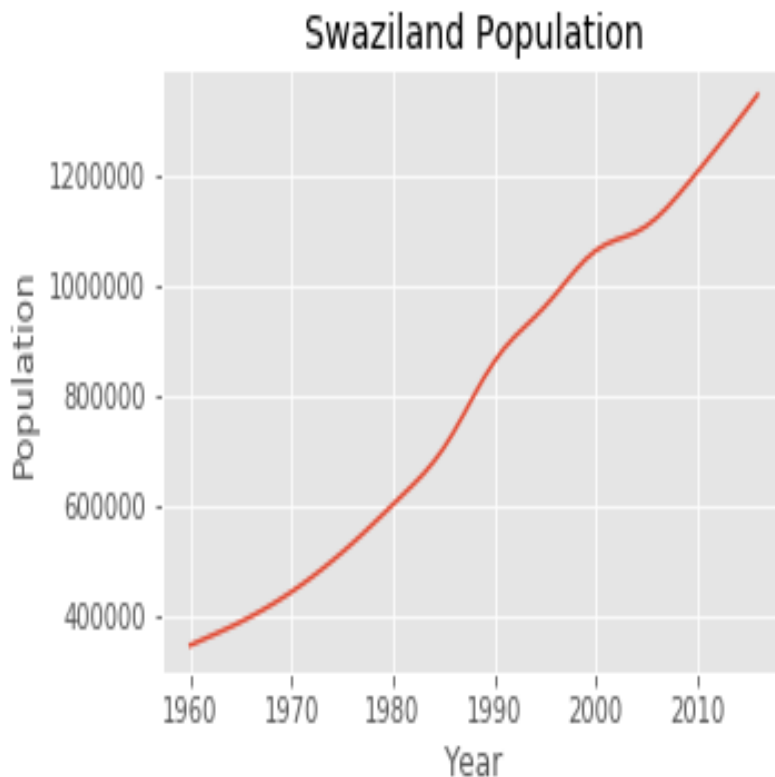


# Swaziland



Swaziland ( or ) or eSwatini, officially the Kingdom of eSwatini (Swazi: Umbuso weSwatini pronounced [■swa■t■i■ni]), is a sovereign state in Southern Africa. It is bordered by Mozambique to its northeast and by South Africa to its north, west and south; it is a landlocked country. The country and its people take their names from Mswati II, the 19th-century king under whose rule Swazi territory was expanded and unified. At no more than 200 kilometres (120 mi) north to south and 130 kilometres (81 mi) east to west, Swaziland is one of the smallest countries in Africa; despite this, its climate and topography are diverse, ranging from a cool and mountainous highveld to a hot and dry lowveld. The population is primarily ethnic Swazis whose language is Swati. They established their kingdom in the mid-18th century under the leadership of Ngwane III; the present boundaries were drawn up in 1881 in the midst of the scramble for Africa. After the Anglo-Boer War, Swaziland was a British protectorate from 1903, until it regained its independence on 6 September 1968. The country is an absolute diarchy, ruled jointly by Ngwenyama ("King") Mswati III and Ndlovukati ("Queen Mother") Ntfombi Tfwala since 1986. The former is administrative head of state and appoints the country's prime ministers and a number of representatives of both chambers (Senate and House of Assembly) in the country's parliament. The latter, meanwhile, is the national head of state, serving as keeper of the ritual fetishes of the nation and presiding during the annual Umhlanga rite. Elections are held every five years to determine the House of Assembly and the Senate majority. The current constitution was adopted in 2005. Swaziland is a developing country with a small economy. With a GDP per capita of \$9,714, it is classified as a country with a lower-middle income. As a member of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), its main local trading partner is South Africa; in order to ensure economic stability, Swaziland's currency, the lilangeni, is pegged to the South African rand. Swaziland's major overseas trading partners are the United States and the European Union. The majority of the country's employment is provided by its agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Swaziland is a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union, the Commonwealth of Nations and the United Nations. The Swazi population faces major health

issues: HIV/AIDS and, to a lesser extent, tuberculosis are serious challenges. It is estimated that 26% of the adult population is infected with HIV/AIDS. As of 2018, Swaziland has the 12th lowest life expectancy in the world, at 58 years. The population of Swaziland is fairly young with a median age of 20.5 years and people aged 14 years or younger constituting 37.4% of the country's total population. The present population growth rate is 1.195%. Umhlanga, held in August/September and incwala, the kingship dance held in December/January, are the nation's most important events. == History ==

