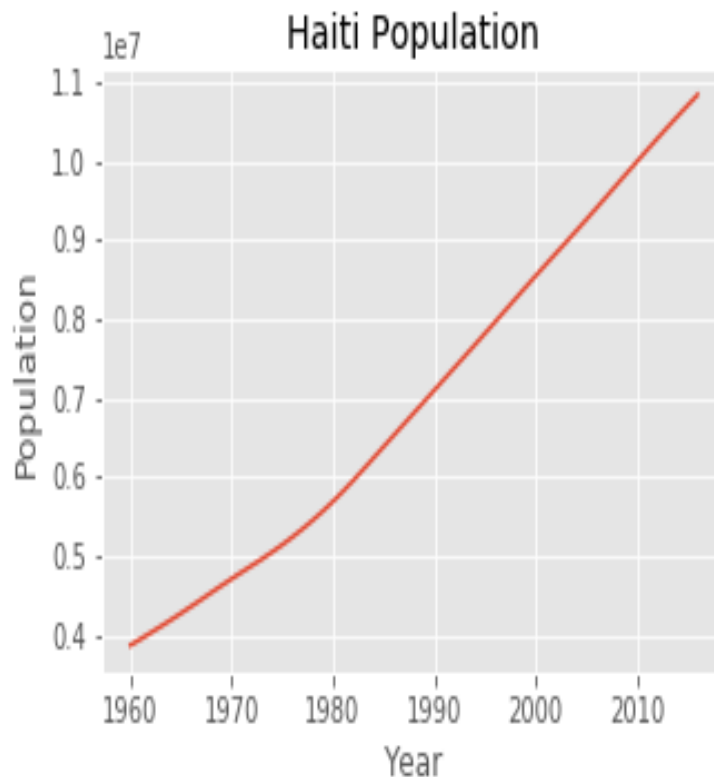


# Haiti



Haiti ( [listen](#)); French: Haïti [a.iti]; Haitian Creole: Ayiti [ajiti]), officially the Republic of Haiti (French: République d'Haïti; Haitian Creole: Repiblik Ayiti) and formerly called Hayti, is a sovereign state located on the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antilles archipelago of the Caribbean Sea. It occupies the western three-eighths of the island, which it shares with the Dominican Republic. Haiti is 27,750 square kilometres (10,714 sq mi) in size and has an estimated 10.8 million people, making it the most populous country in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the second-most populous country in the Caribbean as a whole. The region was originally inhabited by the indigenous Taíno people. Spain landed on the island on 5 December 1492 during the first voyage of Christopher Columbus across the Atlantic. When Columbus initially landed in Haiti, he had thought he had found India or China. On Christmas Day 1492, Columbus' flagship the Santa Maria ran aground north of what is now Limonade. As a consequence, Columbus ordered his men to salvage what they could from the ship, and he created the first European settlement in the Americas, naming it La Navidad after the day the ship was destroyed. The island was named La Española and claimed by Spain, which ruled until the early 17th century. Competing claims and settlements by the French led to the western portion of the island being ceded to France, which named it Saint-Domingue. Sugarcane plantations, worked by slaves brought from Africa, were established by colonists. In the midst of the French Revolution (1789–99), slaves and free people of color revolted in the Haitian Revolution (1791–1804), culminating in the abolition of slavery and the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte's army at the Battle of Vertières. Afterward the sovereign nation of Haiti was established on 1 January 1804 – the first independent nation of Latin America and the Caribbean, the second republic in the Americas, and the only nation in the world established as a result of a successful slave revolt. The rebellion that began in 1791 was led by a former slave and the first black general of the French Army, Toussaint Louverture, whose military genius and political acumen transformed an entire society of slaves into an independent country. Upon his death in a prison in France, he was succeeded by his lieutenant, Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who declared Haiti's sovereignty and later became the first Emperor of Haiti, Jacques I. The Haitian Revolution lasted just

over a dozen years; and apart from Alexandre Pétion, the first President of the Republic, all the first leaders of government were former slaves. The Citadelle Laferrière is the largest fortress in the Americas. Henri Christophe – former slave and first king of Haiti, Henri I – built it to withstand a possible foreign attack. It is a founding member of the United Nations, Organization of American States (OAS), Association of Caribbean States, and the International Francophonie Organisation. In addition to CARICOM, it is a member of the International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. It has the lowest Human Development Index in the Americas. Most recently, in February 2004, a coup d'état originating in the north of the country forced the resignation and exile of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide. A provisional government took control with security provided by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

**== Etymology ==** The name Haiti (or Hayti) comes from the indigenous Taíno language which was the native name given to the entire island of Hispaniola to mean, "land of high mountains." The h is silent in French and the ï in Haïti, is a diacritical mark used to show that the second vowel is pronounced separately, as in the word naïve. In English, this rule for the pronunciation is often disregarded, thus the spelling Haiti is used. There are different anglicizations for its pronunciation such as HIGH-ti, high-EE-ti and haa-EE-ti, which are still in use, but HAY-ti is the most widespread and established. The name was restored by Haitian revolutionary Jean-Jacques Dessalines as the official name of independent Saint-Domingue, as a tribute to the Amerindian predecessors. In French, Haiti's nickname is the "Pearl of the Antilles" (La Perle des Antilles) because of both its natural beauty, and the amount of wealth it accumulated for the Kingdom of France; during the 18th century the colony was the world's leading producer of sugar and coffee.

**== History ==**

**=== Pre-Columbian history ===** At the time of European conquest, the island of Hispaniola, of which Haiti occupies the western three-eighths, was one of many Caribbean islands inhabited by the Taíno Native Americans, speakers of an Arawakan language called Taino, which has been preserved in the Haitian Creole language. The Taíno name for the entire island was Haiti. The people had migrated over centuries into the Caribbean islands from South America. Genetic studies show they were related to the Yanomami of the Amazon Basin. They also originated in Central and South America. After migrating to Caribbean islands, in the 15th century, the Taíno were pushed into the northeast Caribbean islands by the Caribs. In the Taíno societies of the Caribbean islands, the largest unit of political organization was led by a cacique, or chief, as the Europeans understood them. The island of Haiti was divided among five Caciquats: the Magua in the north east, the Marien in the north west, the Xaragua in the south west, the Maguana in the center region of Cibao and the Higüey in the south east. The caciquedoms were tributary kingdoms, with payment consisting of harvests. Taíno cultural artifacts include cave paintings in several locations in the country. These have become national symbols of Haiti and tourist attractions. Modern-day Léogane started as a French colonial town in the southwest, is beside the former capital of the caciquedom of Xaragua.

**=== Spanish rule (1492–1625) ===** Navigator Christopher Columbus landed in Haiti on 5 December 1492, in an area that he named Môle Saint-Nicolas, and claimed the island for the Crown of Castile. Nineteen days later, his ship the Santa María ran aground near the present site of Cap-Haïtien. Columbus left 39 men on the island, who founded the settlement of La Navidad. The sailors carried endemic Eurasian infectious diseases. The natives lacked immunity to these new diseases and died in great numbers in epidemics. The first recorded smallpox epidemic in the Americas erupted on Hispaniola in 1507. The encomienda system forced natives to work in gold mines and plantations. The Spanish passed the Laws of Burgos, 1512–13, which forbade the maltreatment of natives, endorsed their conversion to Catholicism, and gave legal framework to encomiendas. The natives were brought to these sites to work in specific plantations or industries. As a gateway to the Caribbean, Hispaniola became a haven for pirates during the early colonial period. The western part of the island was settled by French buccaneers. Among them was Bertrand d'Ogeron, who succeeded in growing tobacco. He recruited many French colonial families from Martinique and Guadeloupe. European nations were competing for control in the New World, in the Caribbean as well as in North America. France and Spain settled their hostilities on the island, by way of the Treaty of Ryswick of 1697, and divided Hispaniola between them.

**=== French rule (1625–1804) ===** France received the western third and subsequently named it Saint-Domingue, the French equivalent of Santo Domingo, the Spanish colony of Hispaniola and the name of its patron saint, Saint Dominic. To develop it into sugarcane plantations, the French imported thousands of slaves from Africa. Sugar was a lucrative commodity crop throughout the 18th century. By 1789, approximately 40,000 white colonists lived in Saint-Domingue. In contrast, by 1763 the white population of French Canada, a vast territory, had numbered 65,000. The whites were vastly outnumbered by the tens of thousands of African slaves they had imported to work on their plantations,

which were primarily devoted to the production of sugarcane. In the north of the island, slaves were able to retain many ties to African cultures, religion and language; these ties were continually being renewed by newly imported Africans. Blacks outnumbered whites by about ten to one. The French-enacted Code Noir ("Black Code"), prepared by Jean-Baptiste Colbert and ratified by Louis XIV, had established rules on slave treatment and permissible freedoms. Saint-Domingue has been described as one of the most brutally efficient slave colonies; one-third of newly imported Africans died within a few years. Many slaves died from diseases such as smallpox and typhoid fever. They had low birth rates, and there is evidence that some women aborted fetuses rather than give birth to children within the bonds of slavery. As in its Louisiana colony, the French colonial government allowed some rights to free people of color: the mixed-race descendants of European male colonists and African female slaves (and later, mixed-race women). Over time, many were released from slavery. They established a separate social class. White French Creole fathers frequently sent their mixed-race sons to France for their education. Some men of color were admitted into the military. More of the free people of color lived in the south of the island, near Port-au-Prince, and many intermarried within their community. They frequently worked as artisans and tradesmen, and began to own some property. Some became slave holders. The free people of color petitioned the colonial government to expand their rights. Slaves that made it to Haiti from the trans-Atlantic journey and slaves born in Haiti were first documented in Haiti's archives and transferred to France's Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As of 2015, these records are in The National Archives of France. According to the 1788 Census, Haiti's population consisted of nearly 25,000 Europeans, 22,000 free coloreds and 700,000 African slaves. === Haitian Revolution (1791–1804) === Inspired by the French Revolution of 1789 and principles of the rights of man, free people of color and slaves in Saint-Domingue and the French West Indies pressed for freedom and more civil rights. Most important was the revolution of the slaves in Saint-Domingue, starting in the northern plains in 1791, where Africans greatly outnumbered the whites. In 1792, the French government sent three commissioners with troops to re-establish control. To build an alliance with the gens de couleur and slaves, the French commissioners Sonthonax and Polverel abolished slavery in the colony. Six months later, the National Convention, led by Robespierre and the Jacobins, endorsed abolition and extended it to all the French colonies. Political leaders in the United States, which was a new republic itself, reacted with ambivalence, at times providing aid to enable planters to put down the revolt. Later in the revolution, the US provided support to native Haitian military forces, with the goal of reducing French influence in North America and the Caribbean. Toussaint Louverture, a former slave and leader in the slave revolt, drove out the Spanish (from Santo Domingo) and the British invaders who threatened the colony. In the uncertain years of revolution, the United States played both sides off against each other, with its traders supplying both the French and the rebels. The struggle within Haiti between the free people of color led by André Rigaud and the Haitians of African ancestry led by Louverture devolved into the War of the Knives in 1799 and 1800. Many surviving free people of color left the island as refugees. After Louverture created a separatist constitution, Napoléon Bonaparte in 1802 sent an expedition of 20,000 soldiers and as many sailors under the command of his brother-in-law, General Charles Leclerc, to retake the island. The French achieved some victories, but within a few months, most of the French had died from yellow fever. More than 50,000 French troops died in an attempt to retake the colony, including 18 generals. The French captured Louverture, transporting him to France for trial. He was imprisoned at Fort de Joux, where he died in 1803 of exposure and possibly tuberculosis. The slaves, along with free gens de couleur and allies, continued their fight for independence. Jean-Jacques Dessalines defeated French troops at the Battle of Vertières on 18 November 1803, leading the first ever successful slave army revolution. In late 1803, France withdrew its remaining 7,000 troops from the island and Napoleon gave up his idea of re-establishing a North American empire. With the war going badly, he sold Louisiana (New France) to the United States, in the Louisiana Purchase. === First Empire (1804–1806) === The independence of Saint-Domingue was proclaimed by Dessalines on 1 January 1804. It has been estimated that between 24,000 and 100,000 Europeans, and between 100,000 and 350,000 Haitian ex-slaves, died in the revolution. Tropical disease was a major factor in the number of deaths. Many black and Caribbean people died fighting for white masters; and a large number of British and Spanish soldiers, deployed to neighbouring Saint-Domingue, died aiding the rebels. Dessalines was proclaimed "Emperor for Life" by his troops. Dessalines at first offered protection to the white planters and others. Once in power, he ordered the massacre of most whites. Without regard to age or gender, those who did not swear allegiance to him were slain. In the continuing competition for power, he was assassinated by rivals on 17 October 1806. Only three categories of white people were selected out as

exceptions and spared: the Polish soldiers, the majority of whom deserted from the French army and fought alongside the Haitian rebels; the little group of German colonists invited to the north-west region; and a group of medical doctors and professionals. Reportedly, people with connections to officers in the Haitian army were also spared, as well as the women who agreed to marry non-white men. Fearful of the influence of the slaves' revolution, U.S. President Thomas Jefferson refused to recognize the new republic, as did most European nations. The U.S. did not officially recognize Haiti for decades, until after the start of the American Civil War. The revolution led to a wave of emigration. In 1809, nearly 10,000 refugees from Saint-Domingue settled en masse in New Orleans. They doubled the city's population. In addition, the newly arrived slaves added to the city's African population. === State of Haiti, Kingdom of Haiti and the Republic (1806–1820) === Saint-Domingue was divided between the Kingdom of Haiti in the north, directed by Henri Christophe, who declared himself Henri I, and a republic in the south, directed by Alexandre Pétion, an homme de couleur. Henri Christophe established a semi-feudal corvée system, with a rigid education and economic code. President Pétion gave military and financial assistance to the revolutionary leader Simón Bolívar, which were critical in enabling him to liberate the Viceroyalty of New Granada. He was instrumental in aiding countries in South America achieve independence from Spain. === Haitian unification (1821–1844) === Beginning in 1821, President Jean-Pierre Boyer, also an homme de couleur and successor to Pétion, reunified the island and extended control over the entire western portion of the island. In addition, after Santo Domingo declared its independence from Spain on 30 November 1821, Boyer sent forces in to take control. Boyer ruled the entire island with iron rule, ending slavery in Santo Domingo. After Santo Domingo achieved independence from Haiti, it established a separate national identity. Struggling to revive the agricultural economy to produce commodity crops, Boyer passed the Code Rural, which denied peasant laborers the right to leave the land, enter the towns, or start farms or shops of their own. Following the Revolution, many peasants wanted to have their own farms rather than work on plantations. The American Colonization Society (ACS) encouraged free blacks in the United States to emigrate to Haiti. Starting in September 1824, more than 6,000 African Americans migrated to Haiti, with transportation paid by the ACS. Many found the conditions too harsh and returned to the United States. In July 1825, King Charles X of France, during a period of restoration of the monarchy, sent a fleet to reconquer the island. Under pressure, President Boyer agreed to a treaty by which France formally recognized the independence of the nation in exchange for a payment of 150 million francs. By an order of 17 April 1825, the King of France renounced his rights of sovereignty over Santo Domingo, and recognized the independence of Haiti. Though the amount of the reparations was reduced to 90 million in 1838, Haiti was unable to finish paying off its debt until 1947. The Haitian president would have had little choice as the country, unknowingly to him, would have been blockaded by French ships if the exchange did not go the French way. After losing the support of Haiti's elite, Boyer was ousted in 1843. A long succession of coups followed his departure to exile. The enforced payment to France reduced Haiti's economy for years. Western nations did not give Haiti formal diplomatic recognition. Both of these problems kept the Haitian economy and society isolated. Expatriates bankrolled and armed opposing groups. === Loss of the Spanish portion of the island === Charles Rivière-Hérard replaced Boyer as president of Haiti. Nationalist forces led by Juan Pablo Duarte seized control of Santo Domingo on 27 February 1844. Unprofessional and undisciplined Haitian forces in the east, unprepared for a significant uprising, capitulated to the rebels. In March Rivière-Hérard attempted to reimpose his authority, but the Dominicans put up stiff opposition and inflicted heavy losses on the Haitians. Soon after Rivière-Hérard crossed the border, domestic turmoil exploded again. Rivière-Hérard was removed from office by the mulatto hierarchy and replaced with the aged black general Philippe Guerrier, who assumed the presidency on 3 May 1844. Philippe Guerrier died in April 1845, and was succeeded by General Jean-Louis Pierrot. Pierrot's most pressing duty as the new president was to check the incursions of the Dominicans, who were harassing the Haitian troops along the borders. Dominican gunboats were also making depredations on Haiti's coasts. President Pierrot decided to open a campaign against the Dominicans, whom he considered merely as insurgents. The Haitian offensive of 1845 was stopped on the frontier. On 1 January 1846 Pierrot announced a fresh campaign to put down the Dominicans, but his officers and men greeted this fresh summons with contempt. Thus, a month later – February 1846 – when Pierrot ordered his troops to march against the Dominican Republic, the Haitian army mutinied, and its soldiers proclaimed his overthrow as president of the republic. The war against the Dominicans had become very unpopular in Haiti. It was beyond the power of the new president, General Jean-Baptiste Riché, to stage another invasion. === Second Empire (1849–1859) === On 27 February 1846, President Riché died after only a few days of power

