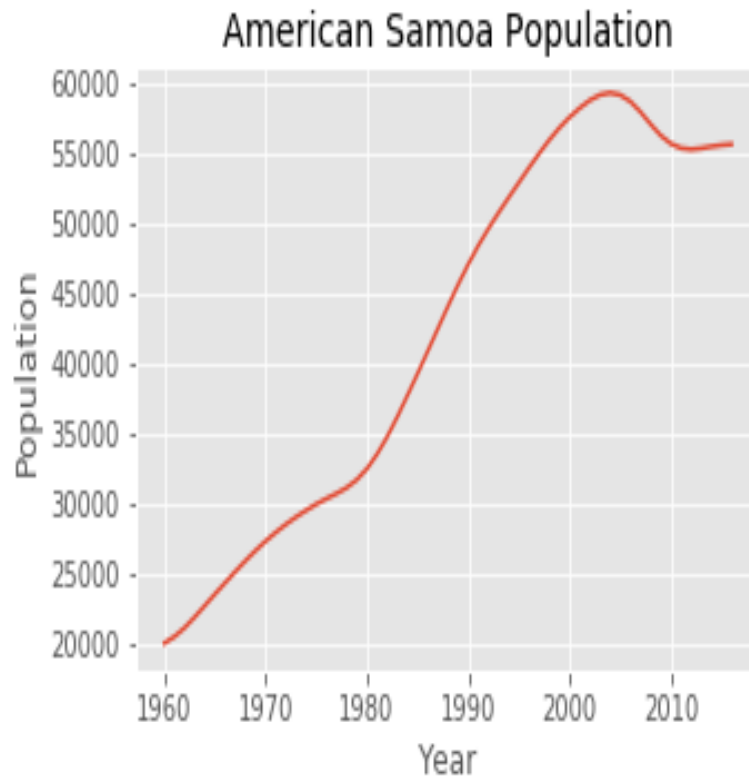


# American Samoa



American Samoa (also called U.S. Samoa due to confusion caused by the word "American") ( ( listen); Samoan: Amerika Sāmoa, [aˈmɛˈlika ˈsaˈmoa]; also Amelika Sāmoa or Sāmoa Amelika) is an unincorporated territory of the United States located in the South Pacific Ocean, southeast of Samoa. American Samoa consists of five main islands and two coral atolls. The largest and most populous island is Tutuila, with the Manuā Islands, Rose Atoll, and Swains Island also included in the territory. All islands except for Swains Island are part of the Samoan Islands, located west of the Cook Islands, north of Tonga, and some 300 miles (500 km) south of Tokelau. To the west are the islands of the Wallis and Futuna group. The 2010 census showed a total population of 55,519 people. The total land area is 199 square kilometers (76.8 sq mi), slightly more than Washington, D.C. American Samoa is the southernmost territory of the United States and one of two U.S. territories south of the Equator, along with the uninhabited Jarvis Island. Tuna products are the main exports, and the main trading partner is the United States. During the 1918 flu pandemic, Governor John Martin Poyer quarantined the territory, and because of his actions, American Samoa was one of the few places in the world where no flu-related deaths occurred. American Samoa is noted for having the highest rate of military enlistment of any U.S. state or territory. As of September 9, 2014, the local U.S. Army recruiting station in Pago Pago was ranked first in production out of the 885 Army recruiting stations and centers under the United States Army Recruiting Command, which includes the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Korea, Japan, and Europe. Most American Samoans are bilingual and can speak English and Samoan fluently. Samoan is the same language spoken in neighboring independent Samoa. American Samoa is the only major territory of the United States in which citizenship is not granted at birth, and people born there are considered "non-citizen nationals". == History == 18th century: First Western contact === Contact with Europeans began in the early 18th century. Dutchman Jacob Roggeveen was the first known European to sight the Samoan Islands in 1722, calling them the "Baumann Islands" after one of his captains. This visit was

followed by French explorer Louis-Antoine de Bougainville who named them the "Isles des Navigateurs" in 1768. British explorer James Cook recorded the island names in 1773, but never visited. The 1789 visit by La Perouse ended in an attack and resulted in the death of his second in command Capt. de Langle and several of his crew on a Tutuila water collection expedition. La Perouse named the island "Massacre Island", and the bay near Aasu is still called "Massacre Bay". H.M.S. Pandora, under the command of Edwards, visited the island in 1791 during its search for the H.M.S. Bounty mutineers. Von Kotzebue visited in 1824. === 19th century === Mission work in the Samoas had begun in late 1830 when John Williams of the London Missionary Society arrived from the Cook Islands and Tahiti. By that time, the Samoans had gained a reputation for being savage and warlike, as violent altercations had occurred between natives and European visitors. Nevertheless, by the late nineteenth century, French, British, German, and American vessels routinely stopped at Samoa, as they valued Pago Pago Harbor as a refueling station for coal-fired shipping and whaling. The US Exploring Expedition visited in 1839. In March 1889, an Imperial German naval force entered a village on Samoa, and in doing so destroyed some American property. Three American warships then entered the Apia harbor and prepared to engage the three German warships found there. Before any shots were fired, a typhoon wrecked both the American and German ships. A compulsory armistice was then called because of the lack of any warships. === Early 20th century === At the turn of the twentieth century, international rivalries in the latter half of the century were settled by the 1899 Tripartite Convention in which Germany and the United States partitioned the Samoan Islands into two parts: the eastern island group became a territory of the United States (the Tutuila Islands in 1900 and officially Manu'a in 1904) and is today known as American Samoa; the western islands, by far the greater landmass, became known as German Samoa, after Britain gave up all claims to Samoa and in return accepted the termination of German rights in Tonga and certain areas in the Solomon Islands and West Africa. Forerunners to the Tripartite Convention of 1899 were the Washington Conference of 1887, the Treaty of Berlin of 1889 and the Anglo-German Agreement on Samoa of 1899. ===== US Protectorate ===== The following year, the USA formally occupied its portion, a smaller group of eastern islands, one