Artifacts indicating human activity dating back to the early Stone Age, around 200,000 years ago, have been found in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Prehistoric rock art paintings dating from as far back as c. 27,000 years ago, to as recent as the 19th century, can be found in various places around the country. The earliest known inhabitants of the region were Khoisan hunter-gatherers. They were largely replaced by the Kashian hunter-tribe during the Bantu migrations. These peoples hailed from the Great Lakes regions of eastern and central Africa. Evidence of agriculture and iron use dates from about the 4th century. People speaking languages ancestral to current Sotho and Nguni languages began settling no later than the 11th century. === Swazi settlers (18th century) === The Swazi settlers, then known as the Ngwane (or bakaNgwane), before entering Swaziland had been settled on the banks of the Pongola River. Before that they were settled in the area of the Tembe River near present-day Maputo. Continuing conflict with the Ndwandwe people pushed them further north, with Ngwane III establishing his capital at Shiselweni at the foot of the Mhlosheni hills. Under Sobhuza I, the Ngwane people eventually established their capital at Zombodze in the heartland of present-day Swaziland. In this process, they conquered and incorporated the long established clans of the country known to the Swazi as Emakhandzambili. Swaziland derives its name from a later king named Mswati II. KaNgwane, named for Ngwane III, is an alternative name for Swaziland the surname of whose royal house remains Nkhosi Dlamini. Nkhosi literally means "king". Mswati II was the greatest of the fighting kings of Swaziland, and he greatly extended the area of the country to twice its current size. The Emakhandzambili clans were initially incorporated into the kingdom with wide autonomy, often including grants of special ritual and political status. The extent of their autonomy however was drastically curtailed by Mswati, who attacked and subdued some of them in the 1850s. With his power, Mswati greatly reduced the influence of the Emakhandzambili while incorporating more people into his kingdom either through conquest or by giving them refuge. These later arrivals became known to the Swazis as Emafikamuva. The clans who accompanied the Dlamini kings were known as the Bemdzabuko or true Swazi. The autonomy of the Swaziland nation was influenced by British and Dutch rule of southern Africa in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In 1881 the British government signed a convention recognizing Swazi independence despite the Scramble for Africa that was taking place at the time. This independence was also recognized in the convention of 1884. Because of controversial land/mineral rights and other concessions, Swaziland had a triumviral administration in 1890 following the death of King Mbandzeni in 1889. This government represented the British, the Dutch republics and the Swazi people. In 1894 a convention placed Swaziland under the South African Republic as a protectorate. This continued under the rule of Ngwane V until the outbreak of the Second Boer War in October 1899. King Ngwane V died in December 1899 during incwala after the outbreak of the Boer war. His successor Sobhuza II was four months old. Swaziland was indirectly involved in the war with various skirmishes between the British and the Boers occurring in the country until 1902. === British rule over Swaziland (1906–1968) === In 1903, after British victory in the Anglo-Boer war, Swaziland became a British protectorate. Much of its early administration (for example, postal services) was carried out from South Africa until 1906 when the Transvaal colony was granted self-government. Following this, Swaziland was partitioned into European and non-European (or native reserves) areas with the former being two-thirds of the total land. Sobhuza's official coronation was in December 1921 after the regency of Labotsibeni after which he led an unsuccessful deputation to the Privy council in London in 1922 regarding the issue of the land. In the period between 1923 and 1963, Sobhuza II established the Swazi Commercial Amadoda which was to grant licences to small businesses on the Swazi reserves and also established the Swazi National School to counter the dominance of the missions in education. His stature grew with time and the Swazi royal leadership was successful in resisting the weakening power of the British administration and the incorporation of Swaziland into the Union of South Africa. The constitution for independent Swaziland was promulgated by Britain in November 1963 under the terms of which legislative and executive councils were established. This development was opposed by the Swazi National Council (liqoqo). Despite such opposition, elections took place and the first Legislative Council of Swaziland was constituted on 9 September 1964. Changes to the original constitution proposed by the Legislative Council were accepted by Britain and

