Rodrigues

Overview:
Rodrigues is the main outer island of the Republic of Mauritius. Rodrigues obtained its autonomy in 2002. The Rodriguan economy is based on a subsistence type of agriculture, stock rearing and fishing.

Territory:
Total Land Area: Surface area of 108 sq. km EEZ: 1.2 million square km

Location:
Rodrigues is situated in the Indian Ocean approximately 560 km to the North East of Mauritius, which is itself 800 km East of Madagascar.

Latitude and Longitude:
19 42 S and 63 25 E

Time Zone:
GMT +4

Total Land Area:
108

EEZ:
1200000

Climate:
Moderate climate. Average annual temperature between 14 and 29 degrees Celsius.

Natural Resources:
Marine red and green algae. There are several species of endemic tropical flora and fauna.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:

Per Capita GDP:

% of GDP per Sector:			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

% of Population Employed by Sector			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

External Aid/Remittances:
Data unavailable

Growth:
The Rodriguan economy is predominantly based on a subsistence type of agriculture, stock rearing, and fishing. The major livestock reared are cattle, sheep, pigs, goats, and poultry. Total livestock production not only meets the subsistence requirements of the island but also generates surplus for export to Mauritius.

Labour Force:	
2001	21,723
2002	22,289

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)
2000	9.6%
2001	13%
2002	13.5%

Industry:
Major industrial employers are found in the fields of public administration & defence, agriculture, forestry, fishing, manufacturing, and construction. Other important employers are found in transportation, storage & communication, education, and hotels & restaurants. The manufacturing sector is limited to a few enterprises, namely stone crushing, baking, metal works, woodwork, garment making, shoe making and small agro-industries. The industries produce primarily for the limited local market.

Niche Industry:
Tourism. Local materials such as Â'vetiverÂ', aloes and coconut shells are utilised to manufacture handicraft products like hats, bags, doormats, dolls and toys, crochet, jewellery and coral sculpture.

Tourism:
Tourism is increasingly being seen as important source of economic activity, as a result, handicrafts have become a source of income to many families. Tourism is now emerging as a growth sector of the economy. There are presently four registered hotels and several guest houses which cater for tourists including visitors from Mauritius. Approximately 32,000 travellers visited Rodrigues in 2001. The majority of tourists come from Mauritius and Reunion. However, significant numbers of tourists also come from the United Kingdom, Switzerland, South Africa, Italy, Germany, Belgium, and Australia. Furthermore, the Mauritian government has created a Tourism Development Plan which has among its goals to upgrade RodriguesÂ's airport to an international one (to increase the airports capacity to receive arrivals), and integrating the agricultural sector with the emerging hotel and tourist industry. The main tourist activities are bird-watching, hiking, and cave touring.

Imports and Exports:	
Main Imports: information unavailable. Export Partners: Mauritius remains the sole export partner.	
Tot. Value of Imports	0.00 ()
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	
Partners Outside EU:	
Import Partners:	
Tot. Value of Exports	()
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	Mauritius
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	
Main Imports:	
Main Exports:	Live stock (cattle, pigs, goat, sheep, fowl), octopus, fish preserves (salted and dried), foodstuffs (lemon, onions, chillies, garlic), honey.

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports: 1
Air Mauritius flies twice daily to Rodrigues. The Plaine Corail airport is currently under going an expansion of its runway. This will allow larger sized planes to access Rodrigues. Currently the airport can only receive planes seating 48 persons or less. The expansion of the airstrip by the proposed 260 metres will allow for the receiving of planes seating up to 68 persons. A Committee has also been set up to look into the requirements for the Plaine Corail airport and its terminal to operate as an international airport with the introduction of direct flights from Reunion to start with.

Number of Main Ports: 1
There is a ferry which services Rodrigues every fortnight.

Internal:

Air

Road:
The number of buses and taxis are quite low when compared to other forms of transportation. In 2004, there were 77 buses on the island. The most popular form of transportation is the Â'autocycleÂ', essentially a motorized bicycle. There were 621 in use in 2004. The next most numerous form of transportation is by car, the island had 660 cars, 2004. This is followed by motorcycles, which numbered at 2,815 in 2004. In total, there were 4,837 vehicles in use in 2004.

