[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Pp-protected](/wiki/Template:Pp-protected) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use mdy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_mdy_dates) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country)

**Mongolia** [Template:IPAc-en](/wiki/Template:IPAc-en) ([Mongolian](/wiki/Mongolian_language): [Template:Lang](/wiki/Template:Lang) [*Monggol Ulus*] in [Mongolian script](/wiki/Mongolian_script); [Template:Linktext](/wiki/Template:Linktext) [Template:Linktext](/wiki/Template:Linktext) [*Mongol Uls*] in [Mongolian Cyrillic](/wiki/Mongolian_Cyrillic_alphabet)) is a landlocked [sovereign state](/wiki/Sovereign_state) in [East Asia](/wiki/East_Asia). Its area is roughly equivalent with the historical territory of [Outer Mongolia](/wiki/Outer_Mongolia), and that term is sometimes used to refer to the current state. It is bordered by [China](/wiki/China) to the south and [Russia](/wiki/Russia) to the north. While it does not share a border with [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan), Mongolia is separated from Kazakhstan by only [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). [Ulaanbaatar](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar), the capital and largest city, is home to about 45% of the country's population.

The area of what is now Mongolia has been ruled by various [nomadic empires](/wiki/Nomadic_empire), including the [Xiongnu](/wiki/Xiongnu), the [Xianbei](/wiki/Xianbei), the [Rouran](/wiki/Rouran), the [Turkic Khaganate](/wiki/Turkic_Khaganate), and others. In 1206, [Genghis Khan](/wiki/Genghis_Khan) founded the [Mongol Empire](/wiki/Mongol_Empire), and his grandson [Kublai Khan](/wiki/Kublai_Khan) conquered China to establish the [Yuan dynasty](/wiki/Yuan_dynasty). After the collapse of the Yuan, the [Mongols](/wiki/Mongols) retreated to Mongolia and resumed their earlier pattern of factional conflict, except during the era of [Dayan Khan](/wiki/Dayan_Khan) and [Tumen Zasagt Khan](/wiki/Tumen_Zasagt_Khan). In the 16th century, [Tibetan Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism_in_Mongolia) began to spread in Mongolia, being further led by the [Manchu](/wiki/Manchu_people)-founded [Qing dynasty](/wiki/Qing_dynasty), which absorbed the country in the 17th century. By the early 1900s, almost one-third of the adult male population were Buddhist monks.[[1]](#cite_note-1)[[2]](#cite_note-2) During the collapse of the Qing dynasty in 1911, Mongols established the Temporary Government of [Khalkha](/wiki/Khalkha_Mongols) on November 30, 1911. This was before the abdication of [the last Qing emperor](/wiki/Puyi) and the establishment of the [Republic of China](/wiki/Republic_of_China_(1912–49)). On December 29, 1911, Mongolia declared independence from the Qing dynasty; the [National Revolution of 1911](/wiki/Mongolian_Revolution_of_1911) ended over 200 years of [Qing rule](/wiki/Mongolia_under_Qing_rule), though it was not until the [Revolution of 1921](/wiki/Mongolian_Revolution_of_1921) that *de facto* independence from the Republic of China was firmly established.

Shortly thereafter, the country came under the control of the [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union), which had aided its independence from China. In 1924, the [Mongolian People's Republic](/wiki/Mongolian_People's_Republic) was declared as a Soviet [satellite state](/wiki/Satellite_state).<ref name=Sik>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> After the anti-Communist [revolutions of 1989](/wiki/Revolutions_of_1989), Mongolia conducted its own peaceful [democratic revolution](/wiki/1990_Democratic_Revolution_in_Mongolia) in early 1990. This led to a [multi-party system](/wiki/Multi-party_system), a new constitution of 1992, and transition to a [market economy](/wiki/Market_economy).

At [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), Mongolia is the [19th largest](/wiki/List_of_countries_and_dependencies_by_area) and the [most sparsely populated](/wiki/List_of_sovereign_states_and_dependent_territories_by_population_density) fully sovereign country in the world, with a population of around 3 million people. It is also the world's second-largest [landlocked country](/wiki/Landlocked_country). The country contains very little [arable land](/wiki/Arable_land), as much of its area is covered by grassy [steppe](/wiki/Steppe), with mountains to the north and west and the [Gobi Desert](/wiki/Gobi_Desert) to the south.

Approximately 30% of the population is [nomadic](/wiki/Nomad) or semi-nomadic; [horse culture](/wiki/Horse_culture_in_Mongolia) is still integral. The majority of its population are [Buddhists](/wiki/Buddhist). The non-religious population is the second largest group. [Islam](/wiki/Islam) is the dominant religion among ethnic [Kazakhs](/wiki/Kazakhs). The majority of the state's citizens are of Mongol ethnicity, although [Kazakhs](/wiki/Kazakhs), [Tuvans](/wiki/Tuvans), and other minorities also live in the country, especially in the west. Mongolia joined the [World Trade Organization](/wiki/World_Trade_Organization) in 1997 and seeks to expand its participation in regional economic and trade groups.[[3]](#cite_note-3)

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

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [*Homo erectus*](/wiki/Homo_erectus) inhabited Mongolia from 850,000 years ago.[[4]](#cite_note-4) Modern humans reached Mongolia approximately 40,000 years ago during the [Upper Paleolithic](/wiki/Upper_Paleolithic). The *Khoit Tsenkher Cave*[[5]](#cite_note-5) in [Khovd Province](/wiki/Khovd_Province) shows lively pink, brown, and red ochre paintings (dated to 20,000 years ago) of [mammoths](/wiki/Mammoths), [lynx](/wiki/Lynx), [bactrian camels](/wiki/Bactrian_camel), and [ostriches](/wiki/Ostrich), earning it the nickname "the [Lascaux](/wiki/Lascaux) of Mongolia". The [venus figurines of Mal'ta](/wiki/Venus_figurines_of_Mal'ta) (21,000 years ago) testify to the level of Upper Paleolithic art in northern Mongolia; Mal'ta is now part of Russia. [thumb|Pasture land in](/wiki/File:Arkhangai_Aimag6.JPG) [Arkhangai Province](/wiki/Arkhangai_Province). Mongolia was the heartland of many nomadic empires. [thumb|Mongolian *ordos* (palaces) were likened to "cities on the move" (](/wiki/File:Ger_Tereg_Blue.jpg)[Plano Carpini](/wiki/Plano_Carpini)).

Neolithic agricultural settlements (c. 5500–3500 BCE), such as those at Norovlin, Tamsagbulag, Bayanzag, and Rashaan Khad, predated the introduction of horse-riding nomadism, a pivotal event in the history of Mongolia and becoming the dominant culture. Horse-riding nomadism has been documented by archeological evidence in Mongolia during the Copper and Bronze Age [Afanasevo culture](/wiki/Afanasevo_culture) (3500–2500 BCE); this culture was active to the [Khangai Mountains](/wiki/Khangai_Mountains) in Central Mongolia. The wheeled vehicles found in the burials of the Afanasevans have been dated to before 2200 BCE.[[6]](#cite_note-6) Pastoral nomadism and metalworking became more developed with the later [Okunev culture](/wiki/Okunev_culture) (2nd millennium BCE), [Andronovo culture](/wiki/Andronovo_culture) (2300–1000 BCE) and [Karasuk culture](/wiki/Karasuk_culture) (1500–300 BCE), culminating with the Iron Age [Xiongnu](/wiki/Xiongnu) Empire in 209 BCE. Monuments of the pre-Xiongnu Bronze Age include [deer stones](/wiki/Deer_stone), keregsur [kurgans](/wiki/Kurgans), [square slab tombs](/wiki/Slab_Grave_Culture), and rock paintings.