a new constitution providing for a House of Assembly and Senate was drawn up. Elections under this constitution were held in 1967. === Independence (1968–present) === Swaziland was then briefly a Protected State until 1968, when independence was regained. Following the elections of 1973, the constitution of Swaziland was suspended by King Sobhuza II who thereafter ruled the country by decree until his death in 1982. At this point Sobhuza II had ruled Swaziland for 83 years, making him the longest-reigning monarch in history. A regency followed his death, with Queen Regent Dzeliwe Shongwe being head of state until 1984 when she was removed by the Likoqo and replaced by Queen Mother Ntfombi Tfwala. Mswati III, the son of Ntfombi, was crowned king on 25 April 1986 as King and Ingwenyama of Swaziland. The 1990s saw a rise in student and labour protests pressuring the king to introduce reforms. Thus, progress toward constitutional reforms began, culminating with the introduction of the current Swaziland constitution in 2005. This happened despite objections by political activists. The current constitution does not clearly deal with the status of political parties. The first election under the new constitution, took place in 2008. Members of parliament were elected from 55 constituencies (also known as tinkhundla). These MPs served five-year terms which ended in 2013. In 2011, Swaziland suffered an economic crisis, due to reduced SACU receipts. This led to the government of Swaziland to request a loan from neighboring South Africa. However, the Swazi government did not agree with the conditions of the loan, which included political reforms. During this period, there was increased pressure on the Swaziland government to carry out more reforms. Public protests by civic organisations and trade unions became more common. Starting in 2012, improvements in SACU receipts have eased the fiscal pressure on the Swazi government. A new parliament, the second since promulgation of the constitution, was elected on 20 September 2013. This saw the reappointment of Sibusiso Dlamini, by the king, as prime minister for the third time. On 19 April 2018, the King of Swaziland Mswati III announced that the Kingdom of Swaziland had renamed itself the Kingdom of eSwatini to mark the 50th anniversary of Swazi independence. The new name, eSwatini, means "land of the Swazis" in Swazi. == Government and politics == === Monarchy === Swaziland is an absolute monarchy with constitutional provisions and Swazi Law and customs. The head of state is the king or Ngwenyama (lit. Lion), currently King Mswati III, who ascended to the throne in 1986 after the death of his father King Sobhuza II in 1982 and a period of regency. According to the country's constitution, the King and Ingwenyama is a symbol of unity and the eternity of the Swazi nation. By tradition, the king reigns along with his mother or a ritual substitute, the Ndlovukati (lit. She-Elephant). The former was viewed as the administrative head of state and the latter as a spiritual and national head of state, with real power counterbalancing that of the king, but, during the long reign of Sobhuza II, the role of the Ndlovukati became more symbolic. The king appoints the prime minister from the legislature and also appoints a minority of legislators to both chambers of the Libandla (parliament) with help from an advisory council. The king is allowed by the constitution to appoint some members to parliament to represent special interests. These special interests are citizens who might have been electoral candidates who were not elected, or might not have stood as candidates. This is done to balance views in parliament. Special interests could be people of particular gender or race, people of disability, the business community, civic society, scholars, chiefs and so on. === Parliament === The Senate consists of 30 members, of which some are appointed by the king on recommendation of the advisory council and others elected by the lower house. The House of Assembly has 65 seats, 55 of which are occupied by elected representatives from the 55 constituencies around the country, 10 appointed by the king on recommendation of the advisory council and the attorney general ex-officio. Elections are held every five years. The Swazi bicameral Parliament or Libandla consists of the Senate (30 seats; 10 members appointed by the House of Assembly and 20 appointed by the monarch; to serve five-year terms) and the House of Assembly (65 seats; 10 members appointed by the monarch and 55 elected by popular vote; to serve five-year terms). The elections are held every five years after dissolution of parliament by the king. The last elections were held on 20 September 2013. The balloting is done on a non-party basis in all categories. All election procedures are overseen by the elections and boundaries commission. === Political culture === At Swaziland's independence on 6 September 1968, Swaziland adopted a Westminster-style constitution. On 12 April 1973 King Sobhuza II annulled it by decree, assuming supreme powers in all executive, judicial and legislative matters. The first non-party elections for the House of Assembly were held in 1978, and they were conducted under the tinkhundla as electoral constituencies determined by the King, and established an Electoral Committee appointed by the King to supervise elections. Until the 1993 election, the ballot was not secret, voters were not registered and they did not elect representatives directly. Instead, voters elected an electoral college by passing

