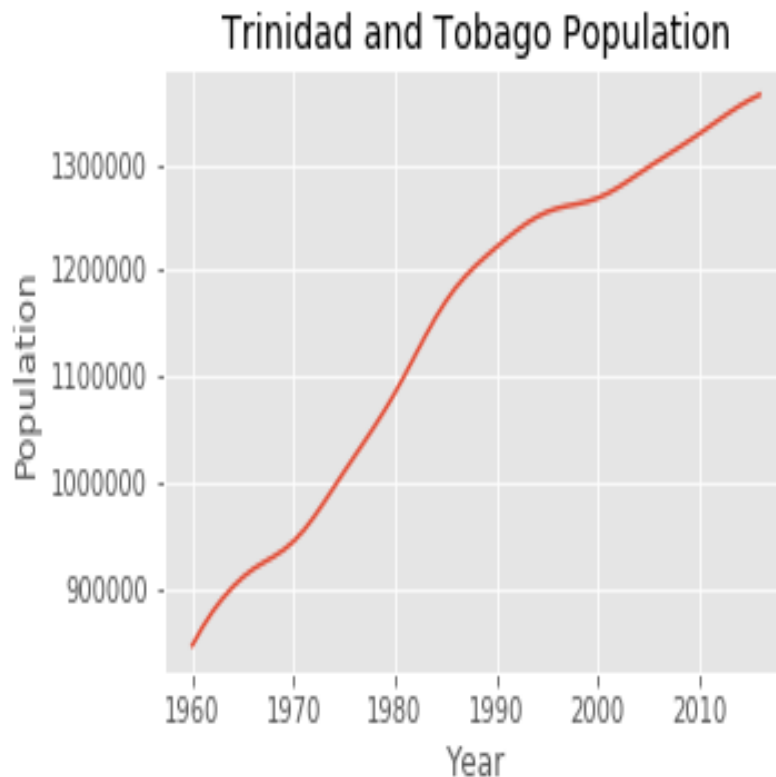


Trinidad and Tobago



Trinidad and Tobago ((listen)), officially the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, is a twin island sovereign state that is the southernmost nation in the Caribbean. It is situated 130 kilometres (81 miles) south of Grenada off the northern edge of the South American mainland, 11 kilometres (6.8 miles) off the coast of northeastern Venezuela. It shares maritime boundaries with Barbados to the northeast, Grenada to the northwest, Guyana to the southeast, and Venezuela to the south and west. The island of Trinidad was a Spanish colony from the arrival of Christopher Columbus in 1498 until Spanish governor Don José María Chacón surrendered the island to a British fleet under the command of Sir Ralph Abercromby in 1797. During the same period, the island of Tobago changed hands among Spanish, British, French, Dutch and Courlander colonizers more times than any other island in the Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago were ceded to Britain in 1802 under the Treaty of Amiens as separate states and unified in 1889. Trinidad and Tobago obtained independence in 1962 and became a republic in 1976. As of 2015, Trinidad and Tobago had the third highest GDP per capita based on purchasing power parity (PPP) in the Americas after the United States and Canada. It is recognised by the World Bank as a high-income economy. Unlike most of the English-speaking Caribbean, the country's economy is primarily industrial with an emphasis on petroleum and petrochemicals. The country's wealth is attributed to its large reserves and exploitation of oil and natural gas. Trinidad and Tobago is known for its Carnival celebration and as the birthplace of steelpan drums, the limbo, and music styles such as calypso, soca, parang and chutney. == Etymology == Historian E. L. Joseph claimed that Trinidad's Amerindian name was Cairi or "Land of the Humming Bird", derived from the Arawak name for hummingbird, ierèttê or yerettê. However, Boomert claims that neither cairi nor caeri means hummingbird and tukusi or tucuchi does. Others have reported that kairi and iere simply mean island. Christopher Columbus renamed it "La Isla de la Trinidad" ("The Island of the Trinity"), fulfilling a vow made before setting out on his third voyage of exploration. Tobago's cigar-like shape may have given it its Spanish name (cabaco, tavaco, tobacco) and possibly its Amerindian names of Aloubaéra (black conch) and Urupaina (big snail), although the English pronunciation is (listen), rhyming