and was replaced by an obscure officer, General Faustin Soulouque. During the first two years of Soulouque's administration the conspiracies and opposition he faced in retaining power were so manifold that the Dominicans were given a further breathing space in which to continue the re-organization of their country. But, when in 1848 France finally recognized the Dominican Republic as a free and independent state and provisionally signed a treaty of peace, friendship, commerce and navigation, Haiti immediately protested, claiming the treaty was an attack upon their own security. Soulouque decided to invade the east before the French Government could ratify the treaty. On March 21, 1849, Haitian soldiers attacked the Dominican garrison at Las Matas. The demoralized defenders offered almost no resistance before abandoning their weapons. Soulouque pressed on, capturing San Juan. This left only the town of Azua as the remaining Dominican stronghold between the Haitian army and the capital. On April 6, Azua fell to 18,000 Haitians and a 5,000-man Dominican counterattack failed. The way to Santo Domingo was clear. But the news of discontent existing at Port-au-Prince, which reached Soulouque, arrested his further progress and caused him to return with the army to his capital. Emboldened by the sudden retreat of the Haitian army, the Dominicans had resumed their depredations. Their flotilla went as far as Dame-Marie, which they plundered and set on fire. Soulouque, now self-proclaimed as Emperor Faustin I, decided to start a new campaign against them. In 1855, he invaded the territory of the Dominican Republic. But owing to insufficient preparation, the army was soon in want of victuals and ammunition. In spite of the bravery of the soldiers, the Emperor had once more to give up the idea of restoring unity of government in the island. After this campaign, Great Britain and France interfered and obtained an armistice on behalf of the Dominicans. The sufferings endured by the soldiers during the campaign of 1855, the losses and sacrifices inflicted on the country without compensation or practical result provoked great discontent. In 1858, a revolution began, led by General Fabre Geffrard, Duke of Tabara. In December of that year, Geffrard defeated the Imperial Army and seized control of most of the country. As a result, the Emperor abdicated his throne on 15 January 1859. Refused aid by the French Legation, Faustin was taken into exile aboard a British warship on 22 January 1859. General Geffrard succeeded him as President. === Early 20th century === In 1892, the German government supported suppression of the reform movement of Anténor Firmin, and in 1897, the Germans used gunboat diplomacy to intimidate and then humiliate the Haitian government during the Luders Affair. In the first decades of the 20th century, Haiti experienced great political instability and was heavily in debt to France, Germany and the United States. Fearing possible foreign intervention, President Woodrow Wilson sent U.S. Marines into Haiti in December 1914, just after the outbreak of World War I. They removed \$500,000 from the Haitian National Bank for "safe-keeping" (sic) in New York, thus giving the United States control of the bank. In an expression of the Theodore Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, the United States occupied the island in July 1915 after the assassination of Haiti's president, Vilbrun Guillaume Sam. The pro-U.S. Haitian president had been dragged from the French legation and killed in the street by local insurgents after he had ordered 167 political prisoners killed. The USS Washington, under Rear Admiral Caperton, arrived in Port-au-Prince in an attempt to restore order and protect U.S. interests. This began a nearly 20-year occupation by U.S. forces. Within days, the Marines had taken control of the capital city and its banks and customs house, which controlled all the finances of the island nation. The Marines declared martial law and severely censored the press. Within weeks, a new pro-U.S. Haitian president, Philippe Sudré Dartiguenave, was installed and a new constitution written that was favorable to the interests of the United States. The new constitution included a clause that allowed, for the first time, foreign ownership of land in Haiti, which was bitterly opposed by the Haitian legislature and citizenry. The occupation greatly improved some of Haiti's infrastructure and centralized power in Port-au-Prince. Infrastructure improvements were particularly impressive: 1700 km of roads were made usable, 189 bridges were built, many irrigation canals were rehabilitated, hospitals, schools, and public buildings were constructed, and drinking water was brought to the main cities. Port-au-Prince became the first Caribbean city to have a phone service with automatic dialing. Agricultural education was organized, with a central school of agriculture and 69 farms in the country. The roads were built using the corvée system that allowed the occupying forces to take people from their homes and farms, at gunpoint if necessary, to build roads, bridges, etc. The U.S. Marines were instilled with a special brand of paternalism towards Haitians. Mary Renda writes that "paternalism was an assertion of authority, superiority, and control expressed in the metaphor of a father's relationship with his children." During Senate hearings in 1921, the commandant of the Marine Corps reported that, in the 20 months of active resistance, 2,250 Haitians had been killed. However, in a report to the Secretary of the Navy, he reported the death toll as being 3,250. Haitian historians have estimated the true number was much

higher. One suggested, "the total number of battle victims and casualties of repression and consequences of the war might have reached, by the end of the pacification period, four or five times that – somewhere in the neighborhood of 15,000 persons." This chapter in the two nations' histories reflects the imperialist foreign policy of the United States toward its neighbors in Central America and the Caribbean that is often characterized as "gunboat diplomacy", or one of many "Banana Wars" that plagued the region in the early 20th century. U.S. Marines were stationed in the country until 1934, a period of 19 years, and were finally ordered from the island by Franklin D. Roosevelt as a demonstration of his "Good Neighbor Policy". However, the United States controlled the economy of the island and heavily influenced elections in Haiti up through the 1980s. Sisal was introduced to Haiti, and sugarcane and cotton became significant exports. Haitian traditionalists, based in rural areas, were highly resistant to U.S.-backed changes, while the urban elites wanted more control. Together they helped secure an end to the occupation in 1934. The debts were still outstanding and the U.S. financial advisor-general receiver handled the budget until 1941. Recognition of the distinctive traditionalism of the Haitian people had an influence on United States writers, including Eugene O'Neill, James Weldon Johnson, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston and Orson Welles. After US forces left in 1934, Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo used anti-Haitian sentiment as a nationalist tool. In an event that became known as the Parsley Massacre, he ordered his army to kill Haitians living on the Dominican side of the border. Few bullets were used. Instead, 20,000–30,000 Haitians were bludgeoned and bayoneted, then herded into the sea, where sharks finished what Trujillo had begun. Congressman Hamilton Fish, ranking member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, called the Parsley Massacre "the most outrageous atrocity that has ever been perpetrated on the American continent." Though he was one-quarter Haitian himself, Trujillo continued policies against the neighboring population for some time. On 27 September 1945, Haiti became a founding member of the United Nations (successor to the League of Nations, in which Haiti was also a founding member). In the 1950s, U.S. and European tourists started to visit Haiti. The waterfront area of Port-au-Prince was redeveloped to allow cruise ship passengers to walk from the docks to cultural attractions. Among these attractions were the Moorish-styled Iron Market, where fine Haitian art and mahogany were sold. In the evenings entrepreneurs provided dancing, casino gambling and Voodoo shows. Truman Capote and Noël Coward visited the Hotel Oloffson, a 19th-century Gothic gingerbread mansion set in a tropical garden, which was even portrayed in Graham Greene's 1966 novel *The Comedians*. === Duvalier dynasty (1957–86) === After a period of disorder, in September 1957 Dr. François Duvalier was elected President of Haiti. Known as "Papa Doc" and initially popular, Duvalier was President until his death in 1971. He advanced black interests in the public sector, where over time, people of color had predominated as the educated urban elite. He stayed in power by enlisting an organization known as Tontons Macoutes ("Bogeymen"), which maintained order by terrorizing the populace and political opponents. 40,000 to 60,000 Haitians are estimated to have been killed during the reign of the Duvalier father and son. Haiti's brief tourism boom was wiped out by the rule of Papa Doc Duvalier and his unstable government. When his son Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier succeeded him as President for Life, tourism returned in the 1970s. *Vive la différence* has long been Haiti's national tourism slogan and its proximity to the United States made Haiti a hot attraction until the Duvalier regime was ousted in 1986. === Contemporary history === Papa Doc's son led the country from 1971 until his ouster in 1986, when protests led him to seek exile in France. Army leader General Henri Namphy headed a new National Governing Council. General elections in November were aborted after dozens of inhabitants were shot in the capital by soldiers and Tontons Macoutes. Fraudulent elections followed. The elected President, Leslie Manigat, was overthrown some months later in the June 1988 Haitian coup d'état. The September 1988 Haitian coup d'état, which followed the St. Jean Bosco massacre, revealed the increasing prominence of former Tontons Macoutes. General Prosper Avril led a military regime until March 1990. In December 1990, a former Catholic priest, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, was elected President in the Haitian general election. In September of the following year, Aristide was overthrown by the military in the 1991 Haitian coup d'état. In 1994, a U.S. team negotiated the departure of Haiti's military leaders and the peaceful entry of U.S. forces under Operation Uphold Democracy. This enabled the restoration of the democratically elected Jean-Bertrand Aristide as president. In October 1994, Aristide returned to Haiti to complete his term in office. Aristide vacated the presidency in February 1996. In the 1995 election, René Préval was elected as president for a five-year term, winning 88% of the popular vote. In November 1994, Hurricane Gordon brushed Haiti, dumping heavy rain and creating flash flooding that triggered mudslides. Gordon killed an estimated 1,122 people, although some estimates go as high as 2,200. The November 2000 election returned Aristide to the presidency

