[Template:Other uses](/wiki/Template:Other_uses" \o "Template:Other uses) [Template:Pp-semi](/wiki/Template:Pp-semi) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Coord](/wiki/Template:Coord) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country) [thumb|right|250px|Map of the three areas dividing the Chilean territory:  
**In blue:**](/wiki/File:The_three_areas_of_Chile.png) [Continental Chile](/wiki/Continental_Chile).  
**In red:** [Insular Chile](/wiki/Insular_Chile).  
**In green:** [Antarctic Chile](/wiki/Chilean_Antarctic_Territory). **Chile** ([Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en);[[1]](#cite_note-1) [Template:IPA-es](/wiki/Template:IPA-es)), officially the **Republic of Chile** ([Template:Audio-es](/wiki/Template:Audio-es)), is a [South American](/wiki/South_America) country occupying a long, narrow strip of land between the [Andes](/wiki/Andes) to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. It borders [Peru](/wiki/Peru) to the north, [Bolivia](/wiki/Bolivia) to the northeast, [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina) to the east, and the [Drake Passage](/wiki/Drake_Passage) in the far south. Chilean territory includes the Pacific islands of [Juan Fernández](/wiki/Juan_Fernández_Islands), [Salas y Gómez](/wiki/Salas_y_Gómez), [Desventuradas](/wiki/Desventuradas_Islands), and [Easter Island](/wiki/Easter_Island) in [Oceania](/wiki/Oceania). Chile also claims about [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of [Antarctica](/wiki/Antarctica), although all claims are suspended under the [Antarctic Treaty](/wiki/Antarctic_Treaty).

The arid [Atacama Desert](/wiki/Atacama_Desert) in northern Chile contains great mineral wealth, principally [copper](/wiki/Copper#Production). The relatively small central area dominates in terms of population and agricultural resources, and is the cultural and political center from which Chile expanded in the late 19th century when it incorporated its northern and southern regions. Southern Chile is rich in forests and grazing lands, and features a string of [volcanoes](/wiki/Volcano) and lakes. The southern coast is a labyrinth of [fjords, inlets, canals](/wiki/Fjords_and_channels_of_Chile), twisting peninsulas, and islands.[[2]](#cite_note-2) [Spain conquered and colonised](/wiki/Conquest_of_Chile) Chile in the mid-16th century, replacing [Inca rule](/wiki/Incas_in_Central_Chile) in northern and central Chile, but [failing to conquer](/wiki/Arauco_War) the independent [Mapuche](/wiki/Mapuche) that inhabited south-central Chile. After [declaring its independence](/wiki/Chilean_Declaration_of_Independence) from Spain in 1818, Chile emerged in the 1830s as a relatively stable authoritarian republic. In the 19th century, Chile saw significant economic and territorial growth, [ending Mapuche resistance](/wiki/Occupation_of_Araucanía) in the 1880s and gaining its current northern territory in the [War of the Pacific](/wiki/War_of_the_Pacific) (1879–83) after defeating Peru and Bolivia.<ref name=factbook>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> In the 1960s and 1970s the country experienced severe left-right [political polarization](/wiki/Polarization_(politics)) and turmoil. This development culminated with the [1973 Chilean coup d'état](/wiki/1973_Chilean_coup_d'état) that overthrew [Salvador Allende's](/wiki/Salvador_Allende) democratically-elected left-wing government and instituted [a 16-year-long right-wing military dictatorship](/wiki/Military_dictatorship_of_Chile_(1973–90)) that left more than 3,000 people dead or missing.[[3]](#cite_note-3) The regime, headed by [Augusto Pinochet](/wiki/Augusto_Pinochet), ended in 1990 after it lost a [referendum in 1988](/wiki/Chilean_presidential_referendum,_1988) and was succeeded by a [centre-left coalition](/wiki/Concertacion) which ruled through four presidencies until 2010.

Chile is today one of South America's most stable and prosperous nations.[[3]](#cite_note-3) It leads Latin American nations in rankings of [human development](/wiki/Human_development_(humanity)), [competitiveness](/wiki/Competitiveness), [income per capita](/wiki/Income_per_capita), [globalization](/wiki/Globalization), [state of peace](/wiki/Global_Peace_Index), [economic freedom](/wiki/Economic_freedom), and [low perception of corruption](/wiki/Political_corruption).[[4]](#cite_note-4) It also ranks high regionally in [sustainability of the state](/wiki/Failed_States_Index#Failed_States_Index), and democratic development.[[5]](#cite_note-5) Chile is a founding member of the [United Nations](/wiki/United_Nations), the [Union of South American Nations](/wiki/Union_of_South_American_Nations) and the [Community of Latin American and Caribbean States](/wiki/Community_of_Latin_American_and_Caribbean_States).

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

There are various theories about the origin of the word *Chile*. According to 17th-century Spanish chronicler [Diego de Rosales](/wiki/Diego_de_Rosales),[[6]](#cite_note-6) the [Incas](/wiki/Incas) called the valley of the [Aconcagua](/wiki/Aconcagua) "Chili" by corruption of the name of a [Picunche](/wiki/Picunche) [tribal chief](/wiki/Tribal_chief) ("cacique") called *Tili*, who ruled the area at the time of the Incan conquest in the 15th century.[[7]](#cite_note-7)[[8]](#cite_note-8) Another theory points to the similarity of the valley of the Aconcagua with that of the [Casma Valley](/wiki/Casma_Valley) in Peru, where there was a town and valley named *Chili.*[[8]](#cite_note-8) Other theories say Chile may derive its name from a [Native American](/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_of_the_Americas) word meaning either "ends of the earth" or "sea gulls";[[9]](#cite_note-9) from the Mapuche word *chilli,* which may mean "where the land ends;"[[10]](#cite_note-10) or from the [Quechua](/wiki/Quechua_languages) *chiri*, "cold",[[11]](#cite_note-11) or *tchili*, meaning either "snow"[[11]](#cite_note-11)[[12]](#cite_note-12) or "the deepest point of the Earth".[[13]](#cite_note-13) Another origin attributed to *chilli* is the onomatopoeic *cheele-cheele*—the Mapuche imitation of the warble of a bird locally known as [trile](/wiki/Yellow-winged_blackbird).[[10]](#cite_note-10)[[14]](#cite_note-14) The Spanish [conquistadors](/wiki/Conquistadors) heard about this name from the Incas, and the few survivors of [Diego de Almagro's](/wiki/Diego_de_Almagro) first Spanish expedition south from Peru in 1535–36 called themselves the "men of Chilli".[[10]](#cite_note-10) Ultimately, Almagro is credited with the universalization of the name *Chile*, after naming the [Mapocho](/wiki/Mapocho_River) valley as such.[[8]](#cite_note-8) The older spelling "Chili" was in use in English until at least 1900 before switching over to "Chile".[[15]](#cite_note-15)

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

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

### Early history[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[thumb|upright|left|The](/wiki/File:Urville-Araucanians.jpg) [Mapuche](/wiki/Mapuche) people were the original inhabitants of southern and central Chile. Stone tool evidence indicates humans sporadically frequented the [Monte Verde](/wiki/Monte_Verde) valley area as long as 18,500 years ago.[[16]](#cite_note-16) About 10,000 years ago, migrating [Native Americans](/wiki/Indigenous_Peoples_of_the_Americas) settled in fertile valleys and coastal areas of what is present-day Chile. Settlement sites from very early human habitation include Monte Verde, [Cueva del Milodon](/wiki/Cueva_del_Milodon) and the [Pali Aike Crater's](/wiki/Pali_Aike_Crater) [lava tube](/wiki/Lava_tube). The Incas briefly extended their empire into what is now northern Chile, but the [Mapuche](/wiki/Mapuche) (or Araucanians as they were known by the Spaniards) successfully resisted many attempts by the Inca Empire to subjugate them, despite their lack of state organization.[[17]](#cite_note-17) They fought against the Sapa Inca Tupac Yupanqui and his army. The result of the bloody three-day confrontation known as the [Battle of the Maule](/wiki/Battle_of_the_Maule) was that the Inca conquest of the territories of Chile ended at the [Maule river](/wiki/Maule_river).[[18]](#cite_note-18)

### Spanish colonization[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) In 1520, while attempting to circumnavigate the globe, [Ferdinand Magellan](/wiki/Ferdinand_Magellan) discovered the southern passage now named after him, the [Strait of Magellan](/wiki/Strait_of_Magellan), thus becoming the first European to set foot on what is now Chile. The next Europeans to reach Chile were Diego de Almagro and his band of Spanish conquistadors, who came from Peru in 1535 seeking gold. The Spanish encountered various cultures that supported themselves principally through slash-and-burn agriculture and hunting.[[18]](#cite_note-18) The conquest of Chile began in earnest in 1540 and was carried out by [Pedro de Valdivia](/wiki/Pedro_de_Valdivia), one of [Francisco Pizarro's](/wiki/Francisco_Pizarro) lieutenants, who founded the city of Santiago on 12 February 1541. Although the Spanish did not find the extensive gold and silver they sought, they recognized the agricultural potential of Chile's central valley, and Chile became part of the [Spanish Empire](/wiki/Spanish_Empire).[[18]](#cite_note-18) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Pedro_de_Valdivia.jpg)[Pedro de Valdivia](/wiki/Pedro_de_Valdivia) [thumb|upright|Cornelius van Wytfliet map from 1597](/wiki/File:Descriptionis_Ptolemaicæ_avgmentvm_siue_Occidentis_notitia_breui_commentario_illustrata_p134.tif)

Conquest took place gradually, and the Europeans suffered repeated setbacks. A massive Mapuche insurrection that began in 1553 resulted in Valdivia's death and the destruction of many of the colony's principal settlements. Subsequent major insurrections took place in 1598 and in 1655. Each time the Mapuche and other native groups revolted, the southern border of the colony was driven northward. The abolition of [slavery](/wiki/Slavery) by the Spanish crown in 1683 was done in recognition that enslaving the Mapuche intensified resistance rather than cowing them into submission. Despite royal prohibitions, relations remained strained from continual colonialist interference.[[19]](#cite_note-19) Cut off to the north by desert, to the south by the Mapuche, to the east by the Andes Mountains, and to the west by the ocean, Chile became one of the most centralized, homogeneous colonies in Spanish America. Serving as a sort of frontier [garrison](/wiki/Garrison), the colony found itself with the mission of forestalling encroachment by both the Mapuche and Spain's European enemies, especially the [British](/wiki/British_Empire) and the Dutch. Buccaneers and English adventurers menaced the colony in addition to the Mapuche, as was shown by [Sir Francis Drake's](/wiki/Sir_Francis_Drake) 1578 raid on Valparaíso, the colony's principal port. Chile hosted one of the largest standing armies in the Americas, making it one of the most militarized of the Spanish possessions, as well as a [drain on the treasury of the Viceroyalty of Peru](/wiki/Real_Situado).[[10]](#cite_note-10) The first general census was conducted by the government of [Agustín de Jáuregui](/wiki/Agustín_de_Jáuregui) between 1777 and 1778; it indicated that the population consisted of 259,646 inhabitants: 73.5 percent of [European descent](/wiki/White_Latin_American), 7.9 percent [mestizos](/wiki/Mestizo), 8.6 percent [indigenous peoples](/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_of_the_Americas) and 9.8 percent blacks. Francisco Hurtado, Governor of the province of [Chiloé](/wiki/Chiloé_Province), conducted a census in 1784 and found the population consisted of 26,703 inhabitants, 64.4 percent of which were whites and 33.5 percent of which were natives.