Sea:

Other Forms of Transportation:

Economic Zones:
Although Mauritius has an established Export Processing Zone (EPZ), Rodrigues has yet to establish offshore industries, tax-free industrial areas, etc.

Energy Policy:
Plant Capacity: (2003) 6.0 MWh; (2004) 10.0 MWh; Peak Demand: (2003)4.8 MWh; (2004)5.6 MWh; Type: Thermic 9.8 MWh; Wind 0.2 MWh.

	Type					Sector				
Year	Total Energy Production (Mwh)	Thermic (Mwh)	Geothermic (Mwh)	Other (Mwh)	Total Energy Consumption (Mwh)	Domestic (Mwh)	Commercial (Mwh)	Public Service (Mwh)	Industry (Mwh)	Public Lighting (Mwh)

Official Currency:
Mauritius Rupee

Banking and Insurance:
Number of Banks and Credit Unions: 4
Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:
Number of Insurance Companies:

Financial Services:
Rodrigues is not a centre for offshore financial business.

Communications/E-Commerce:
E-commerce is not a notable contributor to the local economy.

Public Ownership:
Until the passing of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Bill, 90 per cent of the land on Rodrigues was under state ownership, and the state had the authority over all decisions relating to the leasing of the land. It is believed that autonomy for Rodrigues will give the local population to determine the use of their natural resources (land and sea).

Land Use:

Agriculture/Forestry:
The Rodriguan economy is based on a subsistence type of agriculture, stock rearing and fishing. Agriculture is characterised by the predominance of the production of staple food such as maize, sweet potato, cassava, onion and garlic. The major livestock reared are cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and poultry. Total livestock production not only meets the subsistence requirements of the island but also generates surplus for export to Mauritius. As of 2003, 3,048 hectares of land are covered by forests in Rodrigues. This is the result of a reforestation campaign which began in 1984 (at which time Rodrigues had 2,182 hectares of forest). Furthermore, forested land is considered protected by the Rodrigues Assembly.

Marine Activity:

Fishing:
Fishing is one of the largest employment sectors in Rodrigues. Rodrigues exports over 1,500 tons of fish and marine products to Mauritius per year. However, over-fishing is a serious threat to the industry. For example, over-fishing is the main cause of decline for both octopus and finfish catches. In response to over-fishing, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has established a Coordinating Committee for Fisheries and Marine Resources which is to develop strategies for the management of marine resources in order to protect marine biodiversity and habitats and sustain the livelihoods and long-term security of fisheries.

Marine Life:
There exists a continuous 90 kilometre fringing reef which surrounds Rodrigues and has constituted a lagoon of over 240 square kilometres in area.

Critical Issues:
Since 2000, the production of fresh fish has decreased from 2,016.9 tonnes to 1,404 tonnes in 2002. Catches from the lagoon has decreased by 31.8% from 2000 to 2002. This may indicate either that there is less fishing in the lagoon, or that there is depletion of marine resources due to over-fishing. Data concerning the preservation of coral reefs around the island was not available. However, the data obtained for some stations indicate that percentage of live hard coral cover has decreased from 2002 to 2003. For example, at Passe Armand, the reef slope has decreased from 50.1% to 22.7% from September 2002 to September 2003. At Trou Blanc, the reef flat cover has decreased from 16.4 % to 3.2% for the same period.