Although cultivation of crops has continued since the Neolithic, agriculture has always remained small in scale compared to pastoral nomadism. Agriculture may have first been introduced from the west or arose independently in the region. The population during the [Copper Age](/wiki/Copper_Age) has been described as mongoloid in the east of what is now Mongolia, and as europoid in the west.[[5]](#cite_note-5) Tocharians ([Yuezhi](/wiki/Yuezhi)) and [Scythians](/wiki/Scythians) inhabited western Mongolia during the Bronze Age. The mummy of a Scythian warrior, which is believed to be about 2,500 years old, was a 30- to 40-year-old man with blond hair; it was found in [the Altai](/wiki/Altai_Mountains), Mongolia.[[7]](#cite_note-7) As horse nomadism was introduced into Mongolia, the political center of the [Eurasian Steppe](/wiki/Eurasian_Steppe) also shifted to Mongolia, where it remained until the 18th century CE. The intrusions of northern pastoralists (e.g., Guifang, Shanrong, [Donghu](/wiki/Donghu_people)) into China during the [Shang dynasty](/wiki/Shang_dynasty) (1600–1046 BCE) and [Zhou dynasty](/wiki/Zhou_dynasty) (1046–256 BCE) presaged the age of [nomadic empires](/wiki/Nomadic_empire).

The concept of Mongolia as an independent power north of China is expressed in a letter sent by [Emperor Wen of Han](/wiki/Emperor_Wen_of_Han) to [Laoshang Chanyu](/wiki/Laoshang_Chanyu) in 162 BCE (recorded in the [*Hanshu*](/wiki/Hanshu)): [Template:Cquote](/wiki/Template:Cquote)

[thumb|right|7th-century finds found](/wiki/File:ZaamarTomb.jpg) [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from Ulaanbaatar. Kept in Ulaanbaatar. A constant theme in Mongolian history is its relations with China. Since prehistoric times, Mongolia has been inhabited by nomads who, from time to time, formed great confederations that rose to power and prominence. Common institutions were the office of the [Khan](/wiki/Khan_(title)), the [Kurultai](/wiki/Kurultai) (Supreme Council), left and right wings, imperial army ([Keshig](/wiki/Keshig)) and the decimal military system. The first of these empires, the [Xiongnu](/wiki/Xiongnu) of undetermined ethnicity, were brought together by [Modu Shanyu](/wiki/Modu_Shanyu) to form a confederation in 209 BCE. Soon they emerged as the greatest threat to the [Qin Dynasty](/wiki/Qin_Dynasty), forcing the latter to construct the [Great Wall of China](/wiki/Great_Wall_of_China). It was guarded by up to almost 300,000 soldiers during marshal [Meng Tian's](/wiki/Meng_Tian) tenure, as a means of defense against the destructive Xiongnu raids. The vast Xiongnu empire (209 BCE–93 BE) was followed by the Mongolic [Xianbei empire](/wiki/Xianbei_state) (93–234 CE), which also ruled more than the entirety of present-day Mongolia. The Mongolic [Rouran](/wiki/Rouran) Khaganate (330–555), of [Xianbei](/wiki/Xianbei) provenance was the first to use "Khagan" as an imperial title. It ruled a massive empire before being defeated by the [Göktürks](/wiki/Göktürks) (555–745) whose empire was even bigger.

The Göktürks laid siege to [Panticapaeum](/wiki/Panticapaeum), present-day [Kerch](/wiki/Kerch), in 576. They were succeeded by the [Uyghur Khaganate](/wiki/Uyghur_Khaganate) (745–840) who were defeated by the Kyrgyz. The Mongolic [Khitans](/wiki/Khitan_people), descendants of the Xianbei, ruled Mongolia during the [Liao Dynasty](/wiki/Liao_Dynasty) (907–1125), after which the [Khamag Mongol](/wiki/Khamag_Mongol) (1125–1206) rose to prominence.

Lines 3–5 of the memorial inscription of [Bilge Khagan](/wiki/Bilge_Khagan) (684–737) in central Mongolia summarizes the time of the [Khagans](/wiki/Khagan):

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

### Middle Ages to early 20th century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|right|alt=Map of Asia|This map shows the boundary of the 13th-century](/wiki/File:Mongols-map.png) [Mongol Empire](/wiki/Mongol_Empire) compared to today's [Mongols](/wiki/Mongols). The red area shows where the majority of [Mongolian](/wiki/Mongolian_language) speakers reside today. [thumb|The Northern Yuan at its greatest extent.](/wiki/File:Post-Imperial_Mongolia.png) In the chaos of the late 12th century, a chieftain named [Temüjin](/wiki/Genghis_Khan) finally succeeded in uniting the Mongol tribes between [Manchuria](/wiki/Manchuria) and the [Altai Mountains](/wiki/Altai_Mountains). In 1206, he took the title [Genghis Khan](/wiki/Genghis_Khan#Name_and_title), and waged a series of military campaigns – renowned for their brutality and ferocity – sweeping through much of Asia, and forming the [Mongol Empire](/wiki/Mongol_Empire), the largest contiguous land empire in world history. Under his successors it stretched from present-day [Ukraine](/wiki/Ukraine) in the west to [Korea](/wiki/Korea) in the east, and from [Siberia](/wiki/Siberia) in the north to the [Gulf of Oman](/wiki/Gulf_of_Oman) and [Vietnam](/wiki/Vietnam) in the south, covering some [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert),[[8]](#cite_note-8) (22% of Earth's total land area) and having a population of over 100 million people (about a quarter of Earth's total population at the time). The emergence of [Pax Mongolica](/wiki/Pax_Mongolica) also significantly eased trade and commerce across Asia during its height.[[9]](#cite_note-9)[[10]](#cite_note-10) After Genghis Khan's death, the empire was subdivided into four kingdoms or [Khanates](/wiki/Khanate). These eventually became quasi-independent after the [Toluid Civil War](/wiki/Toluid_Civil_War) (1260–1264), which broke out in a battle for power following [Möngke Khan's](/wiki/Möngke_Khan) death in 1259. One of the khanates, the "Great Khaanate", consisting of the Mongol homeland and [China](/wiki/History_of_China), became known as the [Yuan dynasty](/wiki/Yuan_dynasty) under [Kublai Khan](/wiki/Kublai_Khan), the grandson of Genghis Khan. He set up his capital in present-day [Beijing](/wiki/Beijing). After more than a century of power, the Yuan was replaced by the [Ming dynasty](/wiki/Ming_dynasty) in 1368, and the Mongol court fled to the north. As the Ming armies pursued the Mongols into their homeland, they successfully sacked and destroyed the Mongol capital [Karakorum](/wiki/Karakorum) among a few other cities. Some of these attacks were repelled by the Mongols under [Ayushridar](/wiki/Biligtü_Khan_Ayushiridara) and his general [Köke Temür](/wiki/Köke_Temür).[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

[thumb|upright|](/wiki/File:Altan_Khan.jpg)[Altan Khan](/wiki/Altan_Khan) (1507–1582) founded the city of [Hohhot](/wiki/Hohhot), helped introduce Buddhism and originated the title of [Dalai Lama](/wiki/Dalai_Lama) [thumb|left|Castle built in northern Mongolia by](/wiki/File:Tsogtiin_tsagaan_baishin.JPG) [Tsogt Taij](/wiki/Tsogt_Taij) in 1601. [thumb|left|Tuvkhun Monastery built in 1653 by](/wiki/File:TövkhönKhiid2.jpg) [Zanabazar](/wiki/Zanabazar). Here he created the [Soyombo script](/wiki/Soyombo_script) in 1686. After the expulsion of the Yuan dynasty rulers from China, the Mongols continued to rule Mongolia homeland, known as the [Northern Yuan dynasty](/wiki/Northern_Yuan_dynasty). The next centuries were marked by violent power struggles among various factions, notably the Genghisids and the non-Genghisid [Oirats](/wiki/Oirats), as well as by several Chinese invasions (such as the [five expeditions led by the Yongle Emperor](/wiki/Yongle_Emperor's_campaigns_against_the_Mongols)). In the early 15th century, the Oirads under [Esen Tayisi](/wiki/Esen_Tayisi) gained the upper hand, and raided China in 1449 in a [conflict](/wiki/Tumu_Crisis) over Esen's right to pay tribute, capturing the Ming [emperor](/wiki/Zhengtong_Emperor) in the process. When Esen was murdered in 1454, the [Borjigids](/wiki/Borjigid) regained power. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

