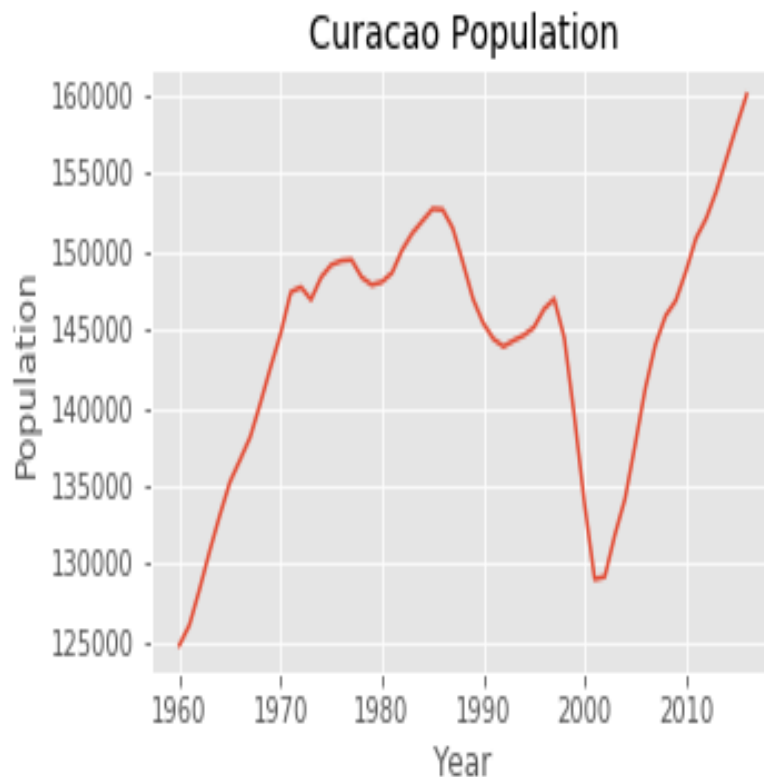


# Curacao



Curaçao KEWR-**■**-sow or ( KUR-**■**-sow; Dutch: Curaçao, pronounced [ky**■**ra**■**s**■**u**■**, ku**■**ra**■**s**■**u**■**]; Papiamentu: Kòrsou, pronounced [**■**korsou]) is a Lesser Antilles island in the southern Caribbean Sea and the Dutch Caribbean region, about 65 km (40 mi) north of the Venezuelan coast. It is a constituent country (Dutch: land) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The country was formerly part of the Curaçao and Dependencies colony (1815–1954) and is now formally called the Country of Curaçao (Dutch: Land Curaçao; Papiamentu: Pais Kòrsou); it includes the main island of Curaçao and the uninhabited island of Klein Curaçao ("Little Curaçao"). It has a population over 160,000 in an area of 444 km<sup>2</sup> (171 sq mi), and its capital is Willemstad. Before the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles on 10 October 2010, Curaçao was administered as the "Island Territory of Curaçao" (Dutch: Eilandgebied Curaçao, Papiamentu: Teritorio Insular di Kòrsou), one of five island territories of the former Netherlands Antilles. == Etymology == In the 16th and 17th centuries, sailors on long voyages would get scurvy from lack of vitamin C. According to some accounts, Portuguese sailors who were ill were left at the island now known as Curaçao. When their ship returned, they had recovered, likely cured from scurvy, probably after eating fruit with vitamin C. From then on the Portuguese referred to this as Ilha da Curaçao (Island of Healing). Another explanation is that it is derived from the Portuguese word for heart (coração), referring to the island as a centre in trade. An unstressed o in Continental Portuguese is usually pronounced [u], so the Portuguese word for heart, coração, is actually pronounced [kur**■**sāw]. Spanish traders took the name over as Curaçao, which was followed by the Dutch. Another explanation is that Curaçao was the name by which the indigenous peoples of the island identified themselves, their autonym. Early Spanish accounts support this theory, as they refer to the indigenous peoples as Indios Curaçaos, or "healing Indians". From 1525, the island was featured on Spanish maps as Curaçote, Curasaote, and Curasaore. By the 17th century, it appeared on most maps in Portuguese as Curaçao or Curazao. On a map created by Hieronymus Cock in 1562 in Antwerp, the island was referred to as Qúracao. == History == == First inhabitants == The original inhabitants of Curaçao were Arawak people. Their ancestors had migrated to the