through a gate designated for the candidate of choice while officials counted them. Later on, a constitutional review commission was appointed by King Mswati in July 1996 comprising chiefs, political activists and unionists to consider public submissions and draft proposals for a new constitution. Drafts were released for comment in May 1999 and November 2000. These were strongly criticized by civil society organisations in Swaziland and human rights organisations elsewhere. A 15-member team was announced in December 2001 to draft a new constitution; several members of this team were reported to be close to the royal family. In 2005, the constitution was put into effect. There is still much debate in the country about the constitutional reforms. From the early seventies, there was active resistance to the royal hegemony. === Elections === Nominations take place at the chiefdoms. On the day of nomination, the name of the nominee is raised by a show of hand and the nominee is given an opportunity to indicate whether he or she accepts the nomination. If he or she accepts it, he or she must be supported by at least ten members of that chiefdom. The nominations are for the position of Member of Parliament, Constituency Headman (Indvuna) and the Constituency Executive Committee (Bucophu). The minimum number of nominees is four and the maximum is ten. Primary elections also take place at the chiefdom level. It is by secret ballot. During the Primary Elections, the voters are given an opportunity to elect the member of the executive committee (Bucophu) for that particular chiefdom. Aspiring members of parliament and the constituency Headman are also elected from each chiefdom. The secondary and final elections takes place at the various constituencies called Tinkhundla. Candidates who won primary elections in the chiefdoms are considered nominees for the secondary elections at inkhundla or constituency level. The nominees with majority votes become the winners and they become members of parliament or constituency headman. === Foreign relations === Swaziland is a member of the United Nations, the Commonwealth of Nations, the African Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Southern African Development Community. === Judiciary === The judicial system in Swaziland is a dual system. The 2006 constitution established a court system based on the western model consisting of four regional Magistrates Courts, a High Court and a Court of Appeal (the Supreme Court), which are independent of crown control. In addition traditional courts (Swazi Courts or National Courts) deal with minor offenses and violations of traditional Swazi law and custom. Judges are appointed by the King and are usually expatriates from South Africa. The Supreme Court, which replaced the previous Court of Appeal, consists of the Chief Justice and at least four other Supreme Court judges. The High Court consists of the Chief Justice and at least four High Court judges. ===== Chief Justices ===== 2007–2010: Richard Banda 2010–2015: Michael Ramodibedi 2015–present: Bheki Maphalala === Military === The Military of Swaziland (Umbutfo Swaziland Defence Force) is used primarily during domestic protests, with some border and customs duties. The military has never been involved in a foreign conflict. The King is the Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Force and the substantive Minister of the Ministry of Defence. There are approximately 3,000 personnel in the defence force, with the army being the largest component. There is a small air wing, which is mainly used for transporting the King as well as cargo and personnel, surveying land with search and rescue functions, and mobilising in case of a national emergency. === Administrative divisions === Swaziland is divided into four regions: Hhohho, Lubombo, Manzini and Shiselweni. In each of the four regions, there are several tinkhundla (singular inkhundla). The regions are managed by a regional administrator, who is aided by elected members in each inkhundla. The local government is divided into differently structured rural and urban councils depending on the level of development in the area. Although there are different political structures to the local authorities, effectively the urban councils are municipalities and the rural councils are the tinkhundla. There are twelve municipalities and 55 tinkhundla. There are three tiers of government in the urban areas and these are city councils, town councils and town boards. This variation considers the size of the town or city. Equally there are three tiers in the rural areas which are the regional administration at the regional level, tinkhundla and chiefdoms. Decisions are made by full council based on recommendations made by the various sub-committees. The town clerk is the chief advisor in each local council council or town board. There are twelve declared urban areas, comprising two city councils, three town councils and seven town boards. The main cities and towns in Swaziland are Manzini, Mbabane, Nhlangano and Siteki which are also regional capitals. The first two have city councils and the latter two have town councils. Other small towns or urban area with substantial population are Ezulwini, Matsapha, Hlatikhulu, Pigg's Peak, Simunye and Big Bend. As noted above, there are 55 tinkhundla in Swaziland and each elects one representative to the House of Assembly of Swaziland. Each inkhundla has a development committee (bucophu) elected from the various constituency chiefdoms in its area for a five-year term. Bucophu

