



Guam



Background Guam was settled by Austronesian people around 1500 B.C. These people became the indigenous Chamorro and were influenced by later migrations, including the Micronesians in the first millennium A.D., and island Southeast Asians around 900. Society was stratified, with higher classes living along the coast and lower classes living inland. Spanish explorer Ferdinand MAGELLAN was the first European to see Guam in 1521, and Spain claimed the island in 1565 because it served as a refueling stop for ships between Mexico and the Philippines. Spain formally colonized Guam in 1668. Spain's brutal repression of the Chamorro, along with new diseases and intermittent warfare, reduced the indigenous population from more than 100,000 to less than 5,000 by the 1700s. Spain tried to repopulate the island by forcing people from nearby islands to settle on Guam and preventing them from escaping.

Guam became a hub for whalers and traders in the western Pacific in the early 1800s. During the 1898 Spanish-American War, the US Navy occupied Guam and set up a military administration. The US Navy opposed local control of government despite repeated petitions from the Chamorro. Japan invaded Guam in 1941 and instituted a repressive regime. During the US recapture of Guam in 1944, the island's two largest villages were destroyed. After World War II, political pressure from local Chamorro leaders led to Guam being established as an unincorporated organized US territory in 1950, with US citizenship granted to all Chamorro. In a referendum in 1982, more than 75% of voters chose closer relations with the US over independence, although no change in status was made because of disagreements on the future right of Chamorro self-determination. The US military holds about 29% of Guam's land and stations several thousand troops on the island. The installations are some of the most strategically important US bases in the Pacific; they also constitute the island's most important source of income and economic stability.

Capital name: Hagatna (Agana)

Government type unincorporated organized territory of the US with local self-government; republican form of territorial government with separate executive, legislative, and judicial branches

Area
total : 544 sq km
land: 544 sq km
water: 0 sq km

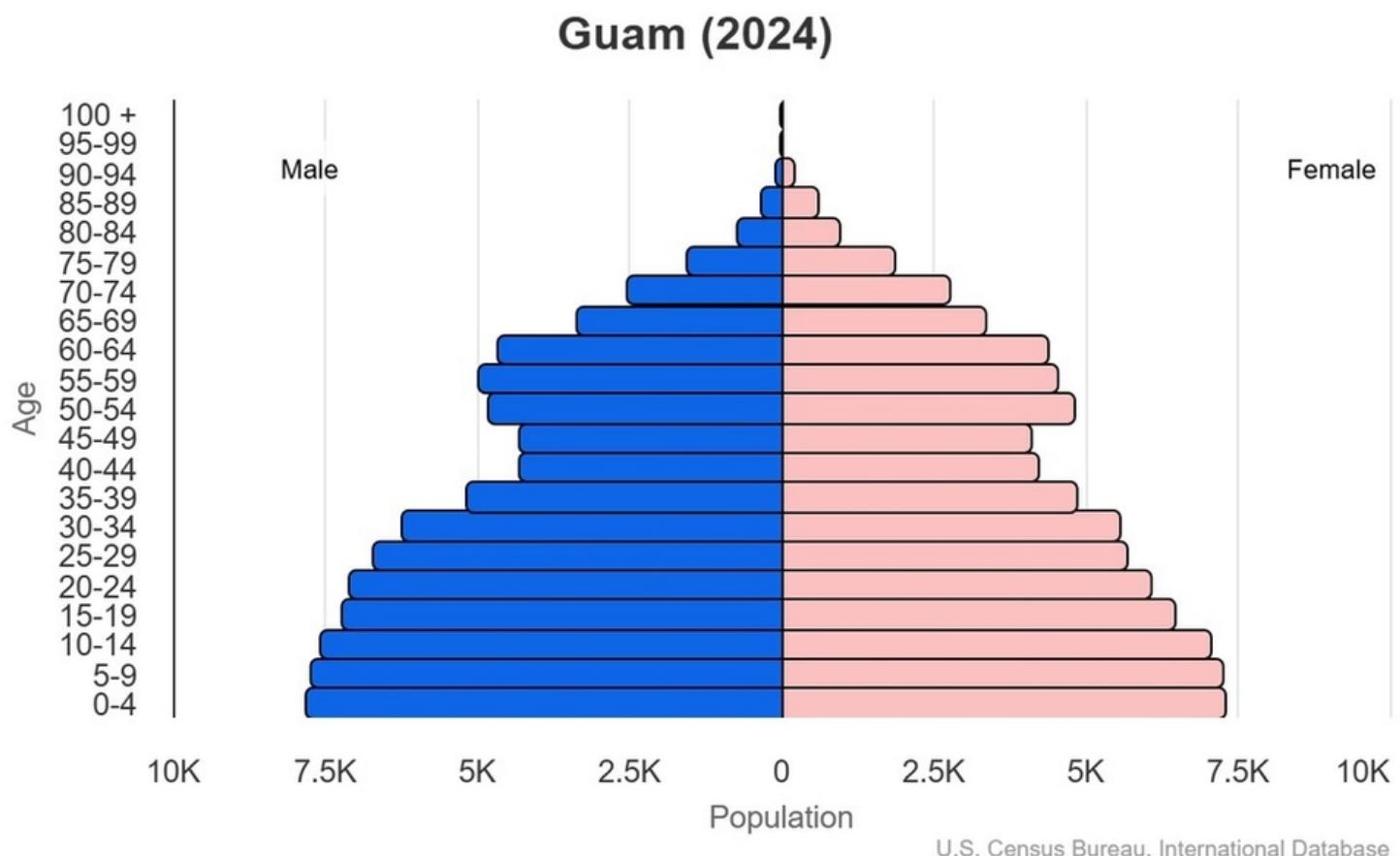
Climate tropical marine; generally warm and humid, moderated by northeast trade winds; dry season (January to June), rainy season (July to December); little seasonal temperature variation

Natural resources aquatic wildlife (supporting tourism), fishing (largely undeveloped)

Population total: 169,532 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate	0.11% (2024 est.)
Ethnic groups	Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander 46.1% (Chamorro 32.8%, Chuukese 6.7%, Palauan 1.4%, Pohnpeian 1.4%, Yapese 1%, other Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander 2.8%), Asian 35.5% (Filipino 29.1%, Korean 2.2%, Japanese 1.4%, Chinese (except Taiwanese) 1.3%, other Asian 1.5%), White 6.8%, African descent or African-American 0.9%, Indigenous 0.1%, other 0.6%, mixed 10% (2020 est.)
Religions	Christian (predominantly Roman Catholic) 94.2%, folk religions 1.5%, Buddhist 1.1%, other 1.6%, unaffiliated 1.7% (2020 est.)
Languages	English 43.3%, Filipino 24.9%, Chamorro 16%, other Pacific Island languages 9.4%, Asian languages 6.5% (2020 est.)
Executive branch	chief of state: President Donald J. TRUMP (since 20 January 2025) head of government: Governor Lourdes LEON GUERRERO (since 7 January 2019)
Legislative branch	legislature name: Legislature of Guam (Liheslaturan Guahan)
Diplomatic representation from the US	embassy: none (territory of the US)
Economic overview	small Pacific island US territorial economy; upper income, tourism-based economy; hard-hit by COVID-19 disruptions; relaunched many industries via vaccination tourism; domestic economy relies on multiple military bases; environmentally fragile economy
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$5.793 billion (2016 est.) \$5.697 billion (2015 est.) \$5.531 billion (2014 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$35,600 (2016 est.) \$35,200 (2015 est.) \$34,400 (2014 est.)
Exports	\$545 million (2022 est.) \$193 million (2021 est.) \$379 million (2020 est.)
Exports - partners	Taiwan 42%, Hong Kong 12%, Philippines 11%, Italy 8%, Australia 6% (2023)
Exports - commodities	scrap iron, scrap copper, trunks and cases (2023)
Imports	\$4.421 billion (2022 est.) \$3.662 billion (2021 est.) \$3.388 billion (2020 est.)
Imports - partners	Singapore 52%, Japan 15%, Malaysia 6%, Taiwan 4%, Greece 4% (2023)
Imports - commodities	refined petroleum, cars, trunks and cases, gas turbines, flavored water (2023)

Population Pyramid



U.S. Census Bureau, International Database