of which contains the noted harbor of Pago Pago. After the United States Navy took possession of eastern Samoa for the United States government, the existing coaling station at Pago Pago Bay was expanded into a full naval station, known as United States Naval Station Tutuila and commanded by a commandant. The Navy secured a Deed of Cession of Tutuila in 1900 and a Deed of Cession of Manu'a in 1904 on behalf of the US government. The last sovereign of Manu'a, the Tui Manu'a Elisala, signed a Deed of Cession of Manu'a following a series of U.S. Naval trials, known as the "Trial of the Ipu", in Pago Pago, Ta'u, and aboard a Pacific Squadron gunboat. The territory became known as the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila. On July 17, 1911, the US Naval Station Tutuila, which was composed of Tutuila, Aunu'u and Manu'a, was officially renamed American Samoa. ===== World War I and the 1918 flu pandemic ===== In 1918 during the final stages of World War I, the flu pandemic had taken its toll, spreading rapidly from country to country. American Samoa became one of only three places in the world (the others being New Caledonia and Marajó island in Brazil) to have prevented any deaths during the pandemic through the quick response from Governor John Martin Poyer after hearing news reports of the outbreak on the radio and requesting quarantine ships from the U.S. mainland. The result of Poyer's quick actions earned him the Navy Cross from the U.S. Navy. With this distinction, American Samoans regarded Poyer as their hero for what he had done to prevent the deadly disease. The neighboring New Zealand territory at the time, Western Samoa suffered the most of all Pacific islands with 90% of the population infected, 30% of adult men, 22% of adult women and 10% of children died. Poyer offered assistance to help his New Zealand counterparts, but was refused by the administrator of Western Samoa Robert Logan who became outraged after witnessing the number of quarantine ships surrounding American Samoa. Angered by this, Logan had cut off communications with his American counterparts. ===== Interwar period ===== ===== American Samoa Mau movement ===== After World War I, during the time of the Mau movement in Western Samoa (then a League of Nations mandate governed by New Zealand), there was a corresponding American Samoa Mau movement led by Samuelu Ripley, a World War I veteran who was from Leone village, Tutuila. After meetings in the United States mainland, he was prevented from disembarking from the ship that brought him home to American Samoa and was not allowed to return because the American Samoa Mau movement was suppressed by the U.S. Navy. In 1930 the U.S. Congress sent a committee to investigate the status of American Samoa, led by Americans who had a part in the overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawaii. ===== Annexation of Swains Island ===== Swains Island, which had been included in the list of guano islands appertaining to the United States and bonded under the Guano

Islands Act, was annexed in 1925 by Pub. Res. 68–75. ===== Pan American and first trans-South Pacific flight ===== In 1938, the noted aviator Ed Musick and his crew died on the Pan American World Airways S-42 Samoan Clipper over Pago Pago, while on a survey flight to Auckland, New Zealand. Sometime after takeoff, the aircraft experienced trouble, and Musick turned it back toward Pago Pago. While the crew dumped fuel in preparation for an emergency landing, an explosion occurred that tore the aircraft apart. ===== World War II and aftermath ===== During World War II, U.S. Marines stationed in Samoa outnumbered the local population and had a huge cultural influence. Young Samoan men from age 14 and above were combat trained by U.S. military personnel. Samoans served in various capacities during World War II, including as combatants, medical personnel, code personnel, and ship repairmen. In 1949, Organic Act 4500, a U.S. Department of Interior-sponsored attempt to incorporate American Samoa, was introduced in Congress. It was ultimately defeated, primarily through the efforts of Samoan chiefs, led by Tuiasosopo Mariota. The efforts of these chiefs led to the creation of a territorial legislature, the American Samoa Fono, which meets in the village of Fagatogo. ===== 1951–1999 ===== By 1956, the U.S. Navy-appointed governor was replaced by Peter Tali Coleman, who was locally elected. Although technically considered "unorganized" since the U.S. Congress has not passed an Organic Act for the territory, American Samoa is self-governing under a constitution that became effective on July 1, 1967. The U.S. Territory of American Samoa is on the United Nations list of Non-Self-Governing Territories, a listing which is disputed by the territorial government officials, who do consider themselves to be self-governing. American Samoa and Pago Pago International Airport had historic