[Template:About](/wiki/Template:About" \o "Template:About) [Template:Pp-move-indef](/wiki/Template:Pp-move-indef) [Template:Use British English](/wiki/Template:Use_British_English) [Template:Use dmy dates](/wiki/Template:Use_dmy_dates) [Template:Coord](/wiki/Template:Coord) [Template:Infobox country](/wiki/Template:Infobox_country)

The **Independent State of** **Samoa** ([Template:Lang-sm](/wiki/Template:Lang-sm), [Template:IPA-all](/wiki/Template:IPA-all)), commonly known as **Samoa** ([Template:Lang-sm](/wiki/Template:Lang-sm)) and formerly known as **Western Samoa**, is a Unitary [Parliamentary Republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic) with [eleven administrative divisions](/wiki/Politics_of_Samoa). The two main islands are [Savai'i](/wiki/Savai'i) and [Upolu](/wiki/Upolu) with four smaller islands surrounding the landmasses. The capital city is [Apia](/wiki/Apia). The Lapita people discovered and settled the Samoan islands around 3,500 years ago. They developed a unique language and cultural identity.

Samoa was admitted to the United Nations on 15 December 1976.[[1]](#cite_note-1) The entire [island group](/wiki/Island_group), which includes [American Samoa](/wiki/American_Samoa), was called "Navigator Islands" by European explorers before the 20th century because of the Samoans' seafaring skills.[[2]](#cite_note-2)[[3]](#cite_note-3) Official languages are [English](/wiki/English_language) and [Samoan](/wiki/Samoan_language) (Gagana Fa'asāmoa), which is also spoken in [American Samoa](/wiki/American_Samoa).

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The oldest date so far for remains in Samoa has been calculated by New Zealand scientists to a likely true age of circa 3,000 years ago from a [Lapita](/wiki/Lapita) site at [Mulifanua](/wiki/Mulifanua) during the 1970s.<ref name=green>[Template:Cite journal](/wiki/Template:Cite_journal)</ref>

The origins of the Samoans are closely studied in modern research about Polynesia in various scientific disciplines such as [genetics](/wiki/Genetics), [linguistics](/wiki/Linguistics) and [anthropology](/wiki/Anthropology). Scientific research is ongoing, although a number of different theories exist; including one proposing that the Samoans originated from [Austronesian](/wiki/Austronesian) predecessors during the terminal eastward Lapita expansion period from Southeast Asia and Melanesia between 2,500 and 1,500 [BCE](/wiki/BCE).[[4]](#cite_note-4) The Samoan origins are currently being reassessed due to new scientific evidence and carbon dating findings from 2003 and onwards.

Intimate sociocultural and genetic ties were maintained between the eastern Lapita colonies and the archaeological record supports oral tradition and native genealogies that indicate inter-island voyaging and intermarriage between prehistoric Samoans, Fijians, and Tongans. [right|thumb|Studio photo depicting preparation of the](/wiki/File:3_Samoan_girls_making_ava_1909.jpg) [Samoa 'ava ceremony](/wiki/Samoa_'ava_ceremony) c. 1911. [right|thumb|Interior of Samoan house, Apia, Urville 1842.](/wiki/File:Urville-Apia-public.jpg)

Contact with Europeans began in the early 18th century. [Jacob Roggeveen](/wiki/Jacob_Roggeveen), a Dutchman, was the first known European to sight the Samoan islands in 1722. This visit was followed by French explorer [Louis-Antoine de Bougainville](/wiki/Louis-Antoine_de_Bougainville), who named them the *Navigator Islands* in 1768. Contact was limited before the 1830s, which is when English [missionaries](/wiki/Missionaries) and traders began arriving.

Mission work in Samoa had begun in late 1830 by [John Williams](/wiki/John_Williams_(missionary)), of the [London Missionary Society](/wiki/London_Missionary_Society) arriving in [Sapapali'i](/wiki/Sapapali'i) from [The Cook Islands](/wiki/The_Cook_Islands) and [Tahiti](/wiki/Tahiti).[[5]](#cite_note-5) According to Barbara A. West, "The Samoans were also known to engage in ‘headhunting', a ritual of war in which a warrior took the head of his slain opponent to give to his leader, thus proving his bravery."[[6]](#cite_note-6) However, [Robert Louis Stevenson](/wiki/Robert_Louis_Stevenson), who lived in Samoa from 1889 until his death in 1894, wrote in [*A Footnote to History: Eight Years of Trouble in Samoa*](/wiki/A_Footnote_to_History:_Eight_Years_of_Trouble_in_Samoa), "… the Samoans are gentle people."[[7]](#cite_note-7) [right|thumb|Exiled orator Lauaki Namulauulu Mamoe.](/wiki/File:Lauaki_Namulauulu_Mamoe.jpg) The Germans in particular began to show great commercial interest in the Samoan Islands, especially on the island of Upolu, where German firms monopolised [copra](/wiki/Copra) and [cocoa bean](/wiki/Cocoa_bean) processing. The United States laid its own claim and formed alliances with local native chieftains, most conspicuously on the islands of [Tutuila](/wiki/Tutuila) and [Manu'a](/wiki/Manu'a).