The Diocese of [Concepción](/wiki/Concepción,_Chile) conducted a census in areas south of the [Maule river](/wiki/Maule_river) in 1812, but did not include the indigenous population or the inhabitants of the province of Chiloé. The population is estimated at 210,567, 86.1 percent of which were [Spanish](/wiki/Spanish_Chilean) or of European descent, 10 percent of which were indigenous and 3.7 percent of which were mestizos, blacks and [mulattos](/wiki/Mulatto).[[20]](#cite_note-20)

### Independence and nation building[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Ohiggins.jpg)[Bernardo O'Higgins](/wiki/Bernardo_O'Higgins), the Supreme Director of Chile In 1808, [Napoleon's](/wiki/Napoleon_I) enthronement of his brother [Joseph](/wiki/Joseph_Bonaparte) as the [Spanish King](/wiki/Spanish_monarchy) precipitated the drive by the colony for [independence from Spain](/wiki/Chilean_War_of_Independence). A national junta in the name of [Ferdinand](/wiki/Ferdinand_VII_of_Spain) – heir to the deposed king – was formed on 18 September 1810. The [Government Junta of Chile](/wiki/Government_Junta_of_Chile_(1810)) proclaimed Chile an autonomous republic within the Spanish monarchy (in memory of this day Chile celebrates its [National Day](/wiki/Fiestas_Patrias_(Chile)) on 18 September each year).

After these events, a movement for total independence, under the command of [José Miguel Carrera](/wiki/José_Miguel_Carrera) (one of the most renowned patriots) and his two brothers Juan José and [Luis Carrera](/wiki/Luis_Carrera), soon gained a wider following. Spanish attempts to re-impose arbitrary rule during what was called the [Reconquista](/wiki/Reconquista_(Spanish_America)) led to a prolonged struggle, including infighting from [Bernardo O'Higgins](/wiki/Bernardo_O'Higgins), who challenged Carrera's leadership.

Intermittent warfare continued until 1817. With Carrera in prison in Argentina, O'Higgins and anti-Carrera cohort [José de San Martín](/wiki/José_de_San_Martín), hero of the [Argentine War of Independence](/wiki/Argentine_War_of_Independence), led [an army](/wiki/Army_of_the_Andes) that [crossed the Andes](/wiki/Crossing_of_the_Andes) into Chile and defeated the royalists. On 12 February 1818 [Chile was proclaimed an independent republic](/wiki/Chilean_Declaration_of_Independence). The political revolt brought little social change, however, and 19th-century Chilean society preserved the essence of the stratified colonial social structure, which was greatly influenced by family politics and the Roman Catholic Church. A strong presidency eventually emerged, but wealthy landowners remained powerful.[[18]](#cite_note-18) [thumb|left|Fighting during the](/wiki/File:Sinking_of_the_Esmeralda_during_the_battle_of_Iquique.jpg) [War of the Pacific](/wiki/War_of_the_Pacific): The [Battle of Iquique](/wiki/Battle_of_Iquique) on 21 May 1879 Chile slowly started to expand its influence and to establish its borders. By the Tantauco Treaty, the archipelago of Chiloé was incorporated in 1826. The economy began to boom due to the discovery of silver ore in Chañarcillo, and the growing trade of the port of Valparaíso, which led to conflict over maritime supremacy in the Pacific with Peru. At the same time, attempts were made to strengthen sovereignty in southern Chile intensifying [penetration into Araucanía](/wiki/Occupation_of_Araucanía) and [colonizing Llanquihue with German immigrants](/wiki/German_colonization_of_Valdivia,_Osorno_and_Llanquihue) in 1848. Through the founding of [Fort Bulnes](/wiki/Fort_Bulnes) by the [Schooner Ancud](/wiki/Schooner_Ancud) under the command of [John Williams Wilson](/wiki/John_Williams_Wilson), the Magallanes region joined the country in 1843, while the Antofagasta area, at the time part of, Bolivia, began to fill with people.

[thumb|200px|Chile's territorial gains after the](/wiki/File:Borders_Chile_1879_and_2006_SP.png) [War of the Pacific](/wiki/War_of_the_Pacific) (1879–83) Toward the end of the 19th century, the government in Santiago consolidated its position in the south by the [Occupation of Araucanía](/wiki/Occupation_of_Araucanía). The [Boundary treaty of 1881 between Chile and Argentina](/wiki/Boundary_treaty_of_1881_between_Chile_and_Argentina) confirmed Chilean sovereignty over the Strait of Magellan. As a result of the [War of the Pacific](/wiki/War_of_the_Pacific) with Peru and Bolivia (1879–83), Chile expanded its territory northward by almost one-third, eliminating Bolivia's access to the Pacific, and acquired valuable [nitrate](/wiki/Caliche_(mineral)#Chilean_caliche) deposits, the exploitation of which led to an era of national affluence.

The [1891 Chilean Civil War](/wiki/1891_Chilean_Civil_War) brought about a redistribution of power between the President and Congress, and Chile established a parliamentary style democracy. However, the Civil War had also been a contest between those who favored the development of local industries and powerful Chilean banking interests, particularly the House of Edwards who had strong ties to foreign investors. Soon after, the country engaged in a [vastly expensive naval arms race](/wiki/Argentine–Chilean_naval_arms_race) with Argentina that nearly led to a war.

### 20th century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=6)]

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) The Chilean economy partially degenerated into a system protecting the interests of a ruling [oligarchy](/wiki/Oligarchy). By the 1920s, the emerging middle and working classes were powerful enough to elect a reformist president, [Arturo Alessandri](/wiki/Arturo_Alessandri), whose program was frustrated by a conservative congress. In the 1920s, [Marxist](/wiki/Marxism) groups with strong popular support arose.[[18]](#cite_note-18) A military coup led by General [Luis Altamirano](/wiki/Luis_Altamirano) in 1924 set off a period of political instability that lasted until 1932. Of the ten governments that held power in that period, the longest lasting was that of General [Carlos Ibáñez del Campo](/wiki/Carlos_Ibáñez_del_Campo), who briefly held power in 1925 and then again between 1927 and 1931 in what was a de facto dictatorship (although not really comparable in harshness or corruption to the type of military dictatorship that has often bedeviled the rest of Latin America).[[21]](#cite_note-21)[[22]](#cite_note-22) By relinquishing power to a democratically elected successor, Ibáñez del Campo retained the respect of a large enough segment of the population to remain a viable politician for more than thirty years, in spite of the vague and shifting nature of his ideology. When constitutional rule was restored in 1932, a strong middle-class party, the Radicals, emerged. It became the key force in coalition governments for the next 20 years. During the period of [Radical Party](/wiki/Radical_Party_(Chile)) dominance (1932–52), the state increased its role in the economy. In 1952, voters returned Ibáñez del Campo to office for another six years. [Jorge Alessandri](/wiki/Jorge_Alessandri) succeeded Ibáñez del Campo in 1958, bringing Chilean conservatism back into power democratically for another term.

The [1964 presidential election](/wiki/Chilean_presidential_election,_1964) of [Christian Democrat](/wiki/Christian_Democrat_Party_of_Chile) [Eduardo Frei Montalva](/wiki/Eduardo_Frei_Montalva) by an [absolute majority](/wiki/Absolute_majority) initiated a period of major reform. Under the slogan "Revolution in Liberty", the Frei administration embarked on far-reaching social and economic programs, particularly in education, housing, and [agrarian reform](/wiki/Agrarian_reform), including rural unionization of agricultural workers. By 1967, however, Frei encountered increasing opposition from leftists, who charged that his reforms were inadequate, and from conservatives, who found them excessive. At the end of his term, Frei had not fully achieved his party's ambitious goals.[[18]](#cite_note-18)[thumb|upright|President](/wiki/File:S.Allende_7_dias_ilustrados.JPG) [Salvador Allende](/wiki/Salvador_Allende) In the 1970 election, Senator [Salvador Allende](/wiki/Salvador_Allende) of the [Socialist Party of Chile](/wiki/Socialist_Party_of_Chile) (then part of the "[Popular Unity](/wiki/Popular_Unity_(Chile))" coalition which included the Communists, Radicals, Social-Democrats, dissident Christian Democrats, the Popular Unitary Action Movement, and the Independent Popular Action),[[18]](#cite_note-18) achieved a partial majority in a [plurality](/wiki/Plurality_(voting)) of votes in a three-way contest, followed by candidates Radomiro Tomic for the Christian Democrat Party and Jorge Alessandri for the Conservative Party. Allende was not elected with an absolute majority, receiving fewer than 35 percent of votes.

The [Chilean Congress](/wiki/National_Congress_of_Chile) conducted a runoff vote between the leading candidates, Allende and former president Jorge Alessandri and keeping with tradition, chose Allende by a vote of 153 to 35. Frei refused to form an alliance with Alessandri to oppose Allende, on the grounds that the Christian Democrats were a workers party and could not make common cause with the right-wing.[[23]](#cite_note-23)[[24]](#cite_note-24) An [economic depression](/wiki/Economic_depression) that began in 1972 was exacerbated by [capital flight](/wiki/Capital_flight), plummeting private investment, and withdrawal of bank deposits in response to Allende's socialist program. Production fell and unemployment rose. Allende adopted measures including price freezes, wage increases, and tax reforms, to increase consumer spending and redistribute income downward.[[25]](#cite_note-25) Joint public-private [public works](/wiki/Public_works) projects helped reduce unemployment.[[26]](#cite_note-26)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed) Much of the banking sector was [nationalized](/wiki/Nationalization). Many enterprises within the [copper](/wiki/Copper#Production), coal, iron, [nitrate](/wiki/Caliche_(mineral)#Chilean_caliche), and steel industries were [expropriated](/wiki/Nationalization), nationalized, or subjected to state intervention. Industrial output increased sharply and unemployment fell during the Allende administration's first year.[[26]](#cite_note-26) Allende's program included advancement of workers' interests,[[26]](#cite_note-26)[[27]](#cite_note-27) replacing the judicial system with "socialist legality",<ref name=friedman368>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> nationalization of banks and forcing others to bankruptcy,<ref name=friedman368/> and strengthening "popular militias" known as MIR.<ref name=friedman368/> Started under former President Frei, the Popular Unity platform also called for nationalization of Chile's major copper mines in the form of a constitutional amendment. The measure was passed unanimously by Congress.