with lumbago, sago, and "may go". == Geography == Trinidad and Tobago are islands situated between 10° 2' and 11° 12' N latitude and 60° 30' and 61° 56' W longitude. At the closest point, Trinidad is just 11 kilometres (6.8 mi) from Venezuelan territory. Covering an area of 5,128 km² (1,980 sq mi), the country consists of the two main islands, Trinidad and Tobago, and numerous smaller landforms, including Chacachacare, Monos, Huevos, Gaspar Grande (or Gasparee), Little Tobago, and St. Giles Island. Trinidad is 4,768 km² (1,841 sq mi) in area (comprising 93.0% of the country's total area) with an average length of 80 km (50 mi) and an average width of 59 kilometres (37 mi). Tobago has an area of about 300 km² (120 sq mi), or 5.8% of the country's area, is 41 km (25 mi) long and 12 km (7.5 mi) at its greatest width. Trinidad and Tobago lie on the continental shelf of South America, and are thus geologically considered to lie entirely in South America. The terrain of the islands is a mixture of mountains and plains. The highest point in the country is found on the Northern Range at El Cerro del Aripo, which is 940 metres (3,080 ft) above sea level. As the majority of the population live in the island of Trinidad, this is the location of most major towns and cities. There are four major municipalities in Trinidad: Port of Spain, the capital, San Fernando, Arima and Chaguanas. The main town in Tobago is Scarborough. Trinidad is made up of a variety of soil types, the majority being fine sands and heavy clays. The alluvial valleys of the Northern Range and the soils of the East-West Corridor are the most fertile. === Geology === The Northern Range consists mainly of Upper Jurassic and Cretaceous metamorphic rocks. The Northern Lowlands (East-West Corridor and Caroni Plains) consist of younger shallow marine clastic sediments. South of this, the Central Range fold and thrust belt consists of Cretaceous and Eocene sedimentary rocks, with Miocene formations along the southern and eastern flanks. The Naparima Plains and the Nariva Swamp form the southern shoulder of this uplift. The Southern Lowlands consist of Miocene and Pliocene sands, clays, and gravels. These overlie oil and natural gas deposits, especially north of the Los Bajos Fault. The Southern Range forms the third anticlinal uplift. It consists of several chains of hills, most famous being the Trinity Hills. The rocks consist of sandstones, shales, siltstones and clays formed in the Miocene and uplifted in the Pleistocene. Oil sands and mud volcanoes are especially common in this area. === Climate === The climate is tropical. There are two seasons annually: the dry season for the first five months of the year, and the rainy season in the remaining seven of the year. Winds are predominantly from the northeast and are dominated by the northeast trade winds. Unlike most of the other Caribbean islands, both Trinidad and Tobago have frequently escaped the wrath of major devastating hurricanes, including Hurricane Ivan, the most powerful storm to have passed close to the islands in recent history, in September 2004. In the Northern Range, the climate is often different in contrast to the sweltering heat of the plains below. With constant cloud and mist cover, and heavy rains in the mountains, the temperature is much cooler. Record temperatures for Trinidad and Tobago are 39 °C (102 °F) for the high in Port of Spain, and a low of 12 °C (54 °F). === Biodiversity === Because Trinidad and Tobago lie on the continental shelf of South America, their biological diversity is unlike that of most other Caribbean islands, and has much in common with that of Venezuela. The main ecosystems are: coastal and marine (coral reefs, mangrove swamps, open ocean and seagrass beds); forest; freshwater (rivers and streams); karst; man-made ecosystems (agricultural land, freshwater dams, secondary forest); and savanna. On 1 August 1996, Trinidad and Tobago ratified the 1992 Rio Convention on Biological Diversity, and it has produced a biodiversity action plan and four reports describing the country's contribution to biodiversity conservation. The reports formally acknowledged the importance of biodiversity to the well-being of the country's people through provision of ecosystem services. Information about vertebrates is good, with 472 bird species (2 endemics), about 100 mammals, about 90 reptiles (a few endemics), about 30 amphibians (a few endemics), 50 freshwater fish and at least 950 marine fish. Information about invertebrates is dispersed and very incomplete. About 650 butterflies, at least 672 beetles (from Tobago alone) and 40 corals have been recorded. Although the list is far from complete, 1647 species of fungi, including lichens, have been recorded. The true total number of fungi is likely to be far higher, given the generally accepted estimate that only about 7% of all fungi worldwide have so far been discovered. A first effort to estimate the number of endemic fungi tentatively listed 407 species. Information about micro-organisms is dispersed and very incomplete. Nearly 200 species of marine algae have been recorded. The true total number of micro-organism species must be much higher. Thanks to a recently published checklist, plant diversity in Trinidad and Tobago is well documented with about 3,300 species (59 endemic) recorded. == History == === Prehistory === Both Trinidad and Tobago were originally settled by Amerindians of South American origin. Trinidad was first settled by pre-agricultural Archaic people at least 7,000 years ago, making it the earliest settled part of the Caribbean. Ceramic-using agriculturalists settled Trinidad

around 250 BC, and then moved further up the Lesser Antillean chain. It was known as 'Land of the Humming Bird' by the indigenous peoples. At the time of European contact, Trinidad was occupied by various Arawakan-speaking groups including the Nepoya and Suppoya, and Cariban-speaking groups such as the Yao, while Tobago was occupied by the Island Caribs and Galibi. === Age of Discovery === Columbus reported seeing Tobago on the distant horizon in 1498, naming it Bellaforma, but did not land on the island. The present name of Tobago is thought to be a corruption of its old name, "Tobaco". The Dutch and the Courlanders (people from the small Duchy of Courland and Semigallia belonging to Polish Commonwealth – modern-day Latvia) established themselves in Tobago in the 16th and 17th centuries and produced tobacco and cotton. Over the centuries, Tobago changed hands between Spanish, British, French, Dutch and Courlander colonizers. Britain consolidated its hold on both islands during the Napoleonic Wars, and they were combined into the colony of Trinidad and Tobago in 1889. As a result of these colonial struggles, Amerindian, Spanish, French and English place names are all common in the country. African slaves and Chinese, Indian, Tamil and free African indentured labourers, as well as Portuguese from Madeira, arrived to supply labour in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Emigration from Barbados and the other Lesser Antilles, Venezuela, Syria and Lebanon also impacted on the ethnic make-up of the country. ===== Spanish settlement ===== Christopher Columbus encountered the island of Trinidad on 31 July 1498. In the 1530s, Antonio de Sedeño, a Spanish soldier intent on conquering the island of Trinidad, landed on its southwest coast with a small army of men. He intended to subdue the Orinoco and the Warao, the two major Amerindian peoples of the island, and rule over them in the name of the Spanish king. Sedeño and his men fought the native Carib Indians on many occasions, and subsequently built a fort. The next few decades were generally spent in warfare with the natives, until in 1592, the 'Cacique' (native chief) Wannawanare (also known as Guanaguanare) granted the area later known as "St. Josephs" to Domingo de Vera e Iburgüen, and withdrew to another part of the island. The settlement of San José de Oruña (St. Joseph) was established by Antonio de Berrío on this land. Only a couple of years later, Sir Walter Raleigh arrived in Trinidad on 22 March 1595. He was in search of the long-rumoured "City of Gold" supposedly located in South America. He soon attacked San José, captured and interrogated Antonio de Berrío, and obtained much information from him and from the Cacique Topiwari. Raleigh then went on his way, and the Spanish authority was restored. The next century (the 1600s) passed without major incident but sustained attempts by the Spaniards to control and rule over the Amerindians, and especially the exertions of the missionaries, were preparing grounds for an outburst. In 1687, the Catholic Catalan Capuchin friars were given responsibility for the conversions of the indigenous people of Trinidad and the Guianas. After 1687, they founded several missions in Trinidad, supported and richly funded by the state, which also granted encomienda over the native people to them. One such mission was Santa Rosa de Arima, established in 1789, when Amerindians from the former encomiendas of Tacarigua and Arauca (Arouca) were relocated further west. The missions aimed at conversion and cultural deracination, which were naturally unwelcome to the target population. Escalating tensions between the Spaniards and Amerindians culminated in the Arena Massacre which took place in 1699. Amerindians bound to the Church's encomienda at the mission at Arena/Arima revolted, killing the priests and desecrating the church. They then ambushed the governor and his party, who were on their way to visit the church. The uprising resulted in the death of several hundred Amerindians, of the Roman Catholic priests connected with the mission of San Francisco de los Arenales, of the Spanish Governor José de León y Echales and of all but one member of his party. Among those killed in the governor's party was Juan Mazien de Sotomayor, missionary priest to the Nepuyo villages of Cuara, Tacarigua and Arauca. Order was eventually restored and the Spanish authority was re-established. Another century passed, and during the 1700s, Trinidad was an island province belonging to the Viceroyalty of New Spain, together with Central America, present-day Mexico and the Southwestern United States. However, Trinidad in this period was still mostly forest, populated by a few Spaniards with their handful of slaves and a few thousand Amerindians. Indeed, the population in 1777 was only 1400, and Spanish colonisation in Trinidad remained tenuous. ===== Influx of French people ===== Since Trinidad was considered underpopulated, Rouse de St. Laurent, a Frenchman living in Grenada, was able to obtain a Cédula de Población from the Spanish king Charles III on 4 November 1783. A Cédula de Población had previously been granted in 1776 by the king, but had not shown results, and therefore the new Cédula was more generous. It granted free land and tax exemption for 10 years to Roman Catholic foreign settlers who were willing to swear allegiance to the King of Spain. The land grant was 30 fanegas (13 hectares/32 acres) for each free man, woman and child and half of that for each slave that they brought with them. It was fortuitous that the Cédula was issued only a few years