In the early 16th century, [Dayan Khan](/wiki/Dayan_Khan) and his [khatun](/wiki/Khatun) [Mandukhai](/wiki/Mandukhai) reunited the entire Mongol nation under the Genghisids. In the mid-16th century, [Altan Khan](/wiki/Altan_Khan) of the Tümed, a grandson of [Dayan Khan](/wiki/Dayan_Khan) – but not a hereditary or legitimate Khan – became powerful. He founded [Hohhot](/wiki/Hohhot) in 1557. After he met with the [Dalai Lama](/wiki/Dalai_Lama) in 1578, he ordered the introduction of [Tibetan Buddhism](/wiki/Tibetan_Buddhism) to Mongolia. (It was the second time this had occurred). Abtai Khan of the [Khalkha](/wiki/Khalkha) converted to Buddhism and founded the [Erdene Zuu](/wiki/Erdene_Zuu) monastery in 1585. His grandson [Zanabazar](/wiki/Zanabazar) became the first [Jebtsundamba Khutughtu](/wiki/Jebtsundamba_Khutughtu) in 1640. Following the leaders, the entire Mongolian population embraced Buddhism. Each family kept scriptures and Buddha statues on an altar at the north side of their [ger](/wiki/Yurt) (yurt). Mongolian nobles donated land, money and herders to the monasteries. As was typical in states with established religions, the top religious institutions, the monasteries, wielded significant temporal power in addition to spiritual power. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) [thumb|left|An image of an early 20th-century](/wiki/File:Oirat_Caravan.jpg) [Oirat](/wiki/Oirats) caravan, traveling on horseback, possibly to trade goods. The last Mongol Khan was [Ligden Khan](/wiki/Ligden_Khan) in the early 17th century. He came into conflicts with the [Manchus](/wiki/Manchu_people) over the looting of Chinese cities, and also alienated most Mongol tribes. He died in 1634. By 1636 most [Inner Mongolian](/wiki/Inner_Mongolia) tribes had submitted to the Manchus, who founded the [Qing dynasty](/wiki/Qing_dynasty). The Khalkha eventually submitted to Qing rule in 1691, thus bringing all of today's Mongolia under Manchu rule. After several wars, the [Dzungars](/wiki/Dzungars) (the western Mongols or Oirats) were virtually annihilated during the Qing conquest of Dzungaria in 1757–58.[[11]](#cite_note-11) Some scholars estimate that about 80% of the 600,000 or more Dzungar were destroyed by a combination of disease and warfare.[[12]](#cite_note-12) Outer Mongolia was given relative autonomy, being administered by the hereditary Genghisid khanates of Tusheet Khan, Setsen Khan, Zasagt Khan and Sain Noyon Khan. The [Jebtsundamba Khutuktu](/wiki/Jebtsundamba_Khutuktu) of Mongolia had immense *de facto* authority. The Manchu forbade mass Chinese immigration into the area, which allowed the Mongols to keep their culture.

The main trade route during this period was the [Tea Road](/wiki/Siberian_Route) through Siberia; it had permanent stations located every [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert), each of which was staffed by 5–30 chosen families. Urga (present-day [Ulaanbaatar](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar)) benefited greatly from this overland trade, as it was the only major settlement in Outer Mongolia used as a stopover point by merchants, officials and travelers on the Tea Road. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Until 1911, the Qing dynasty maintained control of Mongolia with a series of alliances and intermarriages, as well as military and economic measures. [Ambans](/wiki/Amban), Manchu "high officials", were installed in [Khüree](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar), [Uliastai](/wiki/Uliastai), and [Khovd](/wiki/Khovd_(city)), and the country was subdivided into numerous feudal and ecclesiastical fiefdoms (which also placed people in power with loyalty to the Qing). Over the course of the 19th century, the feudal lords attached more importance to representation and less importance to the responsibilities towards their subjects. The behaviour of Mongolia's nobility, together with [usurious](/wiki/Usury) practices by Chinese traders and the collection of imperial taxes in silver instead of animals, resulted in poverty among the nomads becoming widespread. By 1911 there were 700 large and small monasteries in Outer Mongolia; their 115,000 monks made up 21% of the population. Apart from the Jebtsundamba Khutuktu, there were 13 other reincarnating high lamas, called 'seal-holding saints' (*tamgatai khutuktu*), in Outer Mongolia.

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|upright|The eighth](/wiki/File:BogdKhan.jpg) [Jebtsundamba Khutuktu](/wiki/Jebtsundamba_Khutuktu) With the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, Mongolia under the [Bogd Khaan](/wiki/Bogd_Khaan) declared independence. But, the newly established [Republic of China](/wiki/Republic_of_China_(1912–49)) considered Mongolia to be part of its own territory. [Yuan Shikai](/wiki/Yuan_Shikai), the President of the Republic of China, considered the new republic to be the successor of the Qing. Bogd Khaan said that both Mongolia and China had been administered by the [Manchu](/wiki/Manchu_people) during the Qing, and after the fall of the Qing dynasty in 1911, the contract of Mongolian submission to the Manchu had become invalid.[[13]](#cite_note-13) The area controlled by the Bogd Khaan was approximately that of the former [Outer Mongolia](/wiki/Outer_Mongolia) during the Qing period. In 1919, after the [October Revolution](/wiki/October_Revolution) in Russia, Chinese troops led by [Xu Shuzheng](/wiki/Xu_Shuzheng) occupied Mongolia. Warfare erupted on the northern border. As a result of the [Russian Civil War](/wiki/Russian_Civil_War), the [White](/wiki/White_movement) Russian [Lieutenant General](/wiki/Lieutenant_General) [Baron Ungern](/wiki/Roman_Ungern_von_Sternberg) led his troops into Mongolia in October 1920, defeating the Chinese forces in [Niislel Khüree](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar) (Ulaanbaatar) in early February 1921 with support by Mongols.

To eliminate the threat posed by Ungern, [Bolshevik Russia](/wiki/Russian_SFSR) decided to support establishing a communist Mongolian government and army. This Mongolian army took the [Mongolian part](/wiki/Altanbulag,_Selenge) of [Kyakhta](/wiki/Kyakhta) from Chinese forces on March 18, 1921, and on July 6 Russian and Mongolian troops arrived in Khüree. Mongolia declared its independence again on July 11, 1921.[[14]](#cite_note-14) As a result, Mongolia was closely aligned with the Soviet Union over the next seven decades.

In 1924, after the [Bogd Khaan](/wiki/Bogd_Khaan) died of [laryngeal cancer](/wiki/Laryngeal_cancer)[[15]](#cite_note-15) or, as some sources claim, at the hands of Russian spies,[[16]](#cite_note-16) the country's [political system](/wiki/Political_system) was changed. The [Mongolian People's Republic](/wiki/Mongolian_People's_Republic) was established. In 1928, [Khorloogiin Choibalsan](/wiki/Khorloogiin_Choibalsan) rose to power. The early leaders of the Mongolian People's Republic (1921–1952) were not communists and many of them were [Pan-Mongolists](/wiki/Pan-Mongolism). The [Soviet Union](/wiki/Soviet_Union) forcefully established a [communist regime](/wiki/Communist_state) in Mongolia by later exterminating Pan-Mongolists. In the 1960s, Soviets recognized the [Mongolian People's Party](/wiki/Mongolian_People's_Party) as "real" communists, who took power after the suspicious death of Pan-Mongolist leader Choibalsan.