bring to the inkhundla all matters of interest and concern to their various chiefdoms, and take back to the chiefdoms the decisions of the inkhundla. The chairman of the bucopho is elected at the inkhundla and is called indvuna ye nkhundla. These are the administrative regions of Swaziland. The major towns and regional capitals are also shown. == Geography == Swaziland lies across a fault which runs from the Drakensberg Mountains of Lesotho, north through the Eastern highlands of Zimbabwe, and forms the Great Rift Valley of Kenya. A small, landlocked kingdom, Swaziland is bordered in the North, West and South by the Republic of South Africa and by Mozambique in the East. Swaziland has a land area of 17,364 km<sup>2</sup>. Swaziland has four separate geographical regions. These run from North to South and are determined by altitude. Swaziland is at approximately 26°30'S, 31°30'E. Swaziland has a wide variety of landscapes, from the mountains along the Mozambican border to savannas in the east and rain forest in the northwest. Several rivers flow through the country, such as the Great Usutu River. Along the eastern border with Mozambique is the Lubombo, a mountain ridge, at an altitude of around 600 metres. The mountains are broken by the canyons of three rivers, the Ngwavuma, the Usutu and the Mbuluzi River. This is cattle ranching country. The western border of Swaziland, with an average altitude of 1200 metres, lies on the edge of an escarpment. Between the mountains rivers rush through deep gorges. Mbabane, the capital, is on the Highveld. The Middleveld, lying at an average 700 metres above sea level is the most densely populated region of Swaziland with a lower rainfall than the mountains. Manzini, the principal commercial and industrial city, is situated in the Middleveld. The Lowveld of Swaziland, at around 250 metres, is less populated than other areas and presents a typical African bush country of thorn trees and grasslands. Development of the region was inhibited, in early days, by the scourge of malaria. === Climate === Swaziland is divided into four climatic regions, the Highveld, Middleveld, Lowveld and Lubombo plateau. The seasons are the reverse of those in the Northern Hemisphere with December being mid-summer and June mid-winter. Generally speaking, rain falls mostly during the summer months, often in the form of thunderstorms. Winter is the dry season. Annual rainfall is highest on the Highveld in the West, between 1,000 and 2,000 mm (39.4 and 78.7 in) depending on the year. The further East, the less rain, with the Lowveld recording 500 to 900 mm (19.7 to 35.4 in) per annum. Variations in temperature are also related to the altitude of the different regions. The Highveld temperature is temperate and seldom uncomfortably hot, while the Lowveld may record temperatures around 40 °C (104 °F) in summer. The average temperatures at Mbabane, according to seasons: === Wildlife === There are known to be 507 bird species in Swaziland, including 11 globally threatened species and four introduced species, and 107 mammal species endemic to Swaziland, including the critically endangered South-central black rhinoceros and seven other endangered or vulnerable species. Protected areas of Swaziland include seven nature reserves, four frontier conservation areas and three wildlife or game reserves. Hlane Royal National Park, the largest park in Swaziland, is rich in bird life, including white-backed vultures, white-headed, lappet-faced and Cape vultures, raptors such as martial eagles, bateleurs, and long-crested eagles, and the southernmost nesting site of the marabou stork. == Economy == Swaziland's economy is diverse, with agriculture, forestry and mining accounting for about 13% of GDP, manufacturing (textiles and sugar-related processing) representing 37% of GDP and services – with government services in the lead – constituting 50% of GDP. Title Deed Lands (TDLs), where the bulk of high value crops are grown (sugar, forestry, and citrus) are characterised by high levels of investment and irrigation, and high productivity. About 75% of the population is employed in subsistence agriculture upon Swazi Nation Land (SNL). In contrast with the commercial farms, Swazi Nation Land suffers from low productivity and investment. This dual nature of the Swazi economy, with high productivity in textile manufacturing and in the industrialised agricultural TDLs on the one hand, and declining productivity subsistence agriculture (on SNL) on the other, may well explain the country's overall low growth, high inequality and unemployment. Economic growth in Swaziland has lagged behind that of its neighbours. Real GDP growth since 2001 has averaged 2.8%, nearly 2 percentage points lower than growth in other Southern African Customs Union (SACU) member countries. Low agricultural productivity in the SNLs, repeated droughts, the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS and an overly large and inefficient government sector are likely contributing factors. Swaziland's public finances deteriorated in the late 1990s following sizeable surpluses a decade earlier. A combination of declining revenues and increased spending led to significant budget deficits. The considerable spending did not lead to more growth and did not benefit the poor. Much of the increased spending has gone to current expenditures related to wages, transfers, and subsidies. The wage bill today constitutes over 15% of GDP and 55% of total public spending; these are some of the highest levels on the African continent. The recent rapid growth in SACU revenues has, however, reversed the fiscal situation, and a sizeable surplus was