island from the mainland of South America, likely hundreds of years before Europeans arrived. They were believed to have migrated from the Amazon Basin. The first Europeans recorded as seeing the island were members of a Spanish expedition under the leadership of Alonso de Ojeda in 1499. The Spaniards enslaved most of the Arawak as their labour force. They sometimes forcibly relocated the survivors to other colonies where workers were needed. In 1634, after the Netherlands achieved independence from Spain caused by Eighty Years' War, Dutch colonists started to occupy the island. European powers were trying to establish bases in the Caribbean. The Dutch West India Company founded the capital of Willemstad on the banks of an inlet called the Schottegat. Curaçao had been ignored by colonists, because it lacked gold deposits. The natural harbour of Willemstad proved to be an ideal spot for trade. Commerce and shipping—and piracy—became Curaçao's most important economic activities. In addition, in 1662, the Dutch West India Company made Curaçao a centre for the Atlantic slave trade, often bringing slaves here for sale elsewhere in the Caribbean and on the mainland of South America. Sephardic Jews with ancestors from the Iberian Peninsula settled here with the Dutch and in then-Dutch Brazil; they have had a significant influence on the culture and economy of the island. In the Franco-Dutch War, Count Jean II d'Estrées planned to attack Curaçao. His fleet — 12 men of war, three fireships, two transports, a hospital ship, and 12 privateers — met with disaster, losing seven men-of-war and two other ships when they struck reefs off the Las Aves archipelago. They had made a serious navigational error, hitting the reefs on 11 May 1678, a week after setting sail from Saint Kitts. Curaçao marked the events by a day of thanksgiving, celebrated for decades into the 18th century, to commemorate the island's escape from being invaded by the French. Although a few plantations were established on the island by the Dutch, the first profitable industry established on Curaçao was salt mining. The mineral was a lucrative export at the time and was a major factor for the island being part of international commerce. === Emergence of Willemstad === Many Dutch colonists grew affluent from the slave trade, and the city built impressive colonial buildings. Curaçao architecture blends Dutch and Spanish colonial styles. The wide range of historic buildings in and around Willemstad has resulted in the capital being designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Landhouses (former plantation estates) and West African style *kas di pal'i maishi* (former slave dwellings) are scattered all over the island. Some have been restored and can be visited. In 1795, a major slave revolt took place under the leaders Tula Rigaud, Louis Mercier, Bastian Karpata, and Pedro Wakao. Up to 4000 slaves on the northwest section of the island revolted. More than 1,000 slaves took part in extended gunfights. After a month, the slave owners suppressed the revolt. Curaçao's proximity to South America resulted in interaction with cultures of the coastal areas more than a century after independence of Netherlands from Spain. Architectural similarities can be seen between the 19th-century parts of Willemstad and the nearby Venezuelan city of Coro in Falcón State. The latter has also been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Netherlands established economic ties with Viceroyalty of New Granada, which includes present-day countries of Colombia and Venezuela. In the 19th century, Curaçaoans such as Manuel Piar and Luis Brión were prominently engaged in the wars of independence of Venezuela and Colombia. Political refugees from the mainland (such as Simon Bolivar) regrouped in Curaçao. Children from affluent Venezuelan families were educated on the island. During the 18th and 19th centuries, the island changed hands among the British, the French, and the Dutch several times. In the early 19th century, Portuguese and Lebanese migrated to Curaçao, attracted by the business opportunities. Stable Dutch rule returned in 1815 at the end of the Napoleonic wars, when the island was incorporated into the colony of Curaçao and Dependencies. The Dutch abolished slavery in 1863, bringing a change in the economy with the shift to wage labour. Some inhabitants of Curaçao emigrated to other islands, such as Cuba, to work in sugarcane plantations. Other former slaves had nowhere to go and remained working for the plantation owner in the tenant farmer system. This was an instituted order in which the former slave leased land from his former master. In exchange, the tenant promised to give up for rent most of his harvest to the former slave master. This system lasted until the beginning of the 20th century. Historically, Dutch was not widely spoken on the island outside of colonial administration; its use increased in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Students on Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire were taught predominantly in Spanish until the late 19th century, when the British took Curaçao, Aruba, and Bonaire. Teaching of Spanish was restored when Dutch rule resumed in 1815. Also, efforts were made to introduce bilingual popular education in Dutch and Papiamentu in the late 19th century. When oil was discovered in the Maracaibo Basin town of Mene Grande in 1914, the fortunes of the island were dramatically altered. In the early years, both Shell and Exxon held drilling concessions in Venezuela, which ensured a constant supply of crude oil to the refineries in Aruba and Curaçao. Crude oil production in Venezuela was inexpensive.

