsoon; tropical; coast rain 2627 mm, up to 8000mm. Moheli: Monsoon; tropical; 23-27C; 730 to 1459 mm rain

### Natural Resources:

Natural resources are in short supply and the islands' chief exports - vanilla, cloves and perfume essence - are prone to price fluctuations.

### ECONOMY:

| Total GDP: |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| 2001       | 424,000,000.00 USD |
| 2004       | 386,000,000.00 USD |
| 2006       | 400,000,000.00 USD |

| Per Capita GDP: |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| 2001            | 710.00 USD |
| 2004            | 584.00 USD |
| 2005            | 600.00 USD |

| % of GDP per Sector: |         |           |          |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|----------|
|                      | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
| 2002                 | 40%     | 4%        | 56%      |

| % of Population Employed by Sector |         |           |          |
|------------------------------------|---------|-----------|----------|
|                                    | Primary | Secondary | Tertiary |
| 1996                               | 80%     | 10%       | 10%      |

### External Aid/Remittances:

The people of the Comoros are among the poorest in Africa and are heavily dependent on foreign aid. A number of countries in the past have provided foreign aid; with France being the dominant donor. Foreign aid accounted for about half of GDP in 2002. In 2003, Comoros received USD \$24,000,000 in aid. The majority of foreign aid is dedicated to paying down the interest accumulated by structural adjustment and debt relief. Also, money sent home by Comorans living abroad is an important source of income. According to the United Nations, in 2000 remittances from citizens working abroad totaled \$24 million.

### Growth:

France has been the major trading partner of the Comoros. The Comoros islands have had a negative balance of trade for at least the last five years. Tot. Value of Imports: USD \$115,000,000 (2004) From EU: 51.8% Import Partners (EU): Belgium-Luxembourg (2.0%); France (45.5%); Germany (1.0%); Netherlands (1.0%) From Africa: 14.8% Import Partners (Africa): Kenya (3.8%); Madagascar (1.2%); Mauritius (4.1); Reunion (1.6%); South Africa (5.0%) From Asia: 8.6% Import Partners (Asia): Pakistan (4.7%); Japan (0.1%); Saudi Arabia (0.4%); Singapore (1.3%); Thailand (0.5%) From

United States: 0.0% From Rest of World: 24.8% Tot. Value of Exports: USD \$34,000,000 (2004) – All 3 islands To EU: 20.4% Export Partners: United States (79.1%); France (10.7%); Germany (1.0%); Africa (0.4%) Main Imports: Rice (majority of imports), meat, petroleum products, cement, iron & steel Main Exports: Vanilla, cloves, perfume oil, copra

| <b>Labour Force:</b> |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| 2003                 | 167,500 |
| 2004                 | 171,000 |

| <b>Unemployment</b> |                                      |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Year:</b>        | <b>Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)</b> |
| 2003                | 75%                                  |
| 2004                | 75%                                  |

**Industry:**

Grande Comore: Agriculture is the principal economic activity with crops grown both for domestic consumption and export. The major food crops are cassava, coconut, bananas, rice, sweet potatoes, pulses, and corn. Vanilla, ylang-ylang, cloves, and copra have been the major export crops. Anjouan: The economy of Anjouan is mainly driven by farming. Agriculture, including fishing, hunting, and forestry, is the leading sector of the economy on the island. It contributes 40% to GDP, employs 80% of the labour force, and provides most of the exports. The economy is based on the export of vanilla, ylang-ylang, orange flowers, perfume oil and cloves. Anjouan is the world's primary producer of ylang-ylang oil, which is the core of all perfumes.

**Niche Industry:**

Anjouan is attempting to position itself as a tax haven.