with 92% of the vote. The election had been boycotted by the opposition, then organized into the Convergence Démocratique, over a dispute in the May legislative elections. In subsequent years, there was increasing violence and human rights abuses. Aristide spent years negotiating with the Convergence Démocratique on new elections, but the Convergence's inability to develop a sufficient electoral base made elections unattractive. In 2004, a revolt began in northern Haiti. The rebellion eventually reached the capital, and Aristide was forced into exile, after which the United Nations stationed peacekeepers in Haiti. Some, including Aristide and his bodyguard, Franz Gabriel, stated that he was the victim of a "new coup d'état or modern kidnapping" by U.S. forces. Mrs. Aristide stated that the kidnappers wore U.S. Special Forces uniforms, but changed into civilian clothes upon boarding the aircraft that was used to remove Aristide from Haiti. The United Nations Stabilisation Mission (MINUSTAH) was established after the 2004 coup d'état and remains in the country to the present day. Boniface Alexandre assumed interim authority. René Préal was elected President in February 2006, following elections marked by uncertainties and popular demonstrations. In 2004, Tropical Storm Jeanne skimmed the north coast of Haiti, leaving 3,006 people dead in flooding and mudslides, mostly in the city of Gonaïves. In 2008, Haiti was again struck by tropical storms; Tropical Storm Fay, Hurricane Gustav, Hurricane Hanna and Hurricane Ike all produced heavy winds and rain. There were 331 dead and about 800,000 in need of humanitarian aid. The state of affairs produced by these storms was intensified by already high food and fuel prices that had caused a food crisis and political unrest in April 2008. On 12 January 2010, at 4:53pm local time, Haiti was struck by a magnitude-7.0 earthquake. This was the country's most severe earthquake in over 200 years. The 2010 Haiti earthquake was reported to have left between 220,000 and 300,000 people dead and up to 1.6 million homeless. The country has yet to recover from the 2010 earthquake and a subsequent and massive Haiti cholera outbreak that was triggered when cholera-infected waste from a United Nations peacekeeping station contaminated the country's main river, the Artibonite. In 2017, it was reported that roughly 10,000 Haitians had died and nearly a million had been sickened. After years of denial the United Nations apologized in 2016, but as of 2017, they have refused to acknowledge fault, thus avoiding financial responsibility. General elections had been planned for January 2010 but were postponed due to the earthquake. The elections were held on 28 November 2010 for the senate, the parliament and the first round of the presidential elections. The run-off between Michel Martelly and Mirlande Manigat took place on 20 March 2011, and preliminary results, released on 4 April, named Michel Martelly the winner. On 7 February 2016, Michel Martelly stepped down as president without a successor, but only after a deal was reached for a provisional government and leaving Prime Minister Evans Paul in power "until an interim president is chosen by both chambers of Parliament." In 2013, Haiti called for European nations to pay reparations for slavery and establish an official commission for the settlement of past wrongdoings. The Economist wrote, "Any assistance to the region should be carefully targeted; and should surely stem from today's needs, not the wrongs of the past." The topic, however, has more than a passing reference to a country that, as Lord Anthony Gifford wrote, "was forced to pay compensation to the government of France." On 4 October 2016, Hurricane Matthew made landfall near Les Anglais, making it the worst hurricane to strike the nation since Hurricane Cleo in 1964. The storm brought deadly winds and rain that left Haiti with a large amount of damage to be repaired. With all of the resources in the country destroyed, Haiti received aid from the United Nations of around US\$120 million. The death total was approximately 3,000. Thousands of people were displaced due to infrastructure damage. Also, the cholera outbreak has been growing since the storm hit Haiti. With additional flooding after the storm, cholera continued to spread beyond the control of officials. The storm also caused damage to hospitals and roads, which created a larger problem in helping victims and moving resources. The devastation and damage that Hurricane Matthew caused was unpredictable and left Haiti in a state of emergency. == Geography == Haiti is on the western part of Hispaniola, the second largest island in the Greater Antilles. Haiti is the third largest country in the Caribbean behind Cuba and the Dominican Republic (the latter shares a 360-kilometre (224 mi) border with Haiti). Haiti at its closest point is about 45 nautical miles (83 km; 52 mi) away from Cuba and comprises the horseshoe-shape peninsula and because of this, it has a disproportionately long coastline and is second in length (1,771 km or 1,100 mi) behind Cuba in the Greater Antilles. Haiti is the most mountainous nation in the Caribbean and its terrain consists mainly of them interspersed with small coastal plains and river valleys. The climate is tropical, with some variation depending on altitude. The highest point is Pic la Selle, at 2,680 metres (8,793 ft). The northern region consists of the Massif du Nord (Northern Massif) and the Plaine du Nord (Northern Plain). The Massif du Nord is an extension of the Cordillera Central in the Dominican Republic. It begins at Haiti's eastern border, north of the

Guayamouc River, and extends to the northwest through the northern peninsula. The lowlands of the Plaine du Nord lie along the northern border with the Dominican Republic, between the Massif du Nord and the North Atlantic Ocean. The central region consists of two plains and two sets of mountain ranges. The Plateau Central (Central Plateau) extends along both sides of the Guayamouc River, south of the Massif du Nord. It runs from the southeast to the northwest. To the southwest of the Plateau Central are the Montagnes Noires, whose most northwestern part merges with the Massif du Nord. Its westernmost point is known as Cap Carcasse. The southern region consists of the Plaine du Cul-de-Sac (the southeast) and the mountainous southern peninsula (also known as the Tiburon Peninsula). The Plaine du Cul-de-Sac is a natural depression that harbors the country's saline lakes, such as Trou Caïman and Haiti's largest lake, Étang Saumatre. The Chaîne de la Selle mountain range – an extension of the southern mountain chain of the Dominican Republic (the Sierra de Baoruco) – extends from the Massif de la Selle in the east to the Massif de la Hotte in the west. This mountain range harbors Pic la Selle, the highest point in Haiti at 2,680 metres (8,793 ft). Haiti's most important valley in terms of crops is the Plaine de l'Artibonite, which is oriented south of the Montagnes Noires. This region supports the country's (also Hispaniola's) longest river, the Rivière l'Artibonite, which begins in the western region of the Dominican Republic and continues most of its length through central Haiti and onward where it empties into the Golfe de la Gonâve. The eastern and central region of the island is a large elevated plateau. Haiti also includes various offshore islands. The island of Tortuga (Île de la Tortue) is located off the coast of northern Haiti. The arrondissement of La Gonâve is located on the island of the same name, in the Golfe de la Gonâve. Gonâve Island is moderately populated by rural villagers. Île à Vache (Cow Island), a lush island with many beautiful sights, is located off the tip of southwestern Haiti. Also part of Haiti are the Cayemites and Île d' Anacaona. La Navasse located 40 nautical miles (46 mi; 74 km) west of Jérémie on the south west peninsula of Haiti, is subject to an ongoing territorial dispute with the United States. === Climate === Haiti's climate is tropical with some variation depending on altitude. Port-au-Prince ranges in January from an average minimum of 23 °C (73.4 °F) to an average maximum of 31 °C (87.8 °F); in July, from 25–35 °C (77–95 °F). The rainfall pattern is varied, with rain heavier in some of the lowlands and the northern and eastern slopes of the mountains. Haiti's dry season occurs from November to January. Port-au-Prince receives an average annual rainfall of 1,370 mm (53.9 in). There are two rainy seasons, April–June and October–November. Haiti is subject to periodic droughts and floods, made more severe by deforestation. Hurricanes are also a menace. In summary, Haiti is generally a hot and humid tropical climate. === Geology === There are blind thrust faults associated with the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault system over which Haiti lies. After the earthquake of 2010, there was no evidence of surface rupture and geologists' findings were based on seismological, geological and ground deformation data. The northern boundary of the fault is where the Caribbean tectonic plate shifts eastwards by about 20 mm (0.79 inches) per year in relation to the North American plate. The strike-slip fault system in the region has two branches in Haiti, the Septentrional-Oriente fault in the north and the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault in the south. A 2007 earthquake hazard study, noted that the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault zone could be at the end of its seismic cycle and concluded that a worst-case forecast would involve a 7.2 Mw earthquake, similar in size to the 1692 Jamaica earthquake. A study team presented a hazard assessment of the Enriquillo-Plantain Garden fault system to the 18th Caribbean Geologic Conference in March 2008, noting the large strain. The team recommended "high priority" historical geologic rupture studies, as the fault was fully locked and had recorded few earthquakes in the preceding 40 years. An article published in Haiti's Le Matin newspaper in September 2008 cited comments by geologist Patrick Charles to the effect that there was a high risk of major seismic activity in Port-au-Prince; and duly the magnitude 7.0 2010 Haiti earthquake happened on this fault zone on 12 January 2010. Haiti also has rare elements such as gold, which can be found at The Mont Organisé gold mine. === Environment === The soil erosion released from the upper catchments and deforestation have caused periodic and severe flooding in Haiti, as experienced, for example, on 17 September 2004. Earlier in May that year, floods had killed over 3,000 people on Haiti's southern border with the Dominican Republic. Haiti's forests covered 60 percent of the country as recently as fifty years ago, but today, according to more in-depth environmental analysis, the country yields approximately 30 percent tree cover, a stark difference from the often cited 2 percent which has been widely circulated in discourse concerning Haiti. Scientists at the Columbia University's Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) and the United Nations Environment Programme are working on the Haiti Regenerative Initiative an initiative aiming to reduce poverty and natural disaster vulnerability in Haiti through ecosystem restoration and sustainable resource management. == Government and Politics == The government of Haiti is a



