

Principe

Overview:

It is the smaller of the two major islands of São Tomé and Príncipe off Africa's west coast.

Territory:

Sao Tome is 50 kilometers (31 mi.) long and 32 kilometers (20 mi.) wide and the more mountainous of the two islands. Its peaks reach 2,024 meters (6,640 ft.). Principe is about 30 kilometers (19 mi.) long and 6 kilometers (4 mi.) wide. Swift streams radiating down the mountains through lush forest and cropland to the sea cross both islands.

Location:

The islands of Sao Tome and Principe, situated in the equatorial Atlantic about 300 and 250 kilometers (200 mi. and 150 mi.), respectively, off the northwest coast of Gabon, constitute Africa's smallest country. Both are part of an extinct volcanic mountain range, which also includes the island of Bioko in Equatorial Guinea to the north and Mount Cameroon on the African west coast.

Latitude and Longitude:

Time Zone:

GMT -1

Total Land Area:

147

EEZ:

Climate:

At sea level, the climate is tropical--hot and humid with average yearly temperatures of about 27°C (80°F) and little daily variation. At the interior's higher altitudes, the average yearly temperature is 20°C (68°F), and nights are generally cool. Annual rainfall varies from 500 centimeters (200 in.) on the southwestern slopes to 100 centimeters (40 in.) in the northern lowlands. The rainy season runs from October to May.

Natural Resources:

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:

Per Capita GDP:

% of GDP per Sector:		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

% of Population Employed by Sector		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

External Aid/Remittances:

Growth:

Labour Force:	
2006	4,421

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)
2006	5.3%

Industry:

Niche Industry:

Other than agriculture, the main economic activities are fishing and a small industrial sector engaged in processing local agricultural products and producing a few basic consumer goods.

Tourism:

The scenic islands have potential for tourism, and the government is attempting to improve its rudimentary tourist industry infrastructure. The government sector accounts for about 11% of employment.

Imports and Exports:
Portugal remains one of Sao Tome's major trading partners, particularly as a source of imports.



Food, manufactured articles, machinery, and transportation equipment are imported primarily from the EU.

Tot. Value of Imports	0.00 ()
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	
Partners Outside EU:	
Import Partners:	
Tot. Value of Exports	()
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	
Main Imports:	
Main Exports:	

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports:

Number of Main Ports:

Internal:

Air

Road:

Sea:

Other Forms of Transportation:

Economic Zones:

Energy Policy:

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)

Official Currency:

1 Dobra = 100 Centimos

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:

Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:

Number of Insurance Companies:

Financial Services:

Communications/E-Commerce:

Public Ownership:

Land Use:

Agriculture/Forestry:

Marine Activity:

Fishing:

Marine Life:

Critical Issues:

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES



Capital:
Santo Ant nio

Political System:

Type: Republic. Independence: July 12, 1975 (from Portugal). Constitution: November 5, 1975; revised September 1990, following a national referendum, revised again January 2003. Branches: Executive--president and prime minister. Legislative--National Assembly. Judicial--Supreme Court. Administrative subdivisions: Seven counties, six on Sao Tome and one on Principe. Suffrage: Universal adult.

Political Parties:

Political parties: Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe (MLSTP), Party of Democratic Convergence (PCD), Independent Democratic Action (ADI), Democratic Movement Force of Change (MDFM), Christian Democratic Front-Socialist Union Party (FDC-PSU), Santomean Workers Party (PTS); Popular Party of Progress (PPP), and National Union for Democracy and Progress (UNDP).

Important Legislation:

Principal Taxes:

Associated Power:

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe

Citizenship:

Santomean

Paradiplomacy:

HUMAN RESOURCES

Of Sao Tome and Principe's total population, about 137,500 live on Sao Tome and 6,000 on Principe. All are descended from various ethnic groups that have migrated to the islands since 1485. Six groups are identifiable: Mestico, or mixed-blood, descendants of African slaves brought to the islands during the early years of settlement from Benin, Gabon, and Congo (these people also are known as filhos da terra or "sons of the land"); Angolares, reputedly descendants of Angolan slaves who survived a 1540 shipwreck and now earn their livelihood fishing; Forros, descendants of freed slaves when slavery was abolished; Servicais, contract laborers from Angola, Mozambique, and Cape Verde, living temporarily on the islands; Tongas, children of servicais born on the islands; and Europeans, primarily Portuguese. In the 1970s, there were two significant population movements--the exodus of most of the 4,000 Portuguese residents and the influx of several hundred Sao Tomean refugees from Angola. The islanders have been absorbed largely into a common Luso-African culture.