The integrated companies Shell and Exxon controlled the entire industry from pumping, transporting, and refining to marketing the end product. The refineries on Aruba and Curaçao operated in global markets and were profitable partly because of the margin between the production costs of crude oil and the revenues realized on products. This provided a safety net for losses incurred through inefficiency or excessive operating costs at the refineries. One of the best-known events that occurred in Curaçao during the 20th century is the 1969 Curaçao uprising. The riots damaged Willemstad and resulted in the resignation of the Prime Minister as well as a social prestige for the local language Papiamentu. === Recent events === Curaçao experienced an economic downturn in the early 1980s. Shell's refinery on Curaçao operated with significant losses from 1975 to 1979, and again from 1982 to 1985. Persistent losses, global overproduction, tougher competition, and low market expectations threatened the future of the Shell refinery in Curaçao. In 1985, after a presence of 70 years, Royal Dutch Shell decided to end its activities on Curaçao. Shell's announcement came at a crucial moment; the fragile economy of Curaçao had been stagnating for some time. Several revenue-generating endeavours suffered even more during this period: tourism from Venezuela collapsed after the devaluation of the bolivar, the transport industry deteriorated with deleterious effects on the profits of the Antillean Airline Company, and the Curaçao Dry Dock Company experienced major setbacks. The offshore industry (financial services) also experienced a downturn because of new tax laws in the United States. In the mid-1980s, Shell sold the refinery for the symbolic amount of one Antillean guilder to a local government consortium. The aging refinery has been the subject of lawsuits in recent years, which charge that its emissions, including sulfur dioxide and particulate matter, far exceed safety standards. The government consortium currently leases the refinery to the Venezuelan state oil company PDVSA. Due to an economic slump in the late 1990s and early 2000s, emigration to the Netherlands has been high. On 1 July 2007, the island of Curaçao was due to become a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands. On 28 November 2006, this was delayed when the island council rejected a clarification memorandum on the process. A new island council ratified this agreement on 9 July 2007. On 15 December 2008, Curaçao was scheduled to become a separate country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands (as Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles were). A non-binding referendum on this plan took place in Curaçao on 15 May 2009, in which 52 percent of the voters supported these plans. ===== Since the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles ===== The dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles came into effect on 10 October 2010. Curaçao became a country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, with the Kingdom retaining responsibility for defence and foreign policy. The kingdom was also to oversee the island's finances under a debt-relief arrangement agreed between the two. Curaçao's first prime minister was Gerrit Schotte. He was succeeded in 2012 by Stanley Betrian, ad interim. After elections in 2012 Daniel Hodge became the third prime minister, on 31 December 2012. He led a demissionary cabinet until 7 June 2013, when a new cabinet under the leadership of Ivar Asjes was sworn in. Although Curaçao is autonomous, the Netherlands has interfered when necessary to ensure that parliamentary elections were held and to assist in finalizing an accurate budget. In July 2017, Prime Minister Eugene Rhuggenaath stated that he wants the island to take full responsibility, but asked for more cooperation and assistance from the Netherlands with suggestions for more innovative approaches to help Curaçao succeed, increasing the standard of living. The Dutch government reminded Curaçao that it has provided assistance with Oil Refinery negotiations with the Chinese "on numerous occasions". == Geography == Curaçao, as well as the rest of the ABC islands and also Trinidad and Tobago, lies on the continental shelf of South America. Curaçao's highest point is the Sint Christoffelberg 372 m (1,220 ft). The coastlines bays, inlets and hot springs offer an on-site source of natural mineral, thermal, or seawater used in hydrotherapy and mesotherapy, making this island one of many balneoclimateric areas in the region. === Flora === The flora of Curaçao differs from the typical tropical island vegetation. Xeric scrublands are common, with various forms of cacti, thorny shrubs, evergreen, and the watapana tree, called divi-divi on Aruba, characteristic for the ABC islands and the national symbol of Aruba. === Fauna === === Climate === Curaçao has a tropical savannah climate (Köppen climate classification As) with a dry season from January to September and a wet season from October to December. The temperatures are relatively constant with small differences throughout the year. The trade winds bring cooling during the day and the same trade winds bring warming during the night. The coolest month is January with an average temperature of 26.5 °C (80 °F) and the warmest month is September with an average temperature of 28.9 °C (84 °F). The year's average maximum temperature is 31.2 °C (88 °F). The year's average minimum temperature is 25.3 °C (78 °F). Curaçao lies outside the hurricane belt, but is still occasionally affected by hurricanes, as for example Hazel in 1954, Anna in 1961, Felix in 2007, and Omar in 2008. A landfall of a hurricane in Curaçao has not occurred since the