semi-presidential republic, a multiparty system wherein the President of Haiti is head of state elected directly by popular elections. The Prime Minister acts as head of government and is appointed by the President, chosen from the majority party in the National Assembly. Executive power is exercised by the President and Prime Minister who together constitute the government. In 2013, the annual budget was US\$1 billion. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the two chambers of the National Assembly of Haiti. The government is organized unitarily, thus the central government delegates powers to the departments without a constitutional need for consent. The current structure of Haiti's political system was set forth in the Constitution of Haiti on 29 March 1987. Haitian politics have been contentious: since independence, Haiti has suffered 32 coups. Haiti is the only country in the Western Hemisphere to undergo a successful slave revolution, but a long history of oppression by dictators—including François Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude Duvalier—has markedly affected the nation. France, the United States and other Western countries have repeatedly intervened in Haitian politics since the country's founding, sometimes at the request of one party or another. Along with international financial institutions, they have imposed large quantities of debt. Haiti has so much foreign debt that payments have rivaled the available government budget for social sector spending. There have been criticisms of financial institutions for enforcing trade policies on Haiti, which are considered by some to be detrimental to local industry. According to a 2006 report by the Corruption Perceptions Index, there is a strong correlation between corruption and poverty in Haiti. The nation ranked first of all countries surveyed for levels of perceived domestic corruption. The International Red Cross reports that seven out of ten Haitians live on less than US\$2 a day. This statistic was somewhat disputed in a 2006 article about poverty in the slums of Haiti (written for the Red Cross), wherein ICRC officer Didier Revol wrote, "Such statistical estimations should be looked upon very skeptically because of the fact that the average Haitian and Haitian family has to and does spend a lot more than that daily. The disconnect likely lies in the fact that these are estimates based on surveys conducted by asking individuals what their incomes are; in the Haitian culture it is very unlikely that one will receive a truthful and accurate answer to such a personal question. For various reasons individuals will not tell the truth on such a private matter. For some it is because 'it's none of your business', for others, they will simply exaggerate their poor situation in hopes that some type of financial aide will be gained or rendered to them". The commune of Cité Soleil in Port-au-Prince has been called "the most dangerous place on Earth" by the United Nations. It is one of the largest slums in the Northern Hemisphere. Many of its residents are supporters of former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, who, according to the BBC, "accused the US of forcing him out – an accusation the US rejected as 'absurd'". Jean-Bertrand Aristide was initially denied access to Haiti by Haitian immigration authorities, despite issuing appeals for entrance to his supporters and international observers. The world's most prominent governments did not overtly oppose such appeals, nor did they support them; an unnamed analyst "close to the Haitian government" quoted in several media sources – including The New York Times – is reported to have said: "Aristide could have 15 passports and he's still not going to come back to Haiti [...] France and the United States are standing in the way." However, Aristide finally returned to Haiti on 18 March 2011, days before the 2011 presidential election. The first round of the 2010 general election was held in December. Mirlande Manigat and Jude Celestin qualified for the second round of the presidential election, but its results were contested. Some people said that the first round was a fraud and that Michel Martelly should replace Jude Celestin, René Préval's chosen successor. There was some violence between the contending parties. On 4 April 2011, the Provisional Electoral Council announced preliminary results indicating that Martelly had won the presidential election. After the U.S. funded \$33 million to legislative and presidential elections in August and October 2015, a special verification panel – implemented by interim President Jocelerme Privert – declared the results "tainted by significant fraud". Jovenel Moïse, the supposed winner of the October 25, 2015 election, had been hand-picked by former President Michel Martelly. The month-long examination in May 2016 was created after the elections were condemned as fraudulent to restore credibility to the process. The commission recommended completely redoing the vote after auditing a random sample of about 13,000 ballots. In February 2012, Haiti signaled it would seek to upgrade its observer status to full associate member status of the African Union (AU). The AU was reported to be planning to upgrade Haiti's status from observer to associate at its June 2013 summit but the application had still not been ratified by May 2016. In 2010, the Haitian National Police force numbered 7,000. The legal system for torts is based on a version of the Napoleonic Code. The Institute for the Protection of National Heritage has preserved 33 historical monuments and the historic center of Cap-Haïtien. === Military === Haiti's Ministry of Defense is the main body of their armed forces. The former Haitian Armed Forces were demobilized in

1995, however, efforts to reconstitute it are currently underway. The current defense force for Haiti is the Haitian National Police, which has a highly trained SWAT team, and works alongside the Haitian Coast Guard. === Law enforcement and crime === Haiti has consistently ranked among the most corrupt countries in the world on the Corruption Perceptions Index. It is estimated that President "Baby Doc" Duvalier, his wife Michelle, and their agents stole US \$504 million from the country's treasury between 1971 and 1986. Similarly, after the Haitian Army folded in 1995, the Haitian National Police (HNP) gained sole power of authority on the Haitian citizens. Many Haitians as well as observers of the Haitian society believe that this monopolized power could have given way to a corrupt police force. Similarly, some media outlets alleged that millions were stolen by former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. In March 2004, at the time of Aristide's kidnapping, a BBC article wrote that the Bush administration State Department stated that Aristide had been involved in drug trafficking. The BBC also described pyramid schemes, in which Haitians lost hundreds of millions in 2002, as the "only real economic initiative" of the Aristide years. Conversely, according to the 2013 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report, murder rates in Haiti (10.2 per 100,000) are far below the regional average (26 per 100,000); less than ¼ that of Jamaica (39.3 per 100,000) and nearly ½ that of the Dominican Republic (22.1 per 100,000), making it among the safer countries in the region. In large part, this is due to the country's ability to fulfil a pledge by increasing its national police yearly by 50%, a four-year initiative that was started in 2012. In addition to the yearly recruits, the Haitian National Police (HNP) has been using innovative technologies to crack down on crime. A notable bust in recent years led to the dismantlement of the largest kidnapping ring in the country with the use of an advanced software program developed by a West Point-trained Haitian official that proved to be so effective that it has led to its foreign advisers to make inquiries. In 2010, the New York City Police Department (NYPD) sent a team of veteran officers to Haiti to assist in the rebuilding of its police force with special training in investigative techniques, strategies to improve the anti-kidnapping personnel and community outreach to build stronger relationships with the public especially among the youth. It has also helped the HNP set up a police unit in the center of Delmas, a neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. In 2012 and 2013, 150 HNP officers received specialized training funded by the US government, which also contributed to the infrastructure and communications support by upgrading radio capacity and constructing new police stations from the most violent-prone neighborhoods of Cité Soleil and Grande Ravine in Port-au-Prince to the new northern industrial park at Caracol. === Haitian penitentiary system === Port-au-Prince penitentiary is home to half of Haiti's prisoners. The prison has a capacity of 1,200 detainees but as of November 2017 the penitentiary was obliged to keep 4,359 detainees, a 454% occupancy level. This leads to severe consequences for the inmates. One cell could hold up to 60 inmates which was originally designed for only 18, therefore creating tight and uncomfortable living conditions. The inmates are forced to create makeshift hammocks from the wall and ceilings. The men are on a 22/ 23 hour lock up in the cells so the risk of diseases is very high. Unable to receive sufficient funds from the government as Haiti endures severe natural disasters which takes up their attention and resources, such as the 2010 earthquake, has caused deadly cases of malnutrition, combined with the tight living conditions, increases the risk of infectious diseases such as tuberculosis which has led to 21 deaths in January 2017 alone at the Port-au-Prince penitentiary. Haitian law states that once arrested, one must go before a judge within 48 hours; however, this is very rare. In an interview with Unreported World, the prison governor stated that around 529 detainees were never sentenced, there are 3,830 detainees who are in prolonged detained trial detention. Therefore, 80% are not convicted. Unless families are able to provide the necessary funds for inmates to appear before a judge there is a very slim chance the inmate would have a trial, on average, within 10 years. Brian Concannon, the director of the non-profit Institute for Justice and Democracy in Haiti, claims that without a substantial bribe to persuade judges, prosecutors and lawyers to undergo their case, there is no prospect for a getting a trial for years. Families may send food to the penitentiary; however, most inmates depend on the meals served twice a day. Unfortunately, majority of the meals consist on rational supplies of rice, oats or cornmeal. This has led to deadly cases of malnutrition-related ailments such as beriberi and anaemia. Prisoners too weak are crammed in the penitentiary infirmary. In the confined living spaces for 22/ 23 hours a day, inmates are not provided with latrines and a forced to defecate into plastic bags and leave them outside their cells. These conditions are considered in-humane by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2008. === Criminal Deportation === The United States' deportation of criminals of Haitian descent back to their home country of Haiti poses a serious threat on human rights and overcrowding in Haitian prisons. Not only does this require the deportees to move back to a country some have not seen in years or since they were a child, but this also applies more pressure on the