As a result,[[28]](#cite_note-28) the [Richard Nixon](/wiki/Richard_Nixon) administration [organized and inserted secret operatives](/wiki/United_States_intervention_in_Chile) in Chile, in order to swiftly destabilize Allende’s government.[[29]](#cite_note-29) In addition, US financial pressure restricted international economic credit to Chile.[[30]](#cite_note-30) The economic problems were also exacerbated by Allende's public spending which was financed mostly by printing money and poor credit ratings given by commercial banks.[[31]](#cite_note-31)Simultaneously, opposition media, politicians, business guilds and other organizations helped to accelerate a campaign of domestic political and economical destabilization, some of which was backed by the United States.[[30]](#cite_note-30)[[32]](#cite_note-32) By early 1973, inflation was out of control. The crippled economy was further battered by prolonged and sometimes simultaneous strikes by physicians, teachers, students, truck owners, copper workers, and the small business class. On 26 May 1973, Chile’s Supreme Court, which was opposed to Allende's government, unanimously denounced the Allende *disruption of the legality of the nation*. Although illegal under the Chilean constitution, the court supported and strengthened Pinochet's seizure of power.<ref name=friedman368/>[[33]](#cite_note-33)

#### Pinochet era (1973–1990)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Fighter jets bombing the Presidential Palace (*La Moneda*) in Santiago during the](/wiki/File:Golpe_de_Estado_1973.jpg) [Chilean coup of 1973](/wiki/Chilean_coup_of_1973) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Augusto_Pinochet_1986.jpg)[Augusto Pinochet's](/wiki/Augusto_Pinochet) authoritarian military government ruled Chile between 1973 and 1990. A [military coup](/wiki/Chilean_coup_of_1973) overthrew Allende on 11 September 1973. As the armed forces bombarded the [presidential palace](/wiki/La_Moneda_Palace), Allende apparently committed suicide.[[34]](#cite_note-34)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed)[[35]](#cite_note-35)[Template:Page needed](/wiki/Template:Page_needed) After the coup, [Henry Kissinger](/wiki/Henry_Kissinger) told U.S. president [Richard Nixon](/wiki/Richard_Nixon) that the United States had "helped" the coup.[[36]](#cite_note-36) A military junta, led by General [Augusto Pinochet Ugarte](/wiki/Augusto_Pinochet_Ugarte), took control of the country. The first years of the regime were marked by [human rights violations](/wiki/Human_rights_violations_in_Pinochet's_Chile). On October 1973, at least 72 people were murdered by the [Caravan of Death](/wiki/Caravan_of_Death).[[37]](#cite_note-37) According to the [Rettig Report](/wiki/Rettig_Report) and [Valech Commission](/wiki/Valech_Commission), at least 2,115 were killed,[[38]](#cite_note-38) and at least 27,265<ref name=sintesis>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> were tortured (including 88 children younger than 12 years old).<ref name=sintesis/> In 2011, Chile recognized an additional 9,800 victims, bringing the total number of killed, tortured or imprisoned for political reasons to 40,018.[[39]](#cite_note-39) At the national stadium, filled with detainees, one of those tortured and killed was internationally known poet-singer [Victor Jara](/wiki/Victor_Jara) (see "Music and Dance", below). The stadium was renamed for Jara in 2003.

A new Constitution was approved by a controversial [plebiscite](/wiki/Plebiscite) on 11 September 1980, and General Pinochet became president of the republic for an eight-year term. After Pinochet obtained rule of the country, several hundred committed Chilean revolutionaries joined the [Sandinista](/wiki/Sandinista) army in [Nicaragua](/wiki/Nicaragua), guerrilla forces in [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina) or training camps in [Cuba](/wiki/Cuba), Eastern Europe and Northern Africa.[[40]](#cite_note-40) In the late 1980s, largely as a result of events such as the 1982 economic collapse[[41]](#cite_note-41) and mass [civil resistance](/wiki/Civil_resistance) in 1983–88, the government gradually permitted greater freedom of assembly, [speech](/wiki/Freedom_of_speech), and association, to include trade union and political activity.[[42]](#cite_note-42) The government launched market-oriented reforms with [Hernán Büchi](/wiki/Hernán_Büchi) as Minister of Finance. Chile moved toward a [free market economy](/wiki/Free_market_economy) that saw an increase in domestic and foreign private investment, although the [copper](/wiki/Copper#Production) industry and other important mineral resources were not opened for competition. In a [plebiscite](/wiki/Chilean_national_plebiscite,_1988) on 5 October 1988, Pinochet was denied a second eight-year term as president (56% against 44%). Chileans elected a new president and the majority of members of a two-chamber congress on 14 December 1989. Christian Democrat [Patricio Aylwin](/wiki/Patricio_Aylwin), the candidate of a coalition of 17 political parties called the [*Concertación*](/wiki/Coalition_of_Parties_for_Democracy), received an absolute majority of votes (55%).[[43]](#cite_note-43) President Aylwin served from 1990 to 1994, in what was considered a transition period.

In December 1993, Christian Democrat [Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle](/wiki/Eduardo_Frei_Ruiz-Tagle), the son of previous president Eduardo Frei Montalva, led the Concertación coalition to victory with an absolute majority of votes (58%).[[44]](#cite_note-44)

### 21st century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=8)]

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

[thumb|Five presidents of Chile since](/wiki/File:Izamiento_de_la_Gran_Bandera_Nacional_-_Presidentes_de_Chile.jpg) [Transition to democracy](/wiki/Transition_to_democracy) (1990–2018), celebrating the [Bicentennial of Chile](/wiki/Bicentennial_of_Chile)|260x260px Frei Ruiz-Tagle was succeeded in 2000 by Socialist [Ricardo Lagos](/wiki/Ricardo_Lagos), who won the presidency in an unprecedented [runoff election](/wiki/Chilean_presidential_election,_1999–2000) against [Joaquín Lavín](/wiki/Joaquín_Lavín) of the rightist [Alliance for Chile](/wiki/Alliance_for_Chile).[[45]](#cite_note-45) In January 2006, Chileans elected their first female president, [Michelle Bachelet Jeria](/wiki/Michelle_Bachelet_Jeria), of the Socialist Party, defeating [Sebastián Piñera](/wiki/Sebastián_Piñera), of the [National Renewal](/wiki/National_Renewal_(Chile)) party, extending the *Concertación* governance for another four years.[[46]](#cite_note-46)[[47]](#cite_note-47) In January 2010, Chileans [elected](/wiki/Chilean_presidential_election,_2009-2010) [Sebastián Piñera](/wiki/Sebastián_Piñera) as the first rightist President in 20 years, defeating former President [Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle](/wiki/Eduardo_Frei_Ruiz-Tagle) of the *Concertación*, for a four-year term succeeding Bachelet. Due to term limits, [Sebastián Piñera](/wiki/Sebastián_Piñera) did not stand for re-election in 2013, and his term expired in March 2014 resulting in [Michelle Bachelet](/wiki/Michelle_Bachelet) returning to office.

On 27 February 2010, Chile was struck by an 8.8 MW [earthquake](/wiki/2010_Chile_earthquake), the fifth largest ever recorded at the time. More than 500 people died (most from the ensuing [tsunami](/wiki/Tsunami)) and over a million people lost their homes. The earthquake was also followed by multiple aftershocks.[[48]](#cite_note-48) Initial damage estimates were in the range of US$15–30 billion, around 10 to 15 percent of Chile's real gross domestic product.[[49]](#cite_note-49) Chile achieved global recognition for the successful [rescue of 33 trapped miners](/wiki/2010_Copiapó_mining_accident) in 2010. On 5 August 2010 the access tunnel collapsed at the San José copper and gold mine in the [Atacama Desert](/wiki/Atacama_Desert) near [Copiapó](/wiki/Copiapó) in northern Chile, trapping 33 men [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) below ground. A rescue effort organized by the Chilean government located the miners 17 days later. All 33 men were brought to the surface two months later on 13 October 2010 over a period of almost 24 hours, an effort that was carried on live television around the world.[[50]](#cite_note-50)

## Geography, climate, and environment[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=9)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Parinacota_volcano.jpg)[Parinacota volcano](/wiki/Parinacota_volcano) in northern Chile [thumb|The town of San Pedro de Atacama](/wiki/File:Pueblo_de_San_Pedro_de_Atacama_2013-09-21_11-52-31.jpg) A long and narrow coastal [Southern Cone](/wiki/Southern_Cone) country on the west side of the [Andes Mountains](/wiki/Andes_Mountains), Chile stretches over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) north to south, but only [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) at its widest point east to west.[[51]](#cite_note-51) This encompasses a remarkable variety of climates and landscapes. It contains [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of land area. It is situated within the [Pacific Ring of Fire](/wiki/Pacific_Ring_of_Fire). Excluding its Pacific islands and Antarctic claim, Chile lies between latitudes [17°](/wiki/17th_parallel_south) and [56°S](/wiki/56th_parallel_south), and longitudes [66°](/wiki/66th_meridian_west) and [75°W](/wiki/75th_meridian_west).

Chile is among the longest north-south countries in the world. If one considers only mainland territory, Chile is unique within this group in its narrowness from east to west, with the other long north-south countries (including [Brazil](/wiki/Brazil), [Russia](/wiki/Russia), [Canada](/wiki/Canada), and the United States, among others) all being wider from east to west by a factor of more than 10. Chile also claims [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) of [Antarctica](/wiki/Antarctica) as part of its territory ([Chilean Antarctic Territory](/wiki/Chilean_Antarctic_Territory)). However, this latter claim is suspended under the terms of the [Antarctic Treaty](/wiki/Antarctic_Treaty), of which Chile is a signatory.[[52]](#cite_note-52) It is the world's southernmost country that is geographically on the mainland.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Chile controls [Easter Island](/wiki/Easter_Island) and [Sala y Gómez](/wiki/Sala_y_Gómez) Island, the easternmost islands of Polynesia, which it incorporated to its territory in 1888, and [Robinson Crusoe Island](/wiki/Robinson_Crusoe_Island), more than [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from the mainland, in the [Juan Fernández Islands](/wiki/Juan_Fernández_Islands). Also controlled but only temporarily inhabited (by some local fishermen) are the small islands of San Ambrosio and San Felix. These islands are notable because they extend Chile's claim to territorial waters out from its coast into the [Pacific Ocean](/wiki/Pacific_Ocean).[[54]](#cite_note-54) The northern [Atacama Desert](/wiki/Atacama_Desert) contains great mineral wealth, primarily [copper](/wiki/Copper#Production) and [nitrates](/wiki/Caliche_(mineral)#Chilean_caliche). The relatively small Central Valley, which includes Santiago, dominates the country in terms of population and agricultural resources. This area is also the historical center from which Chile expanded in the late 19th century, when it integrated the northern and southern regions. Southern Chile is rich in forests, grazing lands, and features a string of volcanoes and lakes. The southern coast is a labyrinth of fjords, inlets, canals, twisting peninsulas, and islands. The Andes Mountains are located on the eastern border.

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

[Template:Largest cities of Chile](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Chile).

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|200px|Chile map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Chile_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) [thumb|With more than 300 clear nights each year,](/wiki/File:Admiring_the_Galaxy.jpg) [La Silla](/wiki/La_Silla_Observatory) is in an ideal position to house advanced observational instruments

The diverse [climate of Chile](/wiki/Climate_of_Chile) ranges from the world's driest desert in the north—the [Atacama Desert](/wiki/Atacama_Desert)—through a [Mediterranean climate](/wiki/Mediterranean_climate) in the centre, [humid subtropical](/wiki/Humid_subtropical) in Easter Island, to an [oceanic climate](/wiki/Oceanic_climate), including [alpine tundra](/wiki/Alpine_tundra) and [glaciers](/wiki/Glaciers) in the east and south.[[3]](#cite_note-3) According to the [Köppen system](/wiki/Köppen_climate_classification), Chile within its borders hosts at least seven major climatic subtypes. There are four seasons in most of the country: summer (December to February), autumn (March to May), winter (June to August), and spring (September to November).