[thumb|left|upright|](/wiki/File:Sukhbaatar.jpg)[Damdin Sükhbaatar](/wiki/Damdin_Sükhbaatar)

Khorloogiin Choibalsan instituted [collectivisation](/wiki/Collectivisation) of livestock, began the destruction of the [Buddhist](/wiki/Tibetan_Buddhism) [monasteries](/wiki/Monastery), and carried out the [Stalinist repressions in Mongolia](/wiki/Stalinist_repressions_in_Mongolia), which resulted in the murders of numerous monks and other leaders. In Mongolia during the 1920s, approximately one-third of the male population were monks. By the beginning of the 20th century, about 750 monasteries were functioning in Mongolia.[[17]](#cite_note-17) In 1930 Russia stopped [Buryats](/wiki/Buryats) migration to the Mongolian People's Republic to prevent Mongolian reunification. All leaders of Mongolia who did not fulfill Russian demands to perform terror against Mongolians were executed by Russians, including [Peljidiin Genden](/wiki/Peljidiin_Genden) and [Anandyn Amar](/wiki/Anandyn_Amar). The [Stalinist purges in Mongolia](/wiki/Great_Purge), which began in 1937, killed more than 30,000 people. Choibalsan died suspiciously in Russia in 1952. [Comintern](/wiki/Comintern) leader [Bohumír Šmeral](/wiki/Bohumír_Šmeral) said, "People of Mongolia are not important, the land is important. Mongolian land is larger than England, France and Germany".[[18]](#cite_note-18) After the [Japanese invasion of neighboring Manchuria](/wiki/Japanese_invasion_of_Manchuria) in 1931, Mongolia was threatened on this front. During the [Soviet-Japanese Border War](/wiki/Battles_of_Khalkhin_Gol) of 1939, the Soviet Union successfully defended Mongolia against Japanese expansionism. Mongolia fought against Japan during the [Battles of Khalkhin Gol](/wiki/Battles_of_Khalkhin_Gol) in 1939 and during the [Soviet–Japanese War](/wiki/Soviet–Japanese_War_(1945)) in August 1945 to liberate [Southern Mongolia](/wiki/Southern_Mongolia_(region)) from Japan and China.

The February 1945 [Yalta Conference](/wiki/Yalta_Conference) provided for the Soviet Union's participation in the Pacific War. One of the Soviet conditions for its participation, put forward at Yalta, was that after the war Outer Mongolia would retain its independence. [The referendum](/wiki/Mongolian_independence_referendum,_1945) took place on October 20, 1945, with (according to official numbers) 100% of the electorate voting for independence.[[19]](#cite_note-19) After the establishment of the People's Republic of China, both countries confirmed their mutual recognition on October 6, 1949.

On January 26, 1952, [Yumjaagiin Tsedenbal](/wiki/Yumjaagiin_Tsedenbal) took power in Mongolia. While Tsedenbal was visiting Moscow in August 1984, his severe illness prompted the parliament to announce his retirement and replace him with [Jambyn Batmönkh](/wiki/Jambyn_Batmönkh).

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 strongly influenced Mongolian politics and [youth](/wiki/Youth_in_Mongolia). Its people undertook the [peaceful Democratic Revolution](/wiki/1990_Mongolian_democratic_revolution) in 1990 and the introduction of a multi-party system and market economy. A new constitution was introduced in 1992, and the "People's Republic" was dropped from the country's name. The transition to market economy has often been rocky; during the early 1990s the country had to deal with high inflation and food shortages.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The first election victories for non-communist parties came in 1993 (presidential elections) and 1996 (parliamentary elections).

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) [thumb|The southern portion of Mongolia is taken up by the](/wiki/File:Mongolia_1996_CIA_map.jpg) [Gobi Desert](/wiki/Gobi_Desert), while the northern and western portions are mountainous. [thumb|Mongolia map of Köppen climate classification.](/wiki/File:Mongolia_map_of_Köppen_climate_classification.svg) [thumb|left|](/wiki/File:KhongorynElsCamels.jpg)[Bactrian camels](/wiki/Bactrian_camels) by sand dunes in Gobi Desert. [thumb|left|Mongolian ferry *Sukhbaatar* on](/wiki/File:Байкал_и_Хубсугул_332.jpg) [Lake Khovsgol](/wiki/Lake_Khovsgol) in Khovsgol Province. [thumb|](/wiki/File:UAZ-469_towing_a_bus_through_a_river_in_Mongolia.jpg)[Riverine forest](/wiki/Riverine_forest) of the [Tuul River](/wiki/Tuul_River) near Ulaanbaatar. [thumb|](/wiki/File:Uvs_núr.JPG)[Uvs Lake](/wiki/Uvs_Lake), a [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site), is the remnant of a saline sea. [thumb|The](/wiki/File:Gorkhi_Terelj_Park.jpg) [Khentii Mountains](/wiki/Khentii_Mountains) in [Terelj](/wiki/Gorkhi-Terelj_National_Park), close to the birthplace of Genghis Khan. At [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert),[[20]](#cite_note-20) Mongolia is the world's 19th-largest country (after [Iran](/wiki/Iran)). It is significantly larger than the next-largest country, [Peru](/wiki/Peru). It mostly lies between latitudes [41°](/wiki/41st_parallel_north) and [52°N](/wiki/52nd_parallel_north) (a small area is north of 52°), and longitudes [87°](/wiki/87th_meridian_east) and [120°E](/wiki/120th_meridian_east). As a point of reference the northernmost part of Mongolia is on roughly the same latitude as Berlin (Germany) and Amsterdam (Netherlands), while the southernmost part is on roughly the same latitude as Rome (Italy) and Chicago (USA). The westernmost part of Mongolia is on roughly the same longitude as Kolkata (India), while the easternmost part is on the same longitude as Qinhuangdao (China) and Hangzhou (China), as well as the western edge of Taiwan. Although Mongolia does not share a border with [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan), its westernmost point is only [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from [Kazakhstan](/wiki/Kazakhstan).

Mongolia is known as the "Land of the Eternal Blue Sky" or "Country of Blue Sky" ([Mongolian](/wiki/Mongolian_language): "Mönkh khökh tengeriin oron") because it has over 250 sunny days a year.[[21]](#cite_note-21)[[22]](#cite_note-22)[[23]](#cite_note-23)[[24]](#cite_note-24) The geography of Mongolia is varied, with the [Gobi Desert](/wiki/Gobi_Desert) to the south and with cold and mountainous regions to the north and west. Much of Mongolia consists of [steppes](/wiki/Steppe), with forested areas comprising 11.2% of the total land area,[[25]](#cite_note-25) a higher percentage than the Republic of Ireland (10%).[[26]](#cite_note-26) The highest point in Mongolia is the [Khüiten Peak](/wiki/Khüiten_Peak) in the [Tavan bogd](/wiki/Tavan_bogd) massif in the far west at [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert). The basin of the [Uvs Lake](/wiki/Uvs_Lake), shared with [Tuva Republic](/wiki/Tuva_Republic) in Russia, is a natural [World Heritage Site](/wiki/World_Heritage_Site). Most of the country is hot in the summer and extremely cold in the winter, with January averages dropping as low as [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert).<ref name=mong26>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> A vast front of cold, heavy, shallow air comes in from Siberia in winter and collects in river valleys and low basins causing very cold temperatures while slopes of mountains are much warmer due to the effects of [temperature inversion](/wiki/Temperature_inversion) (temperature increases with altitude).