United States National Hurricane Center started tracking hurricanes. Curaçao has, however, been directly affected by pre-hurricane tropical storms several times; the latest which to do so were Tomas in 2010, Cesar in 1996, Joan-Miriam in 1988, Cora and Greta in 1978, Edith and Irene in 1971, and Francelia in 1969. Tomas brushed Curaçao as a tropical storm, dropping as much as 265 mm (10.4 in) of precipitation on the territory, nearly half of the annual precipitation in one day. This made Tomas one of the wettest events in the island's history, as well as one of the most devastating; its flooding killed two people and caused over NAf60 million (US\$28 million) in damage. Meteo, the Curaçao Weather Department, provides up to date information about weather conditions, via its website and mobile apps for iOS and Android. === Geology === The northern sea floor drops steeply within 60 m (200 ft) of the shore. This drop-off is known as the "blue edge". On Curaçao, four major geological formations can be found: The lava formation, the Knip formation, the Mid-Curaçao formation and Limestone formations. === Forts === When the Dutch arrived in 1634, they built forts at key points around the island to protect themselves from foreign powers, privateers, and pirates. Six of the best-preserved forts can still be seen today: Fort Amsterdam (1635) Fort Beekenburg (1703) Fort Nassau (1797) Waterfort (1826) Riffort (1828) Piscadera Bay Fort (built between 1701–1704) In 1957, the Hotel Van der Valk Plaza Curaçao was built on top of the Waterfort. The Riffort contains restaurants and shops. It is located on the opposite side of the Waterfort across the entrance to the harbour. In 2009, the Renaissance Curaçao Resort and Casino opened next to the Riffort. == Government == The government of Curaçao takes place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic country. The Prime Minister is the head of government. Executive power is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both the government and parliament. The judiciary is independent of the executive and the legislature. Convicted felons are held at the Curaçao Centre for Detention and Correction prison. Curaçao has full autonomy on most matters, with the exceptions summed up in the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands under the title "Kingdom affairs". == Military == Two Dutch naval bases, Parera and Suffisant, are located on the island of Curaçao. Officers of the Arubaanse Militie complete further training on Curaçao. On the west side of Curaçao International Airport are hangars for the two Bombardier Dash 8 Maritime Patrol Aircraft and two AgustaWestland AW139 helicopters of the Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard. This was until 2007 a naval airbase of the Royal Netherlands Navy, which operated the base for 55 years, with a wide variety of aircraft in the past years Fireflies, Avengers, Trackers, Neptunes, Fokker F-27's, P-3C Orions, Fokker F-60's and several helicopters. After the political decision to sell all Orions the airbase wasn't needed anymore. The west end of the airport is a USAF Forward Operating Location (FOL). The base hosts AWACS and transport aircraft. Until 1999 the USAF operated a small fleet of F-16 fighters from the FOB. === Conscription === Suffisant Naval Base has facilities for conscription in the Caribbean, which has not been military conscription since 1997, but social conscription. This type of conscription offers underprivileged Antillean young people the chance of taking professional training. == Economy == Curaçao has an open economy, with tourism, international trade, shipping services, oil refining, storage (oil and bunkering) and international financial services being the most important sectors. The Venezuelan oil company PDVSA has a lease on the island's oil refinery expiring in 2019; the facility employs 1000 people, refining oil from Venezuela for export to the US and Asia. Schlumberger, the world's largest oil field services company is incorporated in Curaçao. The Isla oil refinery is claimed to be responsible for Curaçao's position in the world's top five highest countries for CO2 emissions per capita. Curaçao has its own currency and its economy is well developed, supporting a high standard of living, ranking 46th in the world in terms of GDP (PPP) per capita and 27th in the world in terms of nominal GDP per capita. Curaçao possesses a high income economy, as defined by the World Bank. Activities related to the port of Willemstad (like the Free Trade Zone) make a significant contribution to the economy. To achieve the government's aim to make its economy more diverse, efforts are being made to attract more foreign investment. This policy, called the "Open Arms" policy, features a heavy focus on information technology companies. Reduced foreign demand due to Venezuelan unrest has led to decreased exports along with increased public demands for services and goods which has resulted in economic stagnation since 2016. Expansion was recorded in the construction, financial intermediation, and utilities sectors while other aspects of the economy contracted. === Tourism === While tourism plays a major role in Curaçao's economy, it is less reliant on tourism than other Caribbean countries. Most tourists originate from the Netherlands, Eastern United States, South America and other Caribbean Islands. It is a leader in the Caribbean in cruise tourism growth with 610,186 cruise passengers in 2013, a 41.4% increase over the prior year. Hato International Airport received 1,772,501 passengers in 2013 and recently announced capital investments totaling US\$48 million aimed at transforming the airport into a regional hub by

