

Tristan da Cunha

Overview:

Tristan da Cunha is a dependency of the island of St. Helena, an Overseas Territory of the United Kingdom located in the South Atlantic.

Territory:

Tristan da Cunha and the neighbouring islands of Nightingale, Inaccessible, Middle, Stoltenhoff and Gough comprise the Tristan da Cunha group. Tristan is volcanic in origin; there are as many as 42 distinct craters, all dormant (not extinct), on Ascension Island and Tristan. Tristan da Cunha had to be vacated for two years after a volcanic explosion in 1961. Tristan da Cunha Island is 98 square kilometers. The name "Tristan da Cunha" is also used for the archipelago, which consists of the following islands (areas given in km²): The main island Tristan da Cunha and its surrounding islands

Location:

Tristan da Cunha Islands are 2,778 kilometers west of Cape Town, South Africa, in the South Atlantic Ocean. There are five islands the group, Tristan da Cunha, Nightingale, Inaccessible, Middle and Stoltenhoff. Gough Island is in the group but is 426 kilometers to the south west.

Latitude and Longitude:

Tristan da Cunha is at latitude 37 degrees, 8 minutes South and longitude 12 degrees, 28 minutes West. Tristan da Cunha, the relatively large main island (37°6'44"S, 12°16'56"W) (area: 98 km², 38 sq mi) Inaccessible Island (37°19'00"S, 012°44'00"W) (area: 10 km², 4 sq mi) Nightingale Islands (area: 2 km², 500 acres) Nightingale Island (37°25'58"S, 12°28'31"W) (area: 1.8 km², 440 acres) Middle Island (area: 0.1 km², 25 acres) Stoltenhoff Island (area: 0.1 km², 25 acres) Gough Island (40°20'S, 10°0'W) (Diego Alvarez) (area: 91 km², 35 sq mi)

Time Zone:

GMT +0

Total Land Area:

98

EEZ:

200

Climate:

Tristan da Cunha has a temperate climate and oceanic influences with rapid weather changes, a wide temperature range (4 to 26 degrees C), and an average rainfall of 66 inches (1,676 mm) per year.

Natural Resources:

Tristan da Cunha had fresh water sources which were valued by mariners as well a landing stations for replenishing food supplies with fish from the surrounding oceans. Fur seals, elephant seals, the rare Shepherd's Beaked whale and the Southern Right whale all visit the island. There is a rich and varied birdlife, including the Wandering Albatross, Petrels, Buntings and the unique Flightless Rail. The Yellow-nosed and Sooty Albatross nest on the Base at Tristan and on the other islands. Rockhopper penguins have established rookeries in various parts of the islands.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:

Per Capita GDP:

% of GDP per Sector:		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

% of Population Employed by Sector		
Primary	Secondary	Tertiary

External Aid/Remittances:

Tristan is entirely self-supporting and, except for the Administrator's salary, receives no money from Britain. Earnings from Postage stamps, handicrafts and crawfish has enabled them to retain their relative independence from the rest of the world. Apart from imported food, the islanders eat home grown potatoes, beef and lamb.

Growth:

Tristan da Cunha had a subsistence economy until the 1940's when a South African Company acquired exclusive fishing rights and with it the obligation to serve the island with shipping access. Tristanians had historically bartered fresh vegetables and water with passing ships which the trade winds brought en route to South Africa, India, the Far East and Australia, that is, until the opening of the Suez Canal. Tristan da Cunha is almost self-supporting economically - only large capital projects require overseas funding. Revenue provided by the royalties from the lobster fishery and interest from a reserve fund, finances government activities such as the provision of free health care and education. The Government is the chief employer on the island with a work force of 143. The lobster factory provides permanent employment for 23 and casual employment for a further 110 people on fishing days, when 20 small island boats catch lobster for processing.

Labour Force:

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)

Industry:

Unemployment on Tristan is almost unknown: both girls and boys are guaranteed jobs when they leave school. Industry on the island is characterized by subsistence fishing and farming; most residents work for the community government in one capacity or another, and maintain interests in farming and fishing on the side. There is a rock lobster processing plant located in Edinburgh. The development of a postage stamp and coin industry is unique, and is enabled by regulations of the Universal Postal Union to produce stamps.

Niche Industry:

Handicrafts and other cottage industry products are a niche industry. The creation of woollen items stemmed from the tradition of bartering with passing ships bound for British and European markets with wool from Australia, which would become the raw material for this business, bartered for fresh vegetables and water. Tristan Rock Lobster: The lobster factory provides permanent employment for 23 and casual employment for a further 110 people on fishing days, when 20 small island boats catch lobster for processing. The lobster fishery is operated under the terms of an exclusive concession granted by the Island. The current holder is Eurex Ltd, a subsidiary of Premier Fishing from Cape Town, South Africa. Two company ships fish around the islands of Inaccessible, Nightingale and Gough, while the islanders fish around Tristan. In addition to the royalty and employment, the fishing company also provides passenger and cargo service to Cape Town.

