



Eswatini



Background A Swazi kingdom was founded in the mid-18th century and ruled by a series of kings, including MSWATI II, a 19th century ruler whose name was adopted for the country and its predominant ethnic group. European countries defined the kingdom's modern borders during the late-19th century, and Swaziland (as it became known) was administered as a UK high commission territory from 1903 until its independence in 1968. A new constitution that came into effect in 2005 included provisions for a more independent parliament and judiciary, but the legal status of political parties remains unclear, and the kingdom is still considered an absolute monarchy. King MSWATI III renamed the country from Swaziland to Eswatini in 2018 to reflect the name most commonly used by its citizens.

In 2021, MSWATI III used security forces to suppress prodemocracy protests. A national dialogue and reconciliation process agreed to in the wake of violence has not materialized. In November 2023, King MSWATI III appointed a new prime minister following peaceful national elections. Despite its classification as a lower-middle income country, Eswatini suffers from severe poverty, corruption, and high unemployment. Eswatini has the world's highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate, although recent years have shown marked declines in new infections. Eswatini is the only country in Africa that recognizes Taiwan.

Capital name: Mbabane (administrative capital); Lobamba (royal and legislative capital)

Government type absolute monarchy

Area
total : 17,364 sq km
land: 17,204 sq km
water: 160 sq km

Climate varies from tropical to near temperate

Natural resources asbestos, coal, clay, cassiterite, hydropower, forests, small gold and diamond deposits, quarry stone, and talc

Population total: 1,138,089 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate 0.7% (2024 est.)

Ethnic groups predominantly Swazi; smaller populations of other African ethnic groups, including the Zulu, as well as people of European ancestry

Religions Christian 90% (Zionist - a blend of Christianity and traditional African religions - 40%, Roman Catholic 20%, other Christian 30% - includes Anglican, Methodist, Church of Jesus Christ, Jehovah's Witness), Muslim 2%, other 8% (includes Baha'i, Buddhist, Hindu, indigenous, Jewish) (2015 est.)

Languages English (official, used for government business), siSwati (official)

Executive branch	chief of state: King MSWATI III (since 25 April 1986) head of government: Prime Minister Russell DLAMINI (since 6 November 2023)
Legislative branch	legislature name: Parliament (Libandla)
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Kennedy Fitzgerald GROENING (7 June 2022)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant) Chargé d'Affaires Marc WEINSTOCK (since August 2025)
Economic overview	landlocked southern African economy; South African trade dependent and currency pegging; CMA and SACU member state; COVID-19 economic slowdown; growing utilities inflation; persistent poverty and unemployment; HIV/AIDS labor force disruptions
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$12.885 billion (2024 est.) \$12.553 billion (2023 est.) \$12.135 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$10,400 (2024 est.) \$10,200 (2023 est.) \$10,000 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$2.174 billion (2023 est.) \$2.095 billion (2022 est.) \$2.132 billion (2021 est.)
Exports - partners	South Africa 61%, Ireland 4%, Mozambique 4%, Kenya 4%, Nigeria 3% (2023)
Exports - commodities	scented mixtures, raw sugar, industrial acids/oils/alcohols, garments, wood (2023)
Imports	\$2.351 billion (2023 est.) \$2.288 billion (2022 est.) \$2.173 billion (2021 est.)
Imports - partners	South Africa 71%, China 8%, India 4%, USA 2%, Mozambique 1% (2023)
Imports - commodities	refined petroleum, electricity, plastic products, cotton fabric, garments (2023)

Population Pyramid