**Tourism:**

Island: Year: Number of Tourists: Moheli 2001 140

| <b>Imports and Exports:</b>  |   |
|--|---|
| The Comoros islands have had a negative balance of trade for at least the last five years. Tot. Value of Imports: USD \$115,000,000 (2004) From EU: 51.8% Import Partners (EU): Belgium-Luxembourg (2.0%); France (45.5%); Germany (1.0%); Netherlands (1.0%) From Africa: 14.8% Import Partners (Africa): Kenya (3.8%); Madagascar (1.2%); Mauritius (4.1); Reunion (1.6%); South Africa (5.0%) From Asia: 8.6% Import Partners (Asia): Pakistan (4.7%); Japan (0.1%); Saudi Arabia (0.4%); Singapore (1.3%); Thailand (0.5%) From United States: 0.0% From Rest of World: 24.8% Tot. Value of Exports: USD \$34,000,000 (2004) – All 3 islands To EU: 20.4% Export Partners: United States (79.1%); France (10.7%); Germany (1.0%); Africa (0.4%) Main Imports: Rice (majority of imports), meat, petroleum products, cement, iron & steel Main Exports: Vanilla, cloves, perfume oil, copra |   |
| <b>Tot. Value of Imports</b>   | 115,000,000.00 (2004)   |
| <b>From Eu:</b>  |   |
| <b>Import Partners (EU):</b>   |   |
| <b>Partners Outside EU:</b>  |   |
| <b>Import Partners:</b>  | France 24.8%, UAE 9.9%, South Africa 6.4%, Pakistan 6.3%, Kenya 5%, China 4.8%, India 4.4%, Italy 4.2% (2006) |
| <b>Tot. Value of Exports</b>   | 34000000 (2004)   |
| <b>To Eu:</b>  |   |
| <b>Export Partners:</b>  | Netherlands 35.8%, France 18.3%, Italy 12.8%, Singapore 7.8%, Turkey 5%, US 4.6% (2006)                       |
| <b>Partners Outside EU::</b>   |   |
| <b>Export Partners:</b>  |   |
| <b>Main Imports:</b>   | rice and other foodstuffs, consumer goods, petroleum products, cement, transport equipment                    |
| <b>Main Exports:</b>   | Exports - commodities: vanilla, ylang-ylang (perfume essence), cloves, copra                                  |



**TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS**

**External:**

**Number of Airports: 4**

Air Comores (51% owned by Air France) provides regular interisland flights. Air France and Air Madagascar provide service to Madagascar; Air Mauritius provides service to Mauritius; and South African Airways makes a weekly stop. Number of Airports: Runway Length: Island: 1 4265 ft. Moheli 1 4429 ft. Anjouan 2 4445 ft.; 9514 ft. Grande Comore

**Number of Main Ports: 1**

1 Deep Water Port Anjouan

**Internal:****Air**

Air Comores (51% owned by Air France) provides regular interisland flights.

**Road:**

total: 880 km; paved: 673 km; unpaved: 207 km (1999)

**Sea:****Other Forms of Transportation:****Economic Zones:**

Information unavailable

**Energy Policy:**

Anjouan: Although it is self-sufficient in energy, and there is a hydroelectric plant at Marahani. There are plans to construct more power plants on Anjouan, which will have a beneficial effect on employment and industry as a whole. Island 2003 2004 Total Energy Production: Anjouan 1.3 kWh 5.8 kWh (in millions) Moheli 0.6 kWh 1.4 kWh Grande Comore 10.4 kWh 18.3 kWh Total Energy Consumption for all 3 islands: 23.4 kWh (2003); 17.9 kWh (2004)

| Year | Total Energy Production (Mwh) | Type          |                  |             | Total Energy Consumption (Mwh) | Sector         |                  |                      |                |                       |
|------|-------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|      |                               | Thermic (Mwh) | Geothermic (Mwh) | Other (Mwh) |                                | Domestic (Mwh) | Commercial (Mwh) | Public Service (Mwh) | Industry (Mwh) | Public Lighting (Mwh) |
| 2005 | 20,000                        | 0             | 0                | 0           | 18,600                         | 0              | 0                | 0                    | 0              | 0                     |

**Official Currency:**

Comorian franc (KMF)

**Banking and Insurance:**

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:

Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:

Number of Insurance Companies:

There are banks on the islands of Ngazidja, Nzwani, and Maore but no bank on Mwali. Anjouan: Offers only one type of offshore banking licence, known as CLASS B. This is a full-unrestricted licence, CLASS A being reserved for onshore banks. The CLASS B licence allows the taking of deposits and the offer of financial services to members of the public worldwide, as well as the administration of trusts, and the provision of a normal range of banking services. A reserve of USD 10,000 is required, which must be in the form of a deposit at the Bank of Anjouan (Anjouan's central bank). Both types of licence may be granted to international companies at a fee of USD 17,000 per year. Ready-made but non-traded banks are often available for purchase. There are no requirements for local offices or staff, although local firms can provide representative offices, correspondent accounts, credit card issuance etc. as required on a case by case basis and subject to negotiable fees. All Anjouan companies and banks may open accounts at the Bank of Anjouan, the Central Bank. As of July 2005, 104 banking licenses had been issued in Anjouan by the Bank of Anjouan.

**Financial Services:**

Anjouan is positioning itself to be an attractive jurisdiction for those seeking to incorporate banks, trust and mutual fund companies, captive insurance companies etc. Licences are available for all types of insurance, fiduciary, financial and trust services, investment management, funds administration etc. Licensing is negotiated on a case-by-case basis directly with the relevant government offices. As a general rule, insurance licences are marginally cheaper than banking licences. Law number 1 of March 1999 created the Anjouan Offshore Centre. The government's principal motivation is to attract foreign investors to Anjouan, and increase deposits in Anjouan banks and the economy, by allowing investors to benefit from an advantageous fiscal regime. This in turn will help development of the island, particularly its technology and communications infrastructure. The offshore centre has been further strengthened by the island's new constitution, adopted by referendum in March 2002 in a long-awaited vote overseen by impartial observers from the European Union and the OUA. Trusts: Anjouan: The Anjouan trust is a flexible legal vehicle. Its main purposes are protection of assets and avoidance of fixed inheritance rules and taxes which may otherwise be incurred. Trusts may also be formed to enable confidential ownership of trading companies, since assets will be held in the name of the trust and Anjouan law guarantees total confidentiality in all offshore business. To form a trust, a certified copy of the passport of beneficial owner or settlor is required. This is guaranteed to remain confidential and is only reserved for the files of the Anjouan authorities. Fees as follows are payable in advance (all government fees and taxes are included): Constitution and maintenance of company (first year) USD 1,500; Maintenance of company, registered office etc (per year) USD 1,500; Provision of nominee director (per year) USD 150; Courier and postal fees at cost Discounts are available to incorporators using larger quantities of Anjouan trusts. Apart from fees as above, trusts are exonerated from any tax, including inheritance tax. Offshore Business Possibilities: Anjouan: Offshore companies in Anjouan are formed under Ordinance N° 1 of the 1st March 1999 and are known as International Companies. The law requires that companies registering or licensing in Anjouan must appoint a local representative or registered agent, who in turn requires authorisation to engage in such business. There is currently only one authorised registered agent, Anjouan Services, which also provides a registered office and mailing address service. Companies are usually limited by share capital, but may also be limited by guarantee, or, unusually, by both. The minimum capital of an IC is US\$ 200 or its equivalent in another currency. The minimum number of shareholders is one - who can be an individual or a company. Documentation is available in English or in the French language. All companies may open a current account at the BANK OF ANJOUAN for a small fee. A certified copy of the passport of beneficial owner or director is required. This is guaranteed to remain confidential and is only reserved for the files of the Anjouan authorities. Fees as following are payable in advance (all government fees and taxes are included): Opening of bank account at BANK OF ANJOUAN (central bank) \$90; Constitution and maintenance of company (first year) USD 1,500; Maintenance of company, registered office etc (per year) USD 1,500; Provision of nominee director (per year) USD 150; Courier and postal fees at cost Discounts are available to incorporators using larger quantities of Anjouan International Companies. As of August, 2002, 17 International Companies had been formed in Anjouan.