before the French Revolution. During that period of upheaval, French planters with their slaves, free coloureds and mulattos from the neighbouring islands of Martinique, Saint Lucia, Grenada, Guadeloupe and Dominica migrated to Trinidad, where they established an agriculture-based economy (sugar and cocoa). These new immigrants established local communities in Blanchisseuse, Champs Fleurs, Paramin, Cascade, Carenage and Laventille. Trinidad's population jumped to over 15,000 by the end of 1789, from just under 1,400 in 1777. By 1797, the population of Port of Spain had increased from under 3,000 to 10,422 in five years, and consisted of people of mixed race, Spaniards, Africans, French republican soldiers, retired pirates and French nobility. The total population of Trinidad was 17,718, of which 2,151 were of European ancestry, 4,476 were "free blacks and people of colour", 10,009 were slaves and 1,082 Amerindians. The sparse settlement and slow rate of population-increase during Spanish rule (and even during British rule) made Trinidad one of the less populated colonies of the West Indies, with the least developed plantation infrastructure. ===== British rule ===== In 1797, a British force led by General Sir Ralph Abercromby launched the invasion of Trinidad. His squadron sailed through the Bocas and anchored off the coast of Chaguaramas. The Spanish Governor Chacón decided to capitulate without fighting. Trinidad thus became a British crown colony, with a French-speaking population and Spanish laws. British rule was formalized under the Treaty of Amiens (1802). British rule led to an influx of settlers from the United Kingdom and the British colonies of the Eastern Caribbean. English, Scots, Irish, German and Italian families arrived. Under British rule, new estates were created and the import of slaves did increase, but this was the period of abolitionism in England and the slave trade was under attack. Slavery was abolished in 1833, after which former slaves served an "apprenticeship" period which ended on 1 August 1838 with full emancipation. An overview of the populations statistics in 1838, however, clearly reveals the contrast between Trinidad and its neighbouring islands: upon emancipation of the slaves in 1838, Trinidad had only 17,439 slaves, with 80% of slave owners having fewer than 10 slaves each. In contrast, at twice the size of Trinidad, Jamaica had roughly 360,000 slaves. ===== Influx of East Indians ===== After slaves were emancipated, plantation owners were in severe need of labour. The British authorities filled this need by instituting a system of indentureship. Various nationalities were contracted under this system, including East Indians, Chinese and Portuguese. Of these, the East Indians were imported in the largest numbers, starting from 1 May 1845, when 225 Indians were brought in the first shipment to Trinidad on the *Fatel Razack*, a Muslim-owned vessel. Indentureship of the East Indians lasted from 1845 to 1917, during which more than 147,000 Indians were brought to Trinidad to work on sugarcane plantations. They added what was initially the second-largest population grouping to the young nation, and their labour developed previously underdeveloped plantation lands. The indentureship contract was exploitative, such that historians including Hugh Tinker were to call it "a new system of slavery". People were contracted for a period of five years, with a daily wage as low as 25 cents in the early 20th century, and they were guaranteed return passage to India at the end of their contract period. However, coercive means were often used to retain labourers, and the indentureship contracts were soon extended to 10 years after the planters complained that they were losing their labour too early. In lieu of the return passage, the British authorities soon began offering portions of land to encourage settlement; however, the numbers of people who did receive land grants is unclear. East Indians entering the colony were also subject to particular crown laws which segregated them from the rest of Trinidad's population, such as the requirement that they carry a pass with them once off the plantations, and that if freed, they carry their "Free Papers" or certificate indicating completion of the indenture period. The ex-Indentureds came to constitute a vital and significant section of the population, as did the ex-slaves. ===== Economic depression ===== Alongside sugarcane, the cacao (cocoa) crop also contributed greatly to economic earnings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In the 1920–1930 period, the collapse of the sugarcane industry concomitant with the failure of the cocoa industry resulted in widespread depression among the rural and agricultural workers in Trinidad, and encouraged the rise of the Labour movement. This movement was led by Arthur Cipriani and Tubal Uriah "Buzz" Butler, who, in combination with his Indian partners (notably Adrian Cola Rienzi), aimed to unite the working class and agricultural labour class to achieve a better standard of living for them, as well as to hasten the departure of the British. This effort was severely undermined by the British Home Office and by the British-educated Trinidadian elite, many of whom were descended from the plantocracy themselves. They instigated a vicious race politicking in Trinidad aimed at dividing the class-based movement on race-based lines, and they succeeded, especially since Butler's support had collapsed from the top down. Petroleum had been discovered in 1857, but became economically significant only in the 1930s and afterwards, as a result of the collapse of sugarcane and cocoa, and increasing industrialization. By

