

San Andres y Providencia

Overview:

San Andres and Providencia is an archipelago in the Caribbean, and one of Colombia's 32 Departments.

Territory:

The Department is composed of the three main islands of San Andres, Providencia, and Santa Catalina, and eight atolls (Alicia Bank, Serranilla Bank, Bajo Nuevo Bank, Quita Sueno Bank, Serrana Bank, Roncador Bank, Cayos del Este Sudeste, and Cayos de Albuquerque). San Andres and Providencia are both a long chain of hills skirted by coastal plains. Originally the islands were covered by lowland tropical rainforest, but this has been mostly destroyed.

Location:

710 km (440 miles) northwest of Cartagena, Colombia; 180 km (110 miles) off eastern coast of Nicaragua in the Caribbean Sea.

Latitude and Longitude:

12 58 N, 81 68 W

Time Zone:

GMT -5

Total Land Area:

44

EEZ:

350000

Climate:

The archipelago has a humid, tropical lowland climate with average year-round temperatures of 27 degrees celsius. The islands are humid for six months of the year and hot and dry for the remaining six months. Average annual rainfall is 2,000 mm (1,900 mm in San Andres, and 1,532 mm in Providencia).

Natural Resources:

Fertile soil, marine resources.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:	
2002	229,600,000.00 USD
2001	220,800,000.00 USD
2000	269,570,000.00 USD

Per Capita GDP:	
2002	2,964.64 USD
2001	2,926.68 USD
2000	3,669.43 USD

% of GDP per Sector:			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
2002	3.48%	0.76%	95.76%
2000	2.6%	0.5%	96.9%

% of Population Employed by Sector			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

External Aid/Remittances:

Any aid that comes to the islands is coming from a national level. There is no mention of any international aid groups sending development aid into the region although there are undoubtedly some small initiatives operating on the islands. Remittances do not contribute noticeably to the local economy as migration patterns are onto rather than off of the archipelago.

Growth:

The introduction of the tax free zone on San Andres led to a massive influx of immigrants both from the mainland as well as from other areas of the Caribbean, and other parts of the world. The immigrant community promoted a level of economic growth that could not have been achieved solely by the islanders. Nevertheless it made the traditional economic activities of coconut growing and fishing uncompetitive, which has led to their abandonment on a large scale by islanders.

Labour Force:

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)

Industry:

There are only 12 registered industrial establishments in San Andres and Providencia. The main industries are construction, fishing, and food and tobacco processing. The Raizal People, who depended upon agriculture and fishing for their livelihood, have been completely marginalised from the principal economic activities relative to commerce and tourism. Already in 1962 the Raizal People composed only 14.6% of all registered commercial enterprises, contributing only 8% to the total capital being generated on the islands. This situation has only gotten worse. Today the native islanders represent a minority in all three main economic sectors (construction, commerce, and hotels and restaurants). In 1993, the Raizal People were only 13.7% of all those employed – occupying predominantly the lowest-paid positions. The only three sectors in which Raizal People were the majority were agriculture, fishing, and government. Most of the well-educated native islanders are employed in government. The majority of those employed in the lowest paying secondary sector (primarily construction), are immigrants from other Caribbean Departments of Colombia. Only 13.1% of those employed in construction are Raizal. Statistics for employment per sector for the islands are not available.

Niche Industry:

The only niche industry in San Andres is the service sector – mainly commerce and tourism, which are the pillar of the local economy.

Tourism:

The tertiary sector is the main generator of capital and the main source of employment. The establishment of the “zona libre” in San Andres has a significant impact on the number of tourists visiting the islands. In 1960, shortly after the enactment of the legislation, establishing the tax free zone, 54,517 tourists are recorded as having visited the island. In 2004, 343,354 tourists visited the islands: 81.7% from Colombia, and 18.3% from other countries. There are currently approximately 8.000 beds, distributed among 72 hotels, apartments, inns, suites and bungalows. Since 1997 the numbers of national tourists has been decreasing, and the number of foreign tourists increasing –not at the same rate however. This has lead to an overall decrease in the number of tourists visiting the islands. Main activities include swimming, sunbathing, scuba-diving, wind-surfing, sailing, waterskiing, jet-skiing, hiking, cycling, beach volleyball, and for islanders, basketball, baseball, and horse-racing.