**Communications/E-Commerce:**

Internet domain: .km; .km.an; .km.gc; .km.mo Anjouan: Telecommunications are provided by international microwave links, and the Internet has been available since 1999. A GSM mobile network is under development. Betting & Gaming Licences: Anjouan: Gaming and gaming licenses are issued only to Anjouan companies, but allow a company to engage in as many different kinds of gambling promotion under as many different brand names or web addresses as desired. Local nominee directors are acceptable. A fixed fee of US\$20,000 per year is charged for virtual casino licenses. The server may be located on the island, or anywhere else in the world, and profits may be cleared through Anjouan offshore banks or possibly using the nearby island of Mauritius which has better-established credit card processing facilities. As of July 2005, 33 gaming licenses had been issued in Anjouan by the BCI. Ship & Aircraft Registration: Anjouan: Anjouan is an island nation relying much on maritime and air transport, and as such could be an ideal place to



register anything from a yacht to a container ship. Registration is fast and efficient based on tonnage, and there is no need for a physical inspection in Anjouan. Aircraft can also be licensed in Anjouan, and licences are granted to run airline companies. Ready-made airline companies are generally available for a fee of around USD 20,000.

**Public Ownership:**

Information unavailable

**Land Use:**

Agriculture on the island is generally limited to areas lower than 2,000 feet in altitude. Above this altitude is the remnants of a dense tropical forest (in the south) and an area of grassy plain (in the center and north). arable land: 35.87% permanent crops: 23.32% other: 40.81% (2005)

**Agriculture/Forestry:**

Agriculture - products: vanilla, cloves, perfume essences, copra, coconuts, bananas, cassava (tapioca); Forested areas amounted to about 8,000 hectares (20,000 acres) in 2000. Numerous fruit trees and tropical hardwoods are found. Some timber is produced, notably on the island of Grande Comore, which has about half the remaining forest.

**Marine Activity:**

**Fishing:**

The waters surrounding the Comoran archipelago are rich in tuna and other fish. Fish resources further are interconnected with those of the Seychelles and Madagascar. The fish catch in the Comoros amounted to about 13,200 tons in 2000, half of which was tuna. A Japanese-funded fisheries training center was opened on Anjouan in 1985.

**Marine Life:**

Moheli: Mohéli Marine Park is the first Marine Protected Area in the Comoros. It was created on 19th April 2001 and officially inaugurated on 17th October 2002. From mid-July until the end of October, the park is a major breeding ground for Humpback Whales. Its beaches are one of the most important nesting sites in the Indian Ocean for Green Turtles. Each year, between 4000 and 5000 females lay eggs on Mohéli, about 75% of these nests are within the protective boundaries of the Park.

**Critical Issues:**

The government of Comoros signed a six-year fisheries agreement with the European Union (EU) in February of 2006. The new fisheries protocol reduces the number of EU vessels fishing tuna in Comoran waters and strongly increases licence fees payable by the ship owners. Greater control measures are to limit European vessels' over fishing. The deal, which was backdated to 1 January 2005, regulates the access of EU fishing vessels in Comoran waters until the end of 2010. The EU is to pay a financial contribution totalling euro 2,340,000 over the 6-year period covered in the new protocol. Furthermore, the Comoros can expect an additional annual state income of approximately euro 560,105 per year from license fees paid by EU vessel owners. The licence fees payable by the ship owners have been increased by almost 50 percent to euro 3,375 for seiners and euro 2,065 for long-liners. The EU has to lower its number of fishing vessels in Comoros. Licences were granted for 57 vessels fishing for tuna, down from 65 under the previous protocol. These include 40 tuna seiners - which is an unchanged number - and 17 long-liners, which is down from 25. As total quotas are not defined in the protocol, a possible use of modernised vessels however may end up fishing the same amount of tuna in Comoran waters.

**JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES**

**Capital:**

Grande Comore Moroni, also the national capital (capital of the union) Anjouan Mutsamudu (formerly Domoni) Moheli Fomboni

**Political System:**

Republic. According to the constitution of 2002, the Union is governed by an elected President, as are the other islands, with the federal government being much reduced in power. Article 7 of the Unions constitution states: Every Island freely administers and manages its own affairs. Every Island freely establishes its Fundamental Law with due respect for the Constitution of the Union. Comorians have the same rights, freedoms and obligations everywhere in the Union. No authority can adopt measures that directly or indirectly hinder the freedom of movement and settlement of individuals, as well as the free movement of goods over the whole territory of Union. The Islands have an elected executive and Parliament as well as local communities endowed with a deliberating organ and an executive organ, both elected