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|left|A glacier at](/wiki/File:BeagleChannelGlacier.jpg) [Beagle Channel](/wiki/Beagle_Channel) in southern Chile. [thumb|A](/wiki/File:Culpeo_MC.jpg) [culpeo](/wiki/Culpeo) or Andean fox at the border between Bolivia and Chile. Chile's geographical isolation has also restricted the immigration of faunal life, so that only a few of the many distinctive South American animals are found. Among the larger mammals are the [puma](/wiki/Cougar) or cougar, the llama-like [guanaco](/wiki/Guanaco) and the fox-like [chilla](/wiki/South_American_gray_fox). In the forest region, several types of marsupials and a small deer known as the [pudu](/wiki/Pudú) are found.<ref name= Icarito/>

There are many species of small birds, but most of the larger common Latin American types are absent. Few freshwater fish are native, but North American trout have been successfully introduced into the Andean lakes.<ref name= Icarito/> Owing to the vicinity of the Humboldt Current, ocean waters abound with fish and other forms of marine life, which in turn support a rich variety of waterfowl, including several penguins. Whales are abundant, and some six species of seals are found in the area.<ref name= Icarito/>

Just over 3,000 species of fungi are recorded in Chile,[[55]](#cite_note-55)[[56]](#cite_note-56) but this number is far from complete. The true total number of fungal species occurring in Chile is likely to be far higher, given the generally accepted estimate that only about 7 percent of all fungi worldwide have so far been discovered.[[57]](#cite_note-57) Although the amount of available information is still very small, a first effort has been made to estimate the number of fungal species endemic to Chile, and 1995 species have been tentatively identified as possible endemics of the country.[[58]](#cite_note-58) The northernmost coastal and central region is largely barren of vegetation, approaching the most closely an absolute desert in the world.<ref name=Icarito>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> On the slopes of the Andes, besides the scattered tola desert brush, grasses are found. The central valley is characterized by several species of cacti, the hardy [espinos](/wiki/Acacia_caven), the [Chilean pine](/wiki/Araucaria_araucana), the [southern beeches](/wiki/Nothofagus) and the [copihue](/wiki/Copihue), a red bell-shaped flower that is Chile's national flower.<ref name= Icarito/>

In southern Chile, south of the Biobío River, heavy precipitation has produced dense forests of laurels, magnolias, and various species of conifers and beeches, which become smaller and more stunted to the south. <ref name=Bio&Con>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> The cold temperatures and winds of the extreme south preclude heavy forestation. Grassland is found in Atlantic Chile (in Patagonia). Much of the Chilean flora is distinct from that of neighboring Argentina, indicating that the Andean barrier existed during its formation.<ref name=Bio&Con/>

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

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Araucaria_araucana_-_Parque_Nacional_Conguillío_por_lautaroj_-_001.jpg)[Araucaria araucana](/wiki/Araucaria_araucana) trees in [Conguillío National Park](/wiki/Conguillío_National_Park) The **native flora of Chile** is characterized by a higher degree of endemism and relatively fewer species compared to the flora of other countries of South America. A classification of this flora necessitates its division into at least three general zones: the desert provinces of the north, Central Chile, and the humid regions of the south.

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

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Lapageria_rosea1.jpg)[Copihue](/wiki/Copihue) in flower The **fauna of Chile** is characterized by a high degree of endemism, due to its particular geography. In continental Chile, the [Atacama Desert](/wiki/Atacama_Desert) in the north and the [Andes mountains](/wiki/Andes_Mountains) to the east are barriers that have led to the isolation of flora and fauna. Add to that the enormous extension in length (over [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert)) this results in a wide range of climates and environments.

<gallery widths=150 heights=150> File:Puma2.jpg |Puma in Chile ([cougar](/wiki/Cougar)) File:Araucaria araucana - Parque Nacional Conguillío por lautaroj - 001.jpg|*Araucaria araucana* trees in Conguillío National Park File:Pudupuda hem 8 FdoVidal Villarr 08Abr06-PhotoJimenez.JPG|Pudú in Chile File:Zorrito Chile.JPG|Chilla fox, common in the region File:Colca-condor-c07.jpg|[Andean condor](/wiki/Andean_condor) (*Vultur gryphus*), the national bird of Chile File:Culpeo MC.jpg|*Lycalopex culpaeus*, a culpeo or Andean fox File:Guanaco 09.24.jpg|A [guanaco](/wiki/Guanaco) in northern Chile File:Cuernos del Paine from Lake Pehoé.jpg|Torres del Paine from Lake Pehoé, Torres del Paine National Park, Chile </gallery>

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

Chile is located along a highly [seismic](/wiki/Seismic) and [volcanic](/wiki/Volcanic) zone, part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, due to the subduction of the Nazca and Antarctic plates in the [South American plate](/wiki/South_American_plate).

[thumb|upright|left|Topographic map of Chile. To view maps based on](/wiki/File:Chile_topo_en.jpg) [SRTM](/wiki/SRTM) topographic relief of the country, see [here](/wiki/Commons:Atlas_of_Chile/Clickable_map).

[thumbnail|](/wiki/File:Ojos_del_Salado_summit.jpg)[Nevado Ojos del Salado](/wiki/Ojos_del_Salado): View from the top Chilean Argentine side. [thumbnail|The](/wiki/File:Salar_de_Atacama.jpg) [Atacama](/wiki/Atacama_Desert) [Dry lake](/wiki/Dry_lake), in Chile. At the horizon, the [Licancabur](/wiki/Licancabur) volcano. [thumbnail|Conguillío National Park, south-central area of the country.](/wiki/File:Lago_Conguillio.jpg) [thumbnail|A glacier at the Beagle Channel](/wiki/File:BeagleChannelGlacier.jpg)

Late [Paleozoic](/wiki/Paleozoic), 251 million years ago, Chile belonged to the continental block called Gondwana. It was just a depression accumulated marine sediments began to rise at the end of the Mesozoic, 66 million years ago, due to the collision between the Nazca and South American plates, resulting in the Andes. The territory would be shaped by millions of years due to the folding of the rocks, forming the current relief.

The Chilean relief consists of the central depression, which crosses the country longitudinally, flanked by two mountain ranges that make up about 80% of the territory: the Andes mountains to the east-natural border with [Bolivia](/wiki/Bolivia) and [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina), with its most alton 18 located on the [Nevado Ojos del Salado](/wiki/Nevado_Ojos_del_Salado), at 6891.3 m, the highest volcano in the world, in the [region of Atacama](/wiki/Atacama_Region) and Coastal Range west-minor height from the Andes, with its highest point located on the hill Vicuña Mackenna, at 3114 meters, located in the Sierra Vicuña Mackenna, the south of [Antofagasta](/wiki/Antofagasta_Region). Among the coastal mountains and the Pacific is a series of coastal plains, of variable length, which allow the settlement of coastal towns and big ports. Some areas of the plains territories encompass territory east of the Andes, and the Patagonian steppes and Magellan, or are high plateaus surrounded by high mountain ranges, such as the Altiplano or Puna de Atacama.

The [Far North](/wiki/Far_North,_Chile) is the area between the northern boundary of the country and the [parallel](/wiki/Parallel_(geometry)) 26° S, covering the first three regions. It is characterized by the presence of the [Atacama desert](/wiki/Atacama_desert), the most arid in the world. The desert is fragmented by streams that originate in the area known as the [pampas Tamarugal](/wiki/Pampa_del_Tamarugal). The Andes, split in two and whose eastern arm runs [Bolivia](/wiki/Bolivia), has a high altitude and volcanic activity, which has allowed the formation of the Andean altiplano and salt structures as the [Salar de Atacama](/wiki/Salar_de_Atacama), due to the gradual accumulation of sediments over time.

To the south is the [Norte Chico](/wiki/Norte_Chico,_Chile), extending to the [Aconcagua river](/wiki/Aconcagua_River). Los Andes begin to decrease its altitude to the south and closer to the coast, reaching 90 km away at the height of [Illapel](/wiki/Illapel), the narrowest part of the Chilean territory. The two mountain ranges intersect, virtually eliminating the intermediate depression. The existence of rivers flowing through the territory allows the formation of [transverse valleys](/wiki/Transverse_Valleys), where agriculture has developed strongly in recent times, while the [coastal plains](/wiki/Coastal_plains) begin to expand.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ten highest peaks of Chile** | |
| **Name** | **Altitude (**[**m**](/wiki/Metre)**)** |
| [Nevado Ojos del Salado](/wiki/Nevado_Ojos_del_Salado)1 | align=right|6891,3 |
| [Nevado Tres Cruces](/wiki/Nevado_Tres_Cruces)1 | align=right|6758 |
| [Llullaillaco](/wiki/Llullaillaco)1 | align=right|6739 |
| [Incahuasi](/wiki/Incahuasi)1 | align=right|6638 |
| [Tupungato](/wiki/Tupungato)1 | align=right|6565 |
| [Ata Volcano](/wiki/Ata_(mountain))1 | align=right|6501 |
| [Cerro El Muerto](/wiki/Cerro_El_Muerto)1 | align=right|6488 |
| [Parinacota](/wiki/Parinacota_(volcano))2 | align=right|6342 |
| [Pomerape](/wiki/Pomerape)2 | align=right|6282 |
| [Los Patos](/wiki/Los_Patos)1 | align=right|6239 |
| Note:1 shared with Argentina, 2 shared with Bolivia. | |

The [Central](/wiki/Zona_Central,_Chile) area is the most populated region of the country. The coastal plains are wide and allow the establishment of cities and ports along the Pacific, while the coastal mountains down its height. The Andes maintains altitudes above 6000m but descend slowly starts approaching the 4000 meters on average. The intermediate depression reappears becoming a fertile valley that allows agricultural development and human settlement, due to sediment accumulation. To the south, the Cordillera de la Costa reappears in the [range of Nahuelbuta](/wiki/Nahuelbuta_Range) while glacial sediments originate a series of lakes in the area of [La Frontera](/wiki/La_Frontera,_Chile).

Patagonia extends from within Reloncavi, at the height of parallel 41 ° S, to the south. During the last glaciation, this area was covered by ice that strongly eroded Chilean relief structures. As a result, the intermediate depression sinks in the sea, while the coastal mountains rise to a series of archipelagos, such as [Chiloé](/wiki/Chiloé_Island) and the [Chonos](/wiki/Chonos_Archipelago), disappearing in Taitao peninsula, in the parallel 47 ° S. The Andes mountain range loses height and erosion caused by the action of glaciers has caused [fjords](/wiki/Fjords).

East of the Andes, on the continent, or north of it, on the [island of Tierra del Fuego](/wiki/Tierra_del_Fuego_(main_island)) are located relatively flat plains, which in the Strait of Magellan cover large areas.

The Andes, as he had done previously Cordillera de la Costa, begins to break in the ocean causing a myriad of islands and islets and disappear into it, sinking and reappearing in the Southern Antilles arc and then the Antarctic Peninsula, where it is called Antartandes, in the Chilean Antarctic Territory, lying between the meridians 53 ° W and 90 ° W.

In the middle of the Pacific, the country has sovereignty over several islands of volcanic origin, collectively known as Insular Chile. Of these, we highlight the archipelago of Juan Fernandez and Easter Island, which is located in the fracture zone between the Nazca plate and the Pacific plate known as East Pacific Rise.

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

[thumbnail|left|](/wiki/File:Parinacota_volcano_1995.jpg)[Chungará Lake](/wiki/Chungará_Lake) and [Parinacota volcano](/wiki/Parinacota_volcano)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Ten longest rivers of Chile** | |
| **Name** | **Length (**[**km**](/wiki/Kilometre)**)** |
| [Loa](/wiki/Loa_River) | align=right|440 |
| [Bío Bío](/wiki/Bío_Bío_River) | align=right|380 |
| [Baker](/wiki/Baker_River_(Chile)) | align=right|370 |
| [Copiapó](/wiki/Copiapó_River) | align=right|292 |
| [Maipo](/wiki/Maipo_River) | align=right|250 |
| [Yelcho](/wiki/Yelcho_River)-[Futaleufú](/wiki/Futaleufú_River) | align=right|246 |
| [Maule](/wiki/Maule_River) | align=right|240 |
| [Palena](/wiki/Palena_River) | align=right|240 |
| [Toltén](/wiki/Toltén_River) | align=right|231 |
| [Huasco](/wiki/Huasco_River) | align=right|230 |
| Note: All lengths exclusively through Chilean territory. | |

[thumbnail|left|](/wiki/File:Lago_Gral._Carrera_01.JPG)[General Carrera lake](/wiki/General_Carrera_Lake), the largest in the country. [thumbnail|](/wiki/File:Bruggen-PioXI_FaceCompleteCroppedIMG5642.jpg)[Pio XI Glacier (or Brüggen)](/wiki/Brüggen_Glacier), the longest in the southern hemisphere outside of Antarctica.

Due to the characteristics of the territory, Chile is crossed by numerous rivers generally short in length and with low torrential flow. They commonly extend from the [Andes](/wiki/Andes_Mountains) to the [Pacific Ocean](/wiki/Pacific_Ocean), flowing in an East to West direction.

Because of the [desert](/wiki/Desert), in the Norte Grande there are only short [endorheic](/wiki/Endorheic) character streams, except for the [river Loa](/wiki/River_Loa), the longest in the country 440 km.<ref name=hydr>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref> In the high valleys, wetland areas generate [Chungará Lake](/wiki/Chungará_Lake), located at 4500 meters above sea level. It and the river [Lauca](/wiki/Lauca_River) are shared with [Bolivia](/wiki/Bolivia), as well as the [Lluta](/wiki/Lluta_River).

In the center-north of the country, the number of rivers that form valleys of agricultural importance increases. Noteworthy are the Elqui with 75 km <ref name=hydr/> long, 142 km Aconcagua, Maipo with 250 km <ref name=hydr/> and its tributary, the Mapocho with 110 km, and Maule with 240 km. Their waters mainly flow from Andean snowmelt in the summer and winter rains. The major lakes in this area are the artificial lake Rapel, the Colbun Maule lagoon and the lagoon of La Laja.

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|300px|Population of Chile from 1820, projected up to 2050](/wiki/File:Chile-demography.png)

Chile's 2002 census reported a population of 15 million people. Its rate of population growth has been decreasing since 1990, due to a declining [birth rate](/wiki/Birth_rate).[[59]](#cite_note-59) By 2050 the population is expected to reach approximately 20.2 million people.[[60]](#cite_note-60) About 85 percent of the country's population lives in urban areas, with 40 percent living in [Greater Santiago](/wiki/Santiago,_Chile). The largest agglomerations according to the 2002 census are Greater Santiago with 5.6 million people, [Greater Concepción](/wiki/Greater_Concepción) with 861,000 and [Greater Valparaíso](/wiki/Greater_Valparaíso) with 824,000.[[61]](#cite_note-61)

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

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

Mexican professor Francisco Lizcano, of the [National Autonomous University of Mexico](/wiki/National_Autonomous_University_of_Mexico), estimated that 52.7% of [Chileans](/wiki/Chileans) were white, 39.3% were [mestizo](/wiki/Mestizo), and 8% were [Amerindian](/wiki/Amerindian).[[62]](#cite_note-62) The most recent study in the Candela Project establishes that the genetic composition of Chile is 52% of European origin, with 44% of the genome coming from Native Americans (Amerindians), and 4% coming from Africa, making Chile a primarily mestizo country with traces of African descent present in half of the population.[[63]](#cite_note-63) Another genetic study conducted by the [University of Brasilia](/wiki/University_of_Brasilia) in several American countries shows a similar genetic composition for Chile, with a European contribution of 51.6%, an Amerindian (Native) contribution of 42.1%, and an African contribution of 6.3%.<ref name=UB>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

A public health booklet from the [University of Chile](/wiki/University_of_Chile) states that 30% of the population is of Caucasian origin; "predominantly White" Mestizos are estimated to amount a total of 65%, while Native Americans (Amerindians) comprise the remaining 5%.[[64]](#cite_note-64) Despite the genetic considerations, many Chileans, if asked, would self-identify as White. The 2011 [Latinobarómetro](/wiki/Latinobarómetro) survey asked respondents in Chile what race they considered themselves to belong to. Most answered "White" (59%), while 25% said "Mestizo" and 8% self-classified as "indigenous".[[65]](#cite_note-65) A 2002 national poll revealed that a majority of Chileans believed they possessed some (43.4%) or much (8.3%) "indigenous blood", while 40.3% responded that they had none.[[66]](#cite_note-66) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:Trajes_chilenos_-Geschichte_des_kostüms_in_chronologischer_entwicklung_1888-_A._Racinet.jpg)[Araucanian](/wiki/Mapuche) Indians and [Huasos](/wiki/Huaso) in Chile, 19th century.

The 1907 census reported 101,118 Indians, or 3.1% of the total population. Only those that practiced their native culture or spoke their native language were considered to be Indians, irrespective of their "racial purity".[[67]](#cite_note-67) In 2002 a census took place, directly asking the public whether they considered themselves as part of any of the eight Chilean ethnic groups, regardless of whether or not they maintained their culture, traditions and language, and 4.6 percent of the population (692,192 people) fitted that description of [indigenous peoples in Chile](/wiki/Indigenous_peoples_in_Chile). Of that number, 87.3% declared themselves Mapuche.[[68]](#cite_note-68) Most of the indigenous population shows varying degrees of mixed ancestry.[[69]](#cite_note-69) Chile is one of 22 countries to have signed and ratified the only binding international law concerning indigenous peoples, the [Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989](/wiki/Indigenous_and_Tribal_Peoples_Convention,_1989).[[70]](#cite_note-70) It was adopted in 1989 as the [International Labour Organization](/wiki/International_Labour_Organization) (ILO) Convention 169. Chile ratified it in 2008. A Chilean court decision in November 2009 considered to be a landmark ruling on indigenous rights and made use of the convention. The Supreme Court decision on Aymara water rights upheld rulings by both the Pozo Almonte tribunal and the Iquique Court of Appeals, and marks the first judicial application of ILO Convention 169 in Chile.[[71]](#cite_note-71) Chile was never a particularly attractive destination for migrants, owing to its remoteness and distance from Europe.[[72]](#cite_note-72) Europeans preferred to stay in countries closer to their homelands instead of taking the long journey through the Straits of Magellan or crossing the Andes.<ref name=Euzko/> European migration did not result in a significant change in the ethnic composition of Chile, except in the [region of Magellan](/wiki/Magallanes_y_la_Antártica_Chilena_Region).<ref name=C1907>[Censo de población de 1907, page-PDF 55/1277 and page-PDF 1249/1277 Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas de Chile](http://www.ine.cl/canales/usuarios/cedoc_online/censos/pdf/censo_1907.pdf)</ref> Spaniards were the only major European migrant group to Chile,<ref name=Euzko>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> and there was never large-scale immigration such as that to Argentina or Uruguay.[[72]](#cite_note-72) Between 1851 and 1924, Chile only received 0.5% of European immigration to Latin America, compared to 46% to Argentina, 33% to Brazil, 14% to Cuba, and 4% to Uruguay.<ref name=Euzko/> However, it is undeniable that immigrants have played a significant role in Chilean society.[[72]](#cite_note-72) [thumb|Italian immigrants to](/wiki/File:FamigliaCastagnaColoniCapitanPastene1910.jpg) [Capitan Pastene](/wiki/Italian_Chilean) in southern Chile. Other groups of [Europeans](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Europe) have followed but are found in smaller numbers, like the descendants of [Austrians](/wiki/Austrians)[[73]](#cite_note-73) and [Dutch people](/wiki/Dutch_people). Currently, these are estimated at about 50,000 people.[[74]](#cite_note-74) After the failed [liberal revolution of 1848](/wiki/Revolutions_of_1848_in_the_German_states) in the German states,[[72]](#cite_note-72)[[75]](#cite_note-75) a noticeable German immigration took place, laying the foundation for the [German-Chilean](/wiki/German-Chilean) community. Sponsored by the Chilean government to "unbarbarize" and colonize the southern region,[[72]](#cite_note-72) these Germans (including German-speaking Swiss, [Silesians](/wiki/Silesians), [Alsatians](/wiki/Alsace) and Austrians) settled mainly in [Valdivia](/wiki/Valdivia), [Chiloé](/wiki/Chiloé) and [Los Ángeles](/wiki/Los_Angeles,_Chile).[[76]](#cite_note-76) Descendants of different [European ethnic groups](/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Europe) often intermarried in Chile. This intermarriage and mixture of cultures and races have helped to shape the present society and culture of the Chilean middle and upper classes.[[77]](#cite_note-77) Due in part to its economic fortunes, Chile has recently become a new magnet for immigrants, mostly from neighboring [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina), Bolivia and mainly Peru.[[78]](#cite_note-78) According to the 2002 national census, Chile's foreign-born population has increased by 75% since 1992.[[79]](#cite_note-79) According to an estimate by the Migration and Foreign Residency Department, 317,057 foreigners were living in Chile as of December 2008.[[80]](#cite_note-80) Roughly 500,000 of Chile’s population is of full or partial [Palestinian origin](/wiki/Palestinian_people).[[81]](#cite_note-81)[[82]](#cite_note-82)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Bar box](/wiki/Template:Bar_box)

[Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), 66.6%[[83]](#cite_note-83) of Chilean population over 15 years of age claimed to be of Catholic creed – a decrease from the 70%[[84]](#cite_note-84) reported by the 2002 census – while 17 percent reported adherence to a *evangelical* church. In the census, the term *evangelical* referred to all non-Catholic Christian churches with the exception of the [Orthodox Church](/wiki/Orthodox_Church) (Greek, Persian, Serbian, Ukrainian, and Armenian), [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) ([Mormons](/wiki/Mormons)), [Seventh-day Adventists](/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventists), and [Jehovah's Witnesses](/wiki/Jehovah's_Witnesses), essentially limiting it to the [Protestants](/wiki/Protestants) (although [Adventism](/wiki/Adventism) is often considered a part of it). Approximately 90 percent of Protestants (*evangelicals*) are [Pentecostal](/wiki/Pentecostal). [Wesleyan](/wiki/Wesleyan_Church), [Lutheran](/wiki/Lutheran), [Reformed Evangelical](/wiki/Reformed_churches), [Presbyterian](/wiki/Presbyterian), [Anglican](/wiki/Anglican), [Episcopalian](/wiki/Anglicanism), [Baptist](/wiki/Baptist) and [Methodist churches](/wiki/Methodist_church) are also present.[[85]](#cite_note-85) Irreligious people, atheists, and agnostics account for around 12 percent of the population.

