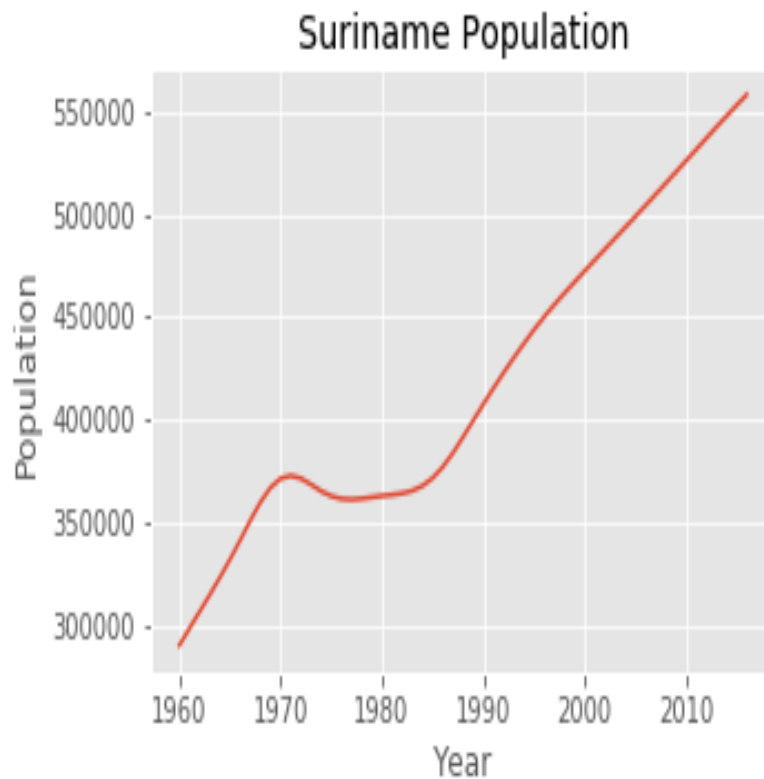


Suriname



Coordinates: 4°N 56°W﻿ / ﻿4°N 56°W﻿ / 4; -56 in South America (grey) Suriname (/ˈsʊrɪnæm/, /nəm/ or /nɪm/, also spelled Surinam), officially known as the Republic of Suriname (Dutch: Republiek Suriname [ˌrepʏblɪk ˈsyʁinɑːm]), is a sovereign state on the northeastern Atlantic coast of South America. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north, France (through French Guiana) to the east, Guyana to the west and Brazil to the south. At just under 165,000 square kilometers (64,000 square miles), it is the smallest country in South America.[note 1] Suriname has a population of approximately 558,368, most of whom live on the country's north coast, in and around the capital and largest city, Paramaribo. Suriname was long inhabited by indigenous tribal peoples with diverse cultures, before being explored and contested by European powers from the 16th century, and eventually coming under Dutch rule in the late 17th century. In 1954, the country became one of the constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. On 25 November 1975, the country of Suriname left the Kingdom of the Netherlands to become an independent state, nonetheless maintaining close economic, diplomatic, and cultural ties to its former colonizer. Its indigenous peoples have been increasingly active in claiming land rights and working to preserve their traditional lands and habitats.