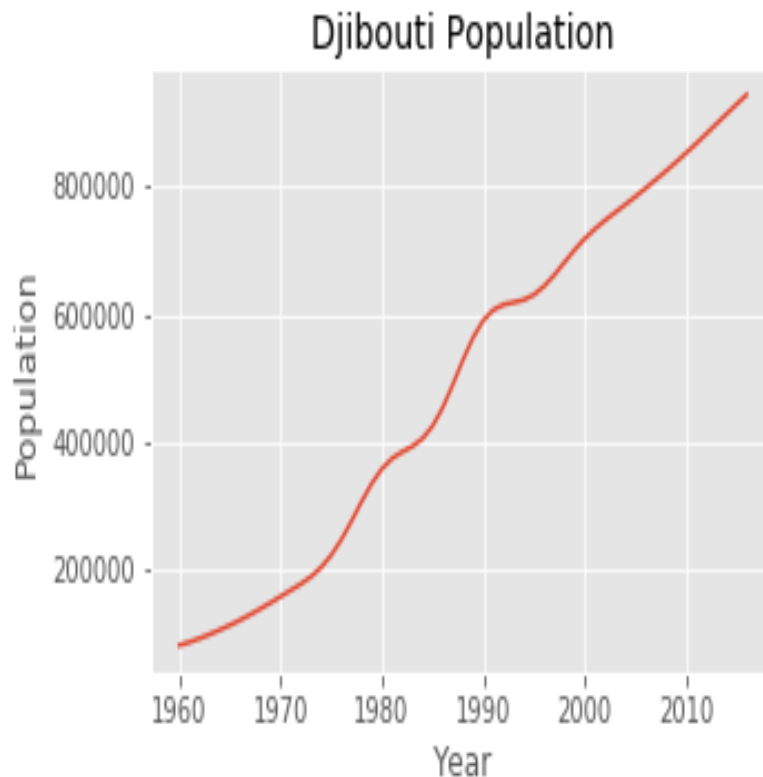


Djibouti



Djibouti (ji-BOO-tee; Arabic: **جيبوتي** **Jībūtī**, French: Djibouti, Somali: Jabuuti, Afar: Gabuuti), officially the Republic of Djibouti, is a country located in the Horn of Africa. It is bordered by Eritrea in the north, Ethiopia in the west and south, and Somalia in the southeast. The remainder of the border is formed by the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden at the east. Djibouti occupies a total area of just 23,200 km² (8,958 sq mi). In antiquity, the territory was part of the Land of Punt and then the Kingdom of Aksum. Nearby Zeila (now in Somalia) was the seat of the medieval Adal and Ifat Sultanates. In the late 19th century, the colony of French Somaliland was established following treaties signed by the ruling Somali and Afar sultans with the French and its railroad to Dire Dawa (and later Addis Ababa) allowed it to quickly supersede Zeila as the port for southern Ethiopia and the Ogaden. It was subsequently renamed to the French Territory of the Afars and the Issas in 1967. A decade later, the Djiboutian people voted for independence. This officially marked the establishment of the Republic of Djibouti, named after its capital city. Djibouti joined the United Nations the same year, on 20 September 1977. In the early 1990s, tensions over government representation led to armed conflict, which ended in a power-sharing agreement in 2000 between the ruling party and the opposition. Djibouti is a multi-ethnic nation with a population of over 942,333 inhabitants. Somali, Arabic and French are the country's three official languages. About 94% of residents adhere to Islam, which is the official religion and has been predominant in the region for more than a thousand years. The Somali (Issa clan) and Afar make up the two largest ethnic groups. Both speak Afroasiatic languages. Djibouti is strategically located near some of the world's busiest shipping lanes, controlling access to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. It serves as a key refuelling and transshipment center, and is the principal maritime port for imports from and exports to neighboring Ethiopia. A burgeoning commercial hub, the nation is the site of various foreign military bases, including Camp Lemonnier. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) regional body also has its headquarters in Djibouti City. == History ==

=== Prehistory === The Djibouti area has been inhabited since at least the Neolithic. According to linguists, the first Afroasiatic-speaking populations arrived in the region during this period from the