Britain also sent troops to protect British business enterprise, harbour rights, and consulate office. This was followed by an [eight-year civil war](/wiki/Samoan_Civil_War), during which each of the three powers supplied arms, training and in some cases combat troops to the warring Samoan parties. The [Samoan crisis](/wiki/Samoan_crisis) came to a critical juncture in March 1889 when all three colonial contenders sent warships into Apia harbour, and a larger-scale war seemed imminent. A massive storm on 15 March 1889 damaged or destroyed the warships, ending the military conflict.[[8]](#cite_note-8) The [Second Samoan Civil War](/wiki/Second_Samoan_Civil_War) reached a head in 1898 when [Germany](/wiki/German_Empire), the [United Kingdom](/wiki/United_Kingdom_of_Great_Britain_and_Ireland), and the United States were locked in dispute over who should control the [Samoa Islands](/wiki/Samoa_Islands). The [Siege of Apia](/wiki/Siege_of_Apia) occurred in March 1899. Samoan forces loyal to Prince [Tanu](/wiki/Malietoa_Tanumafili_I) were besieged by a larger force of Samoan rebels loyal to [Mata'afa Iosefo](/wiki/Mata'afa_Iosefo). Supporting Prince Tanu were landing parties from four British and American warships. After several days of fighting, the Samoan rebels were finally defeated.[[9]](#cite_note-9)[left|thumb|](/wiki/File:Samoan_Paramount_chief_Mataafa_Iosefa,_1896.jpg)[Mata'afa Iosefo](/wiki/Mata'afa_Iosefo) (1832–1912) paramount chief and rival for the kingship of Samoa

American and British warships shelled Apia on 15 March 1899, including the [USS *Philadelphia*](/wiki/USS_Philadelphia_(C-4)). Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States quickly resolved to end the hostilities and divided the island chain at the [Tripartite Convention of 1899](/wiki/Tripartite_Convention_(1899)), signed at Washington on 2 December 1899 with ratifications exchanged on 16 February 1900.<ref name=GHR>Ryden, George Herbert. *The Foreign Policy of the United States in Relation to Samoa*. New York: Octagon Books, 1975. (Reprint by special arrangement with Yale University Press. Originally published at New Haven: Yale University Press, 1928), p. 574</ref>

The eastern island-group became a territory of the United States (the Tutuila Islands in 1900 and officially Manu'a in 1904) and was known as [American Samoa](/wiki/American_Samoa). The western islands, by far the greater landmass, became [German Samoa](/wiki/German_Samoa). The United Kingdom had vacated all claims in Samoa and in return received (1) termination of German rights in [Tonga](/wiki/Tonga), (2) all of the Solomon Islands south of Bougainville, and (3) territorial alignments in West Africa.[[10]](#cite_note-10)

### German Samoa (1900–1914)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=2)]

[thumb|People in attendance at Tupua Tamesese's funeral.](/wiki/File:Funeral_of_Tamesese.jpg) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) The German Empire governed the western Samoan islands from 1900 to 1914. “Over all, the period of German rule was the most progressive, economically, that the country has experienced.”[[11]](#cite_note-11) [Wilhelm Solf](/wiki/Wilhelm_Solf) was appointed the colony’s first governor. His actions and conduct became “… paternal, fair and absolute.”[[12]](#cite_note-12) In 1908, when the non-violent [Mau a Pule](/wiki/Mau_movement) resistance movement arose, Solf did not hesitate to banish the Mau leader [Lauaki Namulauulu Mamoe](/wiki/Lauaki_Namulauulu_Mamoe) to Saipan in the German [Northern Mariana Islands](/wiki/Northern_Mariana_Islands).[[13]](#cite_note-13) The German colonial administration governed on the principle “there was only one government in the islands”,[[14]](#cite_note-14) Thus, there was no Samoan *Tupu* (king), nor an *alii sili* (similar to a governor), but two *Fautua* (advisors) were appointed by the colonial government. *Tumua* and *Pule* (traditional governments of Upolu and Savaii) were for a time silent; all decisions on matters affecting lands and titles were under the control of the colonial Governor.

In the first month of [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I), on 29 August 1914, troops of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force landed unopposed on 'Upolu and [seized control](/wiki/Occupation_of_German_Samoa) from the German authorities, following a request by Great Britain for [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand) to perform their "great and urgent imperial service".[[15]](#cite_note-15)

### New Zealand rule (1914–1962)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=3)]

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) From the end of [World War I](/wiki/World_War_I) until 1962, New Zealand controlled Samoa as a [Class C Mandate](/wiki/Western_Samoa_Trust_Territory) under [trusteeship](/wiki/Trusteeship) through the [League of Nations](/wiki/League_of_Nations),[[16]](#cite_note-16) then through the United Nations. There followed a series of New Zealand administrators who were responsible for two major incidents. In the first incident, approximately one fifth of the Samoan population died in the [influenza epidemic of 1918–1919](/wiki/Influenza_epidemic_of_1918).[[17]](#cite_note-17) Between 1919 and 1962, Samoa was administered by the [Department of External Affairs](/wiki/Department_of_Island_Territories_(New_Zealand)), a government department which had been specially created to oversee New Zealand's Island Territories and Samoa.[[18]](#cite_note-18) In 1943, this Department was renamed the [Department of Island Territories](/wiki/Department_of_Island_Territories_(New_Zealand)) after a separate [Department of External Affairs](/wiki/Ministry_of_Foreign_Affairs_(New_Zealand)) was created to conduct New Zealand's foreign affairs.[[19]](#cite_note-19) In 1919, the Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Epidemic concluded that there had been no epidemic of pneumonic influenza in Western Samoa before the arrival of the [SS *Talune*](/wiki/SS_Talune) from Auckland on 7 November 1918. The NZ administration allowed the ship to berth in breach of quarantine; within seven days of this ship's arrival, influenza became epidemic in Upolu and then spread rapidly throughout the rest of the territory.[[20]](#cite_note-20) The second major incident arose out of an initially peaceful protest by the [Mau](/wiki/Mau_movement) (which literally translates as "strongly held opinion"), a non-violent popular movement which had its beginnings in the early 1900s on Savai'i, led by [Lauaki Namulauulu Mamoe](/wiki/Lauaki_Namulauulu_Mamoe), an orator chief deposed by Solf. In 1909, Lauaki was exiled to [Saipan](/wiki/Saipan) and died en route back to Samoa in 1915.