ever-growing issue of prison overpopulation. Those without family currently residing in Haiti remain locked in a prison cell, unable to be let out even though their crime was not committed on Haitian soil. On the other hand, those with family in the country do not have it so good either. Some of the inmates' family members refuse to relieve them of their imprisonment due to embarrassment and shame. Others, once let out, find it hard to come by work due to the storms that have destroyed land once suitable for farming. An organization called the Support Center for the Rehabilitation of Haitian Deportees (CARDH) has been formed by those who were once criminal deportees themselves. They offer those released from prison any form of relief and assistance possible. In addition to CARDH, Alternative Chance was developed by a United States citizen named Michelle Karshan. Her close connection with Haiti and some of the previous deportees who had moved back to the United States gave her a sense of duty to assist in the effort. Currently, Alternative Chance operates by sending members to Haitian prisons, hearing their stories, and offering any form of medical or counseling help. Karshan continues to work for the organization by testifying in immigration courts across the country. (Bracken, 2009)

=== Administrative divisions === Administratively, Haiti is divided into ten departments. The departments are listed below, with the departmental capital cities in parentheses. Nord-Ouest (Port-de-Paix) Nord (Cap-Haïtien) Nord-Est (Fort-Liberté) Artibonite (Gonaïves) Centre (Hinche) Ouest (Port-au-Prince) Grand'Anse (Jérémie) Nippes (Miragoâne) Sud (Les Cayes) Sud-Est (Jacmel) The departments are further divided into 42 arrondissements, 145 communes and 571 communal sections. These serve as, respectively, second- and third-level administrative divisions.

== Economy == Haiti's purchasing power parity GDP fell 8% in 2010 (from US\$12.15 billion to US\$11.18 billion) and the GDP per capita remained unchanged at PPP US\$1,200. Despite having a viable tourist industry, Haiti is one of the world's poorest countries and the poorest in the Americas region, with poverty, corruption, poor infrastructure, lack of health care and lack of education cited as the main sources. The economy receded due to the 2010 earthquake and subsequent outbreak of cholera. Haiti ranked 145 of 182 countries in the 2010 United Nations Human Development Index, with 57.3% of the population being deprived in at least three of the HDI's poverty measures. Following the disputed 2000 election and accusations about President Aristide's rule, US aid to the Haitian government was cut off between 2001 and 2004. After Aristide's departure in 2004, aid was restored and the Brazilian army led a United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti peacekeeping operation. After almost four years of recession, the economy grew by 1.5% in 2005. In September 2009, Haiti met the conditions set out by the IMF and World Bank's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries program to qualify for cancellation of its external debt. More than 90 percent of the government's budget comes from an agreement with Petrocaribe, a Venezuela-led oil alliance.

=== Foreign aid === Haiti received more than US\$4 billion in aid from 1990 to 2003, including US\$1.5 billion from the United States. The largest donor is the US, followed by Canada and the European Union. In January 2010, following the earthquake, US President Barack Obama promised US\$1.15 billion in assistance. European Union nations pledged more than €400 million (US\$616 million). Neighboring Dominican Republic has also provided extensive humanitarian aid to Haiti, including the funding and construction of a public university, human capital, free healthcare services in the border region, and logistical support after the 2010 earthquake. According to the UN Office of the Special Envoy for Haiti, as of March 2012, of Humanitarian funding committed or disbursed by bilateral and multilateral donors in 2010 and 2011, only 1% has been pledged to the Haitian Government According to the 2013 CIA World Factbook, the 2010 Haiti earthquake inflicted an estimated US\$7.8 billion in damage and caused the country's GDP to contract. The United Nations states that in total US\$13.34 billion has been earmarked for the crisis through 2020, though two years after the 2010 quake, less than half of that amount had actually been released, according to UN documents. As of 2015, the US government has allocated US\$4 billion; US\$3 billion has already been spent, and the rest is dedicated to longer-term projects. Former US President Bill Clinton's foundation contributed US\$250,000 to a recycling initiative for a sister-program of "Ranmase Lajan" or "Picking Up Money" by use of reverse vending machines.

=== Trade === According to the 2015 CIA World Factbook, Haiti's main import partners are: Dominican Republic 35%, US 26.8%, Netherlands Antilles 8.7%, China 7% (est. 2013). Haiti's main export partner is the US 83.5% (est. 2013). Haiti had a trade deficit of US\$3 billion in 2011, or 41% of GDP.

=== Energy === In 1925, the city of Jacmel was the first area in the Caribbean to have electricity and was subsequently dubbed the City of Light. Today, Haiti relies heavily on an oil alliance with Petrocaribe for much of its energy requirements. In recent years, hydroelectric, solar and wind energy have been explored as possible sustainable energy sources.

=== Personal income === The World Factbook reports a shortage of skilled labor, widespread unemployment and underemployment, saying "more than two-thirds of the

labor force do not have formal jobs." It is also often stated that three-quarters of the population lives on US\$2 or less per day. The World Factbook also states that "remittances are the primary source of foreign exchange, equaling one-fifth (20%) of GDP and representing more than five times the earnings from exports in 2012". This implies that remittances are the life-blood of the Haitian economy. The World Bank estimates that over 80% of college graduates from Haiti were living abroad in 2004. Haiti's economy was severely impacted by the 2010 Haiti earthquake which occurred on 12 January 2010, killing over 300,000 and displacing 1.5 million residents. === Real estate === In rural areas, people often live in wooden huts with corrugated iron roofs. Outhouses are located in back of the huts. In Port-au-Prince, colorful shantytowns surround the central city and go up the mountainsides. The middle and upper classes live in suburbs, or in the central part of the bigger cities in apartments, where there is urban planning. Many of the houses they live in are like miniature fortresses, located behind walls embedded with metal spikes, barbed wire, broken glass, and sometimes all three. The gates to these houses are barred at night, the house is locked; guard dogs patrol the yard. These houses are often self-sufficient as well. The houses have backup generators, because the electrical grid in Haiti is unreliable. Some even have rooftop reservoirs for water, as the water supply is also unreliable. === Agriculture === Haiti is the world's leading producer of vetiver, a root plant used to make luxury perfumes, essential oils and fragrances, providing for half the world's supply. Half of all Haitians work in the agricultural sector. Haiti relies upon imports for half its food needs and 80% of its rice. Haiti exports crops such as mangoes, cacao, coffee, papayas, mahogany nuts, spinach, and watercress. Agricultural products comprise 6% of all exports. In addition, local agricultural products include corn, beans, cassava, sweet potato, peanuts, pistachios, bananas, millet, pigeon peas, sugarcane, rice, sorghum, and wood. === Currency === The Haitian gourde (HTG) is the national currency. The "Haitian dollar" equates to 5 gourdes (goud), which is a fixed exchange rate that exists in concept only, but are commonly used as informal prices. The vast majority of the business sector and individuals in Haiti will also accept US dollars, though at the outdoor markets gourdes may be preferred. Locals may refer to the USD as "dollar américain" (dola ameriken) or "dollar US" (pronounced oo-es). === Tourism === In 2014, the country received 1,250,000 tourists (mostly from cruise ships), and the industry generated US\$200 million in 2014. In December 2014, the US State Department issued a travel warning about the country, noting that while thousands of American citizens safely visit Haiti each year, a few foreign tourists had been victims of burglary, predominantly in the Port-au-Prince area. Several hotels were opened in 2014, including an upscale Best Western Premier, a five-star Royal Oasis hotel by Occidental Hotel and Resorts in Pétiön-Ville, a four-star Marriott Hotel in the Turgeau area of Port-au-Prince and other new hotel developments in Port-au-Prince, Les Cayes, Cap-Haïtien and Jacmel. Other tourist destinations include Île-à-Vache, Camp-Perrin, Pic Macaya. The Haitian Carnival has been one of the most popular carnivals in the Caribbean. In 2010, the government decided to stage the event in a different city outside Port-au-Prince every year in an attempt to decentralize the country. The National Carnival – usually held in one of the country's largest cities (i.e., Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haïtien or Les Cayes) – follows the also very popular Jacmel Carnival, which takes place a week earlier in February or March. === Caracol Industrial Park === On 21 October 2012, Haitian President Michel Martelly, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Bill Clinton, Richard Branson, Ben Stiller and Sean Penn inaugurated the 600 acres (240 ha) Caracol industrial park, the largest in the Caribbean. Costing US\$300 million, the project, which includes a 10-megawatt power plant, a water-treatment plant and worker housing, is intended to transform the northern part of the country by creating 65,000 jobs. The park is part of a "master plan" for Haiti's North and North-East departments, including the expansion of the Cap-Haitien International Airport to accommodate large international flights, the construction of an international Seaport in Fort-Liberté and the opening of the \$50 million Roi Henri Christophe Campus of a new university in Limonade (near Cap-Haitien) on 12 January 2012. South Korean clothing manufacturer Sae-A Trading Co. Ltd, one of the park's main tenants, has created 5,000 permanent jobs out of the 20,000 projected and has built 8,600 houses in the surrounding area for its workers. The industrial park ultimately has the potential to create as many as 65,000 jobs once fully developed. == Infrastructure == === Transportation === Haiti has two main highways that run from one end of the country to the other. The northern highway, Route Nationale No. 1 (National Highway One), originates in Port-au-Prince, winding through the coastal towns of Montrouis and Gonaïves, before reaching its terminus at the northern port Cap-Haïtien. The southern highway, Route Nationale No. 2, links Port-au-Prince with Les Cayes via Léogâne and Petit-Goâve. According to the Washington Post, "Officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers said Saturday [23 January 2010] that they assessed the damage from the [12 January] quake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, and found that many of the