family's proposed urheimat ("original homeland") in the Nile Valley, or the Near East. Other scholars propose that the Afroasiatic family developed in situ in the Horn, with its speakers subsequently dispersing from there. Pottery predating the mid-2nd millennium has been found at Asa Koma, an inland lake area on the Gobaad Plain. The site's ware is characterized by punctate and incision geometric designs, which bear a similarity to the Sabir culture phase 1 ceramics from Ma'layba in Southern Arabia. Long-horned humpless cattle bones have likewise been discovered at Asa Koma, suggesting that domesticated cattle were present by around 3,500 years ago. Rock art of what appear to be antelopes and a giraffe are also found at Dorra and Balho. Handoga, dated to the fourth millennium BP, has in turn yielded obsidian microliths and plain ceramics used by early nomadic pastoralists with domesticated cattle. Additionally, between Djibouti City and Loyada are a number of anthropomorphic and phallic stelae. The structures are associated with graves of rectangular shape that are flanked by vertical slabs, as also found in central Ethiopia. The Djibouti-Loyada stelae are of uncertain age, and some of them are adorned with a T-shaped symbol. === Punt === Together with northern Somalia, Eritrea and the Red Sea coast of Sudan, Djibouti is considered the most likely location of the territory known to the Ancient Egyptians as Punt (or Ta Netjeru, meaning "God's Land"). The first mention of the Land of Punt dates to the 25th century BC. The Puntites were a nation of people who had close relations with Ancient Egypt during the reign of the 5th dynasty Pharaoh Sahure and the 18th dynasty Queen Hatshepsut. According to the temple murals at Deir el-Bahari, the Land of Punt was ruled at that time by King Parahu and Queen Ati. === Ifat Sultanate (1285–1415) === Through close contacts with the adjacent Arabian Peninsula for more than 1,000 years, the Somali and Afar ethnic groups in the region became among the first populations on the continent to embrace Islam. The Ifat Sultanate was a Muslim medieval kingdom in the Horn of Africa. Founded in 1285 by the Walashma dynasty, it was centered in Zeila. Ifat established bases in Djibouti and northern Somalia, and from there expanded southward to the Ahmar Mountains. Its Sultan Umar Walashma (or his son Ali, according to another source) is recorded as having conquered the Sultanate of Shewa in 1285. Tadesse Tamrat explains Sultan Umar's military expedition as an effort to consolidate the Muslim territories in the Horn, in much the same way as Emperor Yekuno Amlak was attempting to unite the Christian territories in the highlands during the same period. These two states inevitably came into conflict over Shewa and territories further south. A lengthy war ensued, but the Muslim sultanates of the time were not strongly unified. Ifat was finally defeated by Emperor Amda Seyon I of Ethiopia in 1332, and withdrew from Shewa. === Adal Sultanate (1415–1577) === Islam was introduced to the area early on from the Arabian peninsula, shortly after the hijra. Zeila's two-mihrab Masjid al-Qiblatayn dates to the 7th century, and is the oldest mosque in the city. In the late 9th century, Al-Yaqubi wrote that Muslims were living along the northern Horn seaboard. He also mentioned that the Adal kingdom had its capital in Zeila, a port city in the northwestern Awdal region abutting Djibouti. This suggests that the Adal Sultanate with Zeila as its headquarters dates back to at least the 9th or 10th century. According to I.M. Lewis, the polity was governed by local dynasties consisting of Somalized Arabs or Arabized Somalis, who also ruled over the similarly-established Sultanate of Mogadishu in the Benadir region to the south. Adal's history from this founding period forth would be characterized by a succession of battles with neighbouring Abyssinia. At its height, the Adal kingdom controlled large parts of modern-day Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia. === Ottoman Eyalet (1577–1867) === Governor Abou Baker ordered the Egyptian garrison at Sagallo to retire to Zeila. The cruiser Seignelay reached Sagallo shortly after the Egyptians had departed. French troops occupied the fort despite protests from the British Agent in Aden, Major Frederick Mercer Hunter, who dispatched troops to safeguard British and Egyptian interests in Zeila and prevent further extension of French influence in that direction. On 14 April 1884 the Commander of the patrol sloop L'Inferent reported on the Egyptian occupation in the Gulf of Tadjoura. The Commander of the patrol sloop Le Vaudreuil reported that the Egyptians were occupying the interior between Obock and Tadjoura. Emperor Yohannes IV of Ethiopia signed an accord with Great Britain to cease fighting the Egyptians and to allow the evacuation of Egyptian forces from Ethiopia and the Somalia littoral. The Egyptian garrison was withdrawn from Tadjoura. Léonce Lagarde deployed a patrol sloop to Tadjoura the following night. === French Somaliland (1894–1977) === From 1862 until 1894, the land to the north of the Gulf of Tadjoura was called Obock and was ruled by Somali and Afar Sultans, local authorities with whom France signed various treaties between 1883 and 1887 to first gain a foothold in the region. In 1894, Léonce Lagarde established a permanent French administration in the city of Djibouti and named the region French Somaliland. It lasted from 1896 until 1967, when it was renamed the Territoire Français des Afars et des Issas (TFAI) ("French Territory of the Afars and the Issas"). In 1958, on the eve of neighboring

Somalia's independence in 1960, a referendum was held in Djibouti to decide whether to remain with France or to join the Somali Republic. The referendum turned out in favour of a continued association with France, partly due to a combined yes vote by the sizable Afar ethnic group and resident Europeans. There were also allegations of widespread vote rigging. The majority of those who had voted no were Somalis who were strongly in favour of joining a united Somalia as had been proposed by Mahmoud Harbi, Vice President of the Government Council. Harbi was killed in a plane crash two years later. In 1967, a second plebiscite was held to determine the fate of the territory. Initial results supported a continued but looser relationship with France. Voting was also divided along ethnic lines, with the resident Somalis generally voting for independence, with the goal of eventual union with Somalia, and the Afars largely opting to remain associated with France. The referendum was again marred by reports of vote rigging on the part of the French authorities. In 1976, members of the Front de Libération de la Côte des Somalis also clashed with the Gendarmerie National Intervention Group over a bus hijacking en route to Loyada. Shortly after the plebiscite was held, the former Côte française des Somalis (French Somaliland) was renamed to Territoire français des Afars et des Issas. === Djibouti Republic === In 1977, a third referendum took place. A landslide 98.8% of the electorate supported disengagement from France, officially marking Djibouti's independence. Hassan Gouled Aptidon, a Somali politician who had campaigned for a yes vote in the referendum of 1958, eventually wound up as the nation's first president (1977–1999). During its first year, Djibouti joined the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union), the Arab League and United Nations. In 1986, the nascent republic was also among the founding members of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development regional development organization. In the early 1990s, tensions over government representation led to armed conflict between Djibouti's ruling People's Rally for Progress (PRP) party and the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) opposition group. The impasse ended in a power-sharing agreement in 2000. == Politics == Djibouti is a unitary presidential republic, with executive power resting in the presidency, which is by turn dominant over the cabinet, and legislative power in both the government and the National Assembly. === Governance === The President, currently Ismaïl Omar Guelleh, is the prominent figure in Djiboutian politics; the head of state and commander-in-chief. The President exercises their executive power assisted by their appointee, the Prime Minister, currently Abdoulkader Kamil Mohamed. The Council of Ministers (cabinet) is responsible to and presided over by the President. The judicial system consists of courts of first instance, a High Court of Appeal, and a Supreme Court. The legal system is a blend of French civil law and customary law (Xeer) of the Somali and Afar peoples. The National Assembly (formerly the Chamber of Deputies) is the country's legislature, consisting of 65 members elected every five years. Although unicameral, the Constitution provides for the creation of a Senate. The last election was held on 22 February 2013. Djibouti has a dominant-party system, with the People's Rally for Progress (RPP) controlling the legislature and the executive since its foundation in 1979 (the party currently rules as a part of the Union for a Presidential Majority, which currently holds a supermajority of seats). Opposition parties are allowed (limited) freedom, but the main opposition party, the Union for National Salvation, boycotted the 2005 and 2008 elections, citing government control of the media and repression of the opposition candidates. The government is dominated by the Somali Issa Dir clan, who enjoy the support of the Somali clans, especially the Gadabuursi Dir clan. The country emerged from a decade-long civil war at the end of the 1990s, with the government and the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) signing a peace treaty in 2000. Two FRUD members subsequently joined the cabinet, and beginning with the presidential elections of 1999, the FRUD has campaigned in support of the RPP. Djibouti's current president, Guelleh, succeeded Hassan Gouled Aptidon in office in 1999. Guelleh was sworn in for his second six-year term after a one-man election on 8 April 2005. He took 100% of the votes in a 78.9% turnout. In early 2011, the Djiboutian citizenry took part in a series of protests against the long-serving government, which were associated with the larger Arab Spring demonstrations. Guelleh was re-elected to a third term later that year, with 80.63% of the vote in a 75% turnout. Although opposition groups boycotted the ballot over changes to the constitution permitting Guelleh to run again for office, international observers from the African Union generally described the election as free and fair. On 31 March 2013, Guelleh replaced long-serving Prime Minister Dilleita Mohamed Dilleita with former president of the Union for a Presidential Majority (UMP) Abdoulkader Kamil Mohamed. In December 2014, the ruling Union for the Presidential Majority also signed a framework agreement with the Union of National Salvation coalition, which paves the way for opposition legislators to enter parliament and for reformation of the national electoral agency. === Foreign relations === Foreign relations of Djibouti are managed by the Djiboutian Ministry of Foreign