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

Capital:
Port-Mathurin

Political System:
Rodrigues became an Autonomous Region of the Republic of Mauritius in 2001 and obtained its constitutionally mandated autonomous status in 2002, establishing its government. The island has a regional assembly. The Assembly, excluding the Chairperson, consists of eighteen members Â– twelve Local Region Members for six Local Regions and six Island Region Members. Under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Bill, islanders elect the 18-member Assembly through a mixed system with some chosen through an island-wide proportional representation system and others chosen through the islandÂ's defined constituencies. Each voter has three votes: two for candidates in the local region, and one for a registered political party for island-wide seats according to the list system. To qualify for an island-wide seat, political parties must secure a minimum of ten per cent of votes. The administration of Rodrigues is headed by a Chief Minister or Chief Commissioner who will need to have the support of the majority of members of the Assembly. The islandÂ's civil service is headed by a Chief Executive. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly is empowered to make regulations for matters falling within its purview. It may initiate legislation which, however, has to be ushered into the National Assembly (in Mauritius) to become law for Rodrigues. Matters such as security, foreign affairs, health, and education remain the responsibility of the Parliament of Mauritius. The Assembly is required to appoint a committee of the whole regional assembly and four committees for finance, public health and environment, works, planning and development and welfare, sports, culture and leisure. There is full discretion to establish other committees. The Assembly prepares and adopts its annual budgetary estimates. These are then considered by the Cabinet of Ministers before being incorporated in the National Appropriation Bill. The budgetary provision for the Rodrigues Regional Assembly features as a one line all-comprehensive item in the national budget. In view of geographical distance and for the sake of greater efficiency, the law provides for regular interaction between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, through the Chief Commissioner, and the Prime Minister. Commissioners are also encouraged to consult relevant Ministers on the mainland as often as is necessary. A non-executive president, who does not have to be a member of the assembly, is elected by assembly members by majority vote for a term of five years. Members of the assembly elect from among their number by majority vote the chief commissioner, a full-time appointment, also for a five-year term. The executive body of the assembly is the executive council comprising the chief commissioner, the deputy chief commissioner, and not more than five other members of the assembly appointed by the president acting on the advice of the commissioner. The executive council is responsible to the regional assembly, and continues to operate during any period when the assembly is dissolved. The salary and allowances of the regional assembly president and the chief commissioner are determined by the national assembly. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly has an extensive range of functions and also exercises all local government and other powers as are available to a municipal council on Mauritius. The assembly may propose bills for matters within its jurisdiction, and where these are adopted, the Minister for Rodrigues then forwards them to the national assembly.

Political Parties:
Two political parties dominate: The Rodrigues Movement (Mouvement Rodriguais) and The Rodrigues People's Organisation (Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais). At present, since the 2002 Regional Assembly elections, the Organisation du Peuple Rodriguais (OPR) has ten of eighteen seats on the Assembly. The Rodrigues Movement (MR) has the remaining eight. As a result of their majority on the Assembly, OPR retains two of seventy seats in the Mauritian Parliament.

Important Legislation:
The constitution of Mauritius was amended in 2001 to establish the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. The powers of the Regional Assembly include the ability to propose and adopt Bills in relation to the matters for which it shall be responsible, which Bills, when adopted by Parliament in such manner as may be prescribed. Regional Assembly Laws and Regional Assembly Regulations shall apply only to Rodrigues. The Regional Assembly will have a wide range of powers to propose laws for the regulation of the islandÂ's internal matters, although matters such as security, foreign affairs, health and education will remain the responsibility of the Parliament of Mauritius. The administration of Rodrigues will be headed by a Chief Minister or Chief Commissioner who will need to have the support of the majority of Members of the Assembly, while the islandÂ's civil service will be headed by a Chief Executive. Under the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001, the president may at any time dissolve the regional assembly. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly Bill proposes extensive autonomy to Rodrigues Island by establishing a regional assembly to replace the current Ministry of Rodrigues. Autonomy will provide to the people of Rodrigues broad internal self-governance, enabling them to decide and manage their own internal affairs. The right of the local population to determine the priorities of their socio-economic development and the use of their natural resources (land and sea), and to handle matters relating to regional or international cooperation for development, investment and trade, will be recognized.

Principal Taxes:
The Rodrigues Regional Assembly is responsible for collecting local taxes and fees. The Regional Assembly retains fees, dues or other charges payable in respect of any economic activity, together with all receipts from public services and public utilitites. Furthermore, fees collected under the Environmental Protection Act are also held by Rodrigues.

Associated Power:
Republic of Mauritius

Citizenship:
Rodriguans hold Mauritian citizenship and are free to live, work and vote in Â'mainlandÂ' Mauritius.

Paradiplomacy:
In Rodrigues, the chief commissioner is required to forward to the Minister for Rodrigues an annual report rviewing the activities of the assembly for tabling in the national assembly. The executive council of the Regional Assembly may submit to the prime minister policy statements on matters relating to the development of Rodrigues and may refer specific matters to the prime minister, for consideration by the cabinet.

HUMAN RESOURCES

Age of Population: 0-14 (2003) 11260, (2004) 11260; 15-24 (2003) 8230, (2004) 8300; 25-49 (2003) 11200, (2004 11180; 50-64 (2003) 3610, (2004) 3720; 65+ (2003) 2140, (2004) 2230.

Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population
Rodrigues	109	40,000	%

It is to be noted that the level of unemployment is almost the same for men and women. 60% of the unemployed were from the 15 to 24 age group in 2002.

Population:	
Year	**Resident Population**

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
2003	11260	0	0	0	2,140
2004	11260	0	0	0	2,230

Migration:
Emigration from Rodrigues is usually to Mauritius. Reasons for migration are overwhelmingly based on economic depression on Rodrigues, specifically the lack of job opportunities.

Crude Birth Rate:	
2002	22.9%
2003	23.6%
2004	25.7%

Life Expedctancy:
Life Expectancy (2002): Female: 76.59; Male: 70.71;

Crude Death Rate:	
2002	6.1%
2003	6%
2004	5.9%

Ethnicity:
The population of Rodrigues is overwhelmingly African descended, 98 per cent of the population is considered Creole.

Class Division:
Information unavailable

Languages:
French Creole is the common language of exchange on Rodrigues, however, French is spoken in governmental offices.

Religion:
The main religion on the island is Catholicism.

Literacy:
Primary and secondary education in Rodrigues is free. Major issues are the low rates of primary school completion, a lack of locally trained teachers, and an inadequate educational infrastructure and material resources. In 2001, the Deputy Prime Minister of Mauritius indicated that two additional secondary schools would be built on Rodrigues.

Education System:
Primary schooling is free and compulsory in the Island of Rodrigues as it is throughout the Republic of Mauritius. The rate of dropouts of the educational system after primary schooling was still high (about 38.6% in Mauritius and 68.2% in Rodrigues for 1990) (Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture, 1991:26). The rate of dropouts has been reduced to 33.2% in Mauritius and quite significantly to 44.4% for Rodrigues for the year 2000.

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
	31		13		6	5			0	0

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	**Pre-School**	**Elementary**	**High-school**	**Prof.**	**University**
2003-04	1,359	4,700	3,456	440	0

Teachers							
Year	**Pre-School**	**Elementary**			**High-School**	**Prof.**	**University**
		1	2	3			
2003	73	191	0	0	169	27	0

Total Pre-Schools (2003/2004): 31 Total Primary Schools (2003/2004): 13; Total Secondary Schools (2003/04): 6; Pre-Vocational Schools 2003/2004: 5; Total Professional Schools: none; Universities: none;

Medical Services:
In 2004 there was 1 hospital (the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Creve Coeur) on Rodrigues, two private health centers, and fourteen public clinics. In addition, Rodrigues has three dental clinics. The total number of hospital beds capable of supporting patients undergoing operations was tallied at 177. Pharmacy services are available at 17 locations in Rodrigues.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:
 The island of Rodrigues was already known to early Arabian explorers and traders. This knowledge was passed onto their Portuguese counterparts, who marked the island Dina a Robi on their maps. The first European to sight the island was a Portuguese explorer, Diogo Rodrigues. His Â'discoveryÂ' in 1528 allowed Rodrigues to name the island after himself. However, Portugal did not claim ownership, but instead used the island as a mark for sailing between South Africa and India. The Dutch were the first to land on Rodrigues in 1601, however, similarly to the Portuguese, the Dutch never formally took possession or occupied Rodrigues. The first Europeans to occupy the island were the French in 1691. In 1794, in an attempt to blockade French supplies to Mauritius, Britain invaded, and used Rodrigues as a supply station. Britain eventually captured Mauritius 1809 via their presence in Rodrigues, which they maintained until 1812. The treaty of Paris in 1814 cemented BritainÂ's ownership over Mauritius and Rodrigues. When Mauritius gained its independence in 1968, the island of Rodrigues was bound to the Mauritian territory. Historically, the economy of Rodrigues was based around fishing, farming and some small trade, based primarily on the tobacco trade, with Mauritius.

Referenda:
There have not been any major referenda in the last five years in Rodrigues.

Recent Significant Events:
There was a severe typhoon in 2003 which caused extensive damage and soil erosion on the island.

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:
Handicraft is source of income to many families. Local materials such as Â'vetiverÂ', aloes and coconut shells are utilised to manufacture handicraft products such as hats, bags, doormats, dolls and toys, crochet, fancy jewellery and coral sculpture.

Sources:

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