Imports and Exports:	
Tot. Value of Imports: 1,042,334.64 USD in 2003 (533,875.56 USD in 2004); Import Partners: Brazil, the US, Spain, Italy, Venezuela, Korea, China, Argentina, Japan. Main Imports: Food products, electric machinery, metallomecanic goods excluding machinery, clothing items, printed materials and editorials, textiles, non-electric machinery, other industrial materials, plastic goods, footwear. Tot. Value of Exports: 7,625,309.00 USD in 2003 (6,453,306.95 USD in 2004); Export Partners: US, Japan, Haiti, Panama, Nicaragua, Rusia, Costa Rica, Vietnam. Main Exports: Perishable and non-perishable food products, toiletries, frozen meat, electric goods. NB: The US is the islands’ number one trading partner for exports (94.02%), and its second most important partner for imports after Brazil. The value of exports is significantly higher than imports – this is proof of the use of the islands as an extractive economy for the benefit of the mainland. The figure for imports for 2004 is so low that the researcher believes there may be an error.	
Tot. Value of Imports	1,042,445.00 USD (2003)
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	
Partners Outside EU:	
Import Partners:	Brazil, the US, Spain, Italy, Venezuela, Korea, China, Argentina, Japan
Tot. Value of Exports	7265309 USD (2003)
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	US, Japan, Haiti, Panama, Nicaragua, Rusia, Costa Rica, Vietnam.
Main Imports:	Food products, electric machinery, metallomecanic goods excluding machinery, clothing items, printed materials and editorials, textiles, non-electric machinery, other industrial materials, plastic goods, footwear.
Main Exports:	Perishable and non-perishable food products, toiletries, frozen meat, electric goods.

TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS

External:

Number of Airports: 2

Air travel is the principal means of reaching the islands. San Andres is the major site of entry, located in north of the island. Providencia also has a smaller airport for local flights.

Number of Main Ports:

Sea transport is the principal means of moving cargo from one island to another. Passenger Arrivals: 8,344 (2003). Cargo: 150,589 tonnes; national: 122,930 tonnes; international: 27,659 tonnes (15,590 from US, 9,449 from Central America).

Internal:

Air

Airlines Serving the Islands: 7 There are air connections between San Andres and Providencia (up to 8 daily, depending on demand) provided by West Caribbean, and Air Providence. TACA, Costa Rica's national carrier, provides daily flights to a number of Central American countries. West Caribbean Airline also has flights from the islands to Costa Rica and Panama three times a week. Alianza Summa, Intercontinental, Aerorepublica, West Caribbean, and Air Providence connect the islands with major Colombian urban centres such as Bogota, Medellin, Calim Barranquilla, Cartagena, Manizales, and Pereira. From these cities connecting flights to smaller cities are available. There are approximately 13 national flights between the islands and the mainland (this number doubles during the peak tourism season), and 2 international flights daily.

Road:

Land transportation includes taxis, buses, minibuses, car and motorcycle rentals, and tourist trains.

Sea:

Internal marine transportation includes a boat cooperative, private boats that take tourists to the cays, yachts and sailboats for cruises in the bay, and marine rentals, such as sailboats and boards for windsurfing.

Other Forms of Transportation:

Bicycles can be rented.

Economic Zones:

In 1953, legislation was enacted that established San Andres as a tax free zone. At the time, imported products carried a much higher price on the Colombian market. The "free port" or tax free zone in San Andres provides adult tourists with an opportunity to purchase international goods at lower prices and then take them back to the mainland without paying any import duties or taxes for items having a value of up to \$2,500.00. The visitors have to have been on the island for a minimum of two days in order to qualify for the tax break. Minors can purchase goods up to a value of 50% the adult benchmark tax free. Items purchased must be for personal or domestic use. The limit can be exceeded the individual allowance by traveling in a family group and adding their allowances together. The islands are also Special Economic Export Zones (ZEEEs). This gives them special regimes for new export-oriented businesses. Some of the benefits offered to investors include income tax exemption over export income, tax exemption over dividends and remittances abroad, income tax exemption at construction companies, tariff exemption on capital goods or raw materials for production use within the ZEEE, flexible labour regimes, as well as the incentives of the tax free zone regarding customs and tax matters. The conditions are that a minimum investment of 100,000 USD was required up to 2004, and 1,000,000 or 2,000,000 USD for projects submitted in 2005 or 2006; the project had to be an industrial, residential development, or infrastructure development initiative; it should guarantee technology transfer and the generation of employment opportunities; the investor has to export at least 80% of its production, or when using agriculture raw materials, 100%; and the investor has to be a legal entity, and sign an agreement with the government for a period of between 5 and 20 years.