the 1950s, petroleum had become a staple in Trinidad's export market, and was responsible for a growing middle class among all sections of the Trinidad population. The collapse of Trinidad's major agricultural commodities, followed by the Depression, and the rise of the oil economy, led to major changes in the country's social structure. === Independence === Trinidad started to gain rights in the early 1900s. They achieved the right to vote in 1924. In the 1940s the citizens pushed for a self run internal government. Trinidad and Tobago gained its independence from the United Kingdom on 31 August 1962. Elizabeth II remained head of state as Queen of Trinidad and Tobago. Eric Williams, a noted Caribbean historian, widely regarded as The Father of The Nation, was the first Prime Minister; he served from 1956 to 1959, before independence as Chief Minister, from 1959 to 1962, before independence as Premier, from 1962 to 1976, after independence as Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, then from 1976 to his death in 1981 as Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. Rudranath Capildeo was the first Leader of the Opposition post-independence; he served from 1962 to 1967. The presence of American military bases in Chaguaramas and Cumuto in Trinidad during World War II profoundly changed the character of society. In the post-war period, the wave of decolonisation that swept the British Empire led to the formation of the West Indies Federation in 1958 as a vehicle for independence. Chaguaramas was the proposed site for the federal capital. The Federation dissolved after the Jamaican Federation of the West Indies membership referendum of 1961, and the resulting withdrawal of the Province of Jamaica. The government of Trinidad and Tobago then also chose to seek independence from the United Kingdom on its own. In 1976, the country became a republic within the Commonwealth, though it retained the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council as its final appellate court. Between the years 1972 and 1983, the republic profited greatly from the rising price of oil, as the oil-rich country increased its living standards greatly. In 1990, 114 members of the Jamaat al Muslimeen, led by Yasin Abu Bakr, formerly known as Lennox Phillip, stormed the Red House (the seat of Parliament), and Trinidad and Tobago Television, the only television station in the country at the time, and held the country's government hostage for six days before surrendering. Since 2003, the country has entered a second oil boom, a driving force which the government hopes to use to turn the country's main export back to sugar and agriculture. Great concern was raised in August 2007 when it was predicted that this boom would last only until 2018. Petroleum, petrochemicals and natural gas continue to be the backbone of the economy. Tourism and the public service are the mainstay of the economy of Tobago, though authorities have begun to diversify the island. The bulk of tourist arrivals on the islands are from the United States. The country is also a recognised transshipment point for illegal narcotics, with the cocaine distribution from the South American continent to the United States Eastern seaboard. With the most recent seizure of \$100 million US dollar shipment by United States Authorities on 17 January 2014. == Politics == Trinidad and Tobago is a republic with a two-party system and a bicameral parliamentary system based on the Westminster System. The head of state of Trinidad and Tobago is the President, currently Paula Mae Weekes. The head of government is the Prime Minister, currently Keith Rowley. The President is elected by an Electoral college consisting of the full membership of both houses of Parliament. The Prime Minister is elected from the results of a general election which takes place every five years. The President is required to appoint the leader of the party who in his opinion has the most support of the members of the House of Representatives to this post; this has generally been the leader of the party which won the most seats in the previous election (except in the case of the 2001 General Elections). Tobago also has its own elections, separate from the general elections. In these elections, members are elected and serve in the Tobago House of Assembly. Parliament consists of the Senate (31 seats) and the House of Representatives (41 seats). The members of the Senate are appointed by the president. Sixteen Government Senators are appointed on the advice of the Prime Minister, six Opposition Senators are appointed on the advice of the Leader of the Opposition and nine Independent Senators are appointed by the President to represent other sectors of civil society. The 41 members of the House of Representatives are elected by the people for a maximum term of five years in a "first past the post" system. === Political culture === From 24 December 2001 to 24 May 2010, the governing party has been the People's National Movement (PNM) led by Patrick Manning; the Opposition party was the United National Congress (UNC) led by Basdeo Panday. Another recent party was the Congress of the People, or COP, led by Winston Dookeran. Support for these parties appears to fall along ethnic lines with the PNM consistently obtaining a majority of Afro-Trinidadian vote, and the UNC gaining a majority of Indo-Trinidadian support. COP gained 23% of the votes in the 2007 general elections but failed to win a seat. Prior to 24 May 2010, the PNM held 26 seats in the House of Representatives and the UNC Alliance (UNC-A) held 15 seats, following elections held on 5 November 2007. After two and a half

years, Prime Minister Patrick Manning dissolved Parliament in April 2010, and called a general election on 24 May 2010. After these general elections, the new governing coalition is the People's Partnership led by Kamla Persad-Bissessar. Persad-Bissessar and "the People's Partnership" wrested power from the Patrick Manning-led PNM, taking home 29 seats to the PNM's 12 seats, based on preliminary results.

=== Business culture === It is estimated that the hidden economy represents 20–30% of measured GDP. Within the Trinidadian and Tobagonian business structure illicit activities and licit activities work side by side, with many business and political organisations being funded by institutionalised drug smugglers. Within Trinidad and Tobago there are two main drug cartels, the Syrian/Lebanese drug cartels and the Indo Trinidadian drug cartels. The Syrian Lebanese drug cartels are the longest tenured drug cartel on the islands, having ridden the wave of cocaine exportation from the 1970s to the current day. The Syrian Drug Cartels control the vast sway of financing and business interest on the island and exhibit monopolistic tendencies which limit free market policies in insurance, health, finance, heavy and light manufacturing, and land distribution.