Currently in 2015, the majority religion in Chile is Christianity (68%), with an estimated 55% of Chileans belonging to the Catholic church, 13% Protestant or Evangelical and just 7% with any other religion. Agnostics and atheist are estimated at 25%.[[86]](#cite_note-86) In May 2010 Chile became the first South American country to join the [OECD](/wiki/Organisation_for_Economic_Co-operation_and_Development).[[114]](#cite_note-114) In 2006, Chile became the country with the highest nominal GDP per capita in Latin America.[[115]](#cite_note-115) Copper mining makes up 20% of Chilean GDP and 60% of exports.<ref name=coppersol>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref> [Escondida](/wiki/Escondida) is the largest copper mine in the world, producing over 5% of global supplies.<ref name=coppersol/> Overall, Chile produces a third of the world’s copper.<ref name=coppersol/> [Codelco](/wiki/Codelco), the state mining firm, competes with private ones.<ref name=coppersol/>

Sound economic policies, maintained consistently since the 1980s, have contributed to steady economic growth in Chile and have more than halved poverty rates.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Chile began to experience a moderate economic downturn in 1999. The economy remained sluggish until 2003, when it began to show clear signs of recovery, achieving 4.0% GDP growth.[[116]](#cite_note-116) The Chilean economy finished 2004 with growth of 6 percent. Real GDP growth reached 5.7 percent in 2005 before falling back to 4 percent in 2006. GDP expanded by 5 percent in 2007.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Faced with an [international economic downturn](/wiki/2008_financial_crisis) the government announced an economic stimulus plan to spur employment and growth, and despite the global financial crisis, aimed for an expansion of between 2 percent and 3 percent of GDP for 2009. Nonetheless, economic analysts disagreed with government estimates and predicted economic growth at a median of 1.5 percent.[[117]](#cite_note-117) Real GDP growth in 2012 was 5.5%. Growth slowed to 4.1% in the first quarter of 2013.<ref name=imfartiv>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The unemployment rate was 6.4% in April 2013.[[118]](#cite_note-118) There are reported labour shortages in agriculture, mining, and construction.<ref name=imfartiv/> The percentage of Chileans with per capita household incomes below the poverty line—defined as twice the cost of satisfying a person's minimal nutritional needs—fell from 45.1 percent in 1987 to 11.5 percent in 2009, according to government surveys.[[119]](#cite_note-119)[[120]](#cite_note-120) Critics in Chile, however, argue that true poverty figures are considerably higher than those officially published.[[121]](#cite_note-121) Using the relative yardstick favoured in many European countries, 27% of Chileans would be poor, according to Juan Carlos Feres of the [ECLAC](/wiki/ECLAC).[[122]](#cite_note-122) [thumb|left|Chilean (blue) and average Latin American (gray)](/wiki/File:Chile_GDP_per_capita_(PPP).svg) [GDP per capita](/wiki/GDP_per_capita) (1950–2008). As of November 2012, about 11.1 million people (64% of the population) benefit from government welfare programs,[[123]](#cite_note-123)[Template:Clarify](/wiki/Template:Clarify) via the "Social Protection Card", which includes the population living in poverty and those at a risk of falling into poverty.[[124]](#cite_note-124) [The privatized national pension system](/wiki/Chile_pension_system) (AFP) has encouraged domestic investment and contributed to an estimated total domestic savings rate of approximately 21 percent of GDP.[[125]](#cite_note-125) Under the compulsory private pension system, most formal sector employees pay 10 percent of their salaries into privately managed funds.[[18]](#cite_note-18) However, by 2009, it has been reported that had been lost from the pension system to the global financial crisis.[[126]](#cite_note-126) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Chuqui001_02.jpg)[Chuquicamata](/wiki/Chuquicamata) copper mine Chile has signed [free trade agreements](/wiki/Free_trade_agreements) (FTAs) with a whole network of countries, including an FTA with the United States that was signed in 2003 and implemented in January 2004.[[127]](#cite_note-127) Internal Government of Chile figures show that even when factoring out inflation and the recent high price of copper, bilateral trade between the U.S. and Chile has grown over 60 percent since then.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Chile's total trade with China reached US in 2006, representing nearly 66 percent of the value of its trade relationship with Asia.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Exports to Asia increased from US in 2005 to US in 2006, a 29.9 percent increase.[[18]](#cite_note-18) Year-on-year growth in imports was especially strong from a number of countries-Ecuador (123.9%), Thailand (72.1%), Korea (52.6%), and China (36.9%).[[18]](#cite_note-18) Chile's approach to foreign direct investment is codified in the country's Foreign Investment Law. Registration is reported to be simple and transparent, and foreign investors are guaranteed access to the official [foreign exchange market](/wiki/Foreign_exchange_market) to repatriate their profits and capital.[[18]](#cite_note-18)The Chilean Government has formed a Council on Innovation and Competition, hoping to bring in additional FDI to new parts of the economy.[[18]](#cite_note-18) [Standard & Poor's](/wiki/Standard_&_Poor's) gives Chile a [credit rating](/wiki/Credit_rating) of AA-.[[128]](#cite_note-128) The Government of Chile continues to pay down its foreign debt, with public debt only 3.9 percent of GDP at the end of 2006.[[18]](#cite_note-18) The Chilean central government is a net creditor with a [net asset position](/wiki/Net_asset_value) of 7% of GDP at end 2012.<ref name=imfartiv/> The [current account deficit](/wiki/Current_account_deficit) was 4% in the first quarter of 2013, financed mostly by foreign direct investment.<ref name=imfartiv/> 14% of central government revenue came directly from copper in 2012.<ref name=imfartiv/>

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

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumbnail|left|](/wiki/File:Mataveri_Airport_Easter_Island_Chile.jpg)[Mataveri International Airport](/wiki/Mataveri_International_Airport) in [Easter Island](/wiki/Easter_Island) [thumbnail|](/wiki/File:Metrolinea4.jpg)[Santiago Metro](/wiki/Santiago_Metro) is South America's most extensive metro system[[129]](#cite_note-129) Due to Chile's topography a functioning transport network is vital to its economy. Buses are now the main means of long distance transportation in Chile, following the decline of its railway network.[[130]](#cite_note-130) The bus system covers the entire country, from [Arica](/wiki/Arica,_Chile) to [Santiago](/wiki/Santiago,_Chile) (a 30-hour journey) and from Santiago to [Punta Arenas](/wiki/Punta_Arenas) (about 40 hours, with a change at [Osorno](/wiki/Osorno,_Chile)).

Chile has a total of 372 runways (62 paved and 310 unpaved). Important airports in Chile include [Chacalluta International Airport](/wiki/Chacalluta_International_Airport) ([Arica](/wiki/Arica)), [Diego Aracena International Airport](/wiki/Diego_Aracena_International_Airport) ([Iquique](/wiki/Iquique)), [Cerro Moreno International Airport](/wiki/Cerro_Moreno_International_Airport) ([Antofagasta](/wiki/Antofagasta)), [Carriel Sur International Airport](/wiki/Carriel_Sur_International_Airport) ([Concepción](/wiki/Concepción,_Chile)), [El Tepual International Airport](/wiki/El_Tepual_International_Airport) ([Puerto Montt](/wiki/Puerto_Montt)), [Presidente Carlos Ibáñez del Campo International Airport](/wiki/Presidente_Carlos_Ibáñez_del_Campo_International_Airport) ([Punta Arenas](/wiki/Punta_Arenas)), [Mataveri International Airport](/wiki/Mataveri_International_Airport) ([Easter Island](/wiki/Easter_Island)), the most remote airport in the world[Template:Dubious](/wiki/Template:Dubious), and the [Comodoro Arturo Merino Benítez International Airport](/wiki/Comodoro_Arturo_Merino_Benítez_International_Airport) ([Santiago](/wiki/Santiago)) with a traffic of 12,105,524 passengers in 2011. Santiago is headquarters of Latin America's largest [airline](/wiki/Airline) [holding company](/wiki/Holding_company) and Chilean [flag carrier](/wiki/Flag_carrier) [LAN Airlines](/wiki/LAN_Airlines).

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

[thumbnail|](/wiki/File:Andes_y_Torre_Entel.jpg)[Torre Entel](/wiki/Torre_Entel) in [Santiago de Chile](/wiki/Santiago_de_Chile), with the [Andes mountains](/wiki/Andes_mountains) in the background [Chile has a telecommunication](/wiki/Telecommunications_in_Chile) system which covers much of the country, including Chilean insular and Antarctic bases. Privatization of the telephone system began in 1988; Chile has one of the most advanced telecommunications infrastructure in South America with a modern system based on extensive microwave radio relay facilities and domestic satellite system with 3 earth stations.[[131]](#cite_note-131) In 2012, there were 3.276 million main lines in use and 24.13 million mobile cellular telephone subscribers.[[131]](#cite_note-131) According to a 2012 database of the [International Telecommunications Union](/wiki/International_Telecommunications_Union) (ITU), 61.42% of the Chilean population uses the internet, making Chile the country with the highest internet penetration in [South America](/wiki/South_America).<ref name=ITU-IndividualsUsingTheInternet>["Percentage of Individuals using the Internet 2000](http://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Documents/statistics/2013/Individuals_Internet_2000-2012.xls), International Telecommunications Union (Geneva), June 2013, retrieved 22 June 2013</ref> The Chilean internet country code is "[.cl](/wiki/.cl)".

#### Water supply and sanitation[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=31)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Water supply](/wiki/Water_supply) and [sanitation](/wiki/Sanitation) sector is characterized by high levels of access and good service quality. Compared to most other countries, Chile's water and sanitation sector distinguishes itself by the fact that all urban water companies are privately owned or operated. The sector also prides itself of having a modern and effective regulatory framework, including an innovative subsidy to water demand by the poor. One weakness of the sector is the relatively high water losses.

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Many of](/wiki/File:Chilean_vineyard_in_Andes_foothills.jpg) [Chile's vineyards](/wiki/Chile's_vineyards) are found on flat land within the foothills of the Andes. [Agriculture](/wiki/Agriculture) in Chile encompasses a wide range of different activities due to its particular [geography](/wiki/Geography), [climate](/wiki/Climate) and [geology](/wiki/Geology) and human factors. Historically agriculture is one of the bases of Chile's economy, now agriculture and allied sectors like [forestry](/wiki/Forestry), [logging](/wiki/Logging) and [fishing](/wiki/Fishing) accounts only for 4.9% of the [GDP](/wiki/GDP) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of) and employed 13.6% of the country's labor force. Some major agriculture products of Chile includes [grapes](/wiki/Grapes), [apples](/wiki/Apple), [pears](/wiki/Pear), [onions](/wiki/Onion), [wheat](/wiki/Wheat), [corn](/wiki/Corn), [oats](/wiki/Oats), [peaches](/wiki/Peach), [garlic](/wiki/Garlic), [asparagus](/wiki/Asparagus), [beans](/wiki/Bean), [beef](/wiki/Beef), [poultry](/wiki/Poultry), [wool](/wiki/Wool), [fish](/wiki/Fish) and [timber](/wiki/Timber).[1] Due to its geographical isolation and strict customs policies Chile is free from diseases such as [Mad Cow Disease](/wiki/Mad_Cow_Disease), [fruit fly](/wiki/Fruit_fly_(disambiguation)) and [Phylloxera](/wiki/Phylloxera). This, plus being located in the [Southern Hemisphere](/wiki/Southern_Hemisphere) which has quite different harvesting times from the [Northern Hemisphere](/wiki/Northern_Hemisphere), and its wide range of agriculture conditions are considered Chile's main comparative advantages. However, Chile's mountainous landscape limits the extent and intensity of agriculture so that arable land corresponds only to 2.62% of the total territory.