significance with the Apollo Program. The astronaut crews of Apollo 10, 12, 13, 14, and 17 were retrieved a few hundred miles from Pago Pago and transported by helicopter to the airport prior to being flown to Honolulu on C-141 Starlifter military aircraft. While the two Samoas share language and ethnicity, their cultures have recently followed different paths, with American Samoans often emigrating to Hawai'i and the US mainland, and adopting many US customs, such as the playing of American football and baseball. Western Samoans have tended to emigrate instead to New Zealand, whose influence has made the sports of rugby and cricket more popular in the western islands. Travel writer Paul Theroux noted that there were marked differences between the societies in Western Samoa and American Samoa. ===== 21st century ===== Due to economic hardship, military service has been seen as an opportunity in American Samoa and other US Overseas territories. This has meant that there have been a disproportionate number of casualties per population compared to other parts of the United States. As of March 23, 2009, 10 American Samoans had died in Iraq, and 2 died in Afghanistan. == Notable events == ===== Pre-20th Century ===== On December 10, 1787, French navigator Jean-François de Galaup, comte de Lapérouse landed two exploration parties on Tutuila's north shore: one from the ship *La Boussole* at Fagasa, and the other from *L'Astrolabe* at A'asu. One of the cooks, David, died of "scorbutic dropsy". On December 11, twelve members of Lapérouse's crew (including First Officer Paul Antoine Fleuriot de Langle) were killed by angry Samoans at A'asu Bay, Tutuila, thereafter known as "Massacre Bay", which Lapérouse described as "this den, more fearful from its treacherous situation and the cruelty of its inhabitants than the lair of a lion or a tiger." This incident gave Samoa a reputation for savagery that kept Europeans away until the arrival of the first Christian missionaries four decades later. On December 12, at A'asu Bay, Lapérouse ordered his gunners to fire one cannonball in the midst of the attackers who had killed his men the day before, and were now returning to launch another attack. He later wrote in his journal "I could have destroyed or sunk a hundred canoes, with more than 500 people in them: but I was afraid of striking the wrong victims; the call of my conscience saved their lives." On March 25, 1891, Robert Louis Stevenson paid a visit to Pago Pago. ===== 20th Century ===== On December 15, 1916, English writer William Somerset Maugham arrived in Pago Pago, allegedly accompanied by a missionary and Miss Sadie Thompson. His visit inspired his short story "Rain" which later became plays and three major Motion Pictures. The building still stands where Maugham stayed and has been renamed the Sadie Thompson Building. Today it is a prominent restaurant and inn. On November 3, 1920, American Samoa's 12th naval governor, Commander Warren Jay Terhune, committed suicide with a pistol in the bathroom of the government mansion, overlooking the entrance to Pago Pago Harbor. His body was discovered by Government House's cook, SDI First Class Felisiano Debid Ahchica, USN. His ghost is rumored to walk about the grounds at night. On August 11, 1925, Margaret Mead arrived in American Samoa aboard the SS *Sonoma* to begin fieldwork for her doctoral dissertation in anthropology at Columbia University, where she was a student of Professor Franz Boas. Her work *Coming of Age in Samoa* was published in 1928, at the time becoming the most widely read book in the field of anthropology. The book has sparked years of ongoing and intense debate and controversy. Mead

returned to American Samoa in 1971 for the dedication of the Jean P. Haydon Museum. On November 24, 1939, American Samoa's last execution was carried out. Imoa was convicted of stabbing Sema to death and was hanged in the Customs House. The popular Samoan song "Fa'afofoga Samoa" is based on this, said to be the final words of Imoa. On January 11, 1942, at 2:26 a.m., a Japanese submarine surfaced off Tutuila between Southworth Point and Fagasa Bay and fired about 15 shells from its 5.5-inch deck gun at the U.S. Naval Station Tutuila over the next 10 minutes. The first shell struck the rear of Frank Shimasaki's store, ironically owned by one of Tutuila's few Japanese residents. The store was closed, as Mr. Shimasaki had been interned as an enemy alien. The next shell caused slight damage to the naval dispensary, the third landed on the lawn behind the naval quarters known as "Centipede Row," and the fourth struck the stone seawall outside the customs house. The other rounds fell harmlessly into the harbor. As one writer described it, "The fire was not returned, notwithstanding the eagerness of the Samoan Marines to test their skill against the enemy... No American or Samoan Marines were wounded." Commander Edwin B. Robinson was bicycling behind