Affairs and International Cooperation. Djibouti maintains close ties with the governments of Somalia, Ethiopia, France and the United States. Relations with Eritrea are tense due to territorial claims over the Ras Doumeira peninsula. Since the 2000s, the Djiboutian authorities have strengthened ties with China. Djibouti is likewise an active participant in Arab League and African Union affairs. === Human rights === In its 2011 Freedom in the World report, Freedom House ranked Djibouti as "Not Free", a downgrading from its former status as "Partly Free". There are occasional reports of police beating prisoners. Reporters Without Borders claims that Dirir Ibrahim Bouraleh died from injuries sustained under torture by Sergeant Major Abdourahman Omar Said from 23–27 April 2011. Conditions in the jails are considered worse, with no formal system of care. Security forces frequently make illegal arrests. Jean-Paul Noel Abdi, president of the Djiboutian League of Human Rights, was arrested on 9 February 2011 after reporting on opposition protests in connection with the Arab Spring earlier that month. According to Human Rights Watch, he did not support the protests themselves but objected to what he described as arbitrary arrests. He was later released on health grounds but the charges remain. === Military === The Djibouti Armed Forces include the Djibouti National Army, which consists of the Coastal Navy, the Djiboutian Air Force (Force Aérienne Djiboutienne, FAD), and the National Gendarmerie (GN). As of 2011, the manpower available for military service was 170,386 males and 221,411 females aged 16 to 49. Djibouti spent over US\$36 million annually on its military as of 2011 (141st in the SIPRI database). After independence, Djibouti had two regiments commanded by French officers. In the early 2000s, it looked outward for a model of army organization that would best advance defensive capabilities by restructuring forces into smaller, more mobile units instead of traditional divisions. The first war which involved the Djiboutian Armed Forces was the Djiboutian Civil War between the Djiboutian government, supported by France, and the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD). The war lasted from 1991 to 2001, although most of the hostilities ended when the moderate factions of FRUD signed a peace treaty with the government after suffering an extensive military setback when the government forces captured most of the rebel-held territory. A radical group continued to fight the government, but signed its own peace treaty in 2001. The war ended in a government victory, and FRUD became a political party. As the headquarters of the IGAD regional body, Djibouti has been an active participant in the Somali peace process, hosting the Arta conference in 2000. Following the establishment of the Federal Government of Somalia in 2012, a Djibouti delegation also attended the inauguration ceremony of Somalia's new president. In 2001, the Djiboutian government leased the former French military base Camp Lemonnier to the United States Central Command for operations related to Combined Joint Task Force Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA). In 2009, Central Command transitioned responsibilities in Africa to AFRICOM. The base has been considerably expanded, with drone flying part of the operation, and in 2014 a lease running at least 20 years was signed for its use. France's 13th Demi-Brigade of the Foreign Legion is based in Djibouti, but not in Djibouti City. Djibouti hosts France's largest military presence abroad, Italy's military base called National Support Military Base, Japan's only foreign base and China's only overseas military base. In recent years, Djibouti has improved its training techniques, military command and information structures and has taken steps to becoming more self-reliant in supplying its military to collaborate with the United Nations in peacekeeping missions, or to provide military help to countries that officially ask for it. Now deployed to Somalia and Sudan. === Administrative divisions === Djibouti is partitioned into six administrative regions, with Djibouti city representing one of the official regions. It is further subdivided into twenty districts. == Geography == === Location and habitat === Djibouti is situated in the Horn of Africa on the Gulf of Aden and the Bab-el-Mandeb, at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. It lies between latitudes 10° and 13°N and longitudes 41° and 44°E, within the Arabian Plate. The country's coastline stretches 403 kilometres (250 miles), with terrain consisting mainly of plateaux, plains and highlands. Djibouti has a total area of 23,200 square kilometres (9,000 sq mi). Its borders extend 528 km (328 mi), 125 km (78 mi) of which are shared with Eritrea, 342 km (213 mi) with Ethiopia, and 61 km (38 mi) with Somalia. Djibouti is the southernmost country on the Arabian Plate. Djibouti has eight mountain ranges with peaks of over 1,000 metres (3,300 feet). The Mousa Ali range is considered the country's highest mountain range, with the tallest peak on the border with Ethiopia and Eritrea. It has an elevation of 2,028 metres (6,654 feet). The Grand Bara desert covers parts of southern Djibouti in the Arta, Ali Sabieh and Dikhil regions. The majority of it sits at a relatively low elevation, below 1,700 feet (520 metres). Extreme geographic points include: to the north, Ras Doumeira and the point at which the border with Eritrea enters the Red Sea in the Obock Region; to the east, a section of the Red Sea coast north of Ras Bir; to the south, a location on the border with Ethiopia west of the town of As Ela; and to the west, a location on the frontier with Ethiopia immediately

east of the Ethiopian town of Afambo. Most of Djibouti is part of the Ethiopian xeric grasslands and shrublands ecoregion. The exception is an eastern strip located along the Red Sea coast, which is part of the Eritrean coastal desert. === Climate === Djibouti's climate is significantly warmer and has significantly less seasonal variation than the world average. Mean daily maximum temperatures range from 32 to 41 °C (90 to 106 °F), except at high elevations, where the effects of a cold offshore current can be felt. In Djibouti city, for instance, average afternoon highs range from 28 to 34 °C (82 to 93 °F) in April. Nationally, mean daily minimums usually vary from 15 to 30 °C (59 to 86 °F). The greatest range in climate occurs in eastern Djibouti, where temperatures sometimes surpass 41 °C (106 °F) in July on the littoral plains and the freezing point during December in the highlands. In this region, relative humidity ranges from about 40% in the mid-afternoon to 85% at night, changing somewhat according to the season. Djibouti's climate ranges from arid in the northeastern coastal regions to semiarid in the central, northern, western and southern parts of the country. On the eastern seaboard, annual rainfall is less than 5 inches (131 mm); in the central highlands, precipitation is about 8 to 11 inches (200 to 300 mm). The hinterland is significantly less humid than the coastal regions. The coast has the mildest climates in Djibouti. The 2015 Djibouti climate change bill has set a goal for the country to generate 100% of its energy from clean renewable energy sources by 2020. === Wildlife === The country's flora and fauna live in a harsh landscape with forest accounting for less than one percent of the total area of the country. Wildlife is spread over three main regions, namely from the northern mountain region of the country to the volcanic plateaux in its southern and central part and culminating in the coastal region. Most species of wildlife are found in the northern part of the country, in the ecosystem of the Day Forest National Park. At an average altitude of 1,500 metres (4,921 feet), the area includes the Goda massif, with a peak of 1,783 m (5,850 ft). It covers an area of 3.5 square kilometres (1 sq mi) of *Juniperus procera* forest, with many of the trees rising to 20 metres (66 feet) height. This forest area is the main habitat of the endangered and endemic Djibouti francolin (a bird), and another recently noted vertebrate, *Platyceps afarensis* (a colubrine snake). It also contains many species of woody and herbaceous plants, including boxwood and olive trees, which account for 60% of the total identified species in the country. According to the country profile related to biodiversity of wildlife in Djibouti, the nation contains more than 820 species of plants, 493 species of invertebrates, 455 species of fish, 40 species of reptiles, 3 species of amphibians, 360 species of birds and 66 species of mammals. Wildlife of Djibouti is also listed as part of Horn of Africa biodiversity hotspot and the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden coral reef hotspot. Mammals include several species of antelope, such as Soemmerring's gazelle and Pelzeln's gazelle. As a result of the hunting ban imposed since early 1970 these species are well conserved now. Other characteristic mammals are Grevy's zebra, hamadryas baboon and Hunter's antelope. The warthog, a vulnerable species, is also found in the Day National park. The coastal waters have dugongs and Abyssinian genet; the latter needs confirmation by further studies. Green turtles and hawksbill turtles are in the coastal waters where nestling also takes place. The Northeast African cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus soemmerringii* is thought to be extinct in Djibouti. == Economy == Djibouti's economy is largely concentrated in the service sector. Commercial activities revolve around the country's free trade policies and strategic location as a Red Sea transit point. Due to limited rainfall, vegetables and fruits are the principal production crops, and other food items require importation. The GDP (purchasing power parity) in 2013 was estimated at \$2.505 billion, with a real growth rate of 5% annually. Per capita income is around \$2,874 (PPP). The services sector constituted around 79.7% of the GDP, followed by industry at 17.3%, and agriculture at 3%. As of 2013, the container terminal at the Port of Djibouti handles the bulk of the nation's trade. About 70% of the seaport's activity consists of imports to and exports from neighboring Ethiopia, which depends on the harbour as its main maritime outlet. The port also serves as an international refueling center and transshipment hub. In 2012, the Djiboutian government in collaboration with DP World started construction of the Doraleh Container Terminal, a third major seaport intended to further develop the national transit capacity. A\$396 million project, it has the capacity to accommodate 1.5 million twenty foot container units annually. Djibouti was ranked the 177th safest investment destination in the world in the March 2011 Euromoney Country Risk rankings. To improve the environment for direct foreign investment, the Djibouti authorities in conjunction with various non-profit organizations have launched a number of development projects aimed at highlighting the country's commercial potential. The government has also introduced new private sector policies targeting high interest and inflation rates, including relaxing the tax burden on enterprises and allowing exemptions on consumption tax. Additionally, efforts have been made to lower the estimated 60% urban unemployment rate by creating more job opportunities through investment in diversified sectors. Funds have especially gone toward

building telecommunications infrastructure and increasing disposable income by supporting small businesses. Owing to its growth potential, the fishing and agro-processing sector, which represents around 15% of GDP, has also enjoyed rising investment since 2008. To expand the modest industrial sector, a 56 megawatt geothermal power plant slated to be completed by 2018 is being constructed with the help of OPEC, the World Bank and the Global Environmental Facility. The facility is expected to solve the recurring electricity shortages, decrease the nation's reliance on Ethiopia for energy, reduce costly oil imports for diesel-generated electricity, and thereby buttress the GDP and lower debt. The Djibouti firm Salt Investment (SIS) began a large-scale operation to industrialize the plentiful salt in Djibouti's Lake Assal region. Operating at an annual capacity of 4 million tons, the desalination project has lifted export revenues, created more job opportunities, and provided more fresh water for the area's residents. In 2012, the Djibouti government also enlisted the services of the China Harbor Engineering Company Ltd for the construction of an ore terminal. Worth \$64 million, the project is scheduled to be completed within two years and will enable Djibouti to export a further 5,000 tons of salt per year to markets in Southeast Asia. Djibouti's gross domestic product expanded by an average of more than 6 percent per year, from US\$341 million in 1985 to US\$1.5 billion in 2015. The Djiboutian franc is the currency of Djibouti. It is issued by the Central Bank of Djibouti, the country's monetary authority. Since the Djiboutian franc is pegged to the U.S. dollar, it is generally stable and inflation is not a problem. This has contributed to the growing interest in investment in the country. As of 2010, 10 conventional and Islamic banks operate in Djibouti. Most arrived within the past few years, including the Somali money transfer company Dahabshiil and BDCD, a subsidiary of Swiss Financial Investments. The banking system had previously been monopolized by two institutions: the Indo-Suez Bank and the Commercial and Industrial Bank (BCIMR). To assure a robust credit and deposit sector, the government requires commercial banks to maintain 30% of shares in the financial institution; a minimum of 300 million Djiboutian francs in up-front capital is mandatory for international banks. Lending has likewise been encouraged by the creation of a guarantee fund, which allows banks to issue loans to eligible small- and medium-sized businesses without first requiring a large deposit or other collateral. Saudi investors are also reportedly exploring the possibility of linking the Horn of Africa with the Arabian Peninsula via a 28.5-kilometre-long (17.7 mi) oversea bridge through Djibouti, referred to as the Bridge of the Horns. The investor Tarek bin Laden has been linked to the project. However, it was announced in June 2010 that Phase I of the project had been delayed. === Transport === The Djibouti–Ambouli International Airport, the country's only international airport in Djibouti City serves many intercontinental routes with scheduled and chartered flights. Air Djibouti is the flag carrier of Djibouti and is the country's largest airline. The new and electrified standard gauge Addis Ababa–Djibouti Railway started operation in January 2018. Its main purpose is to facilitate freight services between the Ethiopian hinterland and the Djiboutian Port of Doraleh. Car ferries pass the Gulf of Tadjoura from Djibouti City to Tadjoura. There is the Port of Doraleh west of Djibouti City, which is the main port of Djibouti. The Port of Doraleh is the terminal of the new Addis Ababa–Djibouti Railway. In addition to the Port of Doraleh, which handles general cargo and oil imports, Djibouti currently (2018) has three other major ports for the import and export of bulk goods and livestock, the Port of Tadjourah (potash), the Damerjog Port (livestock) and the Port of Goubet (salt). Almost 95 % of Ethiopia's imports and exports move through Djiboutian ports. The Djiboutian highway system is named according to the road classification. Roads that are considered primary roads are those that are fully asphalted (throughout their entire length) and in general they carry traffic between all the major towns in Djibouti. === Media and telecommunications === Telecommunications in Djibouti fall under the authority of the Ministry of Communication. Djibouti Telecom is the sole provider of telecommunication services. It mostly utilizes a microwave radio relay network. A fiber-optic cable is installed in the capital, whereas rural areas are connected via wireless local loop radio systems. Mobile cellular coverage is primarily limited to the area in and around Djibouti city. As of 2015, 23,000 telephone main lines and 312,000 mobile/cellular lines were in use. The SEA-ME-WE 3 submarine cable operates to Jeddah, Suez, Sicily, Marseille, Colombo, Singapore and beyond. Telephone satellite earth stations include 1 Intelsat (Indian Ocean) and 1 Arabsat. Medarabel is the regional microwave radio relay telephone network. Radio Television of Djibouti is the state-owned national broadcaster. It operates the sole terrestrial TV station, as well as the two domestic radio networks on AM 1, FM 2, and shortwave 0. Licensing and operation of broadcast media is regulated by the government. Movie theaters include the Odeon Cinema in the capital. As of 2012, there were 215 local internet service providers. Internet users comprised around 99,000 individuals (2015). The internet country top-level domain is .dj. === Tourism === Tourism in Djibouti is one of the growing economic

sectors of the country and is an industry that generates less than 80,000 arrivals per year, mostly the family and friends of the soldiers stationed in the country's major naval bases. Despite the numbers are on the rise, there are talks of the visa on arrival being stopped, which could limit tourism growth. Infrastructure makes it difficult for tourists to travel independently and costs of private tours are high. Since the re-opening of the train line from Addis Ababa to Djibouti in January 2018, travel by land has also resumed. Djibouti's two main geological marvels, Lake Abbe and Lake Assal, are the country's top sights draw hundreds of tourists every year looking for remote places that are not visited by many. ===

Energy === Djibouti has an installed electrical power generating capacity of 126 MW from fuel oil and diesel plants. In 2002 electrical power output was put at 232 GWh, with consumption at 216 GWh. At 2015, per capita annual electricity consumption is about 330 kilowatt-hours (kWh), moreover, about 45% of the population does not have access to electricity, and the level of unmet demand in the country's power sector is significant. Increased hydropower imports from Ethiopia, which currently satisfies 65% of Djibouti's demand, will play a significant role in boosting the country's renewable energy supply. The geothermal potential is generated particular interest by Japan, with 13 potential sites, they have already started the construction on one site near Lake Assal. The construction of the Photovoltaic power station (solar farms) in Grand Bara will generated 50 MW capacity. ==

Demographics == Djibouti has a population of about 942,333 inhabitants. It is a multiethnic country. The local population grew rapidly during the latter half of the 20th century, increasing from about 83,000 in 1960 to around 846,000 by 2016. The two largest ethnic groups are the Somali (60%) and the Afar (35%). The Somali clan component is mainly composed of the Issas sub-clan of the larger Dir, with smaller Gadabuursi Dir and Isaaq. The remaining 5% of Djibouti's population primarily consists of Yemeni Arabs, Ethiopians and Europeans (French and Italians). Approximately 76% of local residents are urban dwellers; the remainder are pastoralists. Djibouti also hosts a number of immigrants and refugees from neighboring states, with Djibouti City nicknamed the "French Hong Kong in the Red Sea" due to its cosmopolitan urbanism. ===

Languages === Djibouti is a multilingual nation. The majority of local residents speak Somali (524,000 speakers) and Afar (306,000 speakers) as first languages. These idioms are the mother tongues of the Somali and Afar ethnic groups, respectively. Both languages belong to the larger Afroasiatic (Hamito-Semitic) family. There are two official languages in Djibouti: Arabic (Afroasiatic) and French (Indo-European). Arabic is of social, cultural and religious importance. In formal settings, it consists of Modern Standard Arabic. Colloquially, about 59,000 local residents speak the Ta'izzi-Adeni Arabic dialect, also known as Djibouti Arabic. French serves as a statutory national language. It was inherited from the colonial period, and is the primary language of instruction. Around 17,000 Djiboutians speak it as a first language. Immigrant languages include Omani Arabic (38,900 speakers), Amharic (1,400 speakers), Greek (1,000 speakers) and Hindi (600 speakers). ===

Religion === Djibouti's population is predominantly Muslim. Islam is observed by around 94% of the nation's population (approximately 740,000 as of 2012), whereas the remaining 6% of residents are Christian adherents. Islam entered the region very early on, as a group of persecuted Muslims had sought refuge across the Red Sea in the Horn of Africa at the urging of the Islamic prophet Muhammad. In 1900, during the early part of the colonial era, there were virtually no Christians in the territories, with only about 100–300 followers coming from the schools and orphanages of the few Catholic missions in the French Somaliland. The Constitution of Djibouti names Islam as the sole state religion, and also provides for the equality of citizens of all faiths (Article 1) and freedom of religious practice (Article 11). Most local Muslims adhere to the Sunni denomination, following the Shafi'i school. The non-denominational Muslims largely belong to Sufi orders of varying schools. According to the International Religious Freedom Report 2008, while Muslim Djiboutians have the legal right to convert to or marry someone from another faith, converts may encounter negative reactions from their family and clan or from society at large, and they often face pressure to go back to Islam. The Diocese of Djibouti serves the small local Catholic population, which it estimates numbered around 7,000 individuals in 2006. ===

Largest cities ===

Health === The life expectancy at birth is around 63.2 for both males and females. Fertility is at 2.35 children per woman. In Djibouti there are about 18 doctors per 100,000 persons. The 2010 maternal mortality rate per 100,000 births for Djibouti is 300. This is compared with 461.6 in 2008 and 606.5 in 1990. The under 5 mortality rate, per 1,000 births is 95 and the neonatal mortality as a percentage of under 5's mortality are 37. In Djibouti the number of midwives per 1,000 live births is 6 and the lifetime risk of death for pregnant women 1 in 93. About 93.1% of Djibouti's women and girls have undergone female genital mutilation (female circumcision), a pre-marital custom mainly endemic to Northeast Africa and parts of the Near East that has its ultimate origins in Ancient Egypt. Although legally proscribed in 1994, the procedure is still widely practiced, as

it is deeply ingrained in the local culture. Encouraged and performed by women in the community, circumcision is primarily intended to deter promiscuity and to offer protection from assault. About 94% of Djibouti's male population have also reportedly undergone male circumcision. === Education === Education is a priority for the government of Djibouti. As of 2009, it allocates 20.5% of its annual budget to scholastic instruction. The Djiboutian educational system was initially formulated to cater to a limited pupil base. As such, the schooling framework was largely elitist and drew considerably from the French colonial paradigm, which was ill-suited to local circumstances and needs. In the late 1990s, the Djiboutian authorities revised the national educational strategy and launched a broad-based consultative process involving administrative officials, teachers, parents, national assembly members and NGOs. The initiative identified areas in need of attention and produced concrete recommendations on how to go about improving them. The government subsequently prepared a comprehensive reform plan aimed at modernizing the educational sector over the 2000–10 period. In August 2000, it passed an official Education Planning Act and drafted a medium-term development plan for the next five years. The fundamental academic system was significantly restructured and made compulsory; it now consists of five years of primary school and four years of middle school. Secondary schools also require a Certificate of Fundamental Education for admission. In addition, the new law introduced secondary-level vocational instruction and established university facilities in the country. As a result of the Education Planning Act and the medium-term action strategy, substantial progress has been registered throughout the educational sector. In particular, school enrollment, attendance, and retention rates have all steadily increased, with some regional variation. From 2004 to 2005 to 2007–08, net enrollments of girls in primary school rose by 18.6%; for boys, it increased 8.0%. Net enrollments in middle school over the same period rose by 72.4% for girls and 52.2% for boys. At the secondary level, the rate of increase in net enrollments was 49.8% for girls and 56.1% for boys. The Djiboutian government has especially focused on developing and improving institutional infrastructure and teaching materials, including constructing new classrooms and supplying textbooks. At the post-secondary level, emphasis has also been placed on producing qualified instructors and encouraging out-of-school youngsters to pursue vocational training. As of 2012, the literacy rate in Djibouti was estimated at 70%. Institutions of higher learning in the country include the University of Djibouti. == Culture == Djiboutian attire reflects the region's hot and arid climate. When not dressed in Western clothing such as jeans and T-shirts, men typically wear the macawiis, which is a traditional sarong-like garment worn around the waist. Many nomadic people wear a loosely wrapped white cotton robe called a tobe that goes down to about the knee, with the end thrown over the shoulder (much like a Roman toga). Women typically wear the dirac, which is a long, light, diaphanous voile dress made of cotton or polyester that is worn over a full-length half-slip and a bra. Married women tend to sport head-scarves referred to as shash and often cover their upper body with a shawl known as garbasaar. Unmarried or young women, however, do not always cover their heads. Traditional Arabian garb such as the male jellabiya (jellabiyaad in Somali) and the female jilbab is also commonly worn. For some occasions such as festivals, women may adorn themselves with specialized jewelry and head-dresses similar to those worn by the Berber tribes of the Maghreb. A lot of Djibouti's original art is passed on and preserved orally, mainly through song. Many examples of Islamic, Ottoman, and French influences can also be noted in the local buildings, which contain plasterwork, carefully constructed motifs, and calligraphy. === Music === Somalis have a rich musical heritage centered on traditional Somali folklore. Most Somali songs are pentatonic. That is, they only use five pitches per octave in contrast to a heptatonic (seven note) scale such as the major scale. At first listen, Somali music might be mistaken for the sounds of nearby regions such as Ethiopia, Sudan or the Arabian Peninsula, but it is ultimately recognizable by its own unique tunes and styles. Somali songs are usually the product of collaboration between lyricists (midho), songwriters (laxan) and singers (codka or "voice"). Balwo is a Somali musical style centered on love themes that is popular in Djibouti. Traditional Afar music resembles the folk music of other parts of the Horn of Africa such as Ethiopia; it also contains elements of Arabic music. The history of Djibouti is recorded in the poetry and songs of its nomadic people, and goes back thousands of years to a time when the peoples of Djibouti traded hides and skins for the perfumes and spices of ancient Egypt, India and China. Afar oral literature is also quite musical. It comes in many varieties, including songs for weddings, war, praise and boasting. === Literature === Djibouti has a long tradition of poetry. Several well-developed Somali forms of verse include the gabay, jifto, geeraar, wiglo, buraanbur, beercade, afarey and guuraw. The gabay (epic poem) has the most complex length and meter, often exceeding 100 lines. It is considered the mark of poetic attainment when a young poet is able to compose such verse, and is regarded as the

height of poetry. Groups of memorizers and reciters (hafidayaal) traditionally propagated the well-developed art form. Poems revolve around several main themes, including baroorodiiq (elegy), amaan (praise), jacayl (romance), guhaadin (diatribe), digasho (gloating) and guubaabo (guidance). The baroorodiiq is composed to commemorate the death of a prominent poet or figure. The Afar are familiar with the ginnili, a kind of warrior-poet and diviner, and have a rich oral tradition of folk stories. They also have an extensive repertoire of battle songs. Additionally, Djibouti has a long tradition of Islamic literature. Among the most prominent such historical works is the medieval Futuh Al-Habash by Shihāb al-Dīn, which chronicles the Adal Sultanate army's conquest of Abyssinia during the 16th century. In recent years, a number of politicians and intellectuals have also penned memoirs or reflections on the country.

=== Sport === Football is the most popular sport amongst Djiboutians. The country became a member of FIFA in 1994, but has only taken part in the qualifying rounds for the African Cup of Nations as well as the FIFA World Cup in the mid-2000s. In November 2007, the Djibouti national football team beat Somalia's national squad 1–0 in the qualification rounds for the 2010 FIFA World Cup, marking its first ever World Cup-related win. Recently, new sports are developing and being introduced, such as Archery. World Archery Federation has helped to implement the Djibouti Archery Federation, and an international archery training center is being created in Arta to support archery development in East Africa and Red Sea area.

=== Cuisine === Djiboutian cuisine is a mixture of Somali, Afar, Yemeni, and French cuisine, with some additional South Asian (especially Indian) culinary influences. Local dishes are commonly prepared using a lot of Middle Eastern spices, ranging from saffron to cinnamon. Grilled Yemeni fish, opened in half and often cooked in tandoori style ovens, are a local delicacy. Spicy dishes come in many variations, from the traditional Fah-fah or "Soupe Djiboutienne" (spicy boiled beef soup), to the yetakelt wet (spicy mixed vegetable stew). Xalwo (pronounced "halwo") or halva is a popular confection eaten during festive occasions, such as Eid celebrations or wedding receptions. Halva is made from sugar, corn starch, cardamom powder, nutmeg powder and ghee. Peanuts are sometimes added to enhance texture and flavor. After meals, homes are traditionally perfumed using incense (cuunsi) or frankincense (lubaan), which is prepared inside an incense burner referred to as a dabqaad.

== See also ==

== References ==

=== Online sources ===

See CIA World Factbook

== External links ==

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