Tourism:

There is a small tourism industry which is supported by the itinerant shipping lines to the island; maximum Bed and Breakfast capacity on Tristan is normally 40 persons. Passengers from passing ships are not allowed to stay overnight as weather conditions change quickly and they may be marooned. Special permission is required from the administrator in advance of arrival to the Island as there are limited facilities. Usually visitors arrive on the South African supply ship on its way to and from Gough Island, giving guests approximately three weeks on the island. Emergency evacuation can be expensive, and these costs need to be considered in the context of the ,30-,40,000 that it can cost to divert a ship to the island. Tourists need to have insurance to meet these costs. Charges to visitors while on the island, for health care and prescription drugs, are very moderate by international standards at present.

Imports and Exports:	
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:**

Transportation to Tristan is predominantly by sea. Air access is not possible in Tristan.

Number of Main Ports:

There is no airport on Tristan da Cunha; the only way to access the island is by sea. The regular sea port connection is to Cape Town, South Africa. There is one fishing harbor with shelter for small boats on the island, which is surrounded by 600 meter cliffs. Access is currently available from Ovenstone Agencies in Cape Town, South Africa, for passengers, freight, and mail. During periods of rough seas, helicopters must be used to load and unload these vessels. The latest shipping news posted in December 2005 schedules the M.V. Edinburgh arriving once a month, the voyage taking five or six days, and the landing depending on the weather. Sometimes passengers are airlifted by helicopter to shore from the ship. The cost is \$690 US for non residents and \$50 for residents. Fishing vessels bring most of the cargo and mail to the island, visiting the island six times a year. The "RMS St Helena", a passenger/cargo ship did visit the island once a year, usually January. The RMS St. Helena was brought into service in 1990 and is scheduled to be decommissioned around 2010, the cost to the British Government of this service to Ascension, St. Helena, and Tristan has been substantial, and essential, as Ascension is the only island with air access. The South African Antarctic survey ship, the "Agulhas" also calls once a year. A number of cruise ships also call

Internal:**Air****Road:**

Tristan da Cuhna has a small number of vehicles on the island, approximately 15 cars and more than 60 motorcycles.

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

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



Official Currency:
St Helena/Ascension Pound

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

There is no banking or insurance centre on Tristan da Cunha.

Financial Services:
Tristan da Cunha and Ascension Island have no capital market of any form, not even a credit union.

Communications/E-Commerce:
The Administrator's office and the Factory have satellite communications by telephone and fax. The Administrator also has E mail. There is a radio telephone link via Cape Town Radio which connects to the international telephone service and in August 1998 a public satellite phone was installed. Satellite television is also now available. Fishing vessels bring most of the cargo and mail to the island, visiting the island six times a year. The "RMS St Helena", a passenger/cargo ship visits the island once a year, usually January, and the South African Antarctic survey ship, the "Agulhas" also calls once a year.

Public Ownership:
The declaration of Gough Island as a World Heritage site and of Inaccessible as a nature reserve means that 40% of Tristan da Cunha's land is under protection. Gough Island has a Wildlife Management Plan to protect its unique environmental status.

Land Use:
Outsiders are not allowed to buy land on the island. Tristan da Cunha has some agricultural land which supports a limited number of livestock and vegetable gardens. The most of the landscape is left in its natural state. The people of Tristan are keenly aware of the need to live in harmony with their environment. The declaration of Gough Island as a World Heritage site and of Inaccessible as a nature reserve means that 40% of Tristan da Cunha's land is under protection. Gough Island has a Wildlife Management Plan to protect its unique environmental status.

Agriculture/Forestry:
The islanders rely to some extent for their food on their own stock, poultry and crops. Each family is limited to 2 cows and 7 sheep - to conserve grazing - and potatoes, the main crop, are grown at Patches, about two miles from Edinburgh. Other vegetables are grown privately and by the Agricultural Department. The Island Store imports and sells a variety of foodstuffs, household equipment and clothing.

Marine Activity:

Fishing:
Fishing is an important activity for Tristanians, there are two ocean going trawlers, operated by the South African company Eurex Ltd which have exclusive fishing rights for rock lobster around the island.

Marine Life:
The seas around the islands of Tristan are rich in fin fish, five finger, snoek, bluefish, stumpnose, steambraes, soldier and mackerel can be found, as well as lobster (Tristan Rock Lobster) and octopus. Fur seals, elephant seals, the rare Shepherd's Beaked whale and the Southern Right whale all visit the island. There is a rich and varied birdlife, including the Wandering Albatross, Petrels, Buntings and the unique Flightless Rail.

Critical Issues:
Asthma appears to be a critical issue for Tristanians, a study island residents in the 1990's revealed that 57% of residents had at least partial evidence of asthma, and 27% had a definite diagnosis of asthma. Genealogy mapping shows that islanders are the descendants of 15 original settlers, two of whom may have been asthmatic.