Centipede Row and was wounded in the knee by a piece of shrapnel, and "a member of the colorful native Fita Fita Guard" received minor injuries; they were the only casualties. This was the only time the Japanese attacked Tutuila during World War II, although "Japanese submarines had patrolled the waters around Samoa before the war, and continued to be active there throughout the war." On August 24, 1943, First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt visited American Samoa and inspected the Fita Fita Guard and Band and the First Samoan Battalion of U.S. Marine Corps Reserve at the U.S. Naval Station American Samoa. On October 18, 1966, President Lyndon Baines Johnson and First Lady Lady Bird Johnson visited American Samoa. Mrs. Johnson dedicated the "Manulele Tausala" ("Lady Bird") Elementary School in Nu'uuli, which was named after her. Johnson is the only US President to have visited American Samoa, while Mrs. Johnson was the second First Lady, preceded by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1943. The territory's only hospital was renamed in honor of President Johnson. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, American Samoa played a pivotal role in five of the Apollo Program missions. The astronauts landed several hundred miles from Pago and were transported to the islands en route back to the mainland. President Richard Nixon gave three moon rocks to the American Samoan government, and these are on display in the Jean P. Haydon Museum, along with a flag carried to the moon on one of the missions. In November 1970, Pope Paul VI visited American Samoa in a brief but lavish greeting. On January 30, 1974, Pan Am Flight 806 from Auckland, New Zealand crashed at Pago Pago International Airport at 10:41 p.m., with 91 passengers aboard. 86 people were killed, including Captain Leroy A. Petersen and the entire flight crew. Four of the five surviving passengers were seriously injured, with the other only slightly injured. The airliner was completely destroyed by the impact and succeeding fire. The crash was attributed to poor visibility, pilot error, or wind shear, since a violent storm was raging at the time. In January 2014, filmmaker Paul Crompton visited the territory to interview local residents for a documentary film about the 1974 crash. A U.S. Navy patrol plane had its vertical stabilizer shorn off by the Solo Ridge-Mount Alava aerial tramway cable across Pago Pago harbor on April 17, 1980 during the Flag Day celebrations, when carrying six skydivers from the U.S. Army's Hawaii-based Tropic Lightning Parachute Club. The plane crashed, demolishing a wing of the Rainmaker Hotel and killing all six crew members and one civilian. The six skydivers were reported in good condition. A memorial monument is erected on Mt. Mauga O Ali'i to honor their memory. == 21st Century == On July 22, 2010, Det. Lt. Lusila Brown was fatally shot outside the temporary High Court building in Fagatogo. It was the first time in more than 15 years that a police officer was killed in the line of duty. The last was Sa Fuimaono, who drowned after saving a teenager from rough seas. On November 8, 2010, United States Secretary of State and former First Lady Hillary Clinton made a refueling stopover at the Pago Pago International Airport. She was greeted by government dignitaries and presented with gifts and a traditional ava ceremony. ==== September 2009 earthquake and tsunami ==== On September 29, 2009, at 17:48:11 UTC, an 8.1 magnitude earthquake struck 120 miles (190 km) off the coast of American Samoa, followed by smaller aftershocks. It was the largest earthquake of 2009. The quake occurred on the outer rise of the Kermadec-Tonga Subduction Zone. This is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, where tectonic plates in the Earth's lithosphere meet and earthquakes and volcanic activity are common. The quake struck 11.2 miles (18.0 km) below the ocean floor and generated an onsetting tsunami that killed more than 170 people in the Samoa Islands and Tonga. Four waves with heights from 15 feet (4.6 m) to 20 feet (6.1 m) high were reported to have reached up to one mile (1.6 km) inland on the island of Tutuila. The Defense Logistics Agency worked with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to provide 16' x 16' humanitarian tents to the devastated areas of American Samoa. == Government and politics == == Government == The