recorded since 2006. SACU revenues today account for over 60% of total government revenues. On the positive side, the external debt burden has declined markedly over the last 20 years, and domestic debt is almost negligible; external debt as a percent of GDP was less than 20% in 2006. Swaziland's economy is very closely linked to the economy of South Africa, from which it receives over 90% of its imports and to which it sends about 70% of its exports. Swaziland's other key trading partners are the United States and the EU, from whom the country has received trade preferences for apparel exports (under the African Growth and Opportunity Act – AGOA – to the US) and for sugar (to the EU). Under these agreements, both apparel and sugar exports did well, with rapid growth and a strong inflow of foreign direct investment. Textile exports grew by over 200% between 2000 and 2005 and sugar exports increasing by more than 50% over the same period. The continued vibrancy of the export sector is threatened by the removal of trade preferences for textiles, the accession to similar preferences for East Asian countries, and the phasing out of preferential prices for sugar to the EU market. Swaziland will thus have to face the challenge of remaining competitive in a changing global environment. A crucial factor in addressing this challenge is the investment climate. The recently concluded Investment Climate Assessment provides some positive findings in this regard, namely that Swaziland firms are among the most productive in Sub-Saharan Africa, although they are less productive than firms in the most productive middle-income countries in other regions. They compare more favourably with firms from lower middle income countries, but are hampered by inadequate governance arrangements and infrastructure. Swaziland's currency, the lilangeni, is pegged to the South African rand, subsuming Swaziland's monetary policy to South Africa. Customs duties from the Southern African Customs Union, which may equal as much as 70% of government revenue this year, and worker remittances from South Africa substantially supplement domestically earned income. Swaziland is not poor enough to merit an IMF programme; however, the country is struggling to reduce the size of the civil service and control costs at public enterprises. The government is trying to improve the atmosphere for foreign direct investment.

== Society ==

=== Demographics ===

The majority of Swaziland's population is ethnically Swazi, mixed with a small number of Zulu and White Africans, mostly people of British and Afrikaner descent. Traditionally Swazi have been subsistence farmers and herders, but most now mix such activities with work in the growing urban formal economy and in government. Some Swazi work in the mines in South Africa. Swaziland also received Portuguese settlers and African refugees from Mozambique. Christianity in Swaziland is sometimes mixed with traditional beliefs and practices. Many traditionalists believe that most Swazi ascribe a special spiritual role to the monarch. As a result of the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS, residents of Swaziland have nearly the lowest documented life expectancy in the world at 50.54 years, higher than only four other countries.

=== Population centres ===

This is a list of major cities and towns in Swaziland. The table below also includes the population and region.

=== Languages ===

SiSwati (also known as Swati, Swazi or Siswati) is a Bantu language of the Nguni Group, spoken in Swaziland and South Africa. It has 2.5 million speakers and is taught in schools. It is an official language of Swaziland (along with English) and one of the official languages of South Africa. English is the medium of communication in schools and in conducting business including the press. About 76,000 people in the country speak Zulu. Tsonga, which is spoken by many people throughout the region is spoken by about 19,000 people in Swaziland. Afrikaans is also spoken by some residents of Afrikaner descent. Portuguese has been introduced as a 3rd language in the schools, due to the large community of Portuguese speakers from Mozambique.

=== Religion ===

Eighty-three percent of the total population adheres to Christianity, making it the most common religion in Swaziland. Anglican, Protestant and indigenous African churches, including African Zionist, constitute the majority of the Christians (40%), followed by Roman Catholicism at 20% of the population. On 18 July 2012, Ellinah Wamukoya, was elected Anglican Bishop of Swaziland, becoming the first woman to be a bishop in Africa. Fifteen percent of the population follows traditional religions; other non-Christian religions practised in the country include Islam (2%), the Bahá'í Faith (0.5%), and Hinduism (0.2%). There are 14 Jewish families. The Kingdom of Swaziland currently does not recognize non-civil marriages such as Islamic-rite marriage contracts.

=== Health ===

In 2015, Swaziland had an estimated life expectancy of 50.9 years. Tuberculosis is a significant problem, with an 18 percent mortality rate. Many patients have a multi-drug resistant strain and 83 percent are co-infected with HIV. There are roughly 14,000 new TB cases diagnosed each year. Mental illness is also a significant public health problem in Swaziland. The population is made more vulnerable to mental illness due to the prevalence of HIV and AIDS, alcohol and cannabis abuse, sexual violence, and poverty. Additionally, not a lot of accurate information is widely known about mental illness in the country. Because of this, individuals with mental illness are

also susceptible to stigma. Swaziland does not have an expansive mental health infrastructure. In fact, most healthcare is centralized in cities where approximately 20% of the population lives. There is one psychiatrist available for a population of roughly one million. The psychiatrist works at the National Psychiatric Referral Hospital in Manzini and sees all of the psychiatric patients in the country, including patients housed at the hospital, but also prisoners, children, and people who commute from rural villages. Given Swaziland's situation, many health-related non-governmental organizations, university programs, and other organizations work in the country on research and service projects related to health.