In winter the whole of Mongolia comes under the influence of the [Siberian Anticyclone](/wiki/Siberian_Anticyclone). The localities most severely affected by this cold weather are Uvs province ([Ulaangom](/wiki/Ulaangom)), western Khovsgol ([Rinchinlhumbe](/wiki/Rinchinlkhumbe,_Khovsgol)), eastern Zavkhan ([Tosontsengel](/wiki/Tosontsengel,_Zavkhan)), northern Bulgan (Hutag) and eastern Dornod province (Khalkhiin Gol). Ulaanbaatar is also strongly affected but not as severely. The cold gets less severe as one goes south, reaching the warmest January temperatures in Omnogovi Province ([Dalanzadgad](/wiki/Dalanzadgad), [Khanbogd](/wiki/Khanbogd,_Ömnögovi)) and the region of the Altai mountains bordering China. A unique microclimate is the fertile grassland-forest region of central and eastern Arkhangai Province ([Tsetserleg](/wiki/Tsetserleg_(city))) and northern Ovorkhangai Province ([Arvaikheer](/wiki/Arvaikheer)) where January temperatures are on average the same and often higher than the warmest desert regions to the south in addition to being more stable. The [Khangai Mountains](/wiki/Khangai_Mountains) play a certain role in forming this microclimate. In Tsetserleg, the warmest town in this microclimate, nighttime January temperatures rarely go under [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) while daytime January temperatures often reach [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) to [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) .[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28) The country is subject to occasional harsh climatic conditions known as [*zud*](/wiki/Zud)*.* The annual average temperature in Ulaanbaatar is −1.3 °C/29.7 °F, making it the world's coldest capital city.<ref name=mong26/> Mongolia is high, cold, and windy. It has an extreme continental climate with long, cold winters and short summers, during which most of its annual precipitation falls. The country averages 257 cloudless days a year, and it is usually at the center of a region of high atmospheric pressure. Precipitation is highest in the north (average of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) per year) and lowest in the south, which receives [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) annually. The highest annual precipitation of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) occurred in the forests of [Bulgan Province](/wiki/Bulgan_Province) close to the border with Russia and the lowest of [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) occurred in the Gobi Desert (period 1961–1990).[[29]](#cite_note-29) The sparsely populated far north of Bulgan Province averages [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) in annual precipitation which means it receives more precipitation than Beijing (571.8mm) or [Berlin](/wiki/Berlin) (571mm).

The name "Gobi" is a Mongol term for a desert steppe, which usually refers to a category of arid rangeland with insufficient vegetation to support [marmots](/wiki/Marmot) but with enough to support [camels](/wiki/Camel). Mongols distinguish Gobi from desert proper, although the distinction is not always apparent to outsiders unfamiliar with the Mongolian landscape. Gobi rangelands are fragile and are easily destroyed by overgrazing, which results in expansion of the true desert, a stony waste where not even [Bactrian camels](/wiki/Bactrian_camel) can survive. The arid conditions in the Gobi are attributed to the [rain shadow effect](/wiki/Rain_shadow_effect) caused by the Himalayas. Before the Himalayas were formed by the collision of the Indo-Australian plate with the Eurasian plate 10 million years ago Mongolia was a flourishing habitat for major fauna but still somewhat arid and cold due to distance from sources of evaporation. Sea turtle and mollusk fossils have been found in the Gobi apart from the more well-known dinosaur fossils. [Tadpole shrimps](/wiki/Tadpole_shrimps) (*Lepidurus mongolicus*) are still found in the Gobi today. The eastern part of Mongolia including the [Onon](/wiki/Onon_River), [Kherlen](/wiki/Kherlen_River) rivers and [Lake Buir](/wiki/Lake_Buir) form part of the [Amur river](/wiki/Amur_river) basin draining to the Pacific Ocean. It hosts some unique species like the Eastern brook lamprey, Daurian crayfish (*cambaroides dauricus*) and Daurian pearl oyster (*dahurinaia dahurica*) in the Onon/Kherlen rivers as well as Siberian prawn (*exopalaemon modestus*) in Lake Buir.

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:UBNorthwest.jpg)[Ulaanbaatar](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar) is the capital and largest city of Mongolia [thumb|In settlements, many families live in](/wiki/File:Yurt_in_Ulan_Bator.JPG) [*ger* districts](/wiki/Ger_district) Mongolia's total population as of January 2015 is estimated by [U.S. Census Bureau](/wiki/U.S._Census_Bureau)[[30]](#cite_note-30) at 3,000,251 people, ranking at around 121st in the world in terms of population. But the [U.S. Department of State](/wiki/U.S._Department_of_State) [Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs](/wiki/Bureau_of_East_Asian_and_Pacific_Affairs) uses the United Nations (UN) estimations[[31]](#cite_note-31) instead of the U.S. Census Bureau estimations. [United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs](/wiki/United_Nations_Department_of_Economic_and_Social_Affairs) Population Division[[32]](#cite_note-32) estimates Mongolia's total population (mid-2007) as 2,629,000 (11% less than the U.S. Census Bureau figure). UN estimates resemble those made by the Mongolian National Statistical Office (2,612,900, end of June 2007). Mongolia's population growth rate is estimated at 1.2% (2007 est.).[[32]](#cite_note-32) About 59% of the total population is under age 30, 27% of whom are under 14. This relatively [young](/wiki/Youth_in_Mongolia) and growing population has placed strains on Mongolia's economy.

The first census in the 20th century was carried out in 1918 and recorded a population of 647,500.[[33]](#cite_note-33) Since the end of socialism, Mongolia has experienced a decline of [total fertility rate](/wiki/Total_fertility_rate) (children per woman) that is steeper than in any other country in the world, according to recent UN estimations:[[32]](#cite_note-32) in 1970–1975, fertility was estimated to be 7.33 children per woman, dropping to about 2.1 in 2000–2005.[[34]](#cite_note-34) Recently, however, that trend has been stopped, so in 2005–2010 period, the estimated fertility value has actually increased to 2.5 and stabilised afterwards at the rate of about 2.2–2.3 children per woman.

Ethnic Mongols account for about 95% of the population and consist of Khalkha and other groups, all distinguished primarily by dialects of the Mongol language. The [Khalkha](/wiki/Khalkha) make up 86% of the ethnic Mongol population. The remaining 14% include [Oirats](/wiki/Oirats), [Buryats](/wiki/Buryats) and others. [Turkic peoples](/wiki/Turkic_people) ([Kazakhs](/wiki/Kazakhs) and [Tuvans](/wiki/Tuvans)) constitute 4.5% of Mongolia's population, and the rest are Russian, Chinese, Korean and American nationalities.[[35]](#cite_note-35)

### Languages[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=7)]

[thumb|Para-Mongolic](/wiki/File:KhitanUB.jpg) [Khitan](/wiki/Khitan_language) inscription dated 1058 found in south-eastern Mongolia. The official language of Mongolia is [Mongolian](/wiki/Mongolian_language), and is spoken by 95% of the population. A variety of [dialects](/wiki/Dialect) of [Oirat](/wiki/Oirat_language) and [Buryat](/wiki/Buryat_language) are spoken across the country, and there are also some speakers of [Mongolic](/wiki/Mongolic_language) Khamnigan. In the west of the country, [Kazakh](/wiki/Kazakh_language) and [Tuvan](/wiki/Tuvan_language), both [Turkic languages](/wiki/Turkic_languages), are also spoken. [Mongolian Sign Language](/wiki/Mongolian_Sign_Language) is the principal language of the deaf community.

