



Cuba



Background

The native Amerindian population of Cuba began to decline after the arrival of Christopher COLUMBUS in 1492, as the country was developed as a Spanish colony during the next several centuries. Large numbers of African slaves were imported to work the coffee and sugar plantations, and Havana became the launching point for the annual treasure fleets bound for Spain from Mexico and Peru. Spanish rule eventually provoked an independence movement, and occasional rebellions were harshly suppressed. US intervention during the Spanish-American War in 1898 assisted the Cubans in overthrowing Spanish rule. The Treaty of Paris established Cuban independence from Spain in 1898, and after three-and-a-half years of subsequent US military rule, Cuba became an independent republic in 1902.

Cuba then experienced a string of governments mostly dominated by the military and corrupt politicians. Fidel CASTRO led a rebel army to victory in 1959; his authoritarian rule held the subsequent regime together for nearly five decades. He handed off the presidency to his younger brother Raul CASTRO in 2008. Cuba's communist revolution, with Soviet support, was exported throughout Latin America and Africa during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Miguel DIAZ-CANEL Bermudez, hand-picked by Raul CASTRO to succeed him, was approved as president by the National Assembly and took office in 2018. DIAZ-CANEL was appointed First Secretary of the Communist Party in 2021 after the retirement of Raul CASTRO and continues to serve as both president and first secretary. Cuba traditionally and consistently portrays the US embargo, in place since 1961, as the source of its socioeconomic difficulties. As a result of efforts begun in 2014 to reestablish diplomatic relations, the US and Cuba reopened embassies in their respective countries in 2015. The embargo remains in place, however, and the relationship between the US and Cuba remains tense. Illicit migration of Cuban nationals to the US via maritime and overland routes has been a longstanding challenge. In 2017, the US and Cuba signed a Joint Statement ending the so-called "wet-foot, dry-foot" policy, by which Cuban nationals who reached US soil were permitted to stay. Irregular Cuban maritime migration has dropped significantly since 2016, when migrant interdictions at sea topped 5,000, but land border crossings continue.

Capital

name: Havana

Government type

communist state

Area

total : 110,860 sq km
land: 109,820 sq km
water: 1,040 sq km

Climate

tropical; moderated by trade winds; dry season (November to April); rainy season (May to October)

Natural resources

cobalt, nickel, iron ore, chromium, copper, salt, timber, silica, petroleum, arable land

Population

total: 10,966,038 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate

-0.17% (2024 est.)

Ethnic groups

White 64.1%, Mulatto or mixed 26.6%, Black 9.3% (2012 est.)

Religions

Christian 58.9%, folk religion 17.6%, Buddhist <1%, Hindu <1%, Jewish <1%, Muslim <1%, other <1%, none 23.2% (2020 est.)

Languages

Spanish (official)

Executive branch

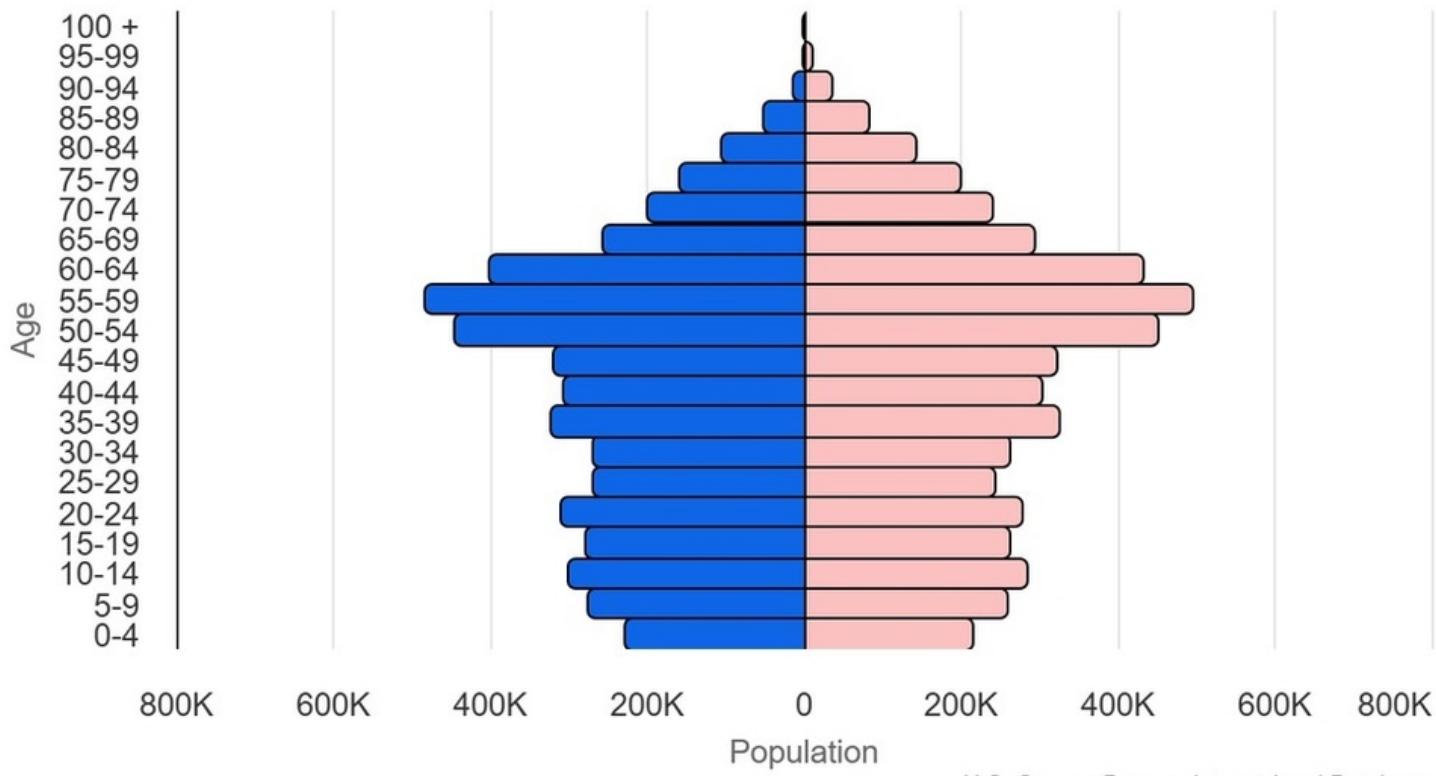
chief of state: President Miguel DIAZ-CANEL Bermudez (since 19 April 2018)

head of government: Prime Minister Manuel MARRERO Cruz (since 21 December 2019)

Legislative branch

legislature name: National Assembly of the People's Power (Asamblea nacional del Poder popular)

Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Lianys TORRES RIVERA (since 14 January 2021)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires Mike HAMMER (since 14 November 2024)
Economic overview	still largely state-run planned economy, although privatization increasing under new constitution; widespread protests due to lack of basic necessities and electricity; massive foreign investment increases recently; known tobacco exporter; unique oil-for-doctors relationship with Venezuela; widespread corruption
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$81.165 billion (2024 est.) \$81.985 billion (2023 est.) \$83.597 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$23,700 (2024 est.) \$18,300 (2023 est.) \$13,300 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$8.768 billion (2020 est.) \$12.632 billion (2019 est.) \$14.53 billion (2018 est.)
Exports - partners	China 34%, Spain 12%, Germany 6%, Switzerland 5%, Hong Kong 4% (2023)
Exports - commodities	tobacco, nickel, liquor, zinc ore, precious metal ore (2023)
Imports	\$8.067 billion (2020 est.) \$10.971 billion (2019 est.) \$12.567 billion (2018 est.)
Imports - partners	Spain 24%, China 13%, Netherlands 10%, USA 9%, Canada 6% (2023)
Imports - commodities	beer, poultry, rice, plastic products, soybean oil (2023)

Population Pyramid**Cuba (2024)**

U.S. Census Bureau, International Database