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Puerto_Varas_Osorno.jpg)[Osorno volcano](/wiki/Osorno_(volcano)), the [Llanquihue Lake](/wiki/Llanquihue_Lake) near of Puerto Varas [thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Moai_Rano_raraku.jpg)[Moai](/wiki/Moai) on [Easter Island](/wiki/Easter_Island), Chile Tourism in Chile has experienced sustained growth over the last few decades. In 2005, tourism grew by 13.6 percent, generating more than 4.5 billion dollars of which 1.5 billion was attributed to foreign tourists. According to the National Service of Tourism (Sernatur), 2 million people a year visit the country. Most of these visitors come from other countries in the American continent, mainly [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina); followed by a growing number from the United States, Europe, and [Brazil](/wiki/Brazil) with a growing number of Asians from [South Korea](/wiki/South_Korea) and [PR China](/wiki/PR_China).[[132]](#cite_note-132) The main attractions for tourists are places of natural beauty situated in the extreme zones of the country: [San Pedro de Atacama](/wiki/San_Pedro_de_Atacama), in the north, is very popular with foreign tourists who arrive to admire the Incaic architecture, the altiplano lakes, and the [Valley of the Moon](/wiki/Valle_de_la_Luna_(Chile)).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) In [Putre](/wiki/Putre), also in the north, there is the [Chungará Lake](/wiki/Chungará_Lake), as well as the [Parinacota](/wiki/Parinacota_Volcano) and the [Pomerape](/wiki/Pomerape) volcanoes, with altitudes of 6,348 m and 6,282 m, respectively. Throughout the central Andes there are many ski resorts of international repute,[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) including [Portillo](/wiki/Portillo,_Chile), [Valle Nevado](/wiki/Valle_Nevado) and [Termas de Chillán](/wiki/Termas_de_Chillán).

The main tourist sites in the south are national parks (the most popular is [Conguillío National Park](/wiki/Conguillío_National_Park) in the Araucanía)[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) and the coastal area around Tirúa and Cañete with the [Isla Mocha](/wiki/Isla_Mocha) and the [Nahuelbuta National Park](/wiki/Nahuelbuta_National_Park), [Chiloé Archipelago](/wiki/Chiloé_Archipelago) and [Patagonia](/wiki/Patagonia), which includes [Laguna San Rafael National Park](/wiki/Laguna_San_Rafael_National_Park), with its many glaciers, and the [Torres del Paine National Park](/wiki/Torres_del_Paine_National_Park). The central port city of [Valparaíso](/wiki/Valparaíso), which is World Heritage with its unique architecture, is also popular.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Finally, Easter Island in the Pacific Ocean is one of the main Chilean tourist destinations.

For locals, tourism is concentrated mostly in the summer (December to March), and mainly in the coastal beach towns.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) [Arica](/wiki/Arica), [Iquique](/wiki/Iquique), [Antofagasta](/wiki/Antofagasta), [La Serena](/wiki/La_Serena,_Chile) and [Coquimbo](/wiki/Coquimbo) are the main summer centres in the north, and Pucón on the shores of [Lake Villarrica](/wiki/Lake_Villarrica) is the main centre in the south. Because of its proximity to Santiago, the coast of the Valparaíso Region, with its many beach resorts, receives the largest number of tourists. [Viña del Mar](/wiki/Viña_del_Mar), Valparaíso's northern affluent neighbor, is popular because of its beaches, [casino](/wiki/Casino), and its annual [song festival](/wiki/Viña_del_Mar_International_Song_Festival), the most important musical event in Latin America.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) [Pichilemu](/wiki/Pichilemu) in the [O'Higgins Region](/wiki/O'Higgins_Region) is widely known as South America's "best [surfing](/wiki/Surfing) spot" according to [Fodor's](/wiki/Fodor's).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In November 2005 the government launched a campaign under the brand "Chile: All Ways Surprising" intended to promote the country internationally for both business and tourism.[[133]](#cite_note-133) [Museums in Chile](/wiki/List_of_museums_in_Chile) such as the [Chilean National Museum of Fine Arts](/wiki/Chilean_National_Museum_of_Fine_Arts) built in 1880, feature works by [Chilean artists](/wiki/List_of_Chilean_artists).

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

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

In Chile, education begins with [preschool](/wiki/Preschool) until the age of 5. [Primary school](/wiki/Primary_school) is provided for children between ages 6 and 13. Students then attend [secondary school](/wiki/Secondary_school) until graduation at age 17.

Secondary education is divided into two parts: During the first two years, students receive a general education. Then, they choose a branch: scientific humanistic education, artistic education, or technical and professional education. Secondary school ends two years later on the acquirement of a certificate (licencia de enseñanza media).[[134]](#cite_note-134) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Marcha_cerca_de_Biblioteca_Nacional_de_Chile,_sept._2013.jpg)[2011–13 Chilean student protests](/wiki/2011–13_Chilean_student_protests) Chilean education is segregated by wealth in a three-tiered system — the quality of the schools reflect socioeconomic backgrounds:

* city schools (colegios municipales) that are mostly free and have the worse education results, mostly attended by poor students;
* subsidized schools that receive some money from the government which can be supplemented by fees paid by the student's family, which are attended by mid-income students and typically get mid-level results; and
* entirely private schools that consistently get the best results. Many private schools charge attendance fees of 0,5 to 1 median household incomes.[[135]](#cite_note-135)

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

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

Upon successful graduation of secondary school, students may continue into [higher education](/wiki/Higher_education). The higher education schools in Chile consist of [Chilean Traditional Universities](/wiki/Chilean_Traditional_Universities) and are divided into [public universities](/wiki/Public_university) or [private universities](/wiki/Private_university). There are [medical schools](/wiki/List_of_medical_schools_in_South_America#Chile) and both the [Universidad de Chile](/wiki/Universidad_de_Chile) and [Universidad Diego Portales](/wiki/Universidad_Diego_Portales) offer [law schools](/wiki/Legal_education) in a partnership with [Yale University](/wiki/Yale_University).[[136]](#cite_note-136)

## Health[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=36)]

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

The [Ministry of Health](/wiki/Ministry_of_Health_(Chile)) (*Minsal*) is the cabinet-level administrative office in charge of planning, directing, coordinating, executing, controlling and informing the public health policies formulated by the President of Chile. The [National Health Fund](/wiki/Fondo_Nacional_de_Salud) (*Fonasa*), created in 1979, is the financial entity entrusted to collect, manage and distribute state funds for health in Chile. It is funded by the public. All employees pay 7 percent of their monthly income to the fund.

Fonasa is part of the NHSS and has executive power through the [Ministry of Health (Chile)](/wiki/Ministry_of_Health_(Chile)). Its headquarters are in [Santiago](/wiki/Santiago,_Chile) and decentralized public service is conducted by various Regional Offices. More than 12 million beneficiaries benefit from Fonasa. Beneficiaries can also opt for more costly private insurance through [Isapre](/wiki/Isapre). [Hospitals in Chile](/wiki/List_of_hospitals_in_Chile) are mainly located in the [Santiago Metropolitan Region](/wiki/Santiago_Metropolitan_Region).

## Culture[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=37)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Multiple image](/wiki/Template:Multiple_image) From the period between early agricultural settlements and up to the late pre-Hispanic period, northern Chile was a region of Andean culture that was influenced by altiplano traditions spreading to the coastal valleys of the north, while southern regions were areas of Mapuche cultural activities. Throughout the colonial period following the conquest, and during the early Republican period, the country's culture was dominated by the Spanish. Other European influences, primarily English, French, and German began in the 19th century and have continued to this day. German migrants influenced the Bavarian style rural architecture and cuisine in the south of Chile in cities such as [Valdivia](/wiki/Valdivia), [Frutillar](/wiki/Frutillar), [Puerto Varas](/wiki/Puerto_Varas), [Osorno](/wiki/Osorno,_Chile), [Temuco](/wiki/Temuco), [Puerto Octay](/wiki/Puerto_Octay), [Llanquihue](/wiki/Llanquihue_Province), [Faja Maisan](/wiki/Faja_Maisan), [Pitrufquén](/wiki/Pitrufquén), [Victoria](/wiki/Victoria,_Chile), [Pucón](/wiki/Pucón) and [Puerto Montt](/wiki/Puerto_Montt).[[137]](#cite_note-137)[[138]](#cite_note-138)[[139]](#cite_note-139)[[140]](#cite_note-140)[[141]](#cite_note-141)

### Music and dance[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=38)]

[thumb|left|*La Zamacueca*, by Manuel Antonio Caro.](/wiki/File:Zamacueca-Chile.jpg) Music in Chile ranges from folkloric, popular and classical music. Its large geography generates different musical styles in the north, center and south of the country, including also Easter Island and Mapuche music.[[142]](#cite_note-142) The national dance is the [cueca](/wiki/Cueca). Another form of traditional Chilean song, though not a dance, is the tonada. Arising from music imported by the Spanish colonists, it is distinguished from the cueca by an intermediate melodic section and a more prominent melody.

Between 1950 and 1970 appears a rebirth in folk music leading by groups such as [Los de Ramón](/wiki/Los_de_Ramón), Los Cuatro Huasos and Los Huasos Quincheros, among others[[143]](#cite_note-143) with composers such as [Raúl de Ramón](/wiki/Raúl_de_Ramón), [Violeta Parra](/wiki/Violeta_Parra) and others. In the mid-1960s native musical forms were revitalized by the [Parra family](/wiki/Parra_family) with the [Nueva canción Chilena](/wiki/Nueva_canción), which was associated with political activists and reformers such as [Víctor Jara](/wiki/Víctor_Jara), [Inti-Illimani](/wiki/Inti-Illimani), and [Quilapayún](/wiki/Quilapayún). Other important [folk](/wiki/Folk_music) singer and researcher on [folklore](/wiki/Folklore) and Chilean [ethnography](/wiki/Ethnography), is [Margot Loyola](/wiki/Margot_Loyola). Also many Chilean rock bands like [Los Jaivas](/wiki/Los_Jaivas), [Los Prisioneros](/wiki/Los_Prisioneros), [La Ley](/wiki/La_Ley_(band)), and [Los Tres](/wiki/Los_Tres) have reached international success. In February, annual music festivals are held in [Viña del Mar](/wiki/Viña_del_Mar).[[144]](#cite_note-144)

### Literature[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=39)]

Chileans call their country *país de poetas* — country of poets.[[145]](#cite_note-145)[[146]](#cite_note-146) [Gabriela Mistral](/wiki/Gabriela_Mistral) was the first Latin American to receive a [Nobel Prize in Literature](/wiki/Nobel_Prize_in_Literature) (1945). Chile's most famous poet is [Pablo Neruda](/wiki/Pablo_Neruda), who received the Nobel Prize for Literature (1971) and is world-renowned for his extensive library of works on romance, nature, and politics. His three highly personalized homes in [Isla Negra](/wiki/Isla_Negra), Santiago and Valparaíso are popular tourist destinations.