Today, Mongolian is written using the [Cyrillic alphabet](/wiki/Cyrillic_alphabet), although in the past it was written using the [Mongolian script](/wiki/Mongolian_script). An official reintroduction of the old script was planned for 1994, but has not taken place as older generations encountered practical difficulties.[[36]](#cite_note-36) The traditional alphabet is being slowly reintroduced through schools.[[37]](#cite_note-37) Russian is the most frequently spoken foreign language in Mongolia, followed by English, although English has been gradually replacing Russian as the second language. [Korean](/wiki/Korean_language) has gained popularity as tens of thousands of [Mongolians work in South Korea](/wiki/Mongolians_in_South_Korea).[[38]](#cite_note-38) Interest in [Chinese](/wiki/Standard_Mandarin), as the language of the other neighbouring power, has been growing.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) A number of older educated Mongolian citizens speak some German, as they studied in the former [East Germany](/wiki/East_Germany), while a few speak other languages from the former [Eastern Bloc](/wiki/Eastern_Bloc). Many younger people are fluent in the Western European languages as they study or work in, among other places, Germany, France and Italy.[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

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

[Mongolian cuisine](/wiki/Mongolian_cuisine) is rooted in their nomadic history, and thus includes a lot of dairy and meat, but little vegetables. Two of the most popular dishes are [Buuz](/wiki/Buuz) (a meat filled steamed dumpling) and [Khuushuur](/wiki/Khuushuur) (a sort of deep-fried meat pie.)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|150px|left|Grounds of Dambadarjaalin Monastery in](/wiki/File:Dambadarjaalin_Monastery_grounds_in_Ulan_Bator,_in_front_of_a_shamanic_sacred_mountain.jpg) [Ulaanbaatar](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar), with a [stupa](/wiki/Stupa), in front of a sacred mount with [mantra](/wiki/Mantra) inscribed on the slope and a [shamanic](/wiki/Mongolian_shamanism) [ovoo](/wiki/Ovoo) on the top. According to the 2010 National Census, among Mongolians aged 15 and above, 53% were [Buddhists](/wiki/Buddhism_in_Mongolia), while 39% were [non-religious](/wiki/Irreligion).

|  |
| --- |
| + Religions in Mongolia (population aged 15 and above)[[39]](#cite_note-39) |
| **Religion** | **Population** | **Share %** |
| **Non-religious** | 735,283 | 38.6 |
| **Religious** | *1,170,283* | *61.4* |
| [Buddhism](/wiki/Buddhism) | 1,009,357 | 53.0 |
| [Islam](/wiki/Islam) | 57,702 | 3.0 |
| [Shamanism](/wiki/Shamanism) | 55,174 | 2.9 |
| [Christianity](/wiki/Christianity) | 41,117 | 2.1 |
| Other religions | 6,933 | 0.4 |
| **Total** | **1,905,566** | **100.0** |

[Mongolian shamanism](/wiki/Mongolian_shamanism) has been widely practised throughout the history of what is now Mongolia, with similar beliefs being common among the nomads of central Asia. They gradually gave way to [Tibetan Buddhism](/wiki/Tibetan_Buddhism), but shamanism has left a mark on Mongolian religious culture, and it continues to be practiced. The Kazakhs residing in western Mongolia, some Mongols and other Turkic peoples in the country traditionally adhere to [Islam](/wiki/Islam_in_Mongolia).

Throughout much of the 20th century, the [communist](/wiki/Mongolian_People's_Republic) government ensured that the religious practices of the Mongolian people were largely repressed. It targeted the clergy of the Mongolian Buddhist Church, which had been tightly intertwined with the previous feudal government structures (e.g. from 1911 on, the head of the Church had also been the [khan](/wiki/Khan_(title)) of the country).<ref name=eb/> In the late 1930s, the regime, then led by [Khorloogiin Choibalsan](/wiki/Khorloogiin_Choibalsan), closed almost all of Mongolia's over 700 Buddhist monasteries and [killed at least 30,000 people, of whom 18,000 were lamas](/wiki/Stalinist_repressions_in_Mongolia).[[40]](#cite_note-40) The number of [Buddhist monks](/wiki/Buddhist_monk) dropped from 100,000 in 1924 to 110 in 1990.<ref name=eb>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref>

The [fall of communism](/wiki/Fall_of_communism) in 1991 restored public religious practice. [Tibetan Buddhism](/wiki/Tibetan_Buddhism), which had been the predominant religion prior to the rise of communism, again rose to become the most widely practised religion in Mongolia. The end of religious repression in the 1990s also allowed for other religions to spread in the country. According to the Christian missionary group [Barnabas Fund](/wiki/Barnabas_Fund), the number of Christians grew from just four in 1989 to around 40,000 [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of). In May 2013, [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](/wiki/The_Church_of_Jesus_Christ_of_Latter-day_Saints) (LDS Church) held a cultural program to celebrate 20 years of LDS Church history in Mongolia, with 10,900 members, and 16 church buildings in the country.[[41]](#cite_note-41) There are some 1,000 Catholics in Mongolia and, in 2003, a missionary from the [Philippines](/wiki/Philippines) was named Mongolia's first [Catholic](/wiki/Catholic_Church) bishop.[[42]](#cite_note-42)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [Template:Clickable map of Mongolian provinces](/wiki/Template:Clickable_map_of_Mongolian_provinces) Mongolia is divided into 21 [provinces (aimags)](/wiki/Provinces_of_Mongolia), which are in turn divided into 329 [districts (sums)](/wiki/Districts_of_Mongolia).[[43]](#cite_note-43) The capital [Ulaanbaatar](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar) is administrated separately as a [capital city (municipality)](/wiki/Provinces_of_Mongolia) with provincial status. The *aimags* are:

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

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) About 40% of the population lives in [Ulaanbaatar](/wiki/Ulaanbaatar), and in 2002 a further 23% lived in [Darkhan](/wiki/Darkhan_(city)), [Erdenet](/wiki/Erdenet), the [aimag](/wiki/Aimags_of_Mongolia) centers and [sum](/wiki/Sums_of_Mongolia)-level permanent settlements.[[44]](#cite_note-44) Another share of the population lives in the sum centers. [Template:Largest cities of Mongolia](/wiki/Template:Largest_cities_of_Mongolia)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|High end southern part of Ulaanbaatar valued for clean air in winter.](/wiki/File:UBSouth.jpg) Economic activity in Mongolia has traditionally been based on herding and agriculture, although development of extensive mineral deposits of copper, coal, molybdenum, tin, tungsten, and gold have emerged as a driver of industrial production.<ref name=stategov>[Template:Cite web](/wiki/Template:Cite_web)</ref> Besides mining (21.8% of GDP) and agriculture (16% of GDP), dominant industries in the composition of GDP are wholesale and retail trade and service, transportation and storage, and real estate activities.<ref name=stategov/> The [grey economy](/wiki/Grey_economy) is estimated to be at least one-third the size of the official economy.<ref name=stategov/> [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), 68.4% of Mongolia's exports went to the [PRC](/wiki/People's_Republic_of_China), and the PRC supplied 29.8% of Mongolia's imports.[[45]](#cite_note-45) Mongolia is ranked as lower middle income economy by the [World Bank](/wiki/World_Bank).[[46]](#cite_note-46) Some 22.4% of the population lives on less than [US$](/wiki/United_States_dollar)1.25 a day.[[47]](#cite_note-47) In 2011, GDP per capita was $3,100.[[3]](#cite_note-3) Despite growth, the proportion of the population below the poverty line was estimated to be 35.6% in 1998, 36.1% in 2002–2003, and 32.2% in 2006.[[48]](#cite_note-48) Because of a boom in the mining sector, Mongolia had high growth rates in 2007 and 2008 (9.9% and 8.9%, respectively).<ref name=stategov/> In 2009, sharp drops in commodity prices and the effects of the global financial crisis caused the local currency to drop 40% against the U.S. dollar. Two of the 16 commercial banks were taken into receivership.<ref name=stategov/> In 2011, GDP growth was expected to reach 16.4%. However, inflation continued to erode GDP gains, with an average rate of 12.6% expected in Mongolia at the end of 2011.<ref name=stategov/> Although GDP has risen steadily since 2002 at the rate of 7.5% in an official 2006 estimate, the state is still working to overcome a sizable trade deficit. The *Economist* predicted this trade deficit of 14% of Mongolia's GDP would transform into a surplus in 2013.[[49]](#cite_note-49) Mongolia was never listed among the [emerging market](/wiki/Emerging_market) countries until February 2011 when [Citigroup](/wiki/Citigroup) analysts determined Mongolia to be one of the "[global growth generating](/wiki/3G_(countries))" countries, which are countries with the most promising growth prospects for 2010–2050.[[50]](#cite_note-50) The [Mongolian Stock Exchange](/wiki/Mongolian_Stock_Exchange), established in 1991 in Ulaanbaatar, is among the world's smallest [stock exchanges](/wiki/Stock_exchange) by [market capitalisation](/wiki/Market_capitalisation).[[51]](#cite_note-51)[[52]](#cite_note-52) In 2011, it had 336 companies listed with a total market capitalization of US$2 billion after quadrupling from US$406 million in 2008.[[53]](#cite_note-53) Mongolia made a significant improvement on the ease of doing business in 2012, moving up to rank 76 compared with 88 last year in the "Doing Business" report by the [International Finance Corporation](/wiki/International_Finance_Corporation) (IFC).[[54]](#cite_note-54)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|](/wiki/File:Oyu_Tolgoi_23.JPG)[Oyu Tolgoi](/wiki/Oyu_Tolgoi) employs 18,000 workers and expects to be producing 450,000 tonnes of copper a year by 2020[[55]](#cite_note-55) Minerals represent more than 80% of Mongolia's exports, a proportion expected to eventually rise to 95%. About 3,000 mining licences have been issued.[[49]](#cite_note-49) Mining is continuing to rise as a major industry of Mongolia as evidenced by number of Chinese, Russian and Canadian firms starting mining businesses in Mongolia.[[3]](#cite_note-3) In 2009, the government negotiated an "investment agreement" with [Rio Tinto](/wiki/Rio_Tinto_Group) and [Ivanhoe Mines](/wiki/Turquoise_Hill_Resources) to develop the [Oyu Tolgoi](/wiki/Oyu_Tolgoi) copper and gold deposit,<ref name=stategov/> the biggest foreign-investment project in Mongolia, expected to account for one-third of Mongolia's GDP by 2020.[[49]](#cite_note-49) In March 2011, six big mining companies prepared to bid for the [Tavan Tolgoi](/wiki/Tavan_Tolgoi) area, the world's largest untapped coal deposit. According to Erdenes MGL, the government body in-charge of Tavan Tolgoi, [ArcelorMittal](/wiki/ArcelorMittal), [Vale](/wiki/Vale_(mining_company)), [Xstrata](/wiki/Xstrata), U.S. coal miner [Peabody](/wiki/Peabody_Energy), a consortium of Chinese energy firm [Shenhua](/wiki/Shenhua_Group) and Japan's [Mitsui & Co](/wiki/Mitsui_&_Co), and a separate consortium of Japanese, South Korean and Russian firms are the preferred bidders.[[56]](#cite_note-56)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) In 2002, about 30% of all households in Mongolia lived from breeding livestock.[[57]](#cite_note-57) Most herders in Mongolia follow a pattern of [nomadic](/wiki/Nomads) or semi-nomadic [pastoralism](/wiki/Pastoralism). Due to the severe 2009–2010 winter, Mongolia lost 9.7 million animals, or 22% of total livestock. This immediately affected meat prices, which increased twofold; the GDP dropped 1.6% in 2009.<ref name=stategov/>

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

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

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

Postal services are provided by state-owned [Mongol Post](/wiki/Mongol_Post) and 54 other licensed operators.[[58]](#cite_note-58)

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

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

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|Train in](/wiki/File:Zamyn_Uud_traders.jpg) [Zamyn-Üüd](/wiki/Zamyn-Üüd) station in [Dornogovi aimag](/wiki/Dornogovi_Province) [thumb|While the](/wiki/File:Rider_in_Mongolia,_2012.jpg) [Mongolian horse](/wiki/Mongolian_horse) continues to be revered as the national symbol, they are fast being replaced by motorized vehicles. The [Trans-Mongolian Railway](/wiki/Trans-Mongolian_Railway) is the main rail link between Mongolia and its neighbors. It begins at the [Trans-Siberian Railway](/wiki/Trans-Siberian_Railway) in Russia at the town of [Ulan-Ude](/wiki/Ulan-Ude), crosses into Mongolia, runs through Ulaanbaatar, then passes into China at [Erenhot](/wiki/Erenhot) where it joins the Chinese railway system. A separate railroad link connects the eastern city of [Choibalsan](/wiki/Choibalsan_(city)) with the Trans-Siberian Railway. However, that link is closed to passengers after the Mongolian town of Chuluunkhoroot.[[59]](#cite_note-59) Mongolia has a number of domestic airports with some of them having international status. However, the main international airport is [Chinggis Khaan International Airport](/wiki/Chinggis_Khaan_International_Airport), located approximately [Template:Convert](/wiki/Template:Convert) from downtown Ulaanbaatar. Direct flight connections exist between Mongolia and South Korea, China, Thailand, Hong Kong, Japan, Russia, Germany, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkey. [MIAT Mongolian Airlines](/wiki/MIAT_Mongolian_Airlines) is Mongolia's national air carrier operating international flights, while other domestic air carriers such as Aero Mongolia and Hunnu Airlines are serving both domestic and regional routes.

Many overland roads in Mongolia are only gravel roads or simple cross-country tracks. There are paved roads from Ulaanbaatar to the Russian and Chinese border, from Ulaanbaatar east- and westward (the so-called Millenium Road), and from Darkhan to [Bulgan](/wiki/Bulgan_(city)). A number of road construction projects are currently underway. Mongolia has 4,800 km of paved roads, with 1,800 km of that total completed in 2013 alone.[[60]](#cite_note-60)

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

During the state socialist period, education was one of the areas of significant achievement in Mongolia. Illiteracy was virtually eliminated, in part through the use of seasonal boarding schools for children of nomadic families. Funding to these boarding schools was cut in the 1990s, contributing to slightly increased illiteracy.

Primary and secondary education formerly lasted 10 years, but was expanded to 11 years. Since the 2008–2009 school year, new first-graders are using the 12-year system, and a full transition to the 12-year system will not occur until the 2019–2020 school year, when the current third-graders graduate.[[61]](#cite_note-61) [Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of), English is taught in all secondary schools across Mongolia, beginning in fourth grade.

Mongolian national universities are all spin-offs from the [National University of Mongolia](/wiki/National_University_of_Mongolia) and the [Mongolian University of Science and Technology](/wiki/Mongolian_University_of_Science_and_Technology). Almost three in five Mongolian youths now enroll in university. There was a six-fold increase in students between 1993 and 2010.[[62]](#cite_note-62) Until reforms in the 1990s, the government had strict control of the media and oversaw all publishing, in which no independent media was allowed.<ref name=pr/> The [dissolution of the Soviet Union](/wiki/Dissolution_of_the_Soviet_Union) had a significant impact on Mongolia, where the [one-party state](/wiki/One-party_state) grew into a [multi-party](/wiki/Multi-party_system) democracy, and with that, media freedoms came to the forefront.