2018. In 2017 the tourism sector was expected grow at 1% in terms of the total tourist stay over and by 15% in total cruise visitors versus 2016. The island's insular shelf has a sharp drop-off known as the "Blue Edge" which is often visited by Scuba diving tourists. Coral reefs for snorkeling and scuba diving can be reached without a boat. The southern coast has calm waters as well as many small beaches, such as Jan Thiel and Cas Abou. The coastline of Curaçao features numerous bays and inlets which serve as popular mooring locations for boats. In June 2017, the island was named the Top Cruise Destination in the Southern Caribbean by Cruise Critic, a major online forum. The winners of the Destination Awards were selected based on comments from cruise passengers who rated the downtown area of Willemstad as "amazing" and the food and shopping as "excellent". Some of the coral reefs are affected by tourism. Porto Marie Beach is experimenting with artificial coral reefs in order to improve the reef's condition. Hundreds of artificial coral blocks that have been placed are now home to a large array of tropical fish. === Labour === In 2016, a Labor Force Survey (LFS) indicated that the unemployment rate was 13.3%. For residents aged 15–64, the employment rate was 70.4%. === Financial services === Curaçao's history in financial services dates back to World War I. Prior to this period, the financial arms of local merchant houses functioned as informal lenders to the community. However, at the turn of the century, Curaçao underwent industrialization, and a number of merchant houses established private commercial banks. As the economy grew, these banks began assuming additional functions eventually becoming full-fledged financial institutions. The Dutch Caribbean Securities Exchange is located in the capital of Willemstad, as is the Central Bank of Curaçao and Sint Maarten; the latter of which dates to 1828. It is the oldest central bank in the Western Hemisphere. The island's legal system supports a variety of corporate structures and is a corporate haven. Though Curaçao is considered a tax haven, it adheres to the EU Code of Conduct against harmful tax practices. It holds a qualified intermediary status from the United States Internal Revenue Service. It is an accepted jurisdiction of the OECD and Caribbean Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering. The country enforces Anti-Money Laundering and Counter-Terrorism funding compliance. ===== Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act ===== On June 30, 2014, Curaçao was deemed to have an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the United States of America with respect to the "Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act" of the United States of America. The Model 1 Agreement recognizes the Kingdom of the Netherlands and states that the agreement relates to Curaçao. This agreement recognizes the following: the Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) with respect to taxes, which was signed in Washington, D.C. on 17 April 2002 between the Government of the Netherlands Antilles with respect to Curaçao and the Government of the United States of America. The exchange of Notes between the Governments via the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs "dated 31 October 2014 and 4 November 2014 between the Parties regarding the application of the TIEA in light of the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles" of which Curaçao was a member country. On 27 March 2017, the U.S. Department of Treasury site disclosed that the agreement and related contracts were "in force" since 3 August 2016. === Trade === Curaçao trades mainly with the United States, Venezuela, and the European Union. It has an Association Agreement with the European Union which allows companies which do business in and via Curaçao to export products to European markets, free of import duties and quotas. It is also a participant in the US Caribbean Basin Initiative allowing it to have preferential access to the US market. === Prostitution === Prostitution in Curaçao is legal only for foreign women who get a temporary permit to work in the large open-air brothel called "Le Mirage" or "Campo Alegre" that has operated near the airport since the 1940s, and for the men (locals included) who make use of their services. Curaçao monitors, contains and regulates the industry. The government states that the workers in these establishments are thereby given a safe environment and access to medical practitioners. This approach does exclude local women (or men) to legally make a living from prostitution and does lead to loss of local income as the foreign prostitutes send or take most of their earnings home. The U.S. State Department has cited anecdotal evidence claiming that, "Curaçao...[is a] destination island... for women trafficked for the sex trade from Peru, Brazil, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, and Haiti, according to local observers. At least 500 foreign women reportedly are in prostitution throughout the five islands of the Antilles, some of whom have been trafficked." The US Department of State has said that the government of Curaçao frequently underestimates the extent of human trafficking problems. == Demographics == Births and deaths Structure of the population As of 1 July 2013: === Languages === Curaçao is a polyglot society. The official languages are Dutch, Papiamentu and English. However, Dutch is the sole language for all administration and legal matters. Most of Curaçao's population is able to converse in at least two of the languages of Papiamentu, Dutch, English, and Spanish. The most widely spoken language is Papiamentu, a Portuguese creole with

African, Dutch and Spanish influences, spoken in all levels of society. Papiamentu was introduced as a language of primary school education in 1993, making Curaçao one of a handful of places where a creole language is used as a medium to acquire basic literacy. Spanish and English also have a long historical presence in Curaçao. Spanish became an important language in the 18th century due to the close economic ties with Spanish colonies in what are now Venezuela and Colombia and several Venezuelan TV networks are received. Use of English dates to the early 19th century, when the British took Curaçao, Aruba and Bonaire. When Dutch rule resumed in 1815, officials already noted wide use of the language. According to the 2001 census, Papiamentu is the first language of 81.2% of the population. Dutch is the first language of 8%, Spanish of 4%, and English of 2.9%. However, these numbers divide the population in terms of first language and do not account for the high rate of bilingualism in the population of Curaçao.

=== Ethnicities === Because of its history, the island's population comes from a number of ethnic backgrounds. While the majority of Curaçaoans are of Black African descent, there are sizeable minorities of Dutch, Latin American, French, South Asian, East Asian (including Javanese who descend largely from workers contracted from the island of Java in the former Dutch East Indies (modern Indonesia)), Portuguese and Levantine people. Additionally, there are both Sephardic and Ashkenazi Jews.

=== Religion === The religious breakdown of the population of Curaçao, according to a 2011 estimate: Roman Catholic; 72.8% Pentecostal; 6.6% other Protestant; 3.2% Adventist; 3% Jehovah's Witnesses; 2% Evangelical; 1.9% Other; 3.8% None; 6% Unspecified; 0.6% This includes a shift towards the charismatic renewal or charismatic movement since the mid-1970s. Other denominations include the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Methodist Church. Alongside these Christian denominations, some inhabitants practice Montamentu and other diaspora African religions. Like elsewhere in Latin America, Pentecostalism is on the rise. There are also practising Muslims and Hindus. The Catholic diocese of Willemstad encompasses all the territory of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Caribbean which includes Aruba, Curaçao, Sint Maarten, and the islands of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba. The diocese is also a member of the Antilles Episcopal Conference. While small, Curaçao's Jewish community has had a significant impact on the island's history. Curaçao has the oldest active Jewish congregation in the Americas, dating to 1651. The Curaçao synagogue is the oldest synagogue of the Americas in continuous use, since its completion in 1732 on the site of a previous synagogue.

== Education == Public education is based on the Dutch educational system and besides the public schools, private and parochial schools are also available. Since the introduction of a new public education law in 1992, compulsory primary education starts at age six and continues six years, secondary lasts for another five. The main institute of higher learning is the University of Curaçao, enrolling 2,100 students. The comprehensive model of education is under influences from both Dutch and American's education offering. Other higher education offering on the island include offshore medical schools, language schools and academies for fine art, music, police, teacher and nurse-training.

== Culture ==

=== Literature === Despite the island's relatively small population, the diversity of languages and cultural influences on Curaçao have generated a remarkable literary tradition, primarily in Dutch and Papiamentu. The oral traditions of the Arawak indigenous peoples are lost. West African slaves brought the tales of Anansi, thus forming the basis of Papiamentu literature. The first published work in Papiamentu was a poem by Joseph Sickman Corsen entitled *Atardi*, published in the *La Cruz* newspaper in 1905. Throughout Curaçaoan literature, narrative techniques and metaphors best characterized as magic realism tend to predominate. Novelists and poets from Curaçao have made an impressive contribution to Caribbean and Dutch literature. Best known are Cola Debrot, Frank Martinus Arion, Pierre Lauffer, Elis Juliana, Guillermo Rosario, Boeli van Leeuwen and Tip Marugg.