=== Foreign relations === Modern Trinidad and Tobago maintains close relations with its Caribbean neighbours and major North American and European trading partners. As the most industrialised and second-largest country in the English-speaking Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago has taken a leading role in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and strongly supports CARICOM economic integration efforts. It also is active in the Summit of the Americas process and supports the establishment of the Free Trade Area of the Americas, lobbying other nations for seating the Secretariat in Port of Spain. As a member of CARICOM, Trinidad and Tobago strongly backed efforts by the United States to bring political stability to Haiti, contributing personnel to the Multinational Force in 1994. After its 1962 independence, Trinidad and Tobago joined the United Nations and Commonwealth of Nations. In 1967, it became the first Commonwealth country to join the Organization of American States (OAS). In 1995, Trinidad played host to the inaugural meeting of the Association of Caribbean States and has become the seat of this 35-member grouping, which seeks to further economic progress and integration among its states. In international forums, Trinidad and Tobago has defined itself as having an independent voting record, but often supports US and EU positions.

=== Military === The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force is the military organisation responsible for the defence of the twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. It consists of the Regiment, the Coast Guard, the Air Guard and the Defence Force Reserves. Established in 1962 after Trinidad and Tobago's independence from the United Kingdom, the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force is one of the largest military forces in the English-speaking Caribbean. Its mission statement is to "defend the sovereign good of The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, contribute to the development of the national community and support the State in the fulfillment of its national and international objectives". The Defence Force has been engaged in domestic incidents, such as the 1990 Coup Attempt, and international missions, such as the United Nations Mission in Haiti between 1993 and 1996.

=== Administrative divisions === Trinidad is split into 14 regional corporations and municipalities, consisting of 9 regions and 5 municipalities, which have a limited level of autonomy. The various councils are made up of a mixture of elected and appointed members. Elections are due to be held every three years, but have not been held since 2003, four extensions having been sought by the government. The island of Tobago is governed by the Tobago House of Assembly:

=== International and regional relationships ===

==== Organisation of American States ==== Trinidad and Tobago is one of the 35 states which has ratified the OAS charter and is a member of the Organisation. The Charter of the Organisation of American States was signed in Bogota in 1948 and was amended by several protocols which were agreed to in different countries. The naming convention which is used with respect to the naming of the protocols is to include in the name of the Protocol the name of the city and the year in which the Protocol was signed, such as Cartagena de Indias in 1985, Managua 1993. Trinidad and Tobago entered into the Inter-American system in 1967.

== Economy == Trinidad and Tobago is the most developed nation and one of the wealthiest in the Caribbean and is listed in the top 40 (2010 information) of the 70 high-income countries in the world. Its gross national income per capita of US\$20,070 (2014 gross national income at Atlas Method) is one of the highest in the Caribbean. In November 2011, the OECD removed Trinidad and Tobago from its list of developing countries. Trinidad's economy is strongly influenced by the petroleum industry. Tourism and manufacturing are also important to the local economy. Tourism is a growing sector, although not as proportionately important as in many other Caribbean islands. Agricultural products include citrus and cocoa. Recent growth has been fuelled by investments in liquefied natural gas (LNG), petrochemicals, and steel. Additional petrochemical, aluminium, and plastics projects are in various stages of planning. Trinidad and Tobago is the leading Caribbean producer of oil and gas, and its economy is heavily dependent

upon these resources but it also supplies manufactured goods, notably food, beverages, and cement, to the Caribbean region. Oil and gas account for about 40% of GDP and 80% of exports, but only 5% of employment. The country is also a regional financial centre, and the economy has a growing trade surplus. The expansion of Atlantic LNG over the past six years created the largest single-sustained phase of economic growth in Trinidad and Tobago. It has become the leading exporter of LNG to the United States, and now supplies some 70% of US LNG imports. Trinidad and Tobago has transitioned from an oil-based economy to a natural gas based economy. In 2007, natural gas production averaged 4 billion cubic feet per day (110,000,000 m³/d), compared with 3.2×10⁶ cu ft/d (91,000 m³/d) in 2005. In December 2005, the Atlantic LNG's fourth production module or "train" for liquefied natural gas (LNG) began production. Train 4 has increased Atlantic LNG's overall output capacity by almost 50% and is the largest LNG train in the world at 5.2 million tons/year of LNG. Trinidad and Tobago, in an effort to undergo economic transformation through diversification formed InvesTT in 2012 to serve as the country's sole investment promotion agency. This agency is aligned to the Ministry of Trade and Industry and is to be the key agent in growing the country's non-oil and gas sectors significantly and sustainably. Trinidad and Tobago's infrastructure is good by regional standards. The international airport in Trinidad was expanded in 2001. There is an extensive network of paved roads with several good four and six lane highways including one controlled access expressway. The Ministry of Works estimates that an average Trinidadian spends about four hours in traffic per day. Emergency services are reliable, but may suffer delays in rural districts. Private hospitals are available and reliable. Utilities are fairly reliable in the cities. Some areas, however, especially rural districts, still suffer from water shortages. === Communications Infrastructure === Trinidad and Tobago has a well developed communications sector. The telecommunications and broadcasting sectors generated an estimated TT\$5.63 billion (US\$0.88 billion) in 2014, which as a percentage of GDP equates to 3.1 percent. This represented a 1.9 percent increase in total revenues generated by this industry compared to last year. Of total telecommunications and broadcasting revenues, mobile voice services accounted for the majority of revenues with TT\$2.20 billion (39.2 percent). This was followed by Internet services which contributed TT\$1.18 billion or 21.1 percent. The next highest revenue earners for the industry were Fixed Voice services and Pay TV services whose contributions totalled TT\$0.76 billion and TT\$0.70 billion respectively (13.4 percent and 12.4 percent). International voice services was next in line, generating TT\$0.27 billion (4.7 percent) in revenues. Free-to Air radio and television services contributed TT\$0.18 billion and TT\$0.13 billion respectively (3.2 percent and 2.4 percent). Finally, other contributors included "other revenues" and "leased line services" with earnings of TT\$0.16 billion and TT\$0.05 billion respectively, with 2.8 percent and 0.9 percent. There are several providers for each segment of the telecommunications market. Fixed Lines Telephone service is provided by TSTT and Cable & Wireless Communications operating as FLOW; cellular service is provided by TSTT (operating as bmobile) and Digicel whilst internet service is provided by TSTT, FLOW, Digicel, Green Dot and Lisa Communications. === Transport === The transport system in Trinidad and Tobago consists of a dense network of highways and roads across both major islands, ferries connecting Port of Spain with Scarborough and San Fernando, and international airports on both islands. The Uriah Butler Highway, Churchill Roosevelt Highway and the Sir Solomon Hochoy Highway links the nation together. Public transportation options on land are public buses, private taxis and minibuses. By sea, the options are inter-island ferries and inter-city water taxis. The island of Trinidad is served by Piarco International Airport located in Piarco. It was opened on 8 January 1931. Elevated at 17.4 metres (57 ft) above sea level it comprises an area of 680 hectares (1,700 acres) and has a runway of 3,200 metres (10,500 ft). The airport consists of two terminals, the North Terminal and the South Terminal. The older South Terminal underwent renovations in 2009 for use as a VIP entrance point during the 5th Summit of the Americas. The North Terminal was completed in 2001, and consists of 14 second-level aircraft gates with jetways for international flights, two ground-level domestic gates and 82 ticket counter positions. Piarco International Airport was voted the Caribbean's leading airport for customer satisfaction and operational efficiency at the prestigious World Travel Awards (WTA), held in the Turks and Caicos in 2006. In 2008 the passenger throughput at Piarco International Airport was approximately 2.6 million. Piarco International Airport is the seventh busiest airport in the Caribbean and the third busiest in the English-speaking Caribbean, after Sangster International Airport and Lynden Pindling International Airport. As of December 2006, nineteen international airlines operated out of Piarco and offered flights to twenty-seven international destinations. Caribbean Airlines, the national airline, operates its main hub at the Piarco International Airport and services the Caribbean, the United States, Canada and South America. The airline is wholly owned by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. After an