By 1918, Samoa had a population of some 38,000 Samoans and 1,500 Europeans.[[21]](#cite_note-21) However, Samoans greatly resented New Zealand's colonial rule, and blamed inflation and the catastrophic 1918 flu epidemic on its misrule.[[22]](#cite_note-22) By the late 1920s the resistance movement against colonial rule had gathered widespread support. One of the Mau leaders was [Olaf Frederick Nelson](/wiki/Olaf_Frederick_Nelson), a half Samoan and half Swedish merchant.[[23]](#cite_note-23) Nelson was eventually [exiled](/wiki/Exile) during the late 1920s and early 1930s, but he continued to assist the organisation financially and politically. In accordance with the Mau's non-violent philosophy, the newly elected leader, High Chief Tupua Tamasese Lealofi, led his fellow uniformed Mau in a peaceful demonstration in downtown Apia on 28 December 1929.[[24]](#cite_note-24) The New Zealand police attempted to arrest one of the leaders in the demonstration. When he resisted, a struggle developed between the police and the Mau. The officers began to fire randomly into the crowd and a [Lewis machine gun](/wiki/Lewis_machine_gun), mounted in preparation for this demonstration, was used to disperse the demonstrators.[[25]](#cite_note-25) Chief Tamasese was shot from behind and killed while trying to bring calm and order to the Mau demonstrators, screaming "Peace, Samoa". Ten others died that day and approximately 50 were injured by gunshot wounds and police batons.[[26]](#cite_note-26) That day would come to be known in Samoa as Black Saturday. The Mau grew, remaining steadfastly non-violent, and expanded to include a highly influential women's branch.

### Independence (1962)[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=4)]

After repeated efforts by the Samoan independence movement, the New Zealand [Western Samoa Act 1961](/wiki/Western_Samoa_Act_1961) of 24 November 1961 granted Samoa independence effective 1 January 1962, upon which the Trusteeship Agreement terminated.[[27]](#cite_note-27)[[28]](#cite_note-28) Samoa also signed a friendship treaty with New Zealand. Samoa, the first small-island country in the Pacific to become independent, joined the [Commonwealth of Nations](/wiki/Commonwealth_of_Nations) on 28 August 1970. While independence was achieved at the beginning of January, Samoa annually celebrates 1 June as its independence day.[[29]](#cite_note-29)[[30]](#cite_note-30) Travel writer [Paul Theroux](/wiki/Paul_Theroux) noted marked differences between the societies in Western Samoa and [American Samoa](/wiki/American_Samoa) in 1992.[[31]](#cite_note-31) In July 1997, the government amended the constitution to change the country's name from *Western Samoa* to *Samoa*.[[32]](#cite_note-32) [American Samoa](/wiki/American_Samoa) protested against the move, asserting that the change diminished its own identity.

In 2002, New Zealand's prime minister [Helen Clark](/wiki/Helen_Clark) formally apologised for New Zealand's role in the events of 1918 and 1929.[[33]](#cite_note-33)[[34]](#cite_note-34)

### 21st century[[edit](/index.php?title=(none)&action=edit&section=5)]

On 7 September 2009, the government changed the [driving orientation for motorists](/wiki/Right-_and_left-hand_traffic): Samoans now drive on the left side of the road. This brought Samoa into line with many other countries in the region. Samoa thus became the first country in recent years – and the first in the 21st century – to switch to driving on the left.[[35]](#cite_note-35) At the end of December 2011, Samoa jumped forward by one day, omitting 30 December from the local calendar, when the nation moved to the west of the [International Date Line](/wiki/International_Date_Line).[[36]](#cite_note-36) This change aimed to help the nation boost its economy in doing business with Australia and [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand). Before this change, Samoa was 21 hours behind Sydney, but the change means it is now three hours ahead. The previous time zone, agreed on 4 July 1892, operated in line with American traders based in California.[[37]](#cite_note-37)

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

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

[thumb|300px|Government buildings in Apia.](/wiki/File:Samoa_-_Apia_Govt_buildings.jpg) The 1960 constitution, which formally came into force with independence from New Zealand in 1962, builds on the British pattern of [parliamentary democracy](/wiki/Parliamentary_democracy), modified to take account of Samoan customs.[[38]](#cite_note-38) The national modern Government of Samoa is referred to as the *Malo*.

[Fiame Mata'afa Faumuina Mulinu’u II](/wiki/Fiame_Mata'afa_Faumuina_Mulinu’u_II), one of the four highest-ranking [paramount chiefs](/wiki/Paramount_chief) in the country, became Samoa's first [Prime Minister](/wiki/Prime_Minister_of_Samoa). Two other paramount chiefs at the time of independence were appointed joint [heads of state](/wiki/Head_of_state) for life. [Tupua Tamasese Mea'ole](/wiki/Tupua_Tamasese_Mea'ole) died in 1963, leaving [Malietoa Tanumafili II](/wiki/Malietoa_Tanumafili_II) sole head of state until his death on 11 May 2007, upon which Samoa changed from a [constitutional monarchy](/wiki/Constitutional_monarchy) to a [parliamentary republic](/wiki/Parliamentary_republic) *de facto*.[[39]](#cite_note-39) The next Head of State, [Tuiatua Tupua Tamasese Efi](/wiki/Tuiatua_Tupua_Tamasese_Efi), was elected by the legislature on 17 June 2007 for a fixed five-year term,[[40]](#cite_note-40) and was re-elected unopposed in July 2012.