=== Cuisine === Local food is called *Krioyo* (pronounced the same as *criollo*, the Spanish word for "Creole") and boasts a blend of flavours and techniques best compared to Caribbean cuisine and Latin American cuisine. Dishes common in Curaçao are found in Aruba and Bonaire as well. Popular dishes include: *stobá* (a stew made with various ingredients such as papaya, beef or goat), *Guiambo* (soup made from okra and seafood), *kadushi* (cactus soup), *sopi mondongo* (intestine soup), *funchi* (cornmeal paste similar to *fufu*, *ugali* and *polenta*) and a lot of fish and other seafood. The ubiquitous side dish is fried plantain. Local bread rolls are made according to a Portuguese recipe. All around the island, there are *snèks* which serve local dishes as well as alcoholic drinks in a manner akin to the English public house. The ubiquitous breakfast dish is *pastechi*: fried pastry with fillings of cheese, tuna, ham, or ground meat. Around the holiday season special dishes are consumed, such as the *hallaca* and *pekelé*, made out of salt cod. At weddings and other special occasions a variety of *kos dushi* are served: *kokada* (coconut sweets), *ko'i lechi* (condensed milk and sugar sweet) and *tentalaria* (peanut sweets). The Curaçao liqueur was developed here, when a local

experimented with the rinds of the local citrus fruit known as laraha. Surinamese, Chinese, Indonesian, Indian and Dutch culinary influences also abound. The island also has a number of Chinese restaurants that serve mainly Indonesian dishes such as satay, nasi goreng and lumpia (which are all Indonesian names for the dishes). Dutch specialties such as croquettes and oliebolle are widely served in homes and restaurants.

== Sports == On 27th March 2018, the Curaçao football team beat Bolivia 1-0 in a friendly match. Bolivia were ranked 47th in the world compared to Curaçao's 82 In 2004, the Little League Baseball team from Willemstad, Curaçao, won the world title in a game against the United States champion from Thousand Oaks, California. The Willemstad lineup included Jurickson Profar, the standout shortstop prospect who now plays for the Texas Rangers of Major League Baseball. In the 2006 World Baseball Classic, Curaçaoans played for the Netherlands team. Shairon Martis, born in Willemstad, contributed to the Dutch team by throwing a seven-inning no-hitter against Panama (the game was stopped due to the mercy rule). The 2010 documentary film, *Boys of Summer*, details Curaçao's Pabao Little League All-Stars winning their country's eighth straight championship at the 2008 Little League World Series, then going on to defeat other teams, including Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, and earning a spot in Williamsport. The prevailing trade winds and warm water make Curaçao a location for windsurfing. One factor is that the deep water around Curaçao makes it difficult to lay marks for major windsurfing events, thus hindering the island's success as a windsurfing destination. There is warm, clear water around the island. Scuba divers and snorkelers may have visibility up to 30 metres (98 feet) at the Curaçao Underwater Marine Park, which stretches along 20 kilometres (12 miles) of Curaçao's southern coastline. Curaçao participated in the 2013 CARIFTA Games. Kevin Philbert stood third in the under-20 male Long Jump with a distance of 7.36 metres (24.15 feet). Vanessa Philbert stood second the under-17 female 1,500 metres (4,900 feet) with a time of 4:47.97.

== Infrastructure ==

=== Airport === Hato International Airport is located on the island. Its runway parallels, and is adjacent to, the northern coast. It has services to the Caribbean region, South America, North America and Europe. Hato Airport is a fairly large facility, with the third longest commercial runway in the Caribbean region after Rafael Hernández Airport in Puerto Rico and Pointe-à-Pitre International Airport in Guadeloupe. The airport serves as a main base for Insel Air, the national airline of Curaçao.

=== Bridges === The Queen Emma Bridge, a 168 metres (551 ft) long pontoon bridge, connects pedestrians between the Punda and Otrobanda districts. This swings open to allow the passage of ships to and from the port. The bridge was originally opened in 1888 and the current bridge was installed in 1939. It is best known and, more often than not, referred to by the locals as "Our Swinging Old Lady". The Queen Juliana Bridge connects mobile traffic between the same two districts. At 185 feet (56 m) above the sea, it is one of the highest bridges in the Caribbean.

=== Utilities === A private company, and full member of CARILEC, Aqualectra, delivers potable water and electricity to the island. Rates are controlled by the government. Water is produced by reverse osmosis or desalinization. It services 69,000 households and companies using 130,000 water and electric meters.