Energy Policy:

All energy is supplied by imported energy sources from the mainland (Colombia's number one export is oil). The islands have a diesel engine power plant, Planta San Andres, with a capacity of 55 Mwe. The main consumers are, in descending order, residential (34.5%), industrial (28.9%), and commercial (21.2%). Commerce and hotels consume 60% of the total amount of energy consumed in the archipelago. Energy consumption is continually increasing in all three sectors. 99% of islanders have electricity (in comparison to only 86% in mainland Colombia). The national government is eyeing the areas around the islands because they are believed to hold 7 billion barrels of reserves. The degree of safety on the islands is greater than in other areas of Colombia which could be attractive to international investors, and the Colombian government is offering more generous royalty terms to counter the perceived higher risk of doing business in Colombia because to the ongoing violence. The territorial dispute between Colombia (to which the islands have belonged for about 100 years), and Nicaragua is the main stumbling block, as Nicaragua also claims the islands.

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:

Colombian Peso and USD

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:

Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:

Number of Insurance Companies:

There are many banks on the islands, including Banco de Bogota, Banco de Colombia, Banco de la Republica, Banco de Occidente, Banco Industrial Colombiano, and Banco Popular. Savings and loan corporations are also present on the islands. There are numerous 24 hour ATM teller machines.

Financial Services:

The Chamber of Commerce for San Andres and Providencia Islands, through its Business Centre, offers information to small, medium and large scale enterprises in its jurisdiction on subjects related to international commerce in order to improve understanding of marketing and commercialization of products and/or services in the external market. EXPOPME (Program for the Development of the Small and medium-Sized Exporter) is a programme being promoted by the national government in conjunction with PROEXPERT, and the Chamber of Commerce of San Andres and Providence Islands. Its goals are to provide incentives for Colombians to pursue export-oriented enterprises, as well as to encourage businesses to use its products and/or services as well as its methods and management techniques in the international market. Market Intelligence is a project that helps connect local exporting businesses with international commercial partners and/or contacts. Zeiky is a cooperative initiative between PROEXPERT, the Ministry of External Commerce, and Bankoldex that supplies consultative services regarding international commerce, market issues and approaches, etc, to local entities. The Chamber of Commerce also promotes small-scale export enterprises through organizing credit days to which a commercial bank is invited, as well as a regional credit institution to enable small enterprises to make connections and gather valuable information about export markets; a program of commercialization training to make micro-enterprises better able to expand their markets, and make connections with business entities in other sectors, regional, national and international. The Chamber of Commerce also organizes opportunities for local businesses to market their skills and products to the public.

Communications/E-Commerce:

In 2004, San Andres had 11,823 telephone subscribers, 7,968 of which were residential and 3,222 commercial; and San Andres had 1,030 subscribers, 807 of which were residential and 134 commercial. 95% of the islands' territory has phone access, with an average of 1 line for every 5 inhabitants. As of 1995, cell phone service is available on the islands. There are currently 667 internet users. For public phone lines there is only 1.37 per 1,000 inhabitants.



Public Ownership:

There is a board established by national legislative decree that regulates population density and development. There does not appear to be any regulations on foreign ownership of land. In 2004, 59.9% of houses were rented and 38.03% were owned (2.07% were "other"). 58.43% of all housing is located in urban centres, of which 71% are rented. For the houses in rural areas the opposite is true, with 55.19% being owned.

Land Use:

There's an official Reserve in Providencia, Old Providence National Park, a part of the National Park System, which protects island forests, mangroves and some reefs. The majority of the population lives in urban areas.

