



Zambia



Background Bantu-speaking groups mainly from the Luba and Lunda Kingdoms in the Congo River Basin and from the Great Lakes region in East Africa settled in what is now Zambia beginning around A.D. 300, displacing and mixing with previous population groups in the region. The Mutapa Empire developed after the fall of Great Zimbabwe to the south in the 14th century and ruled the region, including large parts of Zambia, from the 14th to 17th century. The empire collapsed as a result of the growing slave trade and Portuguese incursions in the 16th and 17th centuries. The region was further influenced by migrants from the Zulu Kingdom to the south and the Luba and Lunda Kingdoms to the north, after invading colonial and African powers displaced local residents into the area around the Zambezi River, in what is now Zambia. In the 1880s, British companies began securing mineral and other economic concessions from local leaders. The companies eventually claimed control of the region and incorporated it as the protectorate of Northern Rhodesia in 1911. The UK took over administrative control from the British South Africa Company in 1924. During the 1920s and 1930s, advances in mining spurred British economic ventures and colonial settlement.

Northern Rhodesia's name was changed to Zambia upon independence from the UK in 1964, under independence leader and first President Kenneth KAUNDA. In the 1980s and 1990s, declining copper prices, economic mismanagement, and a prolonged drought hurt the economy. Elections in 1991 brought an end to one-party rule and propelled the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) into power. The subsequent vote in 1996, however, saw increasing harassment of opposition parties and abuse of state media and other resources. Administrative problems marked the election in 2001, with three parties filing a legal petition challenging the election of ruling party candidate Levy MWANAWASA. MWANAWASA was reelected in 2006 in an election that was deemed free and fair. Upon his death in 2008, he was succeeded by his vice president, Rupiah BANDA, who won a special presidential byelection later that year. BANDA and the MMD lost to Michael SATA and the Patriotic Front (PF) in the 2011 general elections. SATA, however, presided over a period of haphazard economic management and attempted to silence opposition to PF policies. SATA died in 2014 and was succeeded by his vice president, Guy SCOTT, who served as interim president until 2015, when Edgar LUNGU won the presidential byelection and completed SATA's term. LUNGU then won a full term in the 2016 presidential elections. Hakainde HICHILEMA was elected president in 2021.

Capital	name: Lusaka
Government type	presidential republic
Area	total : 752,618 sq km land: 743,398 sq km water: 9,220 sq km
Climate	tropical; modified by altitude; rainy season (October to April)
Natural resources	copper, cobalt, zinc, lead, coal, emeralds, gold, silver, uranium, hydropower
Population	total: 20,799,116 (2024 est.)
Population growth rate	2.83% (2024 est.)
Ethnic groups	Bemba 21%, Tonga 13.6%, Chewa 7.4%, Lozi 5.7%, Nsenga 5.3%, Tumbuka 4.4%, Ngoni 4%, Lala 3.1%, Kaonde 2.9%, Namwanga 2.8%, Lunda (north Western) 2.6%, Mambwe 2.5%, Luvale 2.2%, Lamba 2.1%, Ushi 1.9%, Lenje 1.6%, Bisa 1.6%, Mbunda 1.2%, other 13.8%, unspecified 0.4% (2010 est.)
Religions	Protestant 75.3%, Roman Catholic 20.2%, other 2.7% (includes Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and Baha'i), none 1.8% (2010 est.)
Languages	Bemba 33.4%, Nyanja 14.7%, Tonga 11.4%, Lozi 5.5%, Chewa 4.5%, Nsenga 2.9%, Tumbuka 2.5%, Lunda (North Western) 1.9%, Kaonde 1.8%, Lala 1.8%, Lamba 1.8%, English (official) 1.7%, Luvale 1.5%, Mambwe 1.3%, Namwanga 1.2%, Lenje 1.1%, Bisa 1%, other 9.7%, unspecified 0.2% (2010 est.)
Executive branch	chief of state: President Hakainde HICHILEMA (since 24 August 2021) head of government: President Hakainde HICHILEMA (since 24 August 2021)
Legislative branch	legislature name: National Assembly
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Chibamba KANYAMA (since 30 June 2023)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Michael C. GONZALES (since 16 September 2022)
Economic overview	lower-middle-income sub-Saharan economy; regional hydroelectricity producer; trade ties and infrastructure investments from China; IMF assistance to restructure debt burden; one of youngest and fastest-growing labor forces; systemic corruption; extreme rural poverty
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$79.207 billion (2024 est.) \$76.129 billion (2023 est.) \$72.251 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$3,700 (2024 est.) \$3,700 (2023 est.) \$3,600 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$11.454 billion (2023 est.) \$12.444 billion (2022 est.) \$11.728 billion (2021 est.)
Exports - partners	Switzerland 27%, China 15%, India 13%, UAE 12%, DRC 10% (2023)

Exports - commodities	raw copper, refined copper, gold, precious stones, electricity (2023)
Imports	\$10.854 billion (2023 est.) \$10.022 billion (2022 est.) \$7.691 billion (2021 est.)
Imports - partners	South Africa 25%, China 15%, UAE 10%, India 5%, Japan 5% (2023)
Imports - commodities	refined petroleum, fertilizers, trucks, sulphur, tractors (2023)

Population Pyramid