additional cash injection of US\$50 million, the Trinidad and Tobago government acquired the Jamaican airline Air Jamaica on 1 May 2010, with a 6–12 month transition period to follow. Caribbean Airlines, the national and state-owned airline of Trinidad and Tobago, is the largest in the Caribbean. After the acquisition of the now defunct Air Jamaica, it became the largest airline and was voted as the Caribbean's leading airline. The Island of Tobago is served by the A.N.R. Robinson International Airport in Crown Point. This airport has regular services to North America and Europe. There are regular flights between the two islands, with fares being heavily subsidised by the Government. === Creative Industries === The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has recognized the creative industries as a pathway to economic growth and development. It is one of the newest, most dynamic sectors where creativity, knowledge and intangibles serve as the basic productive resource. In 2015, the Trinidad and Tobago Creative Industries Company Limited (CreativeTT) was established as a state agency under the Ministry of Trade and Industry with a mandate to stimulate and facilitate the business development and export activities of the Creative Industries in Trinidad and Tobago to generate national wealth, and, as such, the company is responsible for the strategic and business development of the three (3) niche areas and sub sectors currently under its purview – Music, Film and Fashion. MusicTT, FilmTT and FashionTT are the subsidiaries established to fulfil this mandate. == Demographics == === Urban Centres and Towns === Ethnic groups === The ethnic composition of Trinidad and Tobago reflects a history of conquest and immigration. While the earliest inhabitants were of Amerindian heritage, since the 20th century the two dominant groups in the country were those of South Asian and of African heritage. Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonians make up the country's largest ethnic group (approximately 37.6%). They are primarily descendants from indentured workers from India, brought to replace freed African slaves who refused to continue working on the sugar plantations. Through cultural preservation some residents of Indian descent continue to maintain traditions from their ancestral homelands. Afro-Trinidadians and Tobagonians make up the country's second largest ethnic group, with approximately 36.3% of the population identifying as being of African descent. People of African background were brought to the island as slaves as early as the 16th century. 24.4% of the population identified in the 2011 census as being of "mixed" ethnic heritage. There are small but significant minorities of people of Amerindian, European, Chinese, and Arab descent. === Languages === English is the country's official language (the local variety of standard English is Trinidadian English or more properly, Trinidad and Tobago Standard English, abbreviated as "TTSE"), but the main spoken language is either of two English-based creole languages (Trinidadian Creole or Tobagonian Creole), which reflects the Amerindian, European, African, and Asian heritage of the nation. Both creoles contain elements from a variety of African languages; Trinidadian English Creole, however, is also influenced by French and French Creole (Patois). Spanish is estimated to be spoken by around 5% of the population and has been promoted by recent governments as a "first foreign language" due to its proximity to Venezuela since March 2005. A majority of the early Indian immigrants spoke Trinidadian Hindustani, which is a form of the Bhojpuri and Awadhi dialect of Hindustani (Hindi-Urdu), which later became the lingua franca of Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonians. Attempts are being made to preserve the Trinidadian Hindustani language in the country, including the promotion of Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonian musical forms called Pichakaree and Chutney, which are typically sung in a mixture of English and Trinidadian Hindustani. The indigenous languages were Yao on Trinidad and Karina on Tobago, both Cariban, and Shebaya on Trinidad, which was Arawakan. === Religion === Many different religions are practised in Trinidad and Tobago. According to the 2011 census, Roman Catholics were the largest religious group in Trinidad and Tobago with 21.60% of the total population. Hindus were the second largest group with 18.15%, while the Pentecostal/Evangelical/Full Gospel denominations were the third largest group with 12.02% of the population. Significantly, respondents who did not state a religious affiliation represented 11.1% of the population. The remaining population is made of Spiritual Shouter Baptists (5.67%), Anglicans (5.67%), Muslims (4.97%), Seventh-day Adventists (4.09%), Presbyterians or Congregationalists (2.49%), Irreligious (2.18%), Jehovah's Witnesses (1.47%), other Baptists (1.21%), Trinidad Orisha believers (0.9%), Methodists (0.65%), Rastafarians (0.27%) and the Moravian Church (0.27%). Two African syncretic faiths, the Shouter or Spiritual Baptists and the Orisha faith (formerly called Shangos, a less than complimentary term) are among the fastest growing religious groups. Similarly, there is a noticeable increase in numbers of Evangelical Protestant and Fundamentalist churches usually lumped as "Pentecostal" by most Trinidadians, although this designation is often inaccurate. Sikhism, Jainism, Zoroastrianism, Bahá'í, and Buddhism are practiced by a minority of Indo-Trinidadian and Tobagonians. Several eastern religions such as Buddhism and Taoism are followed by the Chinese community. === Education ===