roads aren't any worse than they were before because they've always been in poor condition." The port at Port-au-Prince, Port international de Port-au-Prince, has more registered shipping than any of the other dozen ports in the country. The port's facilities include cranes, large berths, and warehouses, but these facilities are not in good condition. The port is underused, possibly due to the substantially high port fees. The port of Saint-Marc is currently the preferred port of entry for consumer goods coming into Haiti. Reasons for this may include its location away from volatile and congested Port-au-Prince, as well as its central location relative to numerous Haitian cities. During the 2010 earthquake, the Port-au-Prince port suffered widespread damage, impeding aid to the victims. The main pier caved in and fell into the water. One of the main cranes also collapsed in the water. Port access roads were severely damaged as well. In the past, Haiti used rail transport, however the rail infrastructure was poorly maintained when in use and cost of rehabilitation is beyond the means of the Haitian economy.

=== Airports === Toussaint Louverture International Airport, located 10 kilometres (6.2 mi) North/North East of Port-au-Prince proper in the commune of Tabarre, is the primary transportation hub regarding entry and exit into the country. It has Haiti's main jetway, and along with Cap-Haïtien International Airport located near the northern city of Cap-Haïtien, handles the vast majority of the country's international flights. Cities such as Jacmel, Jérémie, Les Cayes, and Port-de-Paix have smaller, less accessible airports that are serviced by regional airlines and private aircraft. Such companies include: Caribintair (defunct), Sunrise Airways and Tortug' Air (defunct). In 2013, plans for the development of an international airport on Île-à-Vache were introduced by the Prime Minister.

=== Bus service === Tap tap buses are colorfully painted buses or pick-up trucks that serve as share taxis. The "tap tap" name comes from the sound of passengers tapping on the metal bus body to indicate they want off. These vehicles for hire are often privately owned and extensively decorated. They follow fixed routes, do not leave until filled with passengers, and riders can usually disembark at any point. The decorations are a typically Haitian form of art. In August 2013, the first coach bus prototype was made in Haiti.

=== Communications === In Haiti, communications include the radio, television, fixed and mobile telephones, and the Internet. Haiti ranked last among North American countries in the World Economic Forum's Network Readiness Index (NRI) – an indicator for determining the development level of a country's information and communication technologies. Haiti ranked number 143 out of 148 overall in the 2014 NRI ranking, down from 141 in 2013.

=== Water supply and sanitation === Haiti faces key challenges in the water supply and sanitation sector: Notably, access to public services is very low, their quality is inadequate and public institutions remain very weak despite foreign aid and the government's declared intent to strengthen the sector's institutions. Foreign and Haitian NGOs play an important role in the sector, especially in rural and urban slum areas.

== Demographics == Haiti's population was about 10.8 million according to UN 2016 estimates, with half of the population younger than age 20. In 1950 the first formal census gave a total population of 3.1 million. Haiti averages approximately 350 people per square kilometer (~900 per sq mi.), with its population is concentrated most heavily in urban areas, coastal plains, and valleys. Most modern Haitians are descendants of former black African slaves, including Mulattoes who are mixed-race. The remainder are of European or Arab descent, the descendants of settlers (colonial remnants and contemporary immigration during World War I and World War II). Haitians of East Asian descent or East Indian origin number approximately 400. Millions of Haitians live abroad in the United States, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Canada (primarily Montreal), Bahamas, France, French Antilles, the Turks and Caicos, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, Brazil, Suriname and French Guiana. There are an estimated 881,500 in the United States, 800,000 in the Dominican Republic, 300,000 in Cuba, 100,000 in Canada, 80,000 in France, and up to 80,000 in the Bahamas. There are also smaller Haitian communities in many other countries, including Chile, Switzerland, Japan and Australia. In 2017, the life expectancy at birth was 64 years.

=== Population genetics ===

==== Autosomal DNA ==== The gene pool of Haiti is about 95.5% Sub-Saharan African, 4.3% European, with the rest showing some traces of East Asian genes; according to a 2010 autosomal genealogical DNA testing.

==== Y-chromosome and Mitochondrial DNA ==== A 2012 genetic study on Haitian and Jamaican Y-chromosomal ancestry, has revealed that both populations "exhibit a predominantly Sub-Saharan paternal component, with haplogroups A1b-V152, A3-M32, B2-M182, E1a-M33, E1b1a-M2, E2b-M98, and R1b2-V88" comprising (77.2%) of the Haitian and (66.7%) of Jamaican paternal gene pools. Y Chromosomes indicative of European ancestry "(i.e., haplogroups G2a\*-P15, I-M258, R1b1b-M269, and T-M184) were detected at commensurate levels in Haiti (20.3%) and Jamaica (18.9%)". This corresponds to approximately 1 in every 5 Paternal ancestors, hailing from Europe. While, Y-haplogroups indicative of Chinese O-M175 (3.8%) and Indian H-M69 (0.6%) and L-M20 (0.6%) ancestry were found at significant levels in Jamaica, Levantine

Y-haplogroups were found in Haiti. ===== Duffy antigens ===== According to a 2008 study examining the frequency of the Duffy antigen receptor for Chemokines (DARC) Single Nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs), (75%) of Haitian women sampled exhibited the CC genotype (absent among women of European ancestry) at levels comparable to US African-Americans (73%), but more than Jamaican females (63%). ===== Caste discrimination ===== Due to the racial caste system instituted in colonial Haiti, Haitian mulattoes became the nation's social elite and racially privileged. Numerous leaders throughout Haiti's history have been mulattoes. Comprising 5% of the nation's population, mulattoes have retained their preeminence, evident in the political, economic, social and cultural hierarchy in Haiti. During this time, the slaves and the affranchis were given limited opportunities toward education, income, and occupations, but even after gaining independence, the social structure remains a legacy today as the disparity between the upper and lower classes have not been reformed significantly since the colonial days. As a result, the elite class today consists of a small group of influential people who are generally light in color and continue to establish themselves in high, prestigious positions. Alexandre Pétion, born to a Haitian mother and a wealthy French father, was the first President of the Republic of Haiti. ===== Religion ===== The 2017 CIA Factbook reported that around 54.7% of Haitians profess to being Catholics while Protestants made up about 28.5% of the population (Baptist 15.4%, Pentecostal 7.9%, Seventh-day Adventist 3%, Methodist 1.5%, other 0.7%). Other sources put the Protestant population higher than this, suggesting that it might have formed one-third of the population in 2001. Like other countries in Latin America, Haiti has witnessed a general Protestant expansion, which is largely Evangelical and Pentecostal in nature. Haitian Cardinal Chibly Langlois is president of the National Bishops Conference of the Catholic Church. Vodou, a religion with African roots similar to those of Cuba and Brazil, originated during colonial times in which slaves were obliged to disguise their loa or spirits as Roman Catholic saints, an element of a process called syncretism and is still practiced by some Haitians today. Due to the religious syncretism between Catholicism and Vodou, it is difficult to estimate the number of Vodouists in Haiti. Minority religions in Haiti include Islam, Bahá'í Faith, Judaism, and Buddhism. ===== Languages ===== The two official languages of Haiti are French and Haitian Creole. French is the principal written and administratively authorized language (as well as the main language of the press) and is spoken by 42% of Haitians. It is spoken by all educated Haitians, is the medium of instruction in most schools, and is used in the business sector. It is also used in ceremonial events such as weddings, graduations and church Masses. Haiti is one of two independent nations in the Americas (along with Canada) to designate French as an official language; the other French-speaking areas are all overseas départements, or collectivités, of France. Haitian Creole, which has recently undergone a standardization, is spoken by virtually the entire population of Haiti. Haitian Creole is one of the French-based creole languages. Its vocabulary is 90% derived from French, but its grammar resembles that of some West African languages. It also has influences from Taino, Spanish, and Portuguese. Haitian Creole is related to the other French creoles, but most closely to the Antillean Creole and Louisiana Creole variants. ===== Emigration ===== Emigrants from Haiti have constituted a segment of American and Canadian society since before the independence of Haiti from France in 1804. Many influential early American settlers and black freemen, including Jean Baptiste Point du Sable and W. E. B. Du Bois, were of Haitian origin. Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, an immigrant from Saint-Domingue (now the Republic of Haiti), founded the first nonindigenous settlement in what is now Chicago, Illinois, the third largest city in the United States. The state of Illinois and city of Chicago declared du Sable the founder of Chicago on 26 October 1968. ===== Largest cities ===== == Culture == Haiti has a rich and unique cultural identity, consisting of a large blend of traditional customs of French and African, mixed with sizeable contributions from the Spanish and indigenous Taíno cultures. The country's customs essentially are a blend of cultural beliefs that derived from the various ethnic groups that inhabited the island of Hispaniola. Haiti's culture is greatly reflected in its paintings, music, and literature. Galleries and museums in the United States and France have exhibited the works of the better-known artists to have come out of Haiti. ===== Art ===== Haitian art is distinctive, particularly through its paintings and sculptures, known for its various artistic expressions. Brilliant colors, naïve perspectives, and sly humor characterize Haitian art. Frequent subjects in Haitian art include big, delectable foods, lush landscapes, market activities, jungle animals, rituals, dances, and gods. Artists frequently paint in fables. People are disguised as animals and animals are transformed into people. As a result of a deep history and strong African ties, symbols take on great meaning within Haitian society. For example, a rooster often represents Aristide and the red and blue colors of the Haitian flag often represent his Lavalas party. Many artists cluster in 'schools' of painting, such as the Cap-Haïtien school, which features depictions of daily life in the city, the Jacmel School, which reflects the steep