Agriculture/Forestry:

In the past, the islands' economy was based on cotton, tobacco, and sugar cane. Avocados and oranges were grown for local consumption. With the abolition of slavery in 1853, coconut palms replaced cotton, and a short while later coconuts were exported to the U.S. Since the introduction of the tax free zone in 1953 the economy has shifted away from agriculture, many abandoning their fields simply because it is no longer economically viable. The main group of people involved in agriculture was (and still is) the native islanders, and many have had their land fragmented due to development, or sold it in order to survive. Today 65% of the islands' farmers do not own the land they farm. 45.1% of those in the industry are farmers and 54.9% are involved with animal husbandry (with significantly more farmers in San Andres and more animal husbandry in Providencia. The primary seasonal crops are corn, melon, cucumber and watermelon; annual crops are yucca and potato, and permanent crops plantain and papaya. Water availability during the summer months (January-May) is a serious constraint, and rain collection structures and distribution costly. There is high demand for papaya in the islands' hotels and restaurants. Animal husbandry involves the raising mainly of cattle and pigs (as well as other animals to minimal degrees). In 2001 there were 1,440 heads. Although animal husbandry is replacing agriculture as a means of support, overall the occupation is slowly diminishing in importance as a result of the climate, outside production of milk and cheese products at a lower cost, poor and fragmented pastures, and a limited amount of space. Erosion is a large problem, and generally animal hygiene is bad -- often animals are fed leftovers from hotels.

Marine Activity:**Fishing:**

Fishing plays an important role in the provision of food for islanders as well as the export industry. Main products are lobster, fish, and snails. The Colombian Institute for Rural Development has established fishing quotas for lobsters and snails which are distributed among the local fishing companies. White fishing currently has no quota.

Marine Life:

One outstanding feature of the islands is the presence of coral reefs, one of the largest and best preserved in the western Caribbean Sea, outstanding in terms of marine biodiversity. McBean Lagoon is a Natural Park created in 1996, covering 995 hectares, of which 905 are marine, that include mangrove swamp ecosystem, reefs; Cab Cay; and Three Brothers Cay, an extensive dry forest where cock spur, cactus and papta palm trees are predominant. It is located at the far Northeast between Maracaibo, Maracaibo Hill and Iron Word Hill. The archipelago has been designated as a biosphere reserve, and CORALINA (Corporation for Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andres, Old Providence and Santa Catalina) is a public corporate body created by Colombian law in 1993 whose job is to administer the environment and natural resources so as to promote sustainable development within its jurisdiction. CORALINA has its main office in San Andres, and a branch in Providencia that also serves Santa Catalina with 33 staff as well as 40-50 contracted consultants. The entity has numerous ongoing projects, with one major one addressing the conservation of biodiversity, and ensuring the sustainable use of coastal and marine resources in the archipelago while enhancing equitable benefit distribution for the community. One of the practical activities associated with this is the design and implementation of a system of marine protected areas (MPAs) zoned for multiple-use and managed to reduce human threats and to protect globally important sites of biodiversity in cooperation with the local community.

Critical Issues:

Social: The Raizal People (also called the native islanders), have been calling for self-determination in response to discriminatory government policies which have marginalized their community both socially and economically, displaced them from their lands for the purpose of promoting tertiary sector development, overpopulated the islands, and resulted in a deterioration of the island quality of life. They have created what is called the Archipelago Movement for Ethnic Native Self-Determination (AMEN-SD). Demonstrations are the most recent attempt to have their voices heard. So far, very little has been done to improve their situation on the part of the Colombian government. **Social and ethnic discrimination** is a problem for some of the Caribbean immigrant groups who are employed in the low-paid jobs also. Overall class and ethnic divisions have a significant negative effect on the islands' economy. At the governmental level, corruption is an issue that also impacts the local inhabitants, and the overall quality of life. **Territorial:** Conflict exists over oil development in Nicaraguas' territorial seas just off the coast of San Andres and Providencia. Colombia has been patrolling the waters, claiming that Nicaragua is contracting out waters that are not within its jurisdiction. There are currently Colombian policies in place preventing islanders from working within Nicaraguas' territory -- therefore islanders are not able to take advantage of employment opportunities with oil industry operations off of San Andres and Providencia's coasts. Jurisdiction over the islands has been an area of tension for the two countries for some time, and some think that the oil development is Nicaragua's attempt to stake claim to the territory. The U.S. has an agreement with Colombia whereby they patrol the waters around the islands for drug-traffickers. Cocaine trafficking is currently a big problem in the waters around the islands. **Environmental:** Overdevelopment and lack of appropriate infrastructure have led to serious environmental concerns on the island such as water pollution, marine sea-grass blooms due to sewage being released untreated into coastal waters, destruction of coastal areas and views, elimination of vital habitats, and overfishing. These issues all have economic implications in terms of the tourism industry as well as social implications in terms of the health of local inhabitants and quality of life standards. **Economic:** Overpopulation, ethnic divisions, the overexploitation of available resources to further the tax free zone, over-development, the sun and sea tourism industry package, and fiscal corruption are among the many economic problems being faced by the local government. The national government appears to use the islands purely for extractive purposes with little interest in their long-term development.