Children generally start pre-school at two and a half years but this is not mandatory. They are however, expected to have basic reading and writing skills when they commence primary school. Students proceed to a primary school at the age of five years. Seven years are spent in primary school. The seven classes of primary school consists of First Year and Second Year, followed by Standard One through Standard Five. During the final year of primary school, students prepare for and sit the Secondary Entrance Assessment (SEA) which determines the secondary school the child will attend. Students attend secondary school for a minimum of five years, leading to the CSEC (Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate) examinations, which is the equivalent of the British GCSE O levels. Children with satisfactory grades may opt to continue high school for a further two-year period, leading to the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE), the equivalent of GCE A levels. Both CSEC and CAPE examinations are held by the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Public Primary and Secondary education is free for all, although private and religious schooling is available for a fee. Tertiary education for tuition costs are provided for via GATE (The Government Assistance for Tuition Expenses), up to the level of the bachelor's degree, at the University of the West Indies (UWI), the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT), the University of the Southern Caribbean (USC), the College of Science, Technology and Applied Arts of Trinidad and Tobago (COSTAATT) and certain other local accredited institutions. Government also currently subsidizes some Masters programmes. Both the Government and the private sector also provide financial assistance in the form of academic scholarships to gifted or needy students for study at local, regional or international universities. ===

Women === Women have a key role in Trinidadian demographics. While women account for only 49% of the population, they constitute nearly 55% of the workforce in the country. ==

Culture == Trinidad and Tobago claims two Nobel Prize-winning authors, V. S. Naipaul and St Lucian-born Derek Walcott (who founded the Trinidad Theatre Workshop, working and raising a family in Trinidad for much of his career). Designer Peter Minshall is renowned not only for his Carnival costumes but also for his role in opening ceremonies of the Barcelona Olympics, the 1994 FIFA World Cup, the 1996 Summer Olympics, and the 2002 Winter Olympics, for which he won an Emmy Award. Geoffrey Holder (brother of Boscoe Holder) and Heather Headley are two Trinidad-born artists who have won Tony Awards for theatre. Holder also has a distinguished film career, and Headley has won a Grammy Award as well. Recording artists Billy Ocean and Nicki Minaj are also Trinidadian. Interestingly, three actors who appeared on Will Smith's sitcom *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* are of Trinidadian descent: Tatyana Ali and Alfonso Ribeiro were series regulars as Will's cousins Ashley and Carlton, respectively, while Nia Long played Will's girlfriend Lisa. Foxy Brown, Dean Marshall, Sommore, Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, Gabrielle Reece, pop singer Haddaway, Tracy Quan, Mike Bibby, Lauryn Williams, Fresh Kid Ice, and Roy Hibbert are all of Trinidadian descent. Trinidad and Tobago also has the distinction of being the smallest country to have two Miss Universe titleholders and the first black woman ever to win: Janelle Commissiong in 1977, followed by Wendy Fitzwilliam in 1998; the country has also had one Miss World titleholder, Giselle LaRonde. ===

Cuisine ===

Music === Trinidad and Tobago is the birthplace of calypso music and the steelpan. Trinidad is also the birthplace of soca music, chutney music, chutney-soca, parang, and chutney parang. The diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of its citizens has led to many festivities and ceremonies throughout the year, such as Carnival, Diwali, and Eid festivities. ==

Sports == === Olympic sports === Hasely Crawford won the first Olympic gold medal for Trinidad and Tobago in the men's 100 metre dash in the 1976 Summer Olympics. Nine different athletes from Trinidad and Tobago have won twelve medals at the Olympics, beginning with a silver medal in weightlifting, won by Rodney Wilkes in 1948, and most recently, a gold medal by Keshorn Walcott in the men's javelin throw in 2012. Ato Boldon has won the most Olympic and World Championship medals for Trinidad and Tobago in athletics, with eight in total – four from the Olympics and four from the World Championships. Boldon is the only world champion Trinidad and Tobago has produced to date in athletics. He won the 1997 200 m sprint World Championship in Athens. Swimmer George Bovell III won a bronze medal in the men's 200 m IM in 2004. Also in 2012 Lalonde Gordon competed in the XXX Summer Olympics where he won a Bronze Medal in the 400 metres (1,300 feet), being surpassed by Luguelin Santos of the Dominican Republic and Kirani James of Grenada. Keshorn Walcott (as stated above) came first in javelin and earned a gold medal, making him the second Trinidadian in the country's history to receive one. This also makes him the first Western athlete in 40 years to receive a gold medal in the javelin sport, and the first athlete from Trinidad and Tobago to win a gold medal in a field event in the Olympics. Sprinter Richard Thompson is also from Trinidad and Tobago. He came second place to Usain Bolt in the Beijing Olympics in the 100 metres (330 feet) with a time of 9.89s. ===

Cricket === Cricket is a popular sport of Trinidad and Tobago, with intense

inter-island rivalry with its Caribbean neighbours. Cricket is the national sport of the country. Trinidad and Tobago is represented at Test cricket, One Day International as well as Twenty20 cricket level as a member of the West Indies team. The national team plays at the first-class level in regional competitions such as the Regional Four Day Competition and Regional Super50. Meanwhile, the Trinbago Knight Riders play in the Caribbean Premier League. The Queen's Park Oval located in Port of Spain is the largest cricket ground in the West Indies, having hosted 60 Test matches as of January 2018. Trinidad and Tobago along with other islands from the Caribbean co-hosted the 2007 Cricket World Cup. Brian Lara, world record holder for the most runs scored both in a Test and in a First Class innings and other records, was born in a small town of Santa Cruz, Trinidad and Tobago and is often referred to as the Prince of Port of Spain or simply the Prince. This legendary West Indian batsman is widely regarded (along with Sir Donald Bradman, Sunil Gavaskar and Sachin Tendulkar) as one of the best batsmen ever to have played the game, and is one of the most famous sporting icons in the country.