5			
Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population

Workforce: Agriculture: 15.3%; Industry, commerce, services: 36.5%; Government: 11.5% (2000 UN Development Program est.)

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
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Migration:

Crude Birth Rate:

Life Expedctancy:

Life expectancy (2007) 67.64 yrs. Infant mortality rate (2007 est.)--4.05%.

Crude Death Rate:

Ethnicity:

Mixed African, Portuguese-African.

Class Division:

Languages:

The languages, other than Portuguese, includes Principense or Lunguy a with a few Forro speakers.

Religion:

Almost all belong to the Roman Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, or Seventh-day Adventist Churches, which in turn retain close ties with churches in Portugal.

Literacy:

Literacy rate (2006) - 61.2% Literacy rate (2005) age group 15-24: 85%

Education System:

Total Pre-schools:()	
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	



Second Level:	
Third Level:	
Total Secondary Schools:	
Total Professional Schools	
Universities:	

Number of Schools per Island:										
	Pre-school		Elementary			High-school		Prof.	University	
	Pub	Priv	1	2	3	Pub	Priv		Pub	Priv

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	Pre-School	Elementary	High-school	Prof.	University

Teachers							
Year	Pre-School	Elementary			High-School	Prof.	University
		1	2	3			

Medical Services:

The Hospital Dr. Manuel Quaresma Dias da Graça is the only hospital on Príncipe island.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:

The islands were first discovered by Portuguese navigators between 1469 and 1472. The first successful settlement of Sao Tome was established in 1493 by Alvaro Caminha, who received the land as a grant from the Portuguese crown. Principe was settled in 1500 under a similar arrangement. By the mid-1500s, with the help of slave labor, the Portuguese settlers had turned the islands into Africa's foremost exporter of sugar. Sao Tome and Principe were taken over and administered by the Portuguese crown in 1522 and 1573, respectively.

Sugar cultivation declined over the next 100 years, and by the mid-1600s, Sao Tome was little more than a port of call for bunkering ships. In the early 1800s, two new cash crops, coffee and cocoa, were introduced. The rich volcanic soils proved well suited to the new cash crop industry, and soon extensive plantations (rocas), owned by Portuguese companies or absentee landlords, occupied almost all of the good farmland. By 1908, Sao Tome had become the world's largest producer of cocoa, still the country's most important crop.

The rocas system, which gave the plantation managers a high degree of authority, led to abuses against the African farm workers. Although Portugal officially abolished slavery in 1876, the practice of forced paid labor continued. In the early 1900s, an internationally publicized controversy arose over charges that Angolan contract workers were being subjected to forced labor and unsatisfactory working conditions. Sporadic labor unrest and dissatisfaction continued well into the 20th century, culminating in an outbreak of riots in 1953 in which several hundred African laborers were killed in a clash with their Portuguese rulers. This "Batepa Massacre" remains a major event in the colonial history of the islands, and the government officially observes its anniversary.

By the late 1950s, when other emerging nations across the African Continent were demanding independence, a small group of Sao Tomeans had formed the Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe (MLSTP), which eventually established its base in nearby Gabon. Picking up momentum in the 1960s, events moved quickly after the overthrow of the Salazar and Caetano dictatorship in Portugal in April 1974. The new Portuguese regime was committed to the dissolution of its overseas colonies; in November 1974, their representatives met with the MLSTP in Algiers and worked out an agreement for the transfer of sovereignty. After a period of transitional government, Sao Tome and Principe achieved independence on July 12, 1975, choosing as its first President the MLSTP Secretary General, Manuel Pinto da Costa.