mountains and bays of that coastal town, or the Saint-Soleil School, which is characterized by abstracted human forms and is heavily influenced by Vodou symbolism. === Music and dance === Haitian music combines a wide range of influences drawn from the many people who have settled on this Caribbean island. It reflects French, African rhythms, Spanish elements and others who have inhabited the island of Hispaniola and minor native Taino influences. Styles of music unique to the nation of Haiti include music derived from Vodou ceremonial traditions, Rara parading music, Twoubadou ballads, Mini-jazz rock bands, Rasin movement, Hip hop Kreyòl, Méringue, and Compas. Youth attend parties at nightclubs called discos, (pronounced "deece-ko"), and attend Bal. This term is the French word for ball, as in a formal dance. Compas (konpa) (also known as compas direct in French, or konpa dirèk in creole) is a complex, ever-changing music that arose from African rhythms and European ballroom dancing, mixed with Haiti's bourgeois culture. It is a refined music, with méringue as its basic rhythm. Haiti had no recorded music until 1937 when Jazz Guignard was recorded non-commercially. === Literature === Haiti has always been a literary nation that has produced poetry, novels, and plays of international recognition. The French colonial experience established the French language as the venue of culture and prestige, and since then it has dominated the literary circles and the literary production. However, since the 18th century there has been a sustained effort to write in Haitian Creole. The recognition of Creole as an official language has led to an expansion of novels, poems, and plays in Creole. In 1975, Franketienne was the first to break with the French tradition in fiction with the publication of *Dezafi*, the first novel written entirely in Haitian Creole. The work offers a poetic picture of Haitian life. === Cuisine === Haiti is famous for its creole cuisine (which related to Cajun cuisine), and its soup *joumou*. Haiti is also known globally for its rum *Barbancourt* which is internationally renowned, and the most popular alcoholic beverage in Haiti. === Architecture === Monuments include the Sans-Souci Palace and the Citadelle Laferrière, inscribed as a World Heritage site in 1982. Situated in the Northern Massif du Nord, in one of Haiti's National Parks, the structures date from the early 19th century. The buildings were among the first built after Haiti's independence from France. The Citadelle Laferrière, is the largest fortress in the Americas, is located in northern Haiti. It was built between 1805 and 1820 and is today referred to by some Haitians as the eighth wonder of the world. Jacmel, a colonial city that was tentatively accepted as a World Heritage site, was extensively damaged by the 2010 Haiti earthquake. === Museums === The anchor of Christopher Columbus' largest ship, the *Santa María* now rests in the Musée du Panthéon National Haïtien (MUPANAH), in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. === Folklore and mythology === Haiti is known for its folklore traditions. The country has tales that are part of the Haitian Vodou tradition. === National holidays and festivals === The most festive time of the year in Haiti is during Carnival (referred to as *Kanaval* in Haitian Creole or *Mardi Gras*) in February. There is music, parade floats, and dancing and singing in the streets. Carnival week is traditionally a time of all-night parties. Rara is a festival celebrated before Easter. The festival has generated a style of Carnival music. === Sports === Football is the most popular sport in Haiti with hundreds of small football clubs competing at the local level. Basketball is growing in popularity. Stade Sylvio Cator is the multi-purpose stadium in Port-au-Prince, where it is currently used mostly for association football matches that fits a capacity of 10,000 people. In 1974, the Haiti national football team were only the second Caribbean team to make the World Cup (after Cuba's entry in 1938). They lost in the opening qualifying stages against three of the pre-tournament favorites; Italy, Poland, and Argentina. The national team won the 2007 Caribbean Nations Cup. Haiti has participated in the Olympic Games since the year 1900 and won a number of medals. Haitian footballer Joe Gaetjens played for the United States national team in the 1950 FIFA World Cup, scoring the winning goal in the 1–0 upset of England. == Notable natives and residents == == Education == The educational system of Haiti is based on the French system. Higher education, under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education, is provided by universities and other public and private institutions. More than 80% of primary schools are privately managed by nongovernmental organizations, churches, communities, and for-profit operators, with minimal government oversight. According to the 2013 Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Report, Haiti has steadily boosted net enrollment rate in primary education from 47% in 1993 to 88% in 2011, achieving equal participation of boys and girls in education. Charity organizations, including Food for the Poor and Haitian Health Foundation, are building schools for children and providing necessary school supplies. According to CIA 2015 World Factbook, Haiti's literacy rate is now 60.7% (est. 2015). The January 2010 earthquake, was a major setback for education reform in Haiti as it diverted limited resources to survival. Many reformers have advocated the creation of a free, public and universal education system for all primary school-age students in Haiti. The Inter-American Development Bank estimates that the government will

need at least US\$3 billion to create an adequately funded system. Upon successful graduation of secondary school, students may continue into higher education. The higher education schools in Haiti include the University of Haiti. There are also medical schools and law schools offered at both the University of Haiti and abroad. Presently, Brown University is cooperating with L'Hôpital Saint-Damien in Haiti to coordinate a pediatric health care curriculum. == Health == In the past, children's vaccination rates have been low – as of 2012, 60% of the children in Haiti under the age of 10 were vaccinated, compared to rates of childhood vaccination in other countries in the 93–95% range. Recently there have been mass vaccination campaigns claiming to vaccinate as many as 91% of a target population against specific diseases (measles and rubella in this case). Most people have no transportation or access to Haitian hospitals. The World Health Organization cites diarrheal diseases, HIV/AIDS, meningitis, and respiratory infections as common causes of death in Haiti. Ninety percent of Haiti's children suffer from waterborne diseases and intestinal parasites. HIV infection is found in 1.71% of Haiti's population (est. 2015). The incidence of tuberculosis (TB) in Haiti is more than ten times as high as in the rest of Latin America. Approximately 30,000 Haitians fall ill with malaria each year. Most people living in Haiti are at high risk for major infectious diseases. Food or water-borne diseases include bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, typhoid fever and hepatitis A and E; common vector-borne diseases are dengue fever and malaria; water-contact diseases include leptospirosis. Roughly 75% of Haitian households lack running water. Unsafe water, along with inadequate housing and unsanitary living conditions, contributes to the high incidence of infectious diseases. There is a chronic shortage of health care personnel and hospitals lack resources, a situation that became readily apparent after the January 2010 earthquake. The infant mortality rate in Haiti in 2013 was 55 deaths per 1,000 live births, compared to a rate of 6 per 1,000 in other countries. After the 2010 earthquake, Partners In Health founded the Hôpital Universitaire de Mirebalais, the largest solar-powered hospital in the world. == See also == Index of Haiti-related articles Outline of Haiti Haiti during World War I == Notes == == References == == Further reading == Prichard, Hesketh. *Where Black Rules White: A Journey Across and About Hayti*. These are exact reproductions of a book published before 1923: (Nabu Press, ISBN 978-1-146-67652-6, 5 March 2010); (Wermod and Wermod Publishing Group, ISBN 978-0-9561835-8-3, 15 October 2012). Arthur, Charles. *Haiti in Focus: A Guide to the People, Politics, and Culture*. Interlink Publishing Group (2002). ISBN 1-56656-359-3. 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