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

Capital:
Edinburgh

Political System:
Britain, through the Territory's Governor (appointed by and representing HM The Queen), retains responsibility for external relations, internal security (including police), defence, the public service, finance and shipping. St Helena is an internally self-governing Overseas Territory and the base for the government of St. Helena, Ascension, and Tristan da Cunha. The governor resides in St. Helena, the post is currently held by Michael Clancy. Tristan da Cunha is administered by a resident Administrator, under the authority of the Governor of St. Helena. The Administrator, appointed by the Governor of St. Helena, is the head of Government, which comprises 11 separate Departments. The Administrator must act in accordance with advice from the Island Council, the Island Council consists of eight elected and three nominated members, and the member who has the most votes in the election is the Chief Islander. A general election is held every three years. Elections are held every three years, the latest being held in November of 2003. At least one member of the Council must be a woman, at the moment there are three women members. Tristan da Cunha has its own legislation, but the law of St Helena applies to the extent that it is not inconsistent with local law, in so far as it is suitable for local circumstances and subject to such modifications as local circumstances make necessary.

Political Parties:
There are no political parties on Tristan da Cunha.

Important Legislation:
A significant foundation of the community life on the island was the original agreement of 1817 of communal living, and sharing of costs and profits. The settlement of the island was based on equality of individuals, land is communally owned, and outsiders are not allowed to buy land on the island. In 1876, Tristan da Cunha was gazetted as a separate colony of Great Britain. In 1938 Tristan became a dependency of St. Helena. Her Majesty's Government obligations towards the Overseas Territories (OTs) are enshrined in UN Charter Article 73 (Declaration Regarding Non-self Governing

Territories). The Government's commitments are set out in successive White Papers on International Development and the 1999 White Paper "Britain and the Overseas Territories: Partnership for Progress and Prosperity".

Principal Taxes:

Associated Power:

St. Helena (United Kingdom)

Citizenship:

Tristan da Cunha residents are citizens of Great Britain, and are referred to as Tristanians.

Paradiplomacy:

HUMAN RESOURCES

Tristan da Cunha population in 2005 is 275 persons, some historic population statistics are as follows: 1853 28; 1856 97; 1881 110; 1885 92; 1892 50; 1899 74; 1961 264; 2005 275.

2005			
Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

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

Migration is a historic fact in Tristan da Cunha; although there is no permission for in-migration at this time, the present population is descended from immigrants in the past. There are no indigenous peoples; the first inhabitants were all European.



Crude Birth Rate:

Life Expectancy:

Social life is very limited on Tristan, and like many islands, alcohol consumption is high - an average of 1 litre of whisky per person per week, taking up a large proportion of islanders earnings. Life expectancy is equivalent to the UK, and anything other than basic health care, specialized medical care is provided for Islanders in Capetown, South Africa.

Crude Death Rate:

Ethnicity:

In Tristan, founding families are British, American, Italian, and Dutch; there are only seven founding family names representing these cultural backgrounds.

Class Division:

Languages:

English

Religion:

Christian, Anglican Church.

Literacy:

Education System:

There is one school on Tristan da Cunha; schooling after the age of 16 can be continued in Britain or St. Helena, as there are no advanced studies opportunities on the island.

Total Pre-schools:(2008)	
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	1
Second Level:	1
Third Level:	1
Total Secondary Schools:	0
Total Professional Schools	0
Universities:	0

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			

Recently, many girls have elected to continue their education. They usually go to St. Helena, where they study at Price Andrew School for A (Advanced) Level in many subjects.

Medical Services:

Health care is free, but with just one resident doctor from South Africa and five nurses, the delivery and surgery are limited and serious injury can mean necessitating sending signals to passing fishing vessels, so that the injured person can be transferred to Cape Town. As of late 2007 IBM and Beacon Equity Partners, co-operating with Medweb, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and the government of Tristan da Cunha on "Project Tristan", has availed the island doctor with access to long distance tele-medical help, making it possible to send EKG and x-ray pictures to doctors in other countries for instant consultation.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:

The island was first discovered by the Portuguese Admiral, Tristan da Cunha in 1506. The location of the island in the path of steady westerly winds across the Atlantic made it a regular stop during the era of sail on the high seas. Several nations have attempted to inhabit the island, beginning with the Dutch, and included the Americans, and the British. The lack of a natural harbor has always been a limiting factor in the settlement of the island. It was an American who attempted the first permanent settlement of Tristan da Cunha in 1810. This settlement ended in failure, however, and it was the British who took possession of the island in 1816 and began its permanent occupation. Tristan da Cunha was formally declared to be part of the British Empire in 1876. There are only seven family names found on the island today, Glass, Green, Haga, Laverello, Repetto, Rogers and Swain.

Referenda:

Recent Significant Events:

The explosion of the volcano on Tristan da Cunha in 1961 meant significant change: all residents ended up leaving the island, relocating to England for two years before returning in 1963.

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tristan_da_Cunha

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<http://geography.about.com/od/specificplacesofinterest/a/tristandacunha.htm>

Useful Links:

IslandStudies.ca
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Please address queries to:
 Institute of Island Studies
 University of Prince Edward Island (UPEI)
 550 University Ave
 Charlottetown, PE, Canada, C1A 4P3

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