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES**Capital:**

San Andres

Political System:

San Andres and Providencia is a Department of Colombia. Its governing bodies are the Departmental Assembly, and the Governor (elected by popular vote). There are two municipalities within the department, San Andres and Providencia. The Comptrollership General of the Department and the Comptrollership General of the Republic are in charge of fiscal policy. Administrative control is the responsibility of the Legal Adviser's Office for Internal Control. Disciplinary control is the responsibility of the Legal Adviser's Office for Disciplinary Internal Control (internally), and externally by the Public Prosecutor's Office of the Department. Political control is the responsibility of the Departmental Assembly; and financial control is in the hands of the Finance Office of the Department. The main competencies of the department are infrastructure, and the provision of energy, water, the collection of waste, etc; land-use and planning; tourism and development and activities associated with the tourism industry; local taxes paid by islanders for the provision of departmental services, and in relation to the tax free zone; cultural patrimony; environmental preservation; and public services. Healthcare, education, fisheries, and agriculture are all managed in cooperation with national entities to greater and lesser degrees. Despite these competencies, all of them were given to them by national legislation, and all activities are truly controlled at the national level. The archipelago itself has very little jurisdiction over its economy, and is used by the government to benefit national interests. The general duties of the department are to assure administrative efficiency within the department, as well as the efficient provision of public services; to make political administrative decisions so as to ensure effective public participation in the development and improvement of the archipelago; to develop programs that promote social and economic progress in the department; and to maintain social, economic, and public order. The specific duties of the department are to carry out the Constitution, laws, decrees, national government orders, and departmental ordinances; to coordinate the activities and services of public entities in the department,

private entities, and departmental industrial and commercial enterprises; and to assess and implement national services provided in the department.

Political Parties:

Mainland political parties are represented on the island, as well as the local parties Partido Liberal, Partido Conservador, MOIR Movimiento Obrero Independiente y Revolucionario, Revolucion (Socialist Party), and MIRA.

Important Legislation:

Political Constitution of Colombia, Article 309 (July 5, 1991) establishes San Andres y Providencia as its own department within the Colombian Republic with special political, administrative, and fiscal conditions. <http://www.georgetown.edu/pdba/Constitutions/Colombia/col91.html> . Decree 2274 (1991), which regulates transitory article 309 of the National Constitution that rules in the matter of the organization and functioning of the former Intendancies and Commissariats that became Departments by the 1991 Constitution additions. http://www.esap.edu.co/leyes/D2274_91.HTM . The Law 127 (1959) and the Regulatory Decree 00445 (1960) are the legislative documents that established the characteristics of the free zone, or "zona libre." Law Decree 1222 (1986), which regulates the Departmental regime, as was provided in Law 47(1993). The Assembly Hall sessions are regulated by Law 58 (1996). <http://calsegen01.alcaldiabogota.gov.co:7772/sisjur/normas/Norma1.jsp?i=6100#0> Decree 2762 (1991), which outlines the measures adopted to control the population density of the Archipelago Department. http://www.secretariasenado.gov.co/leyes/L0047_93.HTM Law 1st. (1972) regulates revenues of national nature generated in the Department. Law 47 (1993), which grants special treatment to the Department in the administrative, political and fiscal matters in the development of article 310 of the Constitution; also it regulates that the Government of San Andres will execute the duties of Municipality, until a Municipality or Municipalities are organized accordingly. http://www.secretariasenado.gov.co/leyes/L0047_93.HTM Law 136 (1994), in regards to the regime applicable to the exercise of municipal duties by the Departmental administration . <http://www.cdmb.gov.co/normas/ley1361994.htm> Financial issues, the management of human resources, physical resources, business engagement and control management are regulated by general laws applicable to all public offices at the national as well as at the territorial level. The Colombian National Policy for Biodiversity (1996) focuses on conservation, knowledge, and sustainable use. Law 99 (1993) establishes the need for a regional environmental policy in the Archipelago (article 37) and creates the decentralized national environment system to ensure the design and realization of development programs at the regional level. This law also declares the Archipelago a Biosphere Reserve, empowering the Corporation for the Sustainable Development of the Archipelago of San Andres, Old Providencia, and Santa Catalina - CORALINA - to carry out the actions necessary to realize this status. National law 136 (1994) protects the Archipelago's mangroves, and resolution 1426 (1996) from the Ministry of the Environment defines the Archipelago's corals as special management areas, making regional conservation planning for these ecosystems is a priority. Executive Resolution 023 (1970) establishes a National Reserve Zone in San Andres Bay from Johnny Cay to Haines Cay. 915 of the 21 of October, 2004 which establishes the Border Statute for the Social and Economic Development of the Department of the Archipelago of San Andres, Providencia, and Santa Catalina. <http://www.dian.gov.co/dian/13Normatividad.nsf/0/d89625185b5ccf5e05256f5c00706a82?OpenDocument>