The unicameral legislature (the [Fono](/wiki/Fono)) consists of 49 members serving 5-year terms. Forty-seven are [*matai*](/wiki/Fa'amatai) title-holders elected from territorial districts by Samoans; the other two are chosen by non-Samoans with no chiefly affiliation on separate electoral rolls.[[41]](#cite_note-41) Universal suffrage was adopted in 1990, but only chiefs (matai) may stand for election to the Samoan seats. There are more than 25,000 matais in the country, about 5% of whom are women.[[42]](#cite_note-42) The prime minister, chosen by a majority in the Fono, is appointed by the head of state to form a government. The prime minister's choices for the 12 cabinet positions are appointed by the head of state, subject to the continuing confidence of the Fono.

Prominent women in Samoan politics include the late [Laulu Fetauimalemau Mata'afa](/wiki/Laulu_Fetauimalemau_Mata'afa) (1928–2007) from [Lotofaga](/wiki/Lotofaga) constituency, the wife of Samoa's first prime minister. Their daughter [Fiame Naomi Mata'afa](/wiki/Fiame_Naomi_Mata'afa) is a paramount chief and a long-serving senior member of cabinet. Other women in politics include Samoan scholar and eminent professor [Aiono Fanaafi Le Tagaloa](/wiki/Aiono_Fanaafi_Le_Tagaloa), orator-chief [Matatumua Maimoana](/wiki/Matatumua_Maimoana) and [Safuneitu'uga Pa'aga Neri](/wiki/Safuneitu'uga_Pa'aga_Neri) ([Template:As of](/wiki/Template:As_of) the Minister of Communication and Technology).

The judicial system incorporates [English common law](/wiki/English_common_law) and local customs. The Supreme Court of Samoa is the court of highest jurisdiction. Its [chief justice](/wiki/Chief_justice) is appointed by the head of state upon the recommendation of the prime minister.

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

[Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Samoa comprises eleven *itūmālō* (political districts). These are the traditional eleven districts that were established[Template:By whom?](/wiki/Template:By_whom?) well before Europeans arrived. Each district has its own constitutional foundation (faavae) based on the traditional order of title precedence found in each district's faalupega (traditional salutations).

The capital village of each district administers and coordinates the affairs of the district and confers each district's paramount title, amongst other responsibilities. For example, the District of A'ana has its capital at Leulumoega. The paramount title of A'ana is the TuiA'ana. The orator group which confers this title – the Faleiva (House of Nine) – is based at Leulumoega. This is also the same for the other districts. In the district of Tuamasaga, the paramount title of the district – the Malietoa title – is conferred by the FaleTuamasaga based in Afega.

[right|thumb|320px|Political districts of Samoa](/wiki/File:Samoa_districts_numbered2.png) [Template:Columns](/wiki/Template:Columns)

1 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small)   
2 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small)   
3 [Template:Small](/wiki/Template:Small)

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

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

[thumb|300px|A map of Samoa.](/wiki/File:Samoa_Country_map.png) [thumb|300px|Topography of Samoa.](/wiki/File:Samoa_topography.png)

Samoa is located south of the equator, about halfway between Hawaii and New Zealand in the [Polynesian](/wiki/Polynesia) region of the Pacific Ocean. The total land area is 2,842 km² (1,097 sq mi),[[43]](#cite_note-43) consisting of the two large islands of [Upolu](/wiki/Upolu) and [Savai'i](/wiki/Savai'i) which account for 99% of the total land area, and eight small islets.

These are the three islets in the [Apolima Strait](/wiki/Apolima_Strait) ([Manono Island](/wiki/Manono_Island), [Apolima](/wiki/Apolima) and [Nu'ulopa](/wiki/Nu'ulopa)), the four [Aleipata Islands](/wiki/Aleipata_Islands) off the eastern end of Upolu ([Nu'utele](/wiki/Nu'utele), [Nu'ulua](/wiki/Nu'ulua), [Namua](/wiki/Namua), and [Fanuatapu](/wiki/Fanuatapu)), and [Nu'usafe'e](/wiki/Nu'usafe'e) (less than 0.01 km² – 2½ acres – in area and about 1.4 km (0.9 mi) off the south coast of Upolu at the village of *Vaovai*).[[44]](#cite_note-44) The main island of Upolu is home to nearly three-quarters of Samoa's population, and its capital city is [Apia](/wiki/Apia,_Samoa).

The Samoan islands have been produced by vulcanism, the source of which is the [Samoa hotspot](/wiki/Samoa_hotspot) which is probably the result of a [mantle plume](/wiki/Mantle_plume).[[45]](#cite_note-45)[[46]](#cite_note-46) While all of the islands have volcanic origins, only Savai'i, the western most island in Samoa, is volcanically active with the most recent eruptions in [Mt Matavanu](/wiki/Mt_Matavanu) (1905–1911), [Mata o le Afi](/wiki/Mata_Ole_Afi) (1902) and [Mauga Afi](/wiki/Mauga_Afi) (1725). The highest point in Samoa is [Mt Silisili](/wiki/Silisili), at 1858 m (6,096 ft). The [Saleaula](/wiki/Saleaula) lava fields situated on the central north coast of Savai'i are the result of the Mt Matavanu eruptions which left 50 km² (20 sq mi) of solidified lava.[[47]](#cite_note-47)

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

The climate is equatorial/monsoonal, with an average annual temperature of 26.5 °C (79.7 °F), and a rainy season from November to April.[[48]](#cite_note-48) Savai'i is the largest of the Samoan islands and the sixth largest Polynesian island after New Zealand's [North](/wiki/North_Island), [South](/wiki/South_Island) and [Stewart Islands](/wiki/Stewart_Island/Rakiura) and the Hawaiian islands of [Hawaiʻi](/wiki/Hawaii_(island)) and [Maui](/wiki/Maui). The population of Savai'i is 42,000 people. [Template:Clear](/wiki/Template:Clear)

[Template:Weather box](/wiki/Template:Weather_box)

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

[Template:See also](/wiki/Template:See_also) Samoa is located within the [Samoan tropical moist forests](/wiki/Samoan_tropical_moist_forests) ecoregion. Since human habitation began, about 80% of the lowland rain forests has been lost. Within the ecoregion about 28% of plants and 84% of land birds are endemic.[[49]](#cite_note-49)

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

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

[thumb|](/wiki/File:Colocasia_esculenta_dsc07801.jpg)[Taro](/wiki/Taro), a root crop, traditionally was Samoa's largest export, generating more than half of all export revenue in 1993. A fungal blight decimated the plants, and in each year since 1994 taro exports have accounted for less than 1% of export revenue. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in [purchasing power parity](/wiki/Purchasing_power_parity) (PPP) in 2006 was estimated at $1.218 billion USD. The industrial sector is the largest component of GDP at 58.4%, followed by the services sector at 30.2% (2004 est.). Agriculture represents only 11.4% of GDP (2004 est.). Samoan labour force is estimated at 90,000.[[50]](#cite_note-50) The country currency is the [Samoan tālā](/wiki/Samoan_tala), issued and regulated by the [Central Bank of Samoa](/wiki/Central_Bank_of_Samoa).[[51]](#cite_note-51)The economy of Samoa has traditionally been dependent on agriculture and fishing at the local level. In modern times, [development aid](/wiki/Development_aid), private family [remittances from overseas](/wiki/Remittances_from_overseas), and agricultural exports have become key factors in the nation's economy. Agriculture employs two-thirds of the labour force, and furnishes 90% of exports, featuring [coconut](/wiki/Coconut) cream, [coconut oil](/wiki/Coconut_oil), [noni](/wiki/Noni) (juice of the *nonu* fruit, as it is known in Samoan), and [copra](/wiki/Copra).<ref name=cia/>

Outside of a large automotive [wire harness](/wiki/Wire_harness) factory ([Yazaki Corporation](/wiki/Yazaki)), the manufacturing sector mainly processes agricultural products. Tourism is an expanding sector which now accounts for 25% of GDP. Tourist arrivals have been increasing over the years with more than 100,000 tourists visiting the islands in 2005, up from 70,000 in 1996.

The Samoan government has called for [deregulation](/wiki/Deregulation) of the financial sector, encouragement of investment, and continued fiscal discipline. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) Observers point to the flexibility of the labour market as a basic strength for future economic advances. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) The sector has been helped enormously by major capital investment in hotel infrastructure, political instability in neighbouring Pacific countries, and the 2005 launch of [Virgin Samoa](/wiki/Virgin_Samoa) a joint-venture between the government and [Virgin Australia](/wiki/Virgin_Australia) (then Virgin Blue).

In the period before German colonisation, Samoa produced mostly copra. German merchants and settlers were active in introducing large scale [plantation](/wiki/Plantation) operations and developing new industries, notably cocoa bean and rubber, relying on imported labourers from China and [Melanesia](/wiki/Melanesia). When the value of natural rubber fell drastically, about the end of the Great War (World War I), the New Zealand government encouraged the production of bananas, for which there is a large market in New Zealand. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Because of variations in altitude, a large range of tropical and subtropical crops can be cultivated, but land is not generally available to outside interests. Of the total land area of 2,934 km² (725,000 acres), about 24.4% is in permanent crops and another 21.2% is arable. About 4.4% is Western Samoan Trust Estates Corporation (WSTEC). [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

The staple products of Samoa are copra (dried coconut meat), [cocoa bean](/wiki/Cocoa_bean) (for chocolate), and bananas. The annual production of both bananas and copra has been in the range of 13,000 to 15,000 metric tons (about 14,500 to 16,500 short tons). If the [rhinoceros beetle](/wiki/Rhinoceros_beetle) in Samoa were eradicated, Samoa could produce in excess of 40,000 metric tons (44,000 short tons) of copra. Samoan cocoa beans are of very high quality and used in fine New Zealand chocolates. Most are [Criollo](/wiki/Criollo_(cocoa_bean))-Forastero hybrids. Coffee grows well, but production has been uneven. WSTEC is the biggest coffee producer. Rubber has been produced in Samoa for many years, but its export value has little impact on the economy. [Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed)

Other agricultural industries have been less successful. [Sugarcane](/wiki/Sugarcane) production, originally established by Germans in the early 20th century, could be successful. Old train tracks for transporting cane can be seen at some plantations east of [Apia](/wiki/Apia). [Pineapples](/wiki/Pineapple) grow well in Samoa, but beyond local consumption have not been a major export.

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

[thumb|300px|A Samoan family.](/wiki/File:Samoa_Familie.JPG) [Template:Main](/wiki/Template:Main) Samoa has a population of 194,320. About three-quarters of the population live on the main island of [Upolu](/wiki/Upolu).[[38]](#cite_note-38)

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

92.6% of the population are [Samoans](/wiki/Samoans), 7% [Euronesians](/wiki/Euronesian) (people of mixed European and [Polynesian](/wiki/Polynesians) ancestry) and 0.4% are [Europeans](/wiki/European_ethnic_groups), per the [CIA World Factbook](/wiki/The_World_Factbook). Only the [Māori](/wiki/Māori_people) of New Zealand outnumber Samoans among Polynesian groups.

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

[Samoan](/wiki/Samoan_language) and [English](/wiki/English_language) are official languages. [Samoan Sign Language](/wiki/Samoan_Sign_Language) is used by at least some of the deaf population.

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

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

[Samoans' religious adherence](/wiki/Religion_in_Samoa) includes the following: [Christian Congregational Church of Samoa](/wiki/Christian_Congregational_Church_of_Samoa) 31.8%, [Roman Catholic](/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Church) 19.4%, [Methodist](/wiki/Methodist) 15.2%, [Assembly of God](/wiki/Samoan_Assemblies_of_God) 13.7%, [Mormon](/wiki/Mormon) 7.6%, [Seventh-day Adventist](/wiki/Seventh-day_Adventist_Church) 3.9%, Worship Centre 1.7%, other Christian 5.5%, other 0.7%, none 0.1%, unspecified 0.1% (2011 estimate).<ref name=cia/> The Head of State until 2007, His Highness [Malietoa Tanumafili II](/wiki/Malietoa_Tanumafili_II_of_Samoa), was a [Bahá'í](/wiki/Bahá'í_Faith) convert. Samoa hosts one of seven [Bahá'í Houses of Worship](/wiki/Bahá'í_House_of_Worship) in the world; completed in 1984 and dedicated by the Head of State, it is located in [Tiapapata](/wiki/Tiapapata), 8 km (5 mi) from [Apia](/wiki/Apia).

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

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

[thumb|300px|A view of](/wiki/File:Samoa_upolu.jpg) [Falefa Valley](/wiki/Falefa_Valley) from Le Mafa Pass, east [Upolu](/wiki/Upolu). The [fa'a Samoa](/wiki/Fa'a_Samoa), or traditional Samoan way, remains a strong force in Samoan life and politics. Despite centuries of European influence, Samoa maintains its historical customs, social and political systems, and [language](/wiki/Samoan_language). Cultural customs such as the [Samoa 'ava ceremony](/wiki/Samoa_'ava_ceremony) are significant and solemn rituals at important occasions including the bestowal of [*matai*](/wiki/Fa'amatai) chiefly titles. Items of great cultural value include the finely woven [*'ie toga*](/wiki/'ie_toga).

[Samoan mythology](/wiki/Samoan_mythology) includes many gods with creation stories and figures of legend such as [Tagaloa](/wiki/Tagaloa) and the goddess of war [Nafanua](/wiki/Nafanua), the daughter of [Saveasi'uleo](/wiki/Saveasi'uleo), ruler of the spirit realm [Pulotu](/wiki/Pulotu). Other legends include the well known story of [Sina and the Eel](/wiki/Sina_and_the_Eel) which explains the origins of the first coconut tree.

Some Samoans are spiritual and religious, and have subtly adapted the dominant religion of Christianity to 'fit in' with fa'a Samoa and vice versa. As such, ancient beliefs continue to co-exist side-by-side with Christianity, particularly in regard to the traditional customs and rituals of fa'a Samoa. The Samoan culture is centred around the principle of vāfealoa'i, the relationships between people. These relationships are based on respect, or [fa'aaloalo](/wiki/Fa'aaloalo). When Christianity was introduced in Samoa, most Samoan people converted. Currently 98% of the population identify themselves as Christian.

Some Samoans live a communal way of life, participating in activities collectively. Examples of this are the traditional Samoan [*fale*](/wiki/Architecture_of_Samoa) (houses) which are open with no walls, using blinds made of coconut palm fronds during the night or bad weather.

The Samoan word for dance is [*siva*](/wiki/Siva_Samoa) with unique gentle movements of the body in time to music and which tells a story, although the Samoan male dances can be more physical and snappy.[[52]](#cite_note-52) The [*sasa*](/wiki/Sasa_(dance)) is also a traditional dance where rows of dancers perform rapid [synchronised](/wiki/Synchronization) movements in time to the rhythm of wooden drums *(*[*pate*](/wiki/Pate_(musical_instrument))*)* or rolled mats. Another dance performed by males is called the [*fa'ataupati*](/wiki/Fa'ataupati) or the slap dance, creating rhythmic sounds by slapping different parts of the body. This is believed to have been derived from slapping insects on the body.

The form and construction of traditional [architecture of Samoa](/wiki/Architecture_of_Samoa) was a specialised skill by *Tufuga fai fale* that was also linked to other cultural artforms.

<gallery mode="packed"> File:Catholic church in Samoa-2.jpg|Roman Catholic [Immaculate Conception](/wiki/Immaculate_Conception) of Mary cathedral. File:Siva Afi - Fire spinning.jpg|A Samoan fire dancer. File:Fale on Manono Island.jpg|A [fale](/wiki/Architecture_of_Samoa) on [Manono Island](/wiki/Manono_Island) File:Apia Samoa Temple-new.jpg|LDS [Apia Samoa Temple](/wiki/Apia_Samoa_Temple) </gallery>

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

[thumb|A Samoan woman with a traditional](/wiki/File:Samoan_Malu.jpg) [malu](/wiki/Malu).

