

Madagascar



History and background : Formerly an independent kingdom, Madagascar became a French colony in 1896, but regained its independence in 1960

Location: Southern Africa, island in the Indian Ocean, east of Mozambique.

Area : *total*: 587,040 sq km .

land: 581,540 sq km .

water: 5,500 sq km.

Coastline : 4,828 km

Maritime claims : *territorial sea*: 12 nm

contiguous zone: 24 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: 200 nm or 100 nm from the 2,500-m deep isobaths.

Climate : tropical along coast, temperate inland, arid in south.

Natural resources: graphite, chromite, coal, bauxite, salt, quartz, tar sands, semiprecious stones, mica, fish, hydropower.

Geography - note: world's fourth-largest island; strategic location along Mozambique Channel

Population: 18,040,341 (July 2005 est.)

Population growth rate: 3.03% (2005 est.).

Nationality: noun: Malagasy (singular and plural)
adjective: Malagasy.

Ethnic groups: Malayo-Indonesian (Merina and related Betsileo), Cotiers (mixