



Yemen



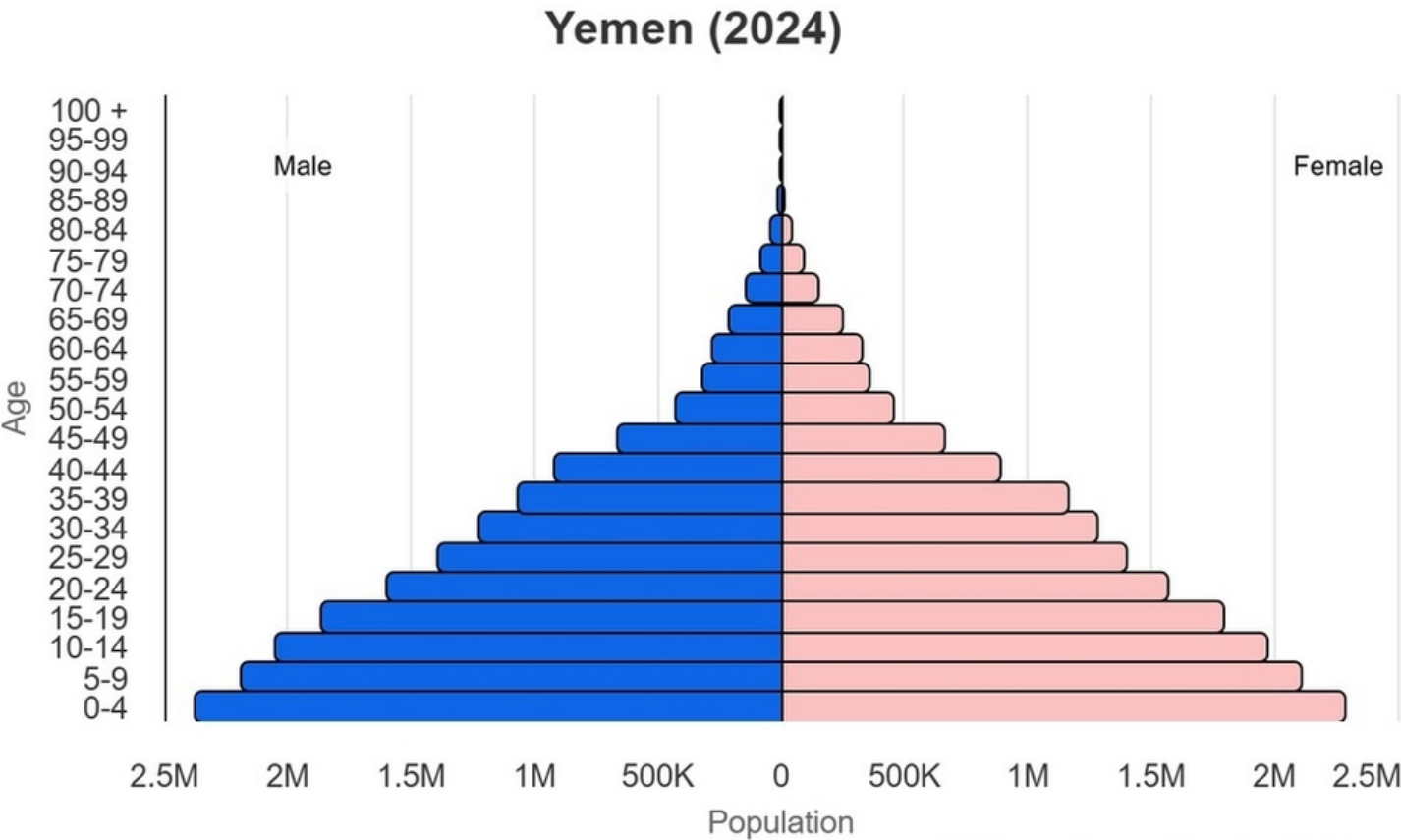
Background The Kingdom of Yemen (colloquially known as North Yemen) became independent from the Ottoman Empire in 1918 and in 1962 became the Yemen Arab Republic. The British, who had set up a protectorate area around the southern port of Aden in the 19th century, withdrew in 1967 from what became the People's Republic of Southern Yemen (colloquially known as South Yemen). Three years later, the southern government adopted a Marxist orientation and changed the country's name to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The exodus of hundreds of thousands of Yemenis from the south to the north contributed to two decades of hostility between the states, which were formally unified as the Republic of Yemen in 1990. A southern secessionist movement and brief civil war in 1994 was quickly subdued. In 2000, Saudi Arabia and Yemen agreed to delineate their border. Fighting in the northwest between the government and the Houthis, a Zaydi Shia Muslim minority, continued intermittently from 2004 to 2010, and then again from 2014 to the present. The southern secessionist movement was revitalized in 2007. Public rallies in Sana'a against then President Ali Abdallah SALIH -- inspired by similar Arab Spring demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt -- slowly gained momentum in 2011, fueled by complaints over high unemployment, poor economic conditions, and corruption. Some protests resulted in violence, and the demonstrations spread to other major cities. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) mediated the crisis with the GCC Initiative, an agreement in which the president would step down in exchange for immunity from prosecution. SALIH eventually agreed to step down and transfer some powers to Vice President Abd Rabuh Mansur HADI. After HADI's uncontested election victory in 2012, SALIH formally transferred all presidential powers. In accordance with the GCC Initiative, Yemen launched a National Dialogue Conference (NDC) in 2013 to discuss key constitutional, political, and social issues. HADI concluded the NDC in 2014 and planned to proceed with constitutional drafting, a constitutional referendum, and national elections. The Houthis, perceiving their grievances were not addressed in the NDC, joined forces with SALIH and expanded their influence in northwestern Yemen, which culminated in a major offensive against military units and rival tribes and enabled their forces to overrun the capital, Sana'a, in 2014. In 2015, the Houthis surrounded key government facilities, prompting HADI and the cabinet to resign. HADI fled first to Aden -- where he rescinded his resignation -- and then to Oman before moving to Saudi Arabia and asking the GCC to intervene militarily in Yemen. Saudi Arabia assembled a coalition of Arab militaries and began airstrikes, and ground fighting continued through 2016. In 2016, the UN initiated peace talks that ended without agreement. Rising tensions between the Houthis and SALIH culminated in Houthi forces killing SALIH. In 2018, the Houthis and the Yemeni Government participated in UN-brokered peace talks, agreeing to a limited cease-fire and the establishment of a UN mission.

In 2019, Yemen's parliament convened for the first time since the conflict broke out in 2014. Violence then erupted between HADI's government and the pro-secessionist Southern Transitional Council (STC) in southern Yemen. HADI's government and the STC signed a power-sharing agreement to end the fighting, and in 2020, the signatories formed a new cabinet. In 2020 and 2021, fighting continued as the Houthis gained territory and also conducted regular UAV and missile attacks against targets in Saudi Arabia. In 2022, the UN brokered a temporary truce between the Houthis and the Saudi-led coalition. HADI and his vice-president resigned and were replaced by an eight-person Presidential Leadership Council. Although the truce formally expired in 2022, the parties nonetheless refrained from large-scale conflict through the end of 2023. Saudi Arabia, after the truce expired, continued to negotiate with the Yemeni Government and Houthis on a roadmap agreement that would include a permanent ceasefire and a peace process under UN auspices.

Capital	name: Sanaa
Government type	in transition
Area	total : 527,968 sq km land: 527,968 sq km water: 0 sq km
Climate	mostly desert; hot and humid along west coast; temperate in western mountains affected by seasonal monsoon; extraordinarily hot, dry, harsh desert in east
Natural resources	petroleum, fish, rock salt, marble; small deposits of coal, gold, lead, nickel, and copper; fertile soil in west
Population	total: 32,140,443 (2024 est.)
Population growth rate	1.78% (2024 est.)
Ethnic groups	predominantly Arab; but also Afro-Arab, South Asian, European
Religions	Muslim 99.1% (official; virtually all are citizens, an estimated 65% are Sunni and 35% are Shia), other 0.9% (includes Jewish, Baha'i, Hindu, and Christian; many are refugees or temporary foreign residents) (2020 est.)
Languages	Arabic (official)
Executive branch	chief of state: Presidential Leadership Council Chairperson Dr. Rashad Muhammad al-ALIMI (since 19 April 2022) head of government: Prime Minister Salim Salih BIN BURAYK (since 9 May 2025)
Legislative branch	legislature name: Parliament (Majlis)
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Abdulwahab Abdullah Ahmed AL-HAJRI (since 24 July 2025)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Steven H. FAGIN (since 1 June 2022); note - the embassy closed in March 2015; Yemen Affairs Unit currently operates out of US Embassy Riyadh
Economic overview	low-income Middle Eastern economy; infrastructure, trade, and economic institutions devastated by civil war; oil/gas-dependent but decreasing reserves; massive poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment; high inflation

Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$18.719 billion (2024 est.) \$18.908 billion (2023 est.) \$19.294 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$200 (2024 est.) \$200 (2023 est.) \$300 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$384.5 million (2017 est.) \$938.469 million (2016 est.) \$1.867 billion (2015 est.)
Exports - partners	UAE 28%, India 21%, Saudi Arabia 17%, Oman 7%, Malaysia 5% (2023)
Exports - commodities	gold, fish, scrap iron, shellfish, industrial acids/oils/alcohols (2023)
Imports	\$4.079 billion (2017 est.) \$8.256 billion (2016 est.) \$7.697 billion (2015 est.)
Imports - partners	China 23%, UAE 15%, Saudi Arabia 11%, Turkey 8%, India 7% (2023)
Imports - commodities	wheat, raw sugar, rice, iron bars, plastic products (2023)

Population Pyramid



U.S. Census Bureau, International Database