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**Andorra** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en); [Template:IPA-ca](/wiki/Template:IPA-ca), [Template:IPA-ca](/wiki/Template:IPA-ca)), officially the **Principality of Andorra** ([Template:Lang-ca](/wiki/Template:Lang-ca)), also called the **Principality of the Valleys of Andorra**[[1]](#cite_note-1) ([Template:Lang-ca](/wiki/Template:Lang-ca)), is a sovereign [landlocked](/wiki/Landlocked_country) [microstate](/wiki/Microstate) in [Southwestern Europe](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula), located in the eastern [Pyrenees](/wiki/Pyrenees) mountains and bordered by [Spain](/wiki/Spain) and [France](/wiki/France). Created under a charter in A.D. 988, the present principality was formed in A.D. 1278. It is known as a [principality](/wiki/Principality) as it is a [monarchy](/wiki/Coregency) headed by two [Co-Princes](/wiki/Co-Princes_of_Andorra)[Template:Snd](/wiki/Template:Snd) the Spanish/Roman Catholic [Bishop of Urgell](/wiki/Bishop_of_Urgell) and the [President of France](/wiki/President_of_France).

Andorra is the [sixth-smallest nation in Europe](/wiki/European_microstates), having an area of 468 km2 (181 sq mi) and a population of approximately 85,000.[[2]](#cite_note-2) Its capital [Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Andorra_la_Vella) is the highest capital city in Europe, at an elevation of 1,023 metres (3,356 ft) [above sea level](/wiki/Above_mean_sea_level).[[3]](#cite_note-3) The official language is [Catalan](/wiki/Catalan_language), although Spanish, Portuguese, and French are also commonly spoken.[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[4]](#cite_note-4) Andorra's [tourism](/wiki/Tourism_in_Andorra) services an estimated 10.2 million visitors annually.[[5]](#cite_note-5) It is not a member of the [European Union](/wiki/European_Union), but the euro is the official currency. It has been a member of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) since 1993.[[6]](#cite_note-6) In 2013, the people of Andorra had [the highest life expectancy in the world](/wiki/List_of_countries_by_life_expectancy) at 81 years, according to [*The Lancet*](/wiki/The_Lancet).[[7]](#cite_note-7)

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## Etymology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=1)]

The origin of the word *Andorra* is unknown, although several hypotheses have been formulated. The oldest derivation of the word *Andorra* is from the Greek historian [Polybius](/wiki/Polybius) ([*The Histories*](/wiki/The_Histories_(Polybius)) III, 35, 1) who describes the *Andosins*, an [Iberian](/wiki/Iberians) [Pre-Roman tribe](/wiki/Pre-Roman_peoples_of_the_Iberian_Peninsula), as historically located in the valleys of Andorra and facing the [Carthaginian](/wiki/Carthaginian) army in its passage through the Pyrenees during the [Punic Wars](/wiki/Punic_Wars). The word *Andosini* or *Andosins* (Ἀνδοσίνους) may derive from the [Basque](/wiki/Basque_language) *handia* whose meaning is "big" or "giant".[[8]](#cite_note-8) The Andorran [toponymy](/wiki/Toponymy) shows evidence of [Basque language](/wiki/Basque_language) in the area. Another theory suggests that the word *Andorra* may derive from the old word *Anorra* that contains the Basque word *ur* (water).[[9]](#cite_note-9) Another theory suggests that *Andorra* may derive from [Arabic](/wiki/Arabic) *al-durra*, meaning "The pearl" (الدرة). When the [Moors](/wiki/Moors) invaded the [Iberian Peninsula](/wiki/Iberian_Peninsula), the valleys of the Pyrenees were covered by large tracts of forest, and other regions and towns, also dominated by Muslims, received this designation.[[10]](#cite_note-10) Other theories suggest that the term derives from the [Navarro-Aragonese](/wiki/Navarro-Aragonese) *andurrial*, which means "land covered with bushes" or "scrubland".[[11]](#cite_note-11) The [folk etymology](/wiki/Folk_etymology) holds that [Charlemagne](/wiki/Charlemagne) had named the region as a reference to the [Biblical](/wiki/Biblical) [Canaanite](/wiki/Cannan) valley of [*Endor*](/wiki/Endor_(village)) or [*Andor*](/wiki/Endor_(village)) (where the [Midianites](/wiki/Midianites) had been defeated), a name also bestowed by their heir and son [Louis le Debonnaire](/wiki/Louis_le_Debonnaire) after defeating the Moors in the "wild valleys of Hell".[[12]](#cite_note-12)

## History[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [left|thumb|Sant Joan de Caselles church, dating from the 11th century](/wiki/File:Església_de_Sant_Joan_de_Caselles_-_10.jpg) Tradition holds that Charles the Great ([Charlemagne](/wiki/Charlemagne)) granted a charter to the Andorran people in return for fighting against the [Moors](/wiki/Moors). [Overlordship](/wiki/Feudalism) of the territory was by the [Count of Urgell](/wiki/Count_of_Urgell) and eventually by the bishop of the [Diocese of Urgell](/wiki/Diocese_of_Urgell). In 988, [Borrell II](/wiki/Borrell_II,_Count_of_Barcelona), Count of Urgell, gave the Andorran valleys to the Diocese of Urgell in exchange for land in [Cerdanya](/wiki/Cerdanya).[[13]](#cite_note-13) Since then the Bishop of Urgell, based in [Seu d'Urgell](/wiki/La_Seu_d'Urgell), has owned Andorra.<ref name=elements>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

Before 1095, Andorra did not have any type of military protection and the Bishop of Urgell, who knew that the Count of Urgell wanted to reclaim the Andorran valleys,<ref name=elements/> asked the [Lord of Caboet](/wiki/Lord_of_Caboet) for help and protection. In 1095 the Lord of Caboet and the Bishop of Urgell signed under oath a declaration of their co-sovereignty over Andorra. Arnalda, daughter of Arnau of Caboet, married the Viscount of Castellbò and both became Viscounts of Castellbò and Cerdanya. Years later their daughter, Ermessenda,[[14]](#cite_note-14) married [Roger Bernat II](/wiki/Roger-Bernard_II,_Count_of_Foix), the French [Count of Foix](/wiki/Count_of_Foix). They became Roger Bernat II and Ermessenda I, Counts of Foix, Viscounts of Castellbò and Cerdanya, and co-sovereigns of Andorra (shared with the Bishop of Urgell).

In the 13th century, a dispute arose between the Bishop of Urgell and the Count of Foix. The conflict was resolved in 1278 with the mediation of [Aragon](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Aragon) by the signing of the first [paréage](/wiki/Paréage_of_Andorra_1278) which provided that Andorra's sovereignty be shared between the count of Foix<ref name=elements/> (whose title would ultimately transfer to the French head of state) and the Bishop of Urgell, in [Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia). This gave the [principality](/wiki/Principality) its territory and political form.

With the passage of time, the co-title to Andorra passed to the kings of [Navarre](/wiki/Kingdom_of_Navarre). After Henry of Navarre became King [Henry IV of France](/wiki/Henry_IV_of_France), he issued an edict in 1607, that established the head of the French state and the Bishop of Urgell as [Co-Princes of Andorra](/wiki/Co-Princes_of_Andorra). In 1812–13, the [First French Empire](/wiki/First_French_Empire) annexed Catalonia and divided it in four [départements](/wiki/Département), with Andorra being made part of the district of [Puigcerdà](/wiki/Puigcerdà) (département of [Sègre](/wiki/Sègre)).

### 17th to 19th centuries[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

Andorra retained its medieval institutions and rural culture largely unchanged during this period. In 1866, a Council General of 24 members elected by suffrage limited to heads of family, replaced the aristocratic oligarchy previously ruling the state.[[15]](#cite_note-15)

### 20th century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Borís_Skósyrev.jpg)[Boris Skossyreff](/wiki/Boris_Skossyreff), briefly self-proclaimed "King of Andorra" in 1934 Andorra declared war on [Imperial Germany](/wiki/Imperial_Germany) during World War I, but did not actually take part in the fighting. It remained in an official state of [belligerency](/wiki/Belligerency) until 1958 as it was not included in the [Treaty of Versailles](/wiki/Treaty_of_Versailles).[[16]](#cite_note-16) In 1933, France occupied Andorra following social unrest which occurred before elections. On 12 July 1934, adventurer [Boris Skossyreff](/wiki/Boris_Skossyreff) issued a proclamation in Urgell, declaring himself "Boris I, King of Andorra", simultaneously declaring war on the Bishop of Urgell. He was arrested by the Spanish authorities on 20 July and ultimately expelled from Spain. From 1936 until 1940, a French military detachment was garrisoned in Andorra to secure the principality against disruption from the [Spanish Civil War](/wiki/Spanish_Civil_War) and [Francoist Spain](/wiki/Francoist_Spain). Francoist troops reached the Andorran border in the later stages of the war. During World War II, Andorra remained neutral and was an important smuggling route between [Vichy France](/wiki/Vichy_France) and Spain.

Given its relative isolation, Andorra has existed outside the mainstream of European history, with few ties to countries other than France, Spain and Portugal. In recent times, however, its thriving tourist industry along with developments in transport and communications have removed the country from its isolation. Its political system was modernised in 1993, when it became a member of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations) and the [Council of Europe](/wiki/Council_of_Europe).

## Politics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

[Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image)

Andorra is a parliamentary [co-principality](/wiki/Co-principality) with the [President of France](/wiki/President_of_the_French_Republic) and the [Bishop of Urgell](/wiki/Bishop_of_Urgell) ([Catalonia](/wiki/Catalonia), Spain) as [Co-Princes](/wiki/List_of_Co-Princes_of_Andorra). This peculiarity makes the President of France, in his capacity as [Prince of Andorra](/wiki/Prince_of_Andorra), an elected reigning monarch, although he is not elected by a popular vote of the Andorran people. The politics of Andorra take place in a framework of a [parliamentary](/wiki/Parliamentary_system) [representative democracy](/wiki/Representative_democracy), whereby the [Head of Government](/wiki/List_of_heads_of_government_of_Andorra) is the [chief executive](/wiki/Head_of_government), and of a [pluriform](/wiki/Wiktionary:pluriform) multi-party system.

The current Head of Government is [Antoni Martí](/wiki/Antoni_Martí) of the [Democrats for Andorra](/wiki/Democrats_for_Andorra) (DA). [Executive power](/wiki/Executive_power) is exercised by the government. Legislative power is vested in both government and parliament.

The Parliament of Andorra is known as the General Council. The General Council consists of between 28 and 42 Councillors, as the members of the legislative branch are called. The Councillors serve for four-year terms and elections are held between the thirtieth and fortieth days following the dissolution of the previous Council. The Councillors can be elected on two equal constituencies.

Half are elected in equal number from each of the seven administrative parishes and the other half of the Councillors are elected from a single national constituency. 15 days after the election, the Councillors hold their inauguration. During this session, the Syndic General, who is the head of the General Council, and the Subsyndic General, his assistant, are elected. Eight days later, the Council convenes once more. During this session the Head of Government is chosen from among the Councillors.

[thumb|Casa de la Vall, Andorran Parliament](/wiki/File:Casa_de_la_Vall_-_18.jpg)

Candidates for the nomination can be proposed by a minimum of one-fifth of the Councillors. The Council then elects the candidate with the absolute majority of votes to be Head of Government. The Syndic General then notifies the Co-Princes who in turn appoint the elected candidate as the Head of Government of Andorra. The General Council is also responsible for proposing and passing laws. Bills may be presented to the Council as Private Members' Bills by three of the Local Parish Councils jointly or by at least one tenth of the citizens of Andorra.

The Council also approves the annual budget of the principality. The government must submit the proposed budget for parliamentary approval at least two months before the previous budget expires. If the budget is not approved by the first day of the next year, the previous budget is extended until a new one is approved. Once any bill is approved, the Syndic General is responsible for presenting it to the Co-Princes so that they may sign and enact it.

If the Head of Government is not satisfied with the Council, he may request that the Co-Princes dissolve the Council and order new elections. In turn, the Councillors have the power to remove the Head of Government from office. After a motion of censure is approved by at least one-fifth of the Councillors, the Council will vote and if it receives the absolute majority of votes, the Head of Government is removed.

## Law and criminal justice[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

The judiciary is composed of the Magistrates Court, the Criminal Law Court, the High Court of Andorra, and the Constitutional Court. The High Court of Justice is composed of five judges: one appointed by the Head of Government, one each by the Co-Princes, one by the Syndic General, and one by the Judges and Magistrates. It is presided over by the member appointed by the Syndic General and the judges hold office for six-year terms.

The Magistrates and Judges are appointed by the High Court, as is the President of the Criminal Law Court. The High Court also appoints members of the Office of the Attorney General. The Constitutional Court is responsible for interpreting the Constitution and reviewing all appeals of unconstitutionality against laws and treaties. It is composed of four judges, one appointed by each of the Co-Princes and two by the General Council. They serve eight-year terms. The Court is presided over by one of the Judges on a two-year rotation so that each judge at one point will preside over the Court.

## Foreign relations, defence, and security[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|The embassy of Andorra in](/wiki/File:Bruxelles_rue_de_la_Montagne_10.jpg) [Brussels](/wiki/Brussels) Andorra does not have its own armed forces,[[2]](#cite_note-2) although there is a small ceremonial Army. Responsibility for defending the nation rests primarily with France and Spain.[[17]](#cite_note-17) However, in case of emergencies or natural disasters, the *Sometent* (an alarm) is called and all able-bodied men between 21 and 60 of Andorran nationality must serve.[[18]](#cite_note-18)[[19]](#cite_note-19) This is why all Andorrans, and especially the head of each house (usually the eldest able-bodied man of a house) should, by law, keep a rifle, even though the law also states that the police will offer a firearm in case of need.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Andorra is a full member of the United Nations (UN), the [Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe](/wiki/Organization_for_Security_and_Co-operation_in_Europe) (OSCE), and has a special agreement with the European Union (EU).

### Military[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

Andorra has a small army, which has historically been raised or reconstituted at various dates, but has never in modern times amounted to a standing army. The basic principle of Andorran defence is that all able-bodied men are available to fight if called upon by the sounding of the *Sometent*[Template:Definition needed](/wiki/Template:Definition_needed). Being a [landlocked country](/wiki/Landlocked_country), Andorra has no [navy](/wiki/Navy).

Prior to World War I Andorra maintained an armed force of about 600 part-time militiamen. This body was not liable for service outside the principality and was commanded by two officials (*viguiers*) appointed by France and the Bishop of Urgel.[[15]](#cite_note-15) Despite not being involved in any fighting during the [First World War](/wiki/World_War_I), Andorra was technically the longest combatant, as the country was left out of the [Versailles Peace Conference](/wiki/Versailles_Peace_Conference), [technically](/wiki/De_jure) remaining at war with Germany from its original declaration of war in 1914 until the 24th of September 1958 when Andorra officially declared peace with Germany.[[16]](#cite_note-16) [[20]](#cite_note-20) In the modern era, the army has consisted of a very small body of volunteers willing to undertake ceremonial duties. Uniforms were handed down from generation to generation within families and communities.

The army's role in internal security was largely taken over by the formation of the [Police Corps of Andorra](/wiki/Police_Corps_of_Andorra) in 1931. Brief civil disorder associated with the elections of 1933 led to assistance being sought from the French [National Gendarmerie](/wiki/National_Gendarmerie), with a detachment resident in Andorra for two months under the command of René-Jules Baulard.[[21]](#cite_note-21) The Andorran Army was reformed in the following year, with eleven soldiers appointed to supervisory roles.[[22]](#cite_note-22) The force consisted of six [Corporals](/wiki/Corporal), one for each parish (although there are currently seven parishes, there were only six until 1978), plus four junior staff officers to co-ordinate action, and a commander with the rank of major. It was the responsibility of the six corporals, each in his own parish, to be able to raise a fighting force from among the able-bodied men of the parish.

Today a small, twelve-man ceremonial unit remains the only permanent section of the Andorran Army, but all able-bodied men remain technically available for military service,[[23]](#cite_note-23) with a requirement for each family to have access to a firearm. The army has not fought for more than 700 years, and its main responsibility is to present the [flag of Andorra](/wiki/Flag_of_Andorra) at official ceremonial functions.[[24]](#cite_note-24)[[25]](#cite_note-25) According to [Marc Forné Molné](/wiki/Marc_Forné_Molné), Andorra's military budget is strictly from voluntary donations, and the availability of full-time volunteers.[[26]](#cite_note-26) The myth that all members of the Andorran Army are ranked as officers is popularly maintained in many works of reference.[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28) In reality, all those serving in the permanent ceremonial reserve hold ranks as [officers](/wiki/Officer_(armed_forces)), or [non-commissioned officers](/wiki/Non-commissioned_officer), because the [other ranks](/wiki/Enlisted_rank) are considered to be the rest of the able-bodied male population, who may still be called upon by the *Sometent* to serve, although such a call has not been made in modern times.

### GIPA[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

The *Grup d'Intervenció Policia d'Andorra* (GIPA) is a small special forces unit trained in [counter-terrorism](/wiki/Counter-terrorism), and [hostage recovery](/wiki/Hostage_negotiator) tasks. Although it is the closest in style to an active military force, it is part of the [Police Corps](/wiki/Police_Corps_of_Andorra), and not the [army](/wiki/Military_of_Andorra). As terrorist and hostage situations are a rare threat to the nation, the GIPA is commonly assigned to prisoner escort duties, and at other times to routine policing.[[29]](#cite_note-29)

### Police Corps[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=10)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Andorra maintains a small but modern and well-equipped internal police force, with around 240 police officers supported by civilian assistants. The principal services supplied by the corps are uniformed community policing, criminal detection, border control, and traffic policing. There are also small specialist units including police dogs, mountain rescue, and a bomb disposal team.[[30]](#cite_note-30)

### Fire brigade[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=11)]

The *Andorran Fire Brigade*, with headquarters at [Santa Coloma](/wiki/Santa_Coloma_d'Andorra), operates from four modern fire stations, and has a staff of around 120 firefighters. The service is equipped with 16 heavy appliances (fire tenders, turntable ladders, and specialist four-wheel drive vehicles), four light support vehicles (cars and vans) and four ambulances.[[31]](#cite_note-31) Historically, the families of the six ancient parishes of Andorra maintained local arrangements to assist each other in fighting fires. The first fire pump purchased by the government was acquired in 1943. Serious fires which lasted for two days in December 1959 led to calls for a permanent fire service, and the *Andorran Fire Brigade* was formed on 21 April 1961.[[32]](#cite_note-32) The fire service maintains full-time cover with five fire crews on duty at any time[Template:Snd](/wiki/Template:Snd) two at the brigade's headquarters in Santa Coloma, and one crew at each of the other three fire stations.[[33]](#cite_note-33)

## Geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=12)]

[thumb|right|Map of Andorra with its seven parishes labelled](/wiki/File:Andorramap.png) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

### Parishes[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=13)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Andorra consists of seven parishes:

* [Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Andorra_la_Vella)
* [Canillo](/wiki/Canillo)
* [Encamp](/wiki/Encamp)
* [Escaldes-Engordany](/wiki/Escaldes-Engordany)
* [La Massana](/wiki/La_Massana)
* [Ordino](/wiki/Ordino)
* [Sant Julià de Lòria](/wiki/Sant_Julià_de_Lòria)

### Physical geography[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=14)]

[thumb|right|Scenery of Andorran mountains](/wiki/File:Grandvalira_ski_resort,_Andorra5.jpg) [thumb|Topographic map of Andorra](/wiki/File:Andorra_topographic_map-en.svg)

Due to its location in the eastern [Pyrenees](/wiki/Pyrenees) mountain range, Andorra consists predominantly of rugged mountains, the highest being the [Coma Pedrosa](/wiki/Coma_Pedrosa) at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), and the average elevation of Andorra is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[34]](#cite_note-34) These are dissected by three narrow valleys in a Y shape that combine into one as the main stream, the [Gran Valira](/wiki/Gran_Valira) river, leaves the country for Spain (at Andorra's lowest point of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)). Andorra's land area is [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).

[Phytogeographically](/wiki/Phytogeography), Andorra belongs to the Atlantic European province of the [Circumboreal Region](/wiki/Circumboreal_Region) within the [Boreal Kingdom](/wiki/Boreal_Kingdom). According to the [WWF](/wiki/World_Wide_Fund_for_Nature), the territory of Andorra belongs to the [ecoregion](/wiki/Ecoregion) of Pyrenees conifer and mixed forests.

### Climate[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=15)]

Andorra has an [alpine climate](/wiki/Alpine_climate) and [continental climate](/wiki/Continental_climate). Its higher elevation means there is, on average, more snow in winter, lower humidity, and it is slightly cooler in summer. There are, on average, 300 days per year of sunshine.

## Economy[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=16)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Exports in 2009](/wiki/File:Tree_map_export_2009_Andorra.jpeg) Tourism, the mainstay of Andorra's tiny, well-to-do economy, accounts for roughly 80% of GDP. An estimated 10.2 million tourists visit annually,[[5]](#cite_note-5) attracted by Andorra's duty-free status and by its summer and winter resorts. Andorra's relative advantage has recently[Template:When](/wiki/Template:When) eroded as the economies of adjoining France and Spain have been opened up, providing broader availability of goods and lower [tariffs](/wiki/Tariff).

One of the main sources of income in Andorra is tourism from ski resorts which total over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of ski ground. The sport brings in over 7 million visitors and an estimated 340 million euros per year, sustaining 2000 direct and 10000 indirect jobs at present[Template:When](/wiki/Template:When).

The banking sector, with its [tax haven](/wiki/Tax_haven) status, also contributes substantially to the economy (the financial and insurance sector accounts for approximately 19% of GDP[[35]](#cite_note-35)). The financial system comprises five banking groups,[[36]](#cite_note-36) one specialised credit entity, 8 investment undertaking management entities, 3 asset management companies and 29 insurance companies, 14 of which are branches of foreign insurance companies authorised to operate in the principality.[[35]](#cite_note-35) Agricultural production is limited—only 2% of the land is arable—and most food has to be imported. Some tobacco is grown locally. The principal livestock activity is domestic sheep raising. Manufacturing output consists mainly of cigarettes, cigars, and furniture. Andorra's natural resources include hydroelectric power, mineral water, timber, iron ore, and lead.[[2]](#cite_note-2) Andorra is not a member of the European Union, but enjoys a [special relationship](/wiki/Andorra–European_Union_relations) with it, such as being treated as an EU member for trade in manufactured goods (no tariffs) and as a non-EU member for agricultural products. Andorra lacked a currency of its own and used both the [French franc](/wiki/French_franc) and the [Spanish peseta](/wiki/Spanish_peseta) in banking transactions until 31 December 1999, when both currencies were replaced by the EU's single currency, the euro. Coins and notes of both the franc and the peseta remained legal tender in Andorra until 31 December 2002. Andorra negotiated to issue its own euro coins, beginning in 2014.

Andorra has traditionally had one of the world's lowest unemployment rates. In 2009 it stood at 2.9%.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Andorra has long benefited from its status as a tax haven, with revenues raised exclusively through import tariffs. However, during the [European sovereign-debt crisis](/wiki/European_sovereign-debt_crisis) of the 21st century, its tourist economy suffered a decline, partly caused by a drop in the prices of goods in Spain, which undercut Andorran [duty-free shopping](/wiki/Duty-free_shop). This led to a growth in unemployment. On 1 January 2012, a business tax of 10% was introduced,[[38]](#cite_note-38) followed by a [sales tax](/wiki/Sales_tax) of 2% a year later, which raised just over 14 million euros in its first quarter.[[39]](#cite_note-39) On 31 May 2013, it was announced that Andorra intended to legislate for the introduction of an [income tax](/wiki/Income_tax) by the end of June, against a background of increasing dissatisfaction with the existence of tax havens among EU members.[[40]](#cite_note-40) The announcement was made following a meeting in Paris between the Head of Government [Antoni Marti](/wiki/Antoni_Marti) and the French President and Prince of Andorra, [François Hollande](/wiki/François_Hollande). Hollande welcomed the move as part of a process of Andorra "bringing its taxation in line with international standards".[[41]](#cite_note-41)

## Demographics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=17)]

[thumb|The town of Encamp, Andorra, as seen from the Vall dels Cortals](/wiki/File:Andorra_Vall_dels_Cortals_05_JMM.JPG) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main)

### Population[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=18)]

The population of Andorra is estimated at 85,458 (2014).[[2]](#cite_note-2) The population has grown from 5,000 in 1900.

Two-thirds of the population is made up of citizens without Andorran nationality, who do not have the right to vote (suffrage) in communal elections. Moreover, they are not allowed to be elected as president[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) or to own more than 33% of the capital stock of a privately held company.[[42]](#cite_note-42)[[43]](#cite_note-43)[[44]](#cite_note-44)[[45]](#cite_note-45)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=19)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The historic and [official language](/wiki/Official_language) is [Catalan](/wiki/Catalan_language), a [Romance language](/wiki/Romance_language). The Andorran government encourages the use of Catalan. It funds a Commission for Catalan [Toponymy](/wiki/Toponymy) in Andorra (Catalan: *la Comissió de Toponímia d'Andorra*), and provides free Catalan classes to assist immigrants. Andorran television and radio stations use Catalan.

Because of immigration, historical links, and close geographic proximity, [Spanish](/wiki/Spanish_language), [Portuguese](/wiki/Portuguese_language) and [French](/wiki/French_language) are also commonly spoken. Most Andorran residents can speak one or more of these, in addition to Catalan. English is less commonly spoken among the general population, though it is understood to varying degrees in the major tourist resorts. Andorra is one of only four European countries (together with France, Monaco, and Turkey)[[46]](#cite_note-46) that have never signed the [Council of Europe Framework Convention on National Minorities](/wiki/Framework_Convention_for_the_Protection_of_National_Minorities).[[47]](#cite_note-47) According to the *Observatori Social d'Andorra*, the linguistic usage in Andorra is as follows:[[48]](#cite_note-48)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mother tongue** | **%** |
| [Catalan](/wiki/Catalan_language) | 38.8% |
| Spanish | 35.4% |
| [Portuguese](/wiki/Portuguese_language) | 15% |
| French | 5.4% |
| Others | 5.5% |
| [2005 3 PoliticaLinguistica.pdf](http://www.iea.ad/images/stories/Documents/CRES/Observatoris/2005/2005_3_PoliticaLinguistica.pdf) | |

### Religion[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=20)]

The population of Andorra is predominantly (88.2%) Roman Catholic.[[49]](#cite_note-49) Their patron saint is [Our Lady of Meritxell](/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Meritxell). Though it is not an official state religion, the constitution acknowledges a special relationship with the Catholic Church, offering some special privileges to that group[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify). Other Christian denominations include the [Anglican Church](/wiki/Anglican_Church), the [Unification Church](/wiki/Unification_Church), the [New Apostolic Church](/wiki/New_Apostolic_Church), and [Jehovah's Witnesses](/wiki/Jehovah's_Witnesses). The [Muslim community](/wiki/Islam_in_Andorra) is primarily made up of approximately a few[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) North African immigrants. There is a small community of [Hindus](/wiki/Hinduism) and [Bahá'ís](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith_in_Andorra)[[50]](#cite_note-50)[[51]](#cite_note-51) and roughly 100 Jews live in Andorra.[[52]](#cite_note-52) (See [History of the Jews in Andorra](/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Andorra).)

## Statistics[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=21)]

### Largest cities[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=22)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Largest cities of Andorra](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Andorra)

## Education[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=23)]

### Schools[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=24)]

Children between the ages of 6 and 16 are required by law to have full-time education. Education up to secondary level is provided free of charge by the government.

There are three systems of schools[Template:Snd](/wiki/Template:Snd) Andorran, French, and Spanish[Template:Snd](/wiki/Template:Snd) which use Catalan, French, and Spanish, respectively, as the main language of instruction. Parents may choose which system their children attend. All schools are built and maintained by Andorran authorities, but teachers in the French and Spanish schools are paid for the most part by France and Spain. About 50% of Andorran children attend the French primary schools, and the rest attend Spanish or Andorran schools.

### University of Andorra[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=25)]

The [Universitat d'Andorra](/wiki/Universitat_d'Andorra) (UdA) is the state public university and is the only university in Andorra. It was established in 1997. The University provides first-level degrees in nursing, computer science, business administration, and educational sciences, in addition to higher professional education courses. The only two graduate schools in Andorra are the Nursing School and the School of Computer Science, the latter having a PhD programme.

#### Virtual Studies Centre[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=26)]

The geographical complexity of the country as well as the small number of students prevents the University of Andorra from developing a full academic programme, and it serves principally as a centre for virtual studies, connected to Spanish and French universities. The Virtual Studies Centre (*Centre d’Estudis Virtuals*) at the University runs approximately twenty different academic degrees at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels in fields including tourism, law, Catalan philology, humanities, psychology, political sciences, audiovisual communication, telecommunications engineering, and East Asia studies. The Centre also runs various postgraduate programmes and continuing-education courses for professionals.

## Healthcare[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=27)]

Healthcare in Andorra is provided to all employed persons and their families by the government-run social security system, [*Caixa Andorrana de Seguretat Social*](/wiki/Caixa_Andorrana_de_Seguretat_Social) (CASS), which is funded by employer and employee contributions in respect of salaries.[[53]](#cite_note-53) The cost of healthcare is covered by CASS at rates of 75% for out-patient expenses such as medicines and hospital visits, 90% for hospitalisation, and 100% for work-related accidents. The remainder of the costs may be covered by private health insurance. Other residents and tourists require full private health insurance.[[53]](#cite_note-53) The main hospital, Meritxell, is in [Escaldes-Engordany](/wiki/Escaldes-Engordany).[[54]](#cite_note-54) There are also 12 primary health care centres in various locations around the principality.[[54]](#cite_note-54)

## Transport[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=28)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

[thumb|A train at](/wiki/File:Latour-de-Carol_station_-_2004-02-02.jpg) [Latour-de-Carol](/wiki/Latour-de-Carol) (*La Tor de Querol*), one of the two stations serving Andorra. Andorra has no railways, although the line connecting Latour-de-Carol and [Toulouse](/wiki/Toulouse), which in turn connects to France's [TGVs](/wiki/TGV) at Toulouse, runs within two kilometres of the Andorran border.

Until the 20th century, Andorra had very limited transport links to the outside world, and development of the country was affected by its physical isolation. Even now, the nearest major airports at Toulouse and Barcelona are both three hours' drive from Andorra.

Andorra has a road network of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), of which [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) is unpaved. The two main roads out of [Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Andorra_la_Vella) are the CG-1 to the Spanish border, and the CG-2 to the French border via the Envalira Tunnel near [El Pas de la Casa](/wiki/El_Pas_de_la_Casa).[[55]](#cite_note-55) Bus services cover all metropolitan areas and many rural communities, with services on most major routes running half-hourly or more frequently during peak travel times. There are frequent long-distance bus services from Andorra to [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona) and [Toulouse](/wiki/Toulouse), plus a daily tour from the former city. Bus services are mostly run by private companies, but some local ones are operated by the government.

There are no airports for fixed-wing aircraft within Andorra's borders but there are, however, heliports in [La Massana](/wiki/La_Massana) (Camí Heliport), [Arinsal](/wiki/Arinsal) and [Escaldes-Engordany](/wiki/Escaldes-Engordany) with commercial helicopter services[[56]](#cite_note-56)[[57]](#cite_note-57) and an airport located in the neighbouring Spanish comarca of [Alt Urgell](/wiki/Alt_Urgell), [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) south of the Andorran-Spanish border.[[58]](#cite_note-58) Since July 2015, [Andorra–La Seu d'Urgell Airport](/wiki/Andorra–La_Seu_d'Urgell_Airport) has operated commercial flights to [Madrid](/wiki/Adolfo_Suárez_Madrid–Barajas_Airport) and [Palma de Mallorca](/wiki/Palma_de_Mallorca_Airport), and is the [main hub](/wiki/Airline_hub) for [Air Andorra](/wiki/Air_Andorra) and [Andorra Airlines](/wiki/Andorra_Airlines).

Nearby airports located in Spain and France provide access to international flights for the principality. The nearest airports are at [Perpignan](/wiki/Perpignan–Rivesaltes_Airport), France (156 km from Andorra) and [Lleida](/wiki/Lleida-Alguaire_Airport), Spain (160 km from Andorra). The largest nearby airports are at [Toulouse](/wiki/Toulouse), France (165 km from Andorra) and [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona_Airport), Spain (215 km from Andorra). There are hourly bus services from both Barcelona and Toulouse airports to Andorra.

The nearest railway station is [L'Hospitalet-près-l'Andorre](/wiki/L'Hospitalet-près-l'Andorre) [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) east of Andorra which is on the [Template:RailGauge](/wiki/Template:RailGauge)[-gauge](/wiki/Standard_gauge) line from [Latour-de-Carol](/wiki/Latour-de-Carol), ([Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) southeast of Andorra, to [Toulouse](/wiki/Toulouse) and on to Paris by the French [high-speed trains](/wiki/TGV). This line is operated by the [SNCF](/wiki/SNCF). Latour-de-Carol has a scenic [Template:RailGauge](/wiki/Template:RailGauge) [trainline](/wiki/Yellow_Train) to [Villefranche-de-Conflent](/wiki/Villefranche-de-Conflent), as well as the SNCF's [Template:RailGauge](/wiki/Template:RailGauge) gauge line connecting to [Perpignan](/wiki/Perpignan), and the [RENFE's](/wiki/RENFE) [Template:RailGauge](/wiki/Template:RailGauge) [-gauge](/wiki/Iberian_gauge) line to [Barcelona](/wiki/Barcelona).[[59]](#cite_note-59)[[60]](#cite_note-60) There are also direct [Intercités de Nuit](/wiki/Intercités#Night_trains) trains between L'Hospitalet-près-l'Andorre and Paris on certain dates.[[61]](#cite_note-61)

## Media and telecommunications[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=29)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Update](/wiki/Template:Update) In Andorra, mobile and fixed telephone and internet services are operated exclusively by the Andorran national telecommunications company, SOM, also known as [Andorra Telecom](/wiki/Andorra_Telecom) (STA). The same company also manages the technical infrastructure for national broadcasting of digital television and radio.

By the end of 2010, it was planned that every home in the country would have fibre-to-the-home for internet access at a minimum speed of 100 Mbit/s,[[62]](#cite_note-62) and the availability was complete in June 2012.

There is only one Andorran television station, [*Ràdio i Televisió d'Andorra*](/wiki/Ràdio_i_Televisió_d'Andorra) (RTVA). *Radio Nacional d’Andorra* operates two radio stations, [*Radio Andorra*](/wiki/Radio_Andorra) and *Andorra Música*. There are three national newspapers, [*Diari d'Andorra*](/wiki/Diari_d'Andorra), [*El Periòdic d'Andorra*](/wiki/El_Periòdic_d'Andorra), and [*Bondia*](/wiki/Bondia_(newspaper)) as well as several local newspapers. There is also an [amateur radio](/wiki/Amateur_radio) society.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Additional TV and radio stations from Spain and France are available via digital terrestrial television and IPTV. [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also)

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=30)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|right|Andorran flag on balcony, Ordino](/wiki/File:HPIM0309.JPG) The official and historic language is Catalan. Thus the culture is Catalan, with its own specificity.

Andorra is home to folk dances like the contrapàs and marratxa, which survive in [Sant Julià de Lòria](/wiki/Sant_Julià_de_Lòria) especially. Andorran folk music has similarities to the music of its neighbours, but is especially [Catalan](/wiki/Music_of_Catalonia) in character, especially in the presence of dances such as the [sardana](/wiki/Sardana). Other Andorran folk dances include contrapàs in [Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Andorra_la_Vella) and Saint Anne's dance in Escaldes-Engordany. Andorra's national holiday is [Our Lady of Meritxell](/wiki/Our_Lady_of_Meritxell) Day, 8 September.[[2]](#cite_note-2) American folk artist [Malvina Reynolds](/wiki/Malvina_Reynolds), intrigued by its defence budget of $4.90, wrote a song "Andorra". [Pete Seeger](/wiki/Pete_Seeger) added verses, and sang "Andorra" on his 1962 album *The Bitter and the Sweet*.

## Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

Andorra is famous for the practice of [Winter Sports](/wiki/Winter_Sports). Popular sports played in Andorra include [football](/wiki/Association_football), [rugby union](/wiki/Rugby_union), basketball and [roller hockey](/wiki/Roller_hockey_(quad)).

In [roller hockey](/wiki/Roller_hockey_(quad)) Andorra usually plays in [CERH Euro Cup](/wiki/CERH_European_Roller_Hockey_Championship) and in [FIRS Roller Hockey World Cup](/wiki/FIRS_Roller_Hockey_World_Cup). In 2011, Andorra was the host country to the [2011 European League Final Eight](/wiki/2011_European_League_Final_Eight).

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Estadi_Comunal_Aixovall.jpg)[Estadi Comunal d'Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Estadi_Comunal_d'Andorra_la_Vella) The country is represented in association football by the [Andorra national football team](/wiki/Andorra_national_football_team). However, the team has had little success internationally because of Andorra's small population.[[64]](#cite_note-64) Football is ruled in Andorra by the [Andorran Football Federation](/wiki/Andorran_Football_Federation) founded in 1994, it organizes the national competitions of association football ([Primera Divisió](/wiki/Primera_Divisió), [Copa Constitució](/wiki/Copa_Constitució) and [Supercopa](/wiki/Andorran_Supercup)) and [futsal](/wiki/Futsal). [FC Andorra](/wiki/FC_Andorra), a club based in [Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Andorra_la_Vella) founded in 1942, compete in the [Spanish football league system](/wiki/Spanish_football_league_system).

[Rugby](/wiki/Rugby_union) is a traditional sport in Andorra, mainly influenced by the popularity in southern France. The [Andorra national rugby union team](/wiki/Andorra_national_rugby_union_team), nicknamed "*Els Isards*", has impressed on the international stage in [rugby union](/wiki/Rugby_union) and [rugby sevens](/wiki/Rugby_sevens).[[65]](#cite_note-65) [VPC Andorra XV](/wiki/VPC_Andorra_XV) is a rugby team based in [Andorra la Vella](/wiki/Andorra_la_Vella) actually playing in the French championship.

Basketball popularity has increased in the country since the 1990s, when the Andorran team [BC Andorra](/wiki/BC_Andorra) played in the top league of Spain ([Liga ACB](/wiki/Liga_ACB)).[[66]](#cite_note-66) After 18 years the club returned to the top league in 2014.[[67]](#cite_note-67) Other sports practised in Andorra include [cycling](/wiki/Cycling), volleyball, [judo](/wiki/Judo), [Australian Rules football](/wiki/Australian_Rules_football), [handball](/wiki/Handball), swimming, gymnastics, tennis and [motorsports](/wiki/Motorsports). In 2012, Andorra raised its first national [cricket](/wiki/Cricket) team and played a home match against the Dutch Fellowship of Fairly Odd Places Cricket Club, the first match played in the history of Andorra at an altitude of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).[[68]](#cite_note-68) Andorra first participated at the [Olympic Games](/wiki/Olympic_Games) in 1976. The country has also appeared in every [Winter Olympic](/wiki/Winter_Olympic) Games since 1976. Andorra competes in the [Games of the Small States of Europe](/wiki/Games_of_the_Small_States_of_Europe) being twice the host country in [1991](/wiki/1991_Games_of_the_Small_States_of_Europe) and [2005](/wiki/2005_Games_of_the_Small_States_of_Europe).

### Major achievements[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=32)]

[Ariadna Tudel Cuberes](/wiki/Ariadna_Tudel_Cuberes) and [Sophie Dusautoir Bertrand](/wiki/Sophie_Dusautoir_Bertrand) earned the bronze medal in the women's team competition at the [2009 European Championship of Ski Mountaineering](/wiki/2009_European_Championship_of_Ski_Mountaineering). [Joan Verdu Sanchez](/wiki/Joan_Verdu_Sanchez) earned a bronze medal in [Alpine Skiing](/wiki/Alpine_skiing_at_the_2012_Winter_Youth_Olympics) at the [2012 Winter Youth Olympics](/wiki/2012_Winter_Youth_Olympics). In 2015, [Marc Oliveras](/wiki/Marc_Oliveras) earned a silver medal in [Alpine Skiing](/wiki/Alpine_skiing_at_the_2015_Winter_Universiade) at the [2015 Winter Universiade](/wiki/2015_Winter_Universiade), while [Carmina Pallas](/wiki/Carmina_Pallas) earned a silver and a bronze medal in the same competition.

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=33)]

[Template:Wikipedia books](/wiki/Template:Wikipedia_books)

* [Index of Andorra-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Andorra-related_articles)
* [Outline of Andorra](/wiki/Outline_of_Andorra)
* [Andorra–European Union relations](/wiki/Andorra–European_Union_relations)
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* [List of Andorrans](/wiki/List_of_Andorrans)
* [List of Co-Princes of Andorra](/wiki/List_of_Co-Princes_of_Andorra)
* [Lists of ecoregions by country](/wiki/Lists_of_ecoregions_by_country)
* [Recognition of same-sex unions in Andorra](/wiki/Recognition_of_same-sex_unions_in_Andorra)
* [Scouts d'Andorra](/wiki/Scouts_d'Andorra)
* [Tourism in Andorra](/wiki/Tourism_in_Andorra)

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=34)]

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## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=35)]

[Template:Wikibooks](/wiki/Template:Wikibooks) [Template:Wikisource](/wiki/Template:Wikisource) [Template:Sister project links](/wiki/Template:Sister_project_links)

* [Govern d'Andorra](http://www.govern.ad/)[Template:Snd](/wiki/Template:Snd) Official governmental site [Template:Ca icon](/wiki/Template:Ca_icon)
* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Portals to the World](http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/hispanic/andorra/andorra.html) from the United States [Library of Congress](/wiki/Library_of_Congress)
* [Andorra](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/andorra.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Andorra](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-17028050) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Andorra – Guía, turismo y de viajes](http://bloggordo.com/andorra-guia-turismo-y-de-viajes/) [History of Andorra: Primary Documents](http://eudocs.lib.byu.edu/index.php/History_of_Andorra:_Primary_Documents) from *EuroDocs*
* [A New Path for Andorra](http://www.nytimes.com/slideshow/2010/08/27/business/global/28andorra-slideshow.html) – slideshow by [*The New York Times*](/wiki/The_New_York_Times)
* [Template:Osmrelation-inline](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation-inline)
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)

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