government of American Samoa is defined under the Constitution of American Samoa as an unincorporated territory; the Ratification Act of 1929 vested all civil, judicial, and military powers in the President of the United States of America. In 1951, with Executive Order 10264, President Harry Truman delegated that authority to the Secretary of the Interior. On June 21, 1963 Paramount Chief Tuli Le'iato of Faga'itua was sworn in and installed as the first Secretary of Samoan Affairs by Governor H. Rex Lee. On June 2, 1967, Interior Secretary Fred Andrew Seaton promulgated the Constitution of American Samoa, which took effect on July 1, 1967. The Governor of American Samoa is the head of government and along with the Lieutenant Governor of American Samoa is elected on the same ticket by popular vote for four-year terms. Since American Samoa is a self-governing territory, the President of the United States serves as the Head of State. He does not play an active role in government, but he can dissolve the Fono and no act of parliament will become law without his approval. The legislative power is vested in the American Samoa Fono, which has two chambers. The House of Representatives has 21 members, elected for a two-year term, 20 in single-seat constituencies and one by a public meeting on Swains Island. The Senate also has 18 members, elected for a four-year term by and from the chiefs of the islands. The judiciary of American Samoa is independent of the executive and the legislature, and the High Court of American Samoa is the highest court below the United States Supreme Court in American Samoa, with the District Courts below it. The High Court is located in the capital of Pago Pago. It consists of a Chief Justice and an Associate Justice, appointed by the United States Secretary of the Interior.

=== Politics === Politics of American Samoa takes place in a framework of a presidential representative democratic dependency, whereby the Governor is the head of government, and of a pluriform multi-party system. American Samoa is an unincorporated and unorganized territory of the United States, administered by the Office of Insular Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior. In 1966, the United Nations gave American Samoa the option of joining the independent country of Samoa, but American Samoa chose to stay in the United States. American Samoa's constitution was ratified in 1966 and came into effect in 1967. Executive power is exercised by the governor. Legislative power is vested in the two chambers of the legislature. The American political parties (Republican and Democratic) exist in American Samoa, but few politicians are aligned with the parties. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. There is also the traditional village politics of the Samoa Islands, the "fa'amatai" and the "fa'asamoa", which continues in American Samoa and in independent Samoa, and which interacts across these current boundaries. The Fa'asamoa is the language and customs, and the Fa'amatai the protocols of the "fono" (council) and the chief system. The Fa'amatai and the Fono take place at all levels of the Samoan body politic, from the family, to the village, to the region, to national matters. The "matai" (chiefs) are elected by consensus within the fono of the extended family and village(s) concerned. The matai and the fono (which is itself made of matai) decide on distribution of family exchanges and tenancy of communal lands. The majority of lands in American Samoa and independent Samoa are communal. A matai can represent a small family group or a great extended family that reaches across islands, and to both American Samoa and independent Samoa. In 2010, voters rejected a package of amendments to the territorial constitution, which would have, among other things, allowed only U.S. citizens with Samoan ancestry to be legislators. In 2012, both the Governor and American Samoa's delegate to the U.S. Congress Eni Faleomavaega called for the populace to consider a move towards autonomy if not independence, to a mixed response.

==== Nationality ==== People born in American Samoa – including those born on Swains Island – are American nationals, but are not American citizens unless one of their parents is a U.S. citizen. In an amicus curiae brief filed in federal court, Samoan Congressman Faleomavaega supported the legal interpretation that the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment does not extend birthright citizenship to United States nationals born in unincorporated territories. U.S. nationals have the right to reside in the United States (i.e., the 50 states and District of Columbia), and may apply for citizenship by naturalization after three months of residency by passing a test in English and civics, and by taking an oath of allegiance to the United States. Under Article II and Amendment XXIII of the U.S. Constitution, only states and the District of Columbia may participate in the election of the president and vice president of the United States. Samoans are entitled to elect one non-voting delegate to the United States House of Representatives. Their delegate since 1989 had been Democrat Eni Faleomavaega. In the 2014 Midterm Election, Republican Aumua Amata Radewagen defeated Eni Faleomavaega, becoming the first female and first Republican representative of American Samoa. They also send delegates to the Democratic and Republican National Conventions.