In 1990, Sao Tome became one of the first African countries to embrace democratic reform. Changes to the constitution, including the legalization of opposition political parties, led to nonviolent, free, and transparent elections in 1991. Miguel Trovoada, a former Prime Minister who had been in exile since 1986, returned as an independent candidate and was elected President. Trovoada was re-elected in Sao Tome's second multiparty presidential election in 1996. The Party of Democratic Convergence (PCD) toppled the MLSTP to take a majority of seats in the National Assembly, with the MLSTP becoming an important and vocal minority party. Municipal elections followed in late 1992, in which the MLSTP came back to win a majority of seats on five of seven regional councils. In early legislative elections in October 1994, the MLSTP won a plurality of seats in the Assembly. It regained an outright majority of seats in the November 1998 elections.

The Government of Sao Tome fully functions under a multiparty system. Presidential elections were held in July 2001. The candidate backed by the Independent Democratic Action Party, Fradique de Menezes, was elected in the first round and inaugurated on September 3. Parliamentary elections held in March 2002 led to a coalition government after no party gained a majority of seats. An attempted coup d'etat in July 2003 by a few members of the military and the Christian Democratic Front (mostly representative of former Sao Tomean volunteers from the apartheid-era Republic of South African Army) was reversed by international, including American, mediation without bloodshed. In September 2004, President de Menezes dismissed the Prime Minister and appointed a new cabinet, which was accepted by the majority party. In June 2005, following public discontent with oil exploration licenses granted in the Joint Development Zone (JDZ) with Nigeria, the MLSTP, the party with the largest number of seats in the National Assembly, and its coalition partners threatened to resign from government and force early parliamentary elections. After several days of negotiations, the President and the MLSTP agreed to form a new government and to avoid early elections. The new government included Maria Silveira, the well-respected head of the Central Bank, who served concurrently as Prime Minister and Finance Minister.

The March 2006 legislative elections went forward without a hitch, with President Menezes' party, the Movement for the Democratic Force of Change (MDFM), winning 23 seats and taking an unexpected lead ahead of MLSTP. MLSTP came in second with 19 seats, and the Independent Democratic Alliance (ADI) came in third with 12 seats. Amidst negotiations to form a new coalition government, President Menezes nominated a new prime minister and cabinet.

July 30, 2006 marked Sao Tome and Principe's fourth democratic, multiparty presidential elections. The elections were regarded by both local and international observers as being free and fair. Incumbent Fradique de Menezes won the election with approximately 60% of the vote. Voter turnout was relatively high with 63% of the 91,000 registered voters casting ballots.

In November 2007, President de Menezes dismissed and replaced several ministers in his government following significant public criticism of souring economic conditions and the government's handling of recurring mutinies by dissident police officers. The changes took place peacefully and without incident.

Referenda:

Recent Significant Events:

Príncipe was the site where Einstein's Theory of Relativity was experimentally proved successful by Arthur Stanley Eddington and his team during an eclipse in 1919. Eddington's observations published next year (Dyson, F.W., Eddington, A.S., & Davidson, C.R. 1920 A Determination of the Deflection of Light by the Sun's Gravitational Field, from Observations Made at the Total Eclipse of May 29, 1919 Mem. R. Astron. Soc., 220, 291-333) confirmed Einstein's theory, and were hailed at the time as a conclusive proof of general relativity over the Newtonian model.

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

Sources:

U.S. State Dept. Background Notes: Sao Tome and Principe: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5434.htm> May 2008.

Wikipedia - The Free Encyclopedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki> 17th December 2007

Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations <http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/Maps/STP/16/ad/index.html> 18th November 2007

ADRA STP - News <http://adrast.blogspot.com/> 7th January 2008

Ilha do Principe (Island of Principe) www.principe.st 18th December 2007

Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization http://www.unpo.org/member_profile.php?id=11 6th January 2008

UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office <http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1007029394365&a=KCountryProfile&aid=1019744986498> 6th January 2008

Instituto Nacional de Estatistica <http://www.ine.st/> 10th January 2008

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www.upei.ca
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