**Political Parties:**

FNR = Forum of National Recovery, pro-federated republic; NJ = National Front for Justice, Islamic; RDR = Rally for Democracy and Renewal, est.1993; RND = National Rally for Development, conservative traditionalist; UCP = Comoran Union for Progress, only legal party 1978-1990; UNF = United National Front, anti-Abdallah; Mil = Military;

**Important Legislation:**

Union of Comoros: The islands of Anjouan and Moheli declared unilateral independence in a violent conflict in 1997. In an effort to bring the breakaway islands back into the fold, Moheli, Anjouan and the largest island, Grande Comore, were granted their own presidents and greater autonomy under a 2001 constitution. The Comoros constitution was amended at the end of the 2001 and the three main islands have been unified into the Union of Comoros; giving each of the islands its own semi-autonomous government with its own president. According to the agreement the presidency of the Union will rotate between the different islands every four years. Presidential elections were held in April 2002, and each island elected its own president. The presidency rotates between the three islands. The presidency is to go to Anjouan in the next presidential election, slated for May 14 2006. Residents of Anjouan will elect three candidates to run for the Union presidency on April 16 2006; then, on 14 May, the total Comoros population will vote. The presidents of the three semi-autonomous islands - Anjouan, Moheli and Grande Comore - are vice presidents of the Union of Comoros. A 33-member national assembly sits on Grande Comore. A president from Moheli is expected to take office in 2010. Anjouan: After breaking with the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comores in 1999, the Chamber of Deputies of Anjouan passed a number of laws creating the basis for an offshore sector of the economy. Anjouan has passed new laws and legislation in 2005 enabling the creation of an offshore finance sector. Under these new laws, provision was made for licenses to be granted for Off Shore companies, Banking, Internet gaming and Insurance Licenses, Mutual Funds, Trusts, Shipping and Aviation Licenses. Law number 1 of March 1999 created the Anjouan Offshore Centre. The government's principal motivation is to attract foreign investors to Anjouan, and increase deposits in Anjouan banks and the economy, by allowing investors to benefit from an advantageous fiscal regime. This in turn will help development of the island, particularly its technology and communications infrastructure. The offshore centre has been further strengthened by the island's new constitution, adopted by referendum in March 2002 in a long-awaited vote overseen by impartial observers from the European Union and the OUA. The new constitution clarifies and reinforces Anjouan's status as a self-governing island within the new Union of the Comoros. Article 10 specifically grants the government of the State of Anjouan full control over economic development and foreign investment, thereby reinforcing the offshore legislation from 1999. The law requires that companies registering or licensing in Anjouan must appoint a local representative or registered agent, who in turn requires authorisation to engage in such business. There is currently only one authorised registered agent, Anjouan Services, which also provides the registered office and mailing address service.

**Principal Taxes:**

Tax collection, formerly the role of the island governors, became a federal responsibility under the 1982 constitutional revision.

**Associated Power:**

The Union of Comoros

**Citizenship:**

Comoran The Anjouan government plans to introduce an economic citizenship (second passport) program

**Paradiplomacy:**

Embassy of the Comoros in Paris, France Permanent Mission of the Comoros to the United Nations in New York The US does not have an embassy in Comoros; the ambassador to Mauritius is accredited to Comoros.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

Total Comoros Population was 768,000 (WHO 2003); 812,000 (UN 2005) for all 3 islands. Year: Resident Population: Island: 2003 295,665 Grande Comore 2003 259,099 Anjouan 2003 35,387 Moheli Age of Population: Information Unavailable

| 2003          |               |            |                       |
|---------------|---------------|------------|-----------------------|
| Island        | Area (km sq.) | Population | % of Total Population |
| Grande Comore | 1,146         | 295,665    | 50%                   |
| Anjouan       | 424           | 259,099    | 44%                   |
| Moheli        | 292           | 35,387     | 6%                    |