Principal Taxes:

Since the establishment of the tax free zone on San Andres, all imports from abroad carry a 10% local tax on their value. This tax has brought a lot of money into the local economy as large amounts of goods are continuously being imported to sell to tourists. In 1987 the per capita income from taxes being earned by San Andres and Providencia was the highest in Colombia, and 12.6 times the median amount received. Most of this tax is not invested in improving social services, but is pocketed by the racial elite and disappears into the bureaucracy of the local government, thereby benefiting the local population very little, if at all.

Associated Power:

Republic of Colombia

Citizenship:

Islanders are considered Colombian citizens, with all the same rights as mainland citizens.

Paradiplomacy:

Paradiplomacy is limited to informal interactions between islanders and international NGOs, and contact between islanders and outsiders when visitors come to the islands or locals travel. The level of government is too low and the degree of jurisdiction too limited for any higher level of paradiplomacy. The most evident paradiplomacy is that carried out by the Raizal People at the international level in trying to promote their call for self-determination and an end to national discriminatory practices.

HUMAN RESOURCES

San Andres and Providencia is one of the most densely populated oceanic islands in the Americas, and possibly in the world. Colombia is currently developing national population statistics in response to UN recommendation. The national government has held that the islands are not over-populated – simply suffering from a lack of economic opportunity and development. However most inhabitants agree that over population is a serious problem that is causing both social and environmental problems. Age of Population: 0-14: (2000) 30.7%, (2005) 29.2%; 15-24: (2000) 15.6%, (2005) 16.1%; 25-49: (2000) 42.6%, (2005) 41.4%; 50-64: (2000) 7.6%, (2005) 9.7%; 65 and up: (2000) 3.5%, (2005) 3.6%.

Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population
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92.4% of the population in San Andres and Providencia lives in the municipality of San Andres. Only 7.6% live in the municipality of Providencia. Of those living in San Andres, 75.5% live in urban areas, whereas the opposite is true in Providencia, where 62% of the inhabitants of live in rural areas.

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

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

Net Migration (1993): 25.53. The establishment of the tax free zone in 1953, and subsequent completion of the first airport in San Andres in 1956, led to massive immigration levels. In 1951 the population on San Andres was 3,705. By 1951 this had reached 14,413, and by 1993, the population had risen to 56,361. The highest increase in the population occurred between 1951 and 1964 when annual growth rates were 10.4%. Between 1956 when the airport was completed, and 1964 population growth was 15% annually. In 1964 immigrants represented 50.6% of the population. Despite promoting unprecedented economic growth, there have been many negative social and economic consequences for the islands in general, and the Raizal People (native islanders – descendants of 17th and 18th century settlers) more specifically. The most prominent of these was that the Raizal People became a minority in the 1980s. In 2002, there are 44 shantytowns, inhabited mostly by immigrants. Immigrants have been from diverse ethnic as well as socio-economic backgrounds, and have included mainlanders, foreigners (especially Arabs) moving to the islands to establish commercial enterprises, as well as other Caribbean islanders (from islands that are a part of Colombia) who come for employment in the hotels, restaurants, and in the construction business.



Crude Birth Rate:**Life Expectancy:**

Figures of the islands are not available. Mainland figure is 72.8 (women 75.7; men 69.9).