== Notable residents == People from Curaçao include:

=== Arts and culture === Tip Marugg, famous writer Izaline Calister, singer-songwriter Sherman Smith (musician), singer-songwriter Ruënná Mercelina, model, actress, beauty queen Peter Hartman, past-CEO of KLM Kizzy McHugh, a singer songwriter and television personality based in the United States No Game, popular band Robby Müller, cinematographer, closely associated with Wim Wenders and Jim Jarmusch Pernell Saturnino, a graduated percussionist of Berklee College of Music Wim Statius Muller, composer, pianist

=== Politics and government === Luis Brión, admiral in the Venezuelan War of Independence Moises Frumencio da Costa Gomez, first Prime Minister of the Netherlands Antilles Daniel De Leon, a socialist leader George Maduro, a war hero and namesake of Madurodam in The Hague Manuel Carlos Piar, general and competitor of Bolívar during the Venezuelan War of Independence Tula, leader of the 1795 slave revolt

=== Sports ===

==== Baseball ==== Players in Minor League Baseball: Sharlon Scoop, professional infielder Players in Major League Baseball: Wladimir Balentien, professional outfielder Roger Bernadina, professional outfielder Didi Gregorius, professional shortstop Kenley Jansen, professional pitcher Andruw Jones, professional outfielder Jair Jurrjens, professional pitcher Shairon Martis, professional pitcher Jurickson Profar, professional infielder Jonathan Schoop, professional infielder Andrelton Simmons, professional shortstop Hensley Meulens, professional baseball player and hitting coach Randall Simon, first baseman Ozzie Albies, second baseman Football (Soccer) Vurnon Anita, a football player for Leeds United in the English EFL Championship Riechedly Bazoer, footballer currently playing for VfL Wolfsburg in the German Bundesliga. Roly Bonevacia, a footballer who plays for Western Sydney Wanderers in the Australian A-League Gino van Kessel, a footballer who plays for Oxford United. Liandro Martis, footballer who plays for Leicester City in the English Premier League.

Cuco Martina, footballer who plays for Everton in the English Premier League Irvingly van Eijma, footballer who currently plays for RKC Waalwijk in the Dutch Eerste Divisie Quentin Martinus, footballer who plays for Urawa Red Diamonds in the Japan J1 League. Darryl Lachman, footballer who currently plays for Willem II in the Dutch Eredivisie. Juninho Bacuna, footballer who currently playing for FC Groningen in the Dutch Eredivisie. Gevaro Nepomuceno, footballer who plays for C.S. Maritimo in the Portugal Primeira Liga. Charlton Vicente, footballer currently playing for Helmond Sport in the Dutch Eerste divisie. Jetro Willems, footballer currently playing for Eintracht Frankfurt in the German Bundesliga. Charlison Benschop, footballer currently playing for Hannover 96 in the German Bundesliga. Other sports Marc de Maar, professional cyclist Churandy Martina, gold medalist 100 metres at the Pan American Games 2007 Jean-Julien Rojer, professional tennis player Jemyma Betrian, professional mixed-martial-arts (MMA) fighter Liemarvin Bonevacia, professional sprinter == See also == Leeward Antilles == Notes == == References == == Further reading == Corcos, Joseph. A Synopsis of the History of the Jews of Curaçao. Curacao: Imprenta de la Librería, 1897. Emmanuel, Isaac S. and Suzanne A. History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles. 2 vols. Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1970. Rupert, Linda M. "Contraband Trade and the Shaping of Colonial Societies in Curaçao and Tierra Firme." Itinerario 30 (2006): 35–54. == External links == "Curaçao". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Government of Curacao (in Dutch) Government of Curacao (in Papiamentu) Curaçao Tourism Board Directory and information guide for Curaçao First Millennium Development Goals and Report. Curaçao and Sint Maarten. 2011 Halman, Johannes; Robert Rojer (2008). Jan Gerard Palm Music Scores: Waltzes, Mazurkas, Danzas, Tumbas, Polkas, Marches, Fantasies, Serenades, a Galop and Music Composed for Services in the Synagogue and the Lodge. Amsterdam: Broekmans & Van Poppel. Archived from the original on 2008-12-26. Halman, Johannes I.M.; Rojer, Robert A. (2008). Jan Gerard Palm: Life and Work of a Musical Patriarch in Curaçao (In Dutch language). Leiden: KITLV. Archived from the original on 2009-09-25. Palm, Edgar (1978). Muziek en musici van de Nederlandse Antillen. Curaçao: E. Palm. Archived from the original on 2004-06-05. Boskaljon, Rudolph (1958). Honderd jaar muziekleven op Curaçao. Anjerpublicaties 3. Assen: Uitg. in samenwerking met het Prins Bernhard fonds Nederlandse Antillen door Van Gorcum. Archived from the original on 2004-02-02.