Crude Birth Rate: 40.05 births/1,000 pop.(2000) All 3 islands; Crude Death Rate: 9.59 deaths/1,000 pop.(2000) All 3 islands

| Population: |                     |
|-------------|---------------------|
| Year        | Resident Population |
|             |                     |

| Age of Population: | 0-14   | 15-24 | 25-49 | 50-64   | 65 and up |
|--------------------|--------|-------|-------|---------|-----------|
| 2007               | 302771 | 0     | 0     | 387,216 | 21,430    |

**Migration:**

About 40,000 Comorians live in France and 25,000 in Madagascar. Anjouan: An estimated 40 people a day are smuggled to the relatively well-off French-administered Mayotte. The Anjouan-based Observatory for Clandestine Emigration (OCI) has calculated that in the past five years around 500 people have drowned trying to make the 150 km crossing to Mayotte.

| Crude Birth Rate: |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| 2000              | 4.05%  |
| 2007              | 3.635% |

**Life Expectancy:**

53.9 years (men), 55.3 years (women) (WHO 2002) – All 3 islands 61 years (men), 65 years (women) (UN 2005) – All 3 islands 60.37 (men), 65.15 (women)(CIAFactbook 2007) - All 3 islands

| Crude Death Rate: |        |
|-------------------|--------|
| 2000              | 0.959% |
| 2007              | 0.795% |

**Ethnicity:**

Comorian (a mixture of Bantu, Arab, Malay, and Malagasy peoples) 97.1%, Makoa 1.6%, French 0.4%, Arab 0.1%, other (Antalote, Cafre, Oimatsaha, Sakalava) 0.8% (2000)

**Class Division:**

Information unavailable

**Languages:**

The official languages of The Union of the Comoros are Arabic, Comoran (a blend of Swahili and Arabic), and French. French is the language of government. Anjouan:Three official languages: Shindzuani (Anjouan), Arabic and French In daily life, most people speak one or more varieties of Comorian, the language group indigenous to the Islands. It is closely related to the Swahili of the East African coast. Comorian is typical of a Bantu language with a large number of noun classes and an elaborate set of verb tenses and aspects. For centuries, people have used Arabic script to write Comorian and there is an attempt presently to normalize an orthography for writing the varieties of the language in Roman script. The rich vocabulary of Comorian has been enhanced by the borrowing of words from many other languages. Since Comorians have been involved in maritime trade for a thousand years or more, they have come into contact with a number of different peoples and their language reflects this contact. Words of Indian, Persian, Arabic, Portuguese, English, and French origin have been added to those of African ancestry.

**Religion:**

Islam 98%; Roman Catholic 1%; Other 1%

**Literacy:**

(those over the age of 15 who can read and write) 57.3% (for all 3 islands); male: 64.2%; female: 50.4% (estimation of 1995); 56.5% (for all 3 islands); male: 63.6%; female: 49.3% (estimation of 2007)

**Education System:**

Total Pre-Schools: Information Unavailable Total Primary Schools: 327 Total Secondary Schools: Information Unavailable Total Professional Schools: Information Unavailable Universities: 1 All 3 islands (2004): Students Enrolled: Primary 108,453 Secondary 38,763 Vocational 69 Higher Education 2,087 Teachers: Primary 1,508 Secondary 591

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|



|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Total Pre-schools:(2004)</b>   |   |
| <b>Total Primary Schools</b>      |   |
| <b>First Level:</b>               |   |
| <b>Second Level:</b>              |   |
| <b>Third Level:</b>               |   |
| <b>Total Secondary Schools:</b>   |   |
| <b>Total Professional Schools</b> |   |
| <b>Universities:</b>              | 1 |

| <b>Number of Schools per Island:</b> |  |                   |             |                   |          |          |                    |             |              |                   |             |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
|                                      |  | <b>Pre-school</b> |             | <b>Elementary</b> |          |          | <b>High-school</b> |             | <b>Prof.</b> | <b>University</b> |             |
|                                      |  | <b>Pub</b>        | <b>Priv</b> | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>Pub</b>         | <b>Priv</b> |              | <b>Pub</b>        | <b>Priv</b> |
|                                      |  |                   |             | 327               |          |          |                    |             |              | 1                 |             |