=== Football === Association football is also a popular sport in Trinidad and Tobago. The men's national football team qualified for the 2006 FIFA World Cup for the first time by beating Bahrain in Manama on 16 November 2005, making them the second smallest country ever (in terms of population) to qualify, after Iceland. The team, coached by Dutchman Leo Beenhakker, and led by Tobagonian-born captain Dwight Yorke, drew their first group game – against Sweden in Dortmund, 0–0, but lost the second game to England on late goals, 0–2. They were eliminated after losing 2–0 to Paraguay in the last game of the Group Stage. Prior to the 2006 World Cup qualification, Trinidad and Tobago came agonizingly close in a controversial qualification campaign for the 1974 FIFA World Cup. Following the match, the referee of their critical game against Haiti was awarded a lifetime ban for his actions. Trinidad and Tobago again fell just short of qualifying for the World Cup in 1990, needing only a draw at home against the United States but losing 1–0. They play their home matches at the Hasely Crawford Stadium. Trinidad and Tobago hosted the 2001 FIFA U-17 World Championship, and hosted the 2010 FIFA U-17 Women's World Cup. The TT Pro League is the country's primary football competition and is the top level of the Trinidad and Tobago football league system. The Pro League serves as a league for professional football clubs in Trinidad and Tobago. The league began in 1999 as part of a need for a professional league to strengthen the country's national team and improve the development of domestic players. The first season took place in the same year beginning with eight teams.

=== Basketball === Basketball is commonly played in Trinidad and Tobago in colleges, universities and throughout various urban basketball courts. Its national team is one of the most successful teams in the Caribbean. At the Caribbean Basketball Championship it won four straight gold medals from 1986–1990.

=== Other sports === Netball has long been a popular sport in Trinidad and Tobago, although it has declined in popularity in recent years. At the Netball World Championships they co-won the event in 1979, were runners up in 1987, and second runners up in 1983. Rugby is played in Trinidad and Tobago and continues to be a popular sport, and horse racing is regularly followed in the country. There is also the Trinidad and Tobago national baseball team which is controlled by the Baseball/Softball Association of Trinidad and Tobago, and represents the nation in international competitions. The team is a provisional member of the Pan American Baseball Confederation. There are a number of 9 and 18-hole golf courses on Trinidad and Tobago. The most established is the St Andrews Golf Club, Maraval in Trinidad (commonly referred to as Moka), and there is a newer course at Trincity, near Piarco Airport called Millennium Lakes. There are 18-hole courses at Chaguramas and Point-a-Pierre and 9-hole courses at Couva and St Madeline. Tobago has two 18-hole courses. The older of the two is at Mount Irvine, with the Magdalena Hotel & Golf Club (formerly Tobago Plantations) being built more recently. Although a minor sport, bodybuilding is of growing interest in Trinidad and Tobago. Heavyweight female bodybuilder Kashma Maharaj is of Trinidadian descent.

== National symbols ==

=== Flag === The flag was chosen by the Independence committee in 1962. Red, black and white symbolise the warmth of the people, the richness of the earth and water respectively.

=== Coat of arms === The coat of arms was designed by the Independence committee, and features the scarlet ibis (native to Trinidad), the cocrico (native to Tobago) and hummingbird. The shield bears three ships, representing both the Trinity, and the three ships that Columbus sailed.

=== Orders and decorations === There are five categories and thirteen classes of national awards: The Order of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (formerly The Trinity Cross Medal of the Order of the Trinity) in Gold only. The Chaconia Medal, in Gold, Silver and Bronze. The Hummingbird Medal, in Gold, Silver and Bronze. The Public Service Medal of Merit, in Gold, Silver and Bronze. The Medal for the Development of Women, in Gold, Silver and Bronze

=== National songs === The National Anthem of the twin-island state is "Forged From The Love of Liberty". Other national songs include "God Bless Our Nation" and

"Our Nation's Dawning". === National birds === The national birds for Trinidad and Tobago are the scarlet ibis and the cocrico. The scarlet ibis is kept safe by the government by living in the Caroni Bird Sanctuary which was set up by the government for the protection of these birds. The Cocrico is more indigenous to the island of Tobago and are more likely to be seen in the forest. == See also == Index of Trinidad and Tobago-related articles List of Trinidad and Tobago-related topics Outline of Trinidad and Tobago Driver's licenses in Trinidad and Tobago Vehicle registration plates of Trinidad and Tobago == References == Historical Development. Historical Development of the Steel Band. <http://www.nalis.gov.tt/Resources/Subject-Guide/Steelband> Retrieved 17-12-17 == Cited sources == Carmichael, Gertrude (1961). The History of the West Indian Islands of Trinidad and Tobago, 1498–1900. London: Alvin Redman. == Further reading == Besson, Gérard & Brereton, Bridget. The Book of Trinidad (2nd edition), Port of Spain: Paria Publishing Co. Ltd, 1992. ISBN 976-8054-36-0 Julian Kenny. Views from the Ridge, Port of Spain: Prospect Press, Media and Editorial Projects Limited, 2000/2007. ISBN 976-95057-0-6 Lans, Cheryl. Creole Remedies of Trinidad and Tobago. C. Lans, 2001. Mendes, John. Côté ci Côté là: Trinidad & Tobago Dictionary. Arima, Trinidad, 1986. Saith, Radhica and Lyndersay, Mark. Why Not a Woman? Port of Spain: Paria Publishing Co. Ltd, 1993. ISBN 976-8054-42-5 Jeremy Taylor. Visitor's Guide to Trinidad & Tobago, London: Macmillan, 1986, ISBN 978-0-333-41985-4). 2nd edition as Trinidad and Tobago: An Introduction and Guide, London: Macmillan, 1991. ISBN 978-0-333-55607-8). == External links == Trinidad and Tobago Government Portal Official Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Company Website "Trinidad and Tobago". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Trinidad and Tobago from UCB Libraries GovPubs and Tobago Trinidad and Tobago at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Trinidad and Tobago profile from the BBC News World Bank Summary Trade Statistics Trinidad and Tobago Wikimedia Atlas of Trinidad and Tobago Geographic data related to Trinidad and Tobago at OpenStreetMap Key Development Forecasts for Trinidad and Tobago from International Futures Guanaguanare – the Laughing Gull. Carib Indians in Trinidad – includes 2 videos