==== Immigration law ==== Unique among US outlying possessions, American Samoa has its own immigration law, separate from the laws that apply in the

United States proper and their other possessions. While US citizens and nationals can freely move to American Samoa, the American Samoa government, via the Immigration Board of American Samoa, controls the migration of aliens to the islands. Special application forms exist for migration to American Samoa based on family-based or employment-based sponsorship. Unlike other US territories (Guam, CNMI, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands), American Samoa is not considered a "US State" for the purposes of the US Immigration and Nationality Act. This means that a lawful permanent resident of the United States may be considered to have abandoned his permanent residence if s/he has moved to live to American Samoa. ===== Official protest to naming of neighboring Samoa ===== The United States Department of State Background Note web page for neighboring Samoa notes that: In July 1997 the Constitution was amended to change the country's name from Western Samoa to Samoa (officially the "Independent State of Samoa"). Western Samoa had been known simply as Samoa in the United Nations since joining the organization in 1976. The neighboring U.S. territory of American Samoa protested the move, feeling that the change diminished its own Samoan identity. American Samoans still use the terms Western Samoa and Western Samoans. === Administrative divisions === American Samoa is administratively divided into three districts—Eastern District, Western District, and Manu'a District—and two "unorganized" atolls, Swains Island and the uninhabited Rose Atoll. The districts and unorganized atolls are subdivided into 74 villages. Pago Pago—the capital of American Samoa—is one of the largest villages and is located on the eastern side of Tutuila island in Ma'oputasi County district #9. Fagatogo is listed in the Constitution of American Samoa as the official seat of government, but it is not the capital. == Geography == American Samoa, located within the geographical region of Oceania, is one of only two possessions of the United States in the Southern Hemisphere, the other being Jarvis Island. Its total land area is 76.1 square miles (197.1 km<sup>2</sup>) – slightly larger than Washington, D.C. – consisting of five rugged, volcanic islands and two coral atolls. The five volcanic islands are: Tutuila, Aunu'u, Ofu, Olosega, and Ta'ū. The coral atolls are: Swains, and Rose Atoll. Of the seven islands, Rose Atoll is the only uninhabited one; it is a Marine National Monument. Due to its positioning in the South Pacific Ocean, it is frequently hit by tropical cyclones between November and April. Rose Atoll is the easternmost point of the territory. American Samoa is the southernmost part of the United States, and Rose Atoll is the southernmost point of the United States. American Samoa is home to the National Park of American Samoa. === Vailulu'u Seamount === The Vailulu'u Seamount, an active submerged volcano, lies 28 miles (45 km) east of Ta'ū in American Samoa. It was discovered in 1975 and has since been studied by an international team of scientists, contributing towards understanding of the Earth's fundamental processes. Growing inside the summit crater of Vailulu'u is an active underwater volcanic cone, named after Samoa's goddess of war, Nafanua. == Climate == American Samoa has a tropical climate all year round with two distinct seasons, the wet and dry season. The wet season is usually between December and March and the dry season from April through to September with the average daily temperature around 81°- 83° Fahrenheit (around 28° Celsius) all year round. == Economy == Employment on the island falls into three relatively equal-sized categories of approximately 5,000 workers each: the public sector, the single remaining tuna cannery, and the rest of the private sector. There are only a few federal employees in American Samoa and no active duty military personnel, except members of the U.S. Coast Guard and recruiters. There is an Army Reserve unit, and a U.S. Army and United States Marine Corps recruiting station in Nu'uuli, American Samoa. The overwhelming majority of public sector employees work for the American Samoa territorial government. The one tuna cannery is StarKist, which exports several hundred million dollars worth of canned tuna to the United States each year. The other tuna cannery was Samoa Packing, a Chicken of the Sea subsidiary, but it closed in 2009 due to American Samoans being granted minimum wage. In early 2007, the Samoan economy was highlighted in the Congress at the request of Eni Faleomavaega, the Samoan delegate to the United States House of Representatives, as it was not mentioned in the minimum wage bill. From 2002 to 2007, real GDP of American Samoa increased at an average annual rate of 0.4 percent. The annual growth rates of real GDP ranged from –2.9 percent to +2.1 percent. The volatility in the growth rates of real GDP was primarily accounted for by changes in the exports of canned tuna. The tuna canning industry was the largest private employer in American Samoa during this period. From 2002 to 2007, the population of American Samoa increased at an average annual rate of 2.3 percent, and real GDP per capita decreased at an average annual rate of 1.9 percent. The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 has contained special provisions for American Samoa since its inception, citing its limited economy. American Samoan wages are based on the recommendations of a Special Industry Committee meeting bi-annually. Originally, the act contained provisions for other territories, provisions which were