Crude Death Rate:**Ethnicity:**

The inhabitants of the islands are a mixed bag of ethnicities resulting from the complex history of the region. They include English, Spanish, French, Dutch, and Caribbean backgrounds, as well as Chinese, Arabs, and Colombians that have been migrating to the islands over the last 50 years. In 1993, 15% of the population was indigenous or Afro-Caribbean (9,602 individuals). Within this group fell 2 Coyaima, 3 Guambiano, 1 Kamentsa, 1 Letuama, 1 Ocaina, 2 Senu, 2 Sikuaní, 1 Siriano, 8 Wayuu, 577 "Black", 7,658 Raizal, and 1,346 not fully identified.

Class Division:

A class structure is very present, and is based upon ethnic differences. The Raizal People, and other Caribbean immigrants are at the bottom of the ladder socio-economically, and the immigrant community – predominantly from the mainland, are at the top of it. There have been complaints by the Raizal People of mainland invasion of the islands.

Languages:

The official languages are Spanish and English --all of the islanders speak Caribbean English among themselves.

Religion:

The main religion is Catholicism, however there are also Baptists, Adventists, Christian Missions, Jehovah's Witnesses and other Protestants on the islands.

Literacy:**Education System:**

Public education is free from first to twelfth grade. There are more than 46 private schools and specialized educational centers on the Island with approximately 13,000 students. In 2003, there were a total of 14,735 students on the islands, 12,655, or 86% of them were attending public schools. In 2002, there were 459 teachers in the public schools for 10,502 students (23 students per teacher). Retention rate up to middle school is high (75%), but the islands have a high drop out rate in high school (only 53% finish high-school). In 2003, 1,500 children were not enrolled in the school system – 80% of these were between 13 and 17 years old. In 2002, enrollment numbers for the public schools in San Andres and Providencia were 11,634 and 1,021 respectively. Funding for the improvement of educational quality comes from the national government and is based upon enrollment figures as well as basic needs that have not been satisfied in each municipality.

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			

Number of Students Enrolled in 2003: Pre-school Pub. 663, Priv 344; Transition Pub. 980, Priv 159; Elementary Pub. 5281, Priv 768; Middle Pub. 4338, Priv 586; Highschool Pub. 1393, Priv 223. In 2002, there were 2 institutions of higher education, offering 11 majors. Only 7% of islanders between the age of 18 and 23 enroll in higher education. The islands have 33 teachers at the tertiary level. On the examination given by the national education board, 83% of islanders received low scores, and only 17% had a high score (in comparison with 50% low, 9% medium, and 33% high at the national level). There are 11 school libraries in the archipelago. There has been a recent effort to establish bilingual schools, as historically the policy was to favour Spanish at the cost of the local Caribbean English. Most schools now teach both languages.

Medical Services:

San Andres has a Departmental Hospital and a Social Security Institute Clinic, located in Sarie Bay. There are also health centres in La Loma and San Luis. There is a Red Cross medical centre in the labourer's neighbourhood. There are also two small private clinics.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:

The date when San Andres and Providencia was first "discovered" appears to be as disputed as which European nation it was that discovered it. Some say it was the Spaniards around 1508, and some say the British, in 1629. The islands were under the rule of the English, Dutch, French, and Spanish for over 200 years. They seem to have passed back and forth between the English and Spanish for many years, ending in 1793 with the signing of the Versailles treaty, in which England recognized Spain's sovereignty over the archipelago. In 1822 the islands were occupied by the Republic of Colombia, but were considered part of the state of Bolivar until 1866 when it was ceded to the central government to be administered directly. In 1868 the archipelago became an independent territory with the name San Andres and Providencia, and in 1912 the island of San Andres was designated as the capital of the new administrative division. Only in 1991 did the Colombian government, in a constitutional article, make the islands their own department. The US had control over a number of the islands which they used as military bases until returning them to Colombia in 1982 (including Serranilla Bank, Bajo Nuevo Bank, Quita Sueno Bank, Serrana Bank, and Roncador Bank).

Referenda:

There have been no recent referenda on the islands.

Recent Significant Events:

There have been no major natural disasters on the islands, however the ongoing turbulent political and economic atmosphere in mainland Colombia has a significant impact on the islands' economy.

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

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