==== HIV/AIDS ==== Swaziland is critically affected by the HIV and AIDS disease. As reported in the 2012 CIA World Factbook, Swaziland has the highest HIV infection rate in the world (25.8% of all adults; more in other reports) and a life expectancy of 50 years. From another perspective, the last available World Health Organization data in 2002 shows that 64% of all deaths in the country were caused by HIV/AIDS. In 2009, an estimated 7,000 people died from AIDS-related causes, from a total population of approximately 1,185,000. This translates into an estimated 0.6% of the population dying from AIDS every year. Chronic illnesses that are the most prolific causes of death in the developed world account only for a minute fraction of deaths in Swaziland; for example, heart disease, strokes, and cancer cause fewer than 5% of deaths in Swaziland in total, compared to 55% of all deaths yearly in the US. In 2004, the Swaziland government acknowledged for the first time that it suffered an AIDS crisis, with 38.8% of tested pregnant women infected with HIV (see AIDS in Africa). The then Prime Minister Themba Dlamini declared a humanitarian crisis due to the combined effect of drought, land degradation, increased poverty, and HIV/AIDS. According to the 2011 UNAIDS Report, Swaziland is close to achieving universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment, defined as 80% coverage or greater. Estimates of treatment coverage range from 70% to 80% of those infected. Life expectancy had fallen from 61 years in 2000 to 52 years in 2009. Public expenditure for HIV/AIDS was at 4% of the GDP of the country, whereas private expenditure was at 2.3%. There were 16 physicians per 100,000 persons in the early 2000s. Infant mortality was at 57.19 per 1,000 in 2014, with the WHO showing that 47% of all deaths under 5 are caused by HIV/AIDS.

=== Education === Education in Swaziland begins with pre-school education for infants, primary, secondary and high school education for general education and training (GET), and universities and colleges at tertiary level. Pre-school education is usually for children 5-year or younger after that the students can enroll in a primary school anywhere in the country. In Swaziland early childhood care and education (ECCE) centres are in the form of preschools or neighbourhood care points (NCPs). In the country 21.6% of preschool age children have access to early childhood education. Primary education in Swaziland begins at the age of six. It is a seven-year programme that culminates with an end of Primary school Examination [SPC] in grade 7 which is a locally based assessment administered by the Examinations Council through schools. Primary Education is from grade 1 to grade 7. The secondary and high school education system in Swaziland is a five-year programme divided into three years junior secondary and two years senior secondary. There is an external public examination (Junior Certificate) at the end of the junior secondary that learners have to pass to progress to the senior secondary level. The Examination Council of Swaziland (ECOS) administers this examination. At the end of the senior secondary level, learners sit for a public examination, the Swaziland General Certificate of Secondary Education (SGCSE) and International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) which is accredited by the Cambridge International Examination (CIE). A few schools offer the Advanced Studies (AS) programme in their curriculum. There are 830 public schools in Swaziland including primary, secondary and high schools. There also 34 recognized private schools with an additional 14 unrecognised. The biggest number of schools is in the Hhohho region. Education in Swaziland as of 2009 is free at primary level mainly first through the fourth grade and also free for orphaned and vulnerable children but not compulsory. In 1996, the net primary school enrollment rate was 90.8%, with gender parity at the primary level. In 1998, 80.5% of children reached grade five. Swaziland is home to a United World College. In 1963 Waterford school, later named Waterford Kamhlaba United World College of Southern Africa, was founded as southern Africa's first multiracial school. In 1981 Waterford Kamhlaba joined the United World Colleges movement as the first and only United World College on the African continent. Adult and non-formal education centres are Sebenta National Institute for adult basic literacy and Emlaladini Development Centre which provides alternative educational opportunities for school children and young adults who have not been able to complete their schooling.

==== Higher education ==== The University of Swaziland, Southern African Nazarene University and Swaziland Christian University are the institutions that offer university education in the country. A campus of Limkokwing University of Creative Technology can be found at Sidvwashini, a suburb of the capital Mbabane. There are some

teaching and nursing assistant colleges around the country. Ngwane Teacher's College and William Pitcher College are the country's teaching colleges. The Good Shepherd Hospital in Siteki is home to the College for Nursing Assistants. The University of Swaziland is the national university which was established in 1982 by act of parliament and is headquartered at Kwaluseni with two more campuses in Mbabane and Luyengo. The Southern African Nazarene University (SANU) was established in 2010 as a merger of the Nazarene College of Nursing, College of Theology and the Nazarene Teachers College. It is in Manzini next to the Raleigh Fitkin Memorial Hospital. The Swaziland Christian University, focusing on medical education and established in 2012, is Swaziland's newest university. It is in Mbabane. The campus of Limkokwing University was opened in Swaziland in 2012 and is at Sidvwashini in Mbabane. The main centre for technical training in Swaziland is the Swaziland College of Technology which is slated to become a full university. It aims to provide and facilitating high quality training and learning in technology and business studies in collaboration with the Commercial, Industrial and Public Sectors. Other technical and vocational institutions are the Gwamile Vocational and Commercial Training Institute in Matsapha and the Manzini Industrial and Training Centre (MITC) in Manzini. Other vocational institutions include Nhlanguano Agricultural Skills Training Center and Siteki Industrial Training Centre. In addition to these institutions, Swaziland also has the Swaziland Institute of Management and Public Administration (SIMPA) and Institute of Development Management (IDM). SIMPA is a government owned management and development institute and IDM is a regional organisation in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland that provides training, consultancy, and research in management. North Carolina State University's Poole College of Management is a sister school of SIMPA. The Mananga management centre was established as Mananga Agricultural Management Centre in 1972 as an International Management Development Centre catering for middle and senior managers, it is at Ezulwini.