phased out as those territories developed more diverse economies. In 2007, the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 was passed, increasing minimum wage in American Samoa by 50¢ per hour in 2007 and another 50¢ per hour each year thereafter until the minimum wage in American Samoa equals the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour in the United States. In response to the minimum wage increase, the Chicken of the Sea tuna canning plant was shut down in 2009 and 2,041 employees were laid off in the process. The other major tuna canning plant in American Samoa is StarKist, which began laying off workers in August 2010, with plans to lay off a total of 800 workers due to the minimum wage increases and other rising operation costs. American Samoa Governor Togiola Tulafono suggested that, rather than laying off minimum wage workers, the companies could reduce salaries and bonuses of top-tier employees. The unemployment rate was 29.8% in 2005, but has been improved to 23.8% as of 2010. Samoa GDP is \$537 million and its GDP per capita (PPP) is \$8,000 as of 2007. Some aspects of telecommunications in American Samoa are, like other U.S. territories, inferior to that of the mainland United States; a recent estimate showed that American Samoa's Internet speed is slower than that of several Eastern European countries. == Taxation == American Samoa is an independent customs territory. As such, local residents are not subject to U.S. federal income taxes on Samoan source income, nor are they subject to pay any real estate taxes on owned properties. == Transportation == American Samoa has 241 km of highways (estimated in 2008). The maximum speed limit is 30 miles per hour. Ports and harbors include Aunu'u, Auasi, Faleasao, Ofu and Pago Pago. American Samoa has no railways. The territory has three airports, all of which have paved runways. The main airport is Pago Pago International Airport, on the island of Tutuila. The Manu'a group has two airports: Ofu Airport on the island of Ofu, and Fitiuta Airport on the island of Ta'u. According to a 1999 estimate, the territory has no merchant marine. == Demographics == The population of American Samoa stands at about 54,194 people, 95% of whom live on the largest island, Tutuila. American Samoa is small enough to have just one ZIP code, 96799, and uses the US Postal Service (state code "AS") for mail delivery. === Ethnicity and language === Of the population, 91.6 percent are native Samoans, 2.8% are Asian, 1% are Caucasian, 4.2% are Mixed, and 0.3% are of other origin. Most people are bilingual. Samoan, a language closely related to Hawaiian and other Polynesian languages, is spoken natively by 91% of the people as well as the co-official language of the territory, while 80% speak English, 2.4% speak Tongan, 2% speak Japanese and other Asian languages, and 2% speak other Pacific islander languages. At least some of the deaf population use Samoan Sign Language. Tokelauan is also spoken in Swains Island. === Religion === Major Christian denominations on the island include the Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa, the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and the Methodist Church of Samoa. Collectively, these churches account for the vast majority of the population. J. Gordon Elton in his book claims that the Methodists, Congregationalists with the London Missionary Society, and Roman Catholics led the first Christian missions to the islands. Other denominations arrived later, beginning in 1895 with the Seventh-day Adventists, various Pentecostals (including the Assemblies of God), Church of the Nazarene, Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons. CIA Factbook 2010 estimate shows the religious affiliations of American Samoa as 98.3% Christian, other 1%, unaffiliated 0.7%. World Christian Database 2010 estimate shows the religious affiliations of American Samoa as 98.3% Christian, 0.7% agnostic, 0.4% Chinese Universalist, 0.3% Buddhist and 0.3% Bahá'í. According to Pew Research Center, 98.3% of the total population is Christian. Among Christians, 59.5% are Protestant, 19.7% are Roman Catholic and 19.2% are other Christians. A major Protestant church on the island, gathering a substantial part of the local Protestant population, is the Congregational Christian Church in American Samoa, a Reformed denomination in the Congregationalist tradition. As of August 2017, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints website claims membership of 16,180 or one-quarter of the whole population, with 41 congregations, and 4 family history centers in American Samoa. Jehovah's Witnesses claim 210 "ministers of the word" and 3 congregations. === Education === The island contains 23 primary schools and 10 secondary schools, 5 are operated by the American Samoa Department of Education, and the other 5 are administered by either religious denominations or are privately owned. American Samoa Community College, founded in 1970, provides post-secondary education on the islands. == Culture == The ethnic culture of American Samoa is almost the same as the ethnic culture of Western Samoa (Upolu and Savaii). U.S. sovereignty distinguishes the civilization of American Samoa from the sovereign Samoa. === Sports === The main sports played in American Samoa are Samoan cricket, baseball, basketball, soccer, and American football. Rugby is also played and, in Samoan villages, volleyball is popular. ===== American football ===== About 30 ethnic Samoans, all from American Samoa, currently play in the National