A new law on press freedom, drafted with help from international NGOs on August 28, 1998 and enacted on January 1, 1999, paved the way for media reforms.<ref name=bruun>[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref> The Mongolian media currently consists of around 300 print and broadcasting outlets.<ref name=bbc>[Template:Cite news](/wiki/Template:Cite_news)</ref>

Since 2006, the media environment has been improving with the government debating a new [Freedom of Information Act](/wiki/Freedom_of_information_laws_by_country), and the removal of any affiliation of media outlets with the government.<ref name=baner>B[Template:Cite book](/wiki/Template:Cite_book)</ref>[[89]](#cite_note-89) Market reforms have led to an increasing number of people working in the media year on year, along with students at journalism schools.<ref name=baner/>

In its 2013 World Press Freedom Index report, [Reporters Without Borders](/wiki/Reporters_Without_Borders) classified the media environment as 98th out of 179, with 1st being most free.[[90]](#cite_note-90) According to 2014 Asian Development Bank survey, 80% of Mongolians cited TV as their main source of information.[[91]](#cite_note-91)

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) [thumb|right|](/wiki/File:Naadamceremony2006.jpg)[Naadam](/wiki/Naadam) is the largest summer celebration The main national festival is [Naadam](/wiki/Naadam), which has been organised for centuries and takes place over three days in the summer, consists of three Mongolian traditional sports, [archery](/wiki/Archery), horse-racing (over long stretches of open country, not the short racing around a track practiced in the West), and wrestling, traditionally recognized as the Three Manly Games of Nadaam. In modern-day Mongolia, Naadam is held on July 11 to 13 in the honour of the anniversaries of the National Democratic Revolution and foundation of the Great Mongol State.

Another very popular activity called Shagaa is the "flicking" of sheep ankle bones at a target several feet away, using a flicking motion of the finger to send the small bone flying at targets and trying to knock the target bones off the platform. At Naadam, this contest is very popular and develops a serious audience among older Mongolians. [thumb|left|Riders during](/wiki/File:Three_Naadam_riders.jpg) [Naadam](/wiki/Naadam) festival

[Horse riding](/wiki/Horse_culture_in_Mongolia) is especially central to Mongolian culture. The long-distance races that are showcased during Naadam festivals are one aspect of this, as is the popularity of trick riding. One example of trick riding is the legend that the Mongolian military hero [Damdin Sükhbaatar](/wiki/Damdin_Sükhbaatar) scattered coins on the ground and then picked them up while riding a horse at full gallop.

[Mongolian wrestling](/wiki/Mongolian_wrestling) is the most popular of all Mongol sports. It is the highlight of the Three Manly Games of Naadam. Historians claim that Mongol-style wrestling originated some seven thousand years ago. Hundreds of wrestlers from different cities and aimags around the country take part in the national wrestling competition.

Other sports such as basketball, [weightlifting](/wiki/Olympic_weightlifting), [powerlifting](/wiki/Powerlifting), and association football, athletics, gymnastics, table tennis, [jujutsu](/wiki/Jujutsu), [karate](/wiki/Karate), [aikido](/wiki/Aikido), [kickboxing](/wiki/Kickboxing), [mixed martial arts](/wiki/Mixed_martial_arts) have become popular in Mongolia. More Mongolian table tennis players are competing internationally.

[Freestyle wrestling](/wiki/Freestyle_wrestling) has been practised since 1958 in Mongolia.[[92]](#cite_note-92) Mongolian freestyle wrestlers have won the first and the most Olympic medals of Mongolia.

[Naidangiin Tüvshinbayar](/wiki/Naidangiin_Tüvshinbayar) won Mongolia's first ever Olympic gold medal in the men's 100-kilogram class of judo.[[93]](#cite_note-93) [Amateur boxing](/wiki/Amateur_boxing) has been practised in Mongolia since 1948.[[94]](#cite_note-94) Mongolian olympic boxing national team was founded in 1960. Communist government of Mongolia banned boxing during the period 1964–1967 but the government ended ban on boxing soon. [Professional boxing](/wiki/Professional_boxing) began in Mongolia in the 1990s.

[Mongolia's basketball team](/wiki/Mongolia_national_basketball_team) enjoyed some success recently, especially at the [East Asian Games](/wiki/Basketball_at_the_East_Asian_Games).

Association football is also played in Mongolia. The [Mongolian national team](/wiki/Mongolia_national_football_team) began playing national games again during the 1990s; but has not yet qualified for a major international tournament. The [Mongolia Premier League](/wiki/Mongolia_Premier_League) is the top domestic competition.

Several Mongolian women have excelled in [pistol shooting](/wiki/Shooting_sports): [Otryadyn Gündegmaa](/wiki/Otryadyn_Gündegmaa) is a silver medalist of the 2008 Olympic Games, [Munkhbayar Dorjsuren](/wiki/Munkhbayar_Dorjsuren) is a double world champion and Olympic bronze medal winner (now representing Germany), while [Tsogbadrakhyn Mönkhzul](/wiki/Tsogbadrakhyn_Mönkhzul) is, as of May 2007, ranked third in the world in the [25-metre pistol](/wiki/25-metre_pistol) event.[[95]](#cite_note-95) Mongolian [sumo](/wiki/Sumo) wrestler [Dolgorsürengiin Dagvadorj](/wiki/Dolgorsürengiin_Dagvadorj) won 25 top division tournament championships, placing him fourth on the [all-time list](/wiki/List_of_sumo_record_holders#Most_career_championships) . In January 2015, [Mönkhbatyn Davaajargal](/wiki/Mönkhbatyn_Davaajargal) took his 33rd top division championship, giving him the most in the history of sumo.

Ulaanbataar holds an annual marathon in June. 2015 will have the 6th marathon that has been organized by Ar Mongol. The race starts at Sukh Bataar Square and is always open to residents and runners who come especially for this unique event.[[96]](#cite_note-96)

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

Mongolia holds many traditional festivals throughout the year. [Naadam Festival](/wiki/Naadam_Festival) is the largest festival, celebrated in every town and village across the country. It features three sporting events: wrestling, archery and horse racing, amongst other traditional games and exhibits. The [Eagle festival](/wiki/Eagle_festival) draws about 400 eagle hunters on horseback, including the traveler Мөнхбаярт Батсайхан (Munkhbayart Batsaikhan), to compete with their birds. The [Ice festival](/wiki/Ice_festival) and the [Thousand Camel Festival](/wiki/Thousand_Camel_Festival) are amongst many other traditional Mongolian festivals.

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

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

* [Index of Mongolia-related articles](/wiki/Index_of_Mongolia-related_articles)
* [Central Asia](/wiki/Central_Asia)
* [Outline of Mongolia](/wiki/Outline_of_Mongolia)
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[Template:Reflist](/wiki/Template:Reflist)

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

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* [Template:Loc](/wiki/Template:Loc)

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

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

Government

* [Template:En icon](/wiki/Template:En_icon) [Template:Link language](/wiki/Template:Link_language) [Official Website of the Government Organizations of Mongolia](https://wayback.archive.org/web/20090316081323/http://www.pmis.gov.mn/gov_eng.htm)
* [Mongolia Government Overview](http://www.pmis.gov.mn/pmis_eng/index.php) [Template:Mn icon](/wiki/Template:Mn_icon)
* [Chief of State and Cabinet Members](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/world-leaders-m/mongolia.html)

General information

* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [Mongolian tourism website](http://www.welcometomongolia.com/)
* [Mongolia](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/mongolia.htm) at *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
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