As with other Polynesian cultures ([Hawaiian](/wiki/Hawaiian_culture), [Tahitian](/wiki/Tahitians) and [Māori](/wiki/Māori_culture)) with significant and unique tattoos, Samoans have two gender specific and culturally significant tattoos. For males, it is called the [Pe'a](/wiki/Pe'a) and consists of intricate and geometrical patterns [tattooed](/wiki/Tattoo) that cover areas from the knees up towards the ribs. A male who possesses such a tatau is called a [soga'imiti](/wiki/Soga'imiti). A Samoan girl or *teine* is given a [malu](/wiki/Malu), which covers the area from just below her knees to her upper thighs.[[53]](#cite_note-53)

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

[Albert Wendt](/wiki/Albert_Wendt) is a significant Samoan writer whose novels and stories tell the Samoan experience. In 1989, his novel *Flying Fox in a Freedom Tree* was made into a feature film in New Zealand, directed by Martyn Sanderson.[[54]](#cite_note-54) Another novel *Sons for the Return Home* had also been made into a feature film in 1979, directed by Paul Maunder.[[55]](#cite_note-55)The late [John Kneubuhl](/wiki/John_Kneubuhl), born in American Samoa, was an accomplished playwright and screenwriter and writer. [Sia Figiel](/wiki/Sia_Figiel) won the 1997 [Commonwealth Writers' Prize](/wiki/Commonwealth_Writers'_Prize) for fiction in the south-east Asia/South Pacific region with her novel "Where We Once Belonged". [Momoe Von Reiche](/wiki/Momoe_Von_Reiche) is an internationally recognised poet and artist. [Tusiata Avia](/wiki/Tusiata_Avia) is a performance poet. Her first book of poetry *Wild Dogs Under My Skirt* was published by Victoria University Press in 2004. [Dan Taulapapa McMullin](/wiki/Dan_Taulapapa_McMullin) is an artist and writer. Other Samoan poets and writers include [Sapa'u Ruperake Petaia](/wiki/Sapa'u_Ruperake_Petaia), [Eti Sa'aga](/wiki/Eti_Sa'aga) and [Savea Sano Malifa](/wiki/Savea_Sano_Malifa), the editor of the [Samoa Observer](/wiki/Samoa_Observer).

In music, popular local bands include [The Five Stars](/wiki/The_Five_Stars), Penina o Tiafau and Punialava'a. [The Yandall Sisters'](/wiki/The_Yandall_Sisters) cover of the song *Sweet Inspiration* reached number one on the New Zealand charts in 1974. [King Kapisi](/wiki/King_Kapisi) was the first hip hop artist to receive the prestigious New Zealand [APRA](/wiki/Australasian_Performing_Right_Association) Silver Scroll Award in 1999 for his song *Reverse Resistance*. The music video for *Reverse Resistance* was filmed in Savai'i at his villages. Other successful Samoan hip hop artists include rapper [Scribe](/wiki/Scribe_(rapper)), [Dei Hamo](/wiki/Dei_Hamo), [Savage](/wiki/Savage_(rapper)) and [Tha Feelstyle](/wiki/Tha_Feelstyle) whose music video *Suamalie* was filmed in Samoa.

[Lemi Ponifasio](/wiki/Lemi_Ponifasio) is a director and choreographer who is prominent internationally with his dance Company MAU.[[56]](#cite_note-56)[Neil Ieremia's](/wiki/Neil_Ieremia) company [Black Grace](/wiki/Black_Grace) has also received international acclaim with tours to Europe and New York. [Hip hop](/wiki/Hip_hop) has had a significant impact on Samoan culture. According to Katerina Martina Teaiwa, PhD from the University of Hawaii at Manoa, "Hip hop culture in particular is popular amongst Samoan youth."[[57]](#cite_note-57) Like very many other countries, hip hop music is popular. In addition, the integration of hip hop elements into Samoan tradition also "testifies to the transferability of the dance forms themselves," and to the "circuits through which people and all their embodied knowledge travel."[[58]](#cite_note-58) Dance both in its traditional form and its more modern forms has remained a central cultural currency to Samoans, especially youths.[[57]](#cite_note-57) The arts organisation *Tautai* is a collective of visual artists including [Fatu Feu'u](/wiki/Fatu_Feu'u), [Johnny Penisula](/wiki/Johnny_Penisula), [Shigeyuki Kihara](/wiki/Shigeyuki_Kihara), [Iosefa Leo](/wiki/Iosefa_Leo), [Michel Tuffery](/wiki/Michel_Tuffery), [John Ioane](/wiki/John_Ioane) and [Lily Laita](/wiki/Lily_Laita).[[59]](#cite_note-59) Director [Sima Urale](/wiki/Sima_Urale) is an award-winning filmmaker. Urale's short film *O Tamaiti* won the prestigious Best Short Film at the [Venice Film Festival](/wiki/Venice_Film_Festival) in 1996. Her first feature film *Apron Strings* opened the 2008 [NZ International Film Festival](/wiki/New_Zealand_International_Film_Festivals). The feature film [*Siones Wedding*](/wiki/Siones_Wedding), co-written by [Oscar Kightley](/wiki/Oscar_Kightley), was financially successful following premieres in Auckland and Apia. The 2011 film [The Orator](/wiki/The_Orator) was the first ever fully Samoan film, shot in Samoa in the Samoan language with a Samoan cast telling a uniquely Samoan story. Written and directed by [Tusi Tamasese](/wiki/Tusi_Tamasese), it received much critical acclaim and attention at film festivals throughout the world.

In comedy, [Laughing Samoans](/wiki/Laughing_Samoans), the [Naked Samoans](/wiki/Naked_Samoans) and Kila Kokonut Krew have enjoyed sold-out tours.

Actor and director [Nathaniel Lees](/wiki/Nathaniel_Lees) has featured in many theatre productions and films including his role as Captain Mifune in [*The Matrix*](/wiki/The_Matrix) trilogy. Published playwrights include Oscar Kightley, [Victor Rodger](/wiki/Victor_Rodger), [Makerita Urale](/wiki/Makerita_Urale) and [Niuean](/wiki/Niue) Samoan playwright [Dianna Fuemana](/wiki/Dianna_Fuemana).[[60]](#cite_note-60)

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

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

[thumb|Samoa (blue) vs. South Africa in June 2007.](/wiki/File:Percy_Montgomery_against_Samoa.jpg) The main sports played in Samoa are [rugby union](/wiki/Rugby_union), [Samoan cricket](/wiki/Samoan_cricket) and [netball](/wiki/Netball). Rugby union is the national football code of Samoa. In Samoan villages, volleyball is also popular.