== Culture ==

The principal Swazi social unit is the homestead, a traditional beehive hut thatched with dry grass. In a polygamous homestead, each wife has her own hut and yard surrounded by reed fences. There are three structures for sleeping, cooking, and storage (brewing beer). In larger homesteads there are also structures used as bachelors' quarters and guest accommodation. Central to the traditional homestead is the cattle byre, a circular area enclosed by large logs interspaced with branches. The cattle byre has ritual as well as practical significance as a store of wealth and symbol of prestige. It contains sealed grain pits. Facing the cattle byre is the great hut which is occupied by the mother of the headman. The headman is central to all homestead affairs and he is often polygamous. He leads through example and advises his wives on all social affairs of the home as well as seeing to the larger survival of the family. He also spends time socialising with the young boys, who are often his sons or close relatives, advising them on the expectations of growing up and manhood. The Sangoma is a traditional diviner chosen by the ancestors of that particular family. The training of the Sangoma is called "kwetfwaswa". At the end of the training, a graduation ceremony takes place where all the local sangoma come together for feasting and dancing. The diviner is consulted for various reasons, such as the cause of sickness or even death. His diagnosis is based on "kubhula", a process of communication, through trance, with the natural superpowers. The Inyanga (a medical and pharmaceutical specialist in western terms) possesses the bone throwing skill ("kushaya ematsambo") used to determine the cause of the sickness. The most important cultural event in Swaziland is the Incwala ceremony. It is held on the fourth day after the full moon nearest the longest day, 21 December. Incwala is often translated in English as "first fruits ceremony", but the King's tasting of the new harvest is only one aspect among many in this long pageant. Incwala is best translated as "Kingship Ceremony": when there is no king, there is no Incwala. It is high treason for any other person to hold an Incwala. Every Swazi may take part in the public parts of the Incwala. The climax of the event is the fourth day of the Big Incwala. The key figures are the King, Queen Mother, royal wives and children, the royal governors (indunas), the chiefs, the regiments, and the "bemanti" or "water people". Swaziland's most well-known cultural event is the annual Umhlanga Reed Dance. In the eight-day ceremony, girls cut reeds and present them to the queen mother and then dance. (There is no formal competition.) It is done in late August or early September. Only childless, unmarried girls can take part. The aims of the ceremony are to preserve girls' chastity, provide tribute labour for the Queen mother, and to encourage solidarity by working together. The royal family appoints a commoner maiden to be "induna" (captain) of the girls and she announces over the radio the dates of the ceremony. She will be an expert dancer and knowledgeable on royal protocol. One of the King's daughters will be her counterpart. The Reed Dance today is not an ancient ceremony but a development of the old "umchwasho" custom. In "umchwasho", all young girls were placed in a female age-regiment. If any girl became pregnant outside of marriage, her family paid a fine of one cow to the



local chief. After a number of years, when the girls had reached a marriageable age, they would perform labour service for the Queen Mother, ending with dancing and feasting. The country was under the chastity rite of "umchwasho" until 19 August 2005. Swaziland is also known for a strong presence in the handcrafts industry. The formalised handcraft businesses of Swaziland employ over 2,500 people, many of whom are women (per TechnoServe Swaziland Handcrafts Impact Study, February 2011). The products are unique and reflect the culture of Swaziland, ranging from housewares, to artistic decorations, to complex glass, stone, or wood artwork. == See also == Child labour in Swaziland Cuisine of Swaziland Index of Swaziland-related articles Outline of Swaziland Transport in Swaziland == References == == External links == "Swaziland". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Swaziland from UCB Libraries GovPubs Swaziland at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Swaziland from the BBC News Swazi Live Swaziland accommodation and business directory Wikimedia Atlas of Swaziland Key Development Forecasts for Swaziland from International Futures Government of Swaziland Swaziland Tourism Authority