Football League, and more than 200 play NCAA Division I college football. In recent years, it has been estimated that a Samoan male (either an American Samoan, or a Samoan living in the mainland United States) is anywhere from 40 to 56 times more likely to play in the NFL than a non-Samoan American, giving American Samoa the nickname "Football Islands". Six-time All-Pro Junior Seau was one of the most famous Americans of Samoan heritage ever to play in the NFL, having been elected to the NFL 1990s All-Decade Team and Pro Football Hall of Fame. Pittsburgh Steelers safety Troy Polamalu, though born and raised in the mainland United States, is another famous American of Samoan heritage to have played in the NFL, not having his hair cut since 2000 (and only because a USC coach told him he had to) and wearing it down during games in honor of his heritage. The football culture was featured on 60 Minutes on January 17, 2010. American Samoa's delegation to the 2016 Republican National Convention boasted about being "the greatest exporter of NFL players." ===== Association football ===== American Samoa national association football team is one of the newest teams in the world, and is also noted for being the world's weakest. They lost to Australia 31–0 in a FIFA World Cup qualifying match on April 11, 2001, but on November 22, 2011 they finally won their first ever game, beating Tonga 2–1 in a FIFA World Cup qualifier. The appearance of American Samoa's Jaiyah Saelua in the contest "apparently became the first transgender player to compete on a World Cup stage." ===== Boxing ===== Maselino Masoe, who represented American Samoa in three consecutive Olympics from 1988 to 1996, was WBA middleweight champion from 2004 to 2006. ===== Professional wrestling ===== A number of American Samoan athletes have been very visible in professional wrestling. The Anoa'i family in particular has had many of its members employed by WWE. ===== Rugby league ===== The American Samoa national rugby league team represents the country in international rugby league. The team competed in the 1988, 1992, 1998 and 2004 Pacific Cup competitions. The team has also competed in the 2003 and 2004 World Sevens qualifiers in the 2005 World Sevens. American Samoa's first match in international Rugby League was in 1988 Pacific Cup against Tonga, Tonga won the match 38–14 which is still the biggest loss by an American Samoan side. American Samoa's biggest win was in 2004 against New Caledonia with the score ending at 62–6. American Samoa gets broadcasts of the National Rugby League in Australia on free-to-air television. There is also a new movement which aims to set up a four team domestic competition in American Samoa. ===== Rugby union ===== Rugby union is a growing sport in American Samoa. The first rugby game recorded in American Samoa was in 1924, since then the development of the game had been heavily overshadowed by the influence of American Football during the 1970s. The highest governing body of rugby in American Samoa is the American Samoa Rugby Union which was founded in 1990 and was not affiliated into the IRB until 2012. Internationally, two American Samoans have played for the New Zealand national rugby union team, known as the All Blacks. Frank Solomon (born in Pago Pago) became the first American national of Samoan descent to play for a New Zealand team. Considered a Pacific pioneer in New Zealand rugby, Solomon scored a try against Australia in the inaugural Bledisloe Cup match in 1932, which New Zealand won 21–13. The second American Samoan to play for the All Blacks is Jerome Kaino (born in Faga'alu). A native of Leone, Kaino moved to New Zealand when he was 4 years old. In 2004 at age 21, he played his first match for New Zealand against the Barbarians where he scored his first try, contributing to New Zealand's 47–19 victory that resulted in him becoming man of the match. He also played a crucial role in the Rugby World Cup 2011 playing every match in the tournament. He scored four tries in the event which led to New Zealand winning the final against France 8–7. Kaino was also a key member of the 2015 Rugby World Cup squad, where he played every match including a try he scored in the quarterfinals against France which New Zealand won 62–13. He scored again in the semifinals against South Africa, which New Zealand won 20–18. He played in the world cup final against Australia where New Zealand won again 34–17 to become world champions for a record 3 times (1987, 2011 and 2015). Kaino is one of twenty New Zealand rugby players to have won the Rugby World Cup twice, back to back in 2011 and 2015. In August 2015, the American Samoa Rugby Union Board selected Leota Toma Patu from the village of Leone as the coach for the Talavalu 15 men's team that represented American Samoa at the Ocean Cup 2015 in Papua New Guinea. ===== Sumo wrestling ===== Some Samoan Sumo wrestlers, most famously Musashimaru and Konishiki, have reached the highest ranks of ■zeki and yokozuna. ===== Track and field ===== Hammer thrower Lisa Misipeka attracted international attention by winning a bronze medal in the 1999 World Championships in Athletics. == See also == Index of American Samoa-related articles List of National Natural Landmarks in American Samoa List of people from American Samoa National Register of Historic Places listings in American Samoa Outline of American Samoa Polynesia Samoa Territories of the United States == References == == Bibliography == Ellison,



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