Rugby union is the national sport in Samoa and the [national team](/wiki/Samoa_national_rugby_union_team), nicknamed the Manu Samoa, is consistently competitive against teams from vastly more populous nations. Samoa has competed at every [Rugby World Cup](/wiki/Rugby_World_Cup) since [1991](/wiki/1991_Rugby_World_Cup), and made the quarter finals in 1991, [1995](/wiki/1995_Rugby_World_Cup) and the second round of the [1999](/wiki/1999_Rugby_World_Cup) world cup.[[61]](#cite_note-61) At the 2003 world cup, Manu Samoa came close to beating eventual world champions, England. Samoa also played in the [Pacific Nations Cup](/wiki/Pacific_Nations_Cup) and the [Pacific Tri-Nations](/wiki/Pacific_Tri-Nations) The sport is governed by the [Samoa Rugby Football Union](/wiki/Samoa_Rugby_Football_Union), who are members of the [Pacific Islands Rugby Alliance](/wiki/Pacific_Islands_Rugby_Alliance), and thus, also contribute to the international [Pacific Islanders rugby union team](/wiki/Pacific_Islanders_rugby_union_team).

At club level, there is the [National Provincial Championship](/wiki/Samoa_National_Provincial_Championship) and [Pacific Rugby Cup](/wiki/Pacific_Rugby_Cup). They also took home the cup at Wellington and the Hong Kong Rugby Sevens in 2007—for which the Prime Minister of Samoa, also Chairman of the national rugby union, Tuila’epa Sa’ilele Malielegaoi, declared a national holiday. They were also the [IRB World Sevens Series](/wiki/IRB_World_Sevens_Series) Champions in 2010 capping a year of achievement for the Samoans, following wins in the USA, Australia, Hong Kong and Scotland Sevens tournaments.

Prominent Samoan players include [Pat Lam](/wiki/Pat_Lam) and [Brian Lima](/wiki/Brian_Lima). In addition, many Samoans have played for or are playing for [New Zealand](/wiki/New_Zealand_national_rugby_union_team).

[Rugby league](/wiki/Rugby_league) is mostly played by Samoans living in New Zealand and Australia,[Template:Citation needed](/wiki/Template:Citation_needed) with [Samoa](/wiki/Samoa_national_rugby_league_team) reaching the quarter finals of the [2013 Rugby League World Cup](/wiki/2013_Rugby_League_World_Cup) made of players playing in the [NRL](/wiki/NRL), [Super League](/wiki/Super_League) and domestic players. Many Samoans and New Zealanders or Australians of Samoan descent play in the Super League and National Leagues in Britain. Francis Meli, Ta'ane Lavulavu of Workington Town, Maurie Fa'asavalu of St Helens and David Fatialofa of Whitehaven and Setima Sa who signed with London Irish rugby club. Other noteworthy players from NZ and Australia have represented the [Samoan National team](/wiki/Samoa_national_rugby_league_team). The 2011 domestic Samoan rugby league competition contained 10 teams with plans to expand to 12 in 2012.[[62]](#cite_note-62) Samoans have been very visible in [boxing](/wiki/Boxing), [kickboxing](/wiki/Kickboxing), [wrestling](/wiki/Professional_wrestling), and [sumo](/wiki/Sumo); some Samoan sumo wrestlers, most famously [Musashimaru](/wiki/Musashimaru) and [Konishiki](/wiki/Konishiki), have reached the highest rank of [*Ozeki*](/wiki/Ozeki) and [*yokozuna*](/wiki/Yokozuna_(sumo)).

[American football](/wiki/American_football) is occasionally played in Samoa, reflecting its wide popularity in [American Samoa](/wiki/American_Samoa), where the sport is played under high school sanction. About 30 ethnic Samoans, many from American Samoa, currently play in the [National Football League](/wiki/National_Football_League). A 2002 article from [*ESPN*](/wiki/ESPN) estimated that a Samoan male (either an American Samoan, or a Samoan living in the mainland United States) is 40 times more likely to play in the NFL than a non-Samoan American.[[63]](#cite_note-63)

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

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

* [1889 Apia cyclone](/wiki/1889_Apia_cyclone)
* [2009 Samoa earthquake and tsunami](/wiki/2009_Samoa_earthquake_and_tsunami)
* [Archaeology of Samoa](/wiki/Archaeology_of_Samoa)
* [Military of Samoa](/wiki/Military_of_Samoa)
* [Outline of Samoa](/wiki/Outline_of_Samoa)
* [Time in Samoa](/wiki/Time_in_Samoa)
* [Transport in Samoa](/wiki/Transport_in_Samoa)
* [Visa policy of Samoa](/wiki/Visa_policy_of_Samoa)

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

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

Government

* [Government of Samoa](http://www.samoagovt.ws/)
* [Chief of State and Cabinet Members](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/world-leaders-1/WS.html)

General information

* [Template:CIA World Factbook link](/wiki/Template:CIA_World_Factbook_link)
* [University of Colorado](http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/samoa.htm) from *UCB Libraries GovPubs*
* [Template:Dmoz](/wiki/Template:Dmoz)
* [Samoa](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-15655855) from the [BBC News](/wiki/BBC_News)
* [Template:Wikiatlas](/wiki/Template:Wikiatlas)
* [Samoa Tourism Authority](http://www.samoa.travel)
* [Key Development Forecasts for Samoa](http://www.ifs.du.edu/ifs/frm_CountryProfile.aspx?Country=WS) from [International Futures](/wiki/International_Futures)
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