Among the list of other Chilean poets are [Carlos Pezoa Véliz](/wiki/Carlos_Pezoa_Véliz), [Vicente Huidobro](/wiki/Vicente_Huidobro), [Gonzalo Rojas](/wiki/Gonzalo_Rojas), [Pablo de Rokha](/wiki/Pablo_de_Rokha), [Nicanor Parra](/wiki/Nicanor_Parra) and [Raúl Zurita](/wiki/Raúl_Zurita). [Isabel Allende](/wiki/Isabel_Allende) is the best-selling Chilean novelist, with 51 millions of her novels sold worldwide.[[147]](#cite_note-147) Novelist [José Donoso's](/wiki/José_Donoso) novel [*The Obscene Bird of Night*](/wiki/The_Obscene_Bird_of_Night) is considered by critic [Harold Bloom](/wiki/Harold_Bloom) to be one of the canonical works of 20th-century Western literature. Another internationally recognized Chilean novelist and poet is [Roberto Bolaño](/wiki/Roberto_Bolaño) whose translations into English have had an excellent reception from the critics.[[148]](#cite_note-148)[[149]](#cite_note-149)[[150]](#cite_note-150)

### Cuisine[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=40)]

[thumb|Chilean](/wiki/File:Chilean_Cazuela.JPG) [Cazuela](/wiki/Cazuela) and assorted salads. [Chilean cuisine](/wiki/Chilean_cuisine) is a reflection of the country's topographical variety, featuring an assortment of seafood, beef, fruits, and vegetables. Traditional recipes include [asado](/wiki/Asado), [cazuela](/wiki/Cazuela), [empanadas](/wiki/Empanada), [humitas](/wiki/Humita), [pastel de choclo](/wiki/Pastel_de_choclo), pastel de papas, [curanto](/wiki/Curanto) and [sopaipillas](/wiki/Sopaipilla#Chile).[[151]](#cite_note-151) [Crudos](/wiki/Crudos) is an example of the mixture of culinary contributions from the various ethnic influences in Chile. The raw minced [llama](/wiki/Llama), heavy use of shellfish and rice bread were taken from native [Quechua](/wiki/Quechua_people) Andean cuisine, (although now beef brought to Chile by Europeans is also used in place of the llama meat), lemon and onions were brought by the Spanish colonists, and the use of [mayonnaise](/wiki/Mayonnaise) and [yogurt](/wiki/Yogurt) was introduced by German immigrants, as was [beer](/wiki/Beer).

### Folklore[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=41)]

The folklore of Chile, cultural and demographic characteristics of the country, is the result of mixture of Spanish and Amerindian elements that occurred during the colonial period.. Due to cultural and historical reasons, they are classified and distinguished four major areas in the country: Northern Areas, central, southern and south. Most of the traditions of the [culture of Chile](/wiki/Culture_of_Chile) have a festive purpose, but some, such as dances and ceremonies have religious components.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

#### Mythology[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=42)]

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

Chilean mythology, is the mythology and beliefs of the Folklore of Chile.

This includes [Chilote mythology](/wiki/Chilote_mythology), [Rapa Nui mythology](/wiki/Rapa_Nui_mythology) and [Mapuche mythology](/wiki/Mapuche_mythology).

### Cinema[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=43)]

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The film originated in [Valparaíso](/wiki/Valparaíso) on 26 May 1902 with the premiere of the documentary *Exercise General Fire Brigade*, the first film completely filmed and processed in the country. In the following decades, marked milestones *The deck of Death* (or *The Enigma of Lord Street*) (1916), considered the first film Chilean story, 'The transmission of presidential *(1920), the first animated film in the country, and* North and South *(1934), the first sound film of Chile.*

### Sports[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=44)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [left|thumb|](/wiki/File:Estadio_Nacional_de_Chile_2.jpg)[Estadio Nacional de Chile](/wiki/Estadio_Nacional_de_Chile)

Chile's most popular sport is association football. Chile has appeared in nine FIFA World Cups which includes hosting the [1962 FIFA World Cup](/wiki/1962_FIFA_World_Cup) where the [national football team](/wiki/Chile_national_football_team) finished third. Other results achieved by the national football team include five finals and [one title](/wiki/2015_Copa_América) at the [Copa América](/wiki/Copa_América), one silver and two bronze medals at the [Pan American Games](/wiki/Pan_American_Games), a bronze medal at the [2000 Summer Olympics](/wiki/2000_Summer_Olympics) and two third places finishes in the FIFA under-17 and under-20 youth tournaments. The top league in the [Chilean football league system](/wiki/Chilean_football_league_system) is the [Chilean Primera División](/wiki/Chilean_Primera_División), which is named by the [IFFHS](/wiki/International_Federation_of_Football_History_&_Statistics) as the ninth strongest national football league in the world.<ref name=iffhs>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The main football clubs are [Colo-Colo](/wiki/Colo-Colo), [Universidad de Chile](/wiki/Club_Universidad_de_Chile) and [Universidad Católica](/wiki/Club_Deportivo_Universidad_Católica). Colo-Colo is the country's most successful football club, having both the most national and international championships, including the coveted [Copa Libertadores](/wiki/Copa_Libertadores) South American club tournament. Universidad de Chile was the last international champion ([Copa Sudamericana](/wiki/Copa_Sudamericana) 2011).

[thumb|The Chilean national polo team with President](/wiki/File:Bachelet_y_campeones_de_polo.jpg) [Michelle Bachelet](/wiki/Michelle_Bachelet) and the trophy of the [2008 World Polo Championship](/wiki/2008_World_Polo_Championship).

Tennis is Chile's most successful sport. Its [national team](/wiki/Chile_Davis_Cup_team) won the [World Team Cup](/wiki/World_Team_Cup) clay tournament twice (2003 & 2004), and played the [Davis Cup](/wiki/Davis_Cup) final against [Italy](/wiki/Italy) in 1976. At the [2004 Summer Olympics](/wiki/2004_Summer_Olympics) the country captured gold and bronze in men's singles and gold in men's doubles. [Marcelo Ríos](/wiki/Marcelo_Ríos) became the first Latin American man to reach the number one spot in the [ATP singles rankings](/wiki/List_of_ATP_number_1_ranked_players) in 1998. [Anita Lizana](/wiki/Anita_Lizana) won the [US Open](/wiki/US_Open_(tennis)) in 1937, becoming the first woman from Latin America to win a [Grand Slam](/wiki/Grand_Slam_(tennis)) tournament. [Luis Ayala](/wiki/Luis_Ayala_(tennis)) was twice a runner-up at the French Open and both Ríos and [Fernando González](/wiki/Fernando_González) reached the Australian Open men's singles finals. González also won a silver medal in singles at the [2008 Summer Olympics](/wiki/2008_Summer_Olympics) in Beijing.

At the Summer Olympic Games Chile boasts a total of two gold medals (tennis), seven silver medals (athletics, [equestrian](/wiki/Equestrian_at_the_Summer_Olympics), [boxing](/wiki/Boxing), shooting and tennis) and four bronze medals (tennis, boxing and football). In 2012, Chile won its first Paralympic Games medal (gold in Athletics).

[Rodeo](/wiki/Chilean_rodeo) is the country's [national sport](/wiki/National_sport) and is practiced in the more rural areas of the nation. A sport similar to [hockey](/wiki/Hockey) called [*chueca*](/wiki/Chueca) was played by the Mapuche people during the Spanish conquest. [Skiing](/wiki/Skiing) and [snowboarding](/wiki/Snowboarding) are practiced at ski centers located in the Central Andes, and in southern ski centers near to cities as Osorno, Puerto Varas, Temuco and Punta Arenas. [surfing](/wiki/Surfing_in_Chile) is popular at some coastal towns. [Polo](/wiki/Polo) is professionally practiced within Chile, with the country achieving top prize in the 2008 and 2015 [World Polo Championship](/wiki/World_Polo_Championship).

Basketball is a popular sport in which Chile has earned a bronze medal in the first men's [FIBA World Championship](/wiki/FIBA_World_Championship) held in 1950 and winning a second bronze medal when Chile hosted the [1959 FIBA World Championship](/wiki/1959_FIBA_World_Championship). Chile hosted the first [FIBA World Championship for Women](/wiki/FIBA_World_Championship_for_Women) in 1953 finishing the tournament with the silver medal. [San Pedro de Atacama](/wiki/San_Pedro_de_Atacama) is host to the annual "Atacama Crossing", a six-stage, [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) footrace which annually attracts about 150 competitors from 35 countries. The [Dakar Rally](/wiki/Dakar_Rally) [off-road automobilie race](/wiki/Off-road_racing) has been held in both Chile and [Argentina](/wiki/Argentina) since 2009.

### Cultural heritage[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=45)]

[thumbnail|left|The historical district of the port city of Valparaíso](/wiki/File:Cerro_Concepcion.jpg) The [cultural heritage](/wiki/Cultural_heritage) of Chile consists, first, of their intangible heritage, composed of various cultural events, such as visual arts, crafts, dances, holidays, cuisine, games, music and traditions, and, secondly, by its tangible, consists of those buildings, objects and sites of archaeological, architectural, traditional, artistic, ethnographic, folkloric, historical, religious or technological scattered through Chilean territory, among them, those goods are declared [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site) by [UNESCO](/wiki/UNESCO), in accordance with the provisions of the Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage of 1972, ratified by Chile in 1980. These cultural sites are the [Rapa Nui National Park](/wiki/Rapa_Nui_National_Park) (1995), the [Churches of Chiloé](/wiki/Churches_of_Chiloé) (2000), [the historical district of the port city of Valparaíso](/wiki/Valparaíso) (2003), [Humberstone and Santa Laura Saltpeter Works](/wiki/Humberstone_and_Santa_Laura_Saltpeter_Works) (2005) and the mining city [Sewell](/wiki/Sewell,_Chile) (2006).

In 1999 the *Cultural Heritage Day* was established as a way to honour and commemorate Chiles cultural heritage. It is an official national holiday celebrated in May every year.

## See also[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=46)]

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

* [Index of Chile-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Chile-related_articles)
* [International rankings of Chile](/wiki/International_rankings_of_Chile)
* [List of Chileans](/wiki/List_of_Chileans)
* [Outline of Chile](/wiki/Outline_of_Chile)
* [2015 Chile earthquake](/wiki/2015_Chile_earthquake)

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

## References[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=47)]

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

## Further reading[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=48)]

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* Paul W. Drake, and others., *Chile: A Country Study,* Library of Congress, 1994
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* John L. Rector, *The History of Chile,* Greenwood Press, 2003

## External links[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=49)]

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

* [Official Chile website](http://www.thisischile.cl/)
* [Government of Chile](http://www.gobiernodechile.cl/)
* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Chile](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/chile.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Chile profile](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/country_profiles/1222764.stm) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Road maps of Chile, interactive](http://www.ubicachile.cl/)
* [World Bank Summary Trade Statistics Chile](http://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/Country/CHL/Year/2012/Summary)
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Template:Osmrelation-inline](/wiki/Template:Osmrelation-inline)
* [Key Development Forecasts for Chile](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=CL) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures)
* [Chile Cultural Society](http://www.chileculture.org/)

[Template:Chile topics](/wiki/Template:Chile_topics) [Template:Navboxes](/wiki/Template:Navboxes)

[Template:Authority control](/wiki/Template:Authority_control)

[Category:Chile](/wiki/Category:Chile) [Category:G15 nations](/wiki/Category:G15_nations) [Category:Former Spanish colonies](/wiki/Category:Former_Spanish_colonies) [Category:Liberal democracies](/wiki/Category:Liberal_democracies) [Category:Member states of the Union of South American Nations](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_Union_of_South_American_Nations) [Category:Republics](/wiki/Category:Republics) [Category:States and territories established in 1818](/wiki/Category:States_and_territories_established_in_1818) [Category:Spanish-speaking countries and territories](/wiki/Category:Spanish-speaking_countries_and_territories) [Category:Countries in South America](/wiki/Category:Countries_in_South_America) [Category:Member states of the United Nations](/wiki/Category:Member_states_of_the_United_Nations) [Category:1818 establishments in South America](/wiki/Category:1818_establishments_in_South_America)