| <b>Students Enrolled:</b> |                   |                   |                    |              |                   |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Year:</b>              | <b>Pre-School</b> | <b>Elementary</b> | <b>High-school</b> | <b>Prof.</b> | <b>University</b> |
| 2004                      | 0                 | 108,453           | 38,763             | 69           | 2,087             |

| <b>Teachers</b> |                   |                   |          |          |                    |              |                   |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>Year</b>     | <b>Pre-School</b> | <b>Elementary</b> |          |          | <b>High-School</b> | <b>Prof.</b> | <b>University</b> |
|                 |                   | <b>1</b>          | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> |                    |              |                   |
| 2004            | 0                 | 1,508             | 0        | 0        | 591                | 0            | 0                 |

All 3 islands (2004): Students Enrolled: Primary 108,453 Secondary 38,763 Vocational 69 Higher Education 2,087 Teachers: Primary 1,508 Secondary 591

#### **Medical Services:**

(1.4 hospital beds/1,000 people) 6 Main Hospitals 10 Secondary Hospitals/Clinics 4 Maternity Clinics

## **HISTORY AND CULTURE**

### **History:**

For several centuries, the islands of present-day Comoros were divided into dozens of sultanates. In 1886 the ruler of Bambao, Saidi Ali ibn Saidi Omar, united the sultanates of Grand Comore into the state of Ngasidja, with the other sultanates maintaining autonomy. That same year, France established a protectorate over the island. In 1911 France annexed the island and the sultanates were abolished. In 1975 Grand Comore federated with Anjouan and Moheli to form the nation of Comoros. In 1997 the Comoros nation began to fall apart as Anjouan and Moheli seceded. Grand Comore became the only island under federal control. By 2002, however, Grand Comore was reunited with the other islands under the new constitution.

### **Referenda:**

#### **Recent Significant Events:**

In 1997 the islands of Anjouan and Moheli attempted to secede from Comoros, bringing on political instability. The secessionists wanted a return to French rule, arguing that independence from France in 1975 had brought economic disaster and political chaos. France repeatedly rejected the demands for reincorporation, but Paris is widely seen by Comorans as intent on undermining national unity, as evidenced by the role of French mercenaries in the Unions 19 coup attempts. In 2001 there were hopes that stability would return and economic growth would resume following the signing of a reconciliation agreement in February of that year. This agreement called for the reintegration of Anjouan into the Union together with the islands of Grande Comore. The agreement stipulated the adoption of a new constitution clarifying their relationship with a central government to be put to a referendum. The accord offers wide autonomy to each island in return for national unity. Under the agreement: The Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros would be renamed the Union of Comoros Islands. Each of the three islands - Grand Comore, Anjouan and Moheli - would have its own local executive and parliament after a one-year transition period. The islands would have a three-year rotating presidency. The union would be responsible for sovereignty, defence, the currency, most aspects of foreign affairs, some aspects of education, and scientific research. But reconciliation attempts did not succeed. Although a new Constitution was adopted in a referendum held in December 2001, and presidents were elected for the Union and the three islands in early 2002, the political process stalled. Legislative elections were postponed, and strong disagreements ensued between the three island parties and the Union on the sharing of power and financial resources. An encouraging development occurred on December 20, 2003. Under the auspices of President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, and with the involvement of the Prime Ministers of Madagascar and Mauritius, as well as the French Minister of Cooperation, the President of the Union and the three presidents of the islands signed an agreement to end the institutional crisis. The agreement sets out transitional measures for the division of competencies between the Union and the islands, in particular customs administration and budget execution, and provides for strengthening of key institutions. Since the signing of the reconciliation agreement, Comoros has made progress in establishing a representative institutional structure and a more stable political environment. Key steps during 2004 included the holding of parliamentary elections (April), installation of the National Assembly (June) and the Constitutional Court (October), and the formation of a new Union government (July). In early 2005 an agreement was reached on the division of competences and on the sharing of revenues between the Union and the Islands. This agreement led to the adoption of a consolidated budget for 2005 and the resumption of a Staff Monitored Program with the IMF. The union

assembly's main task will be to finalise the distribution of powers and public revenues between the central government and the island administrations.

### Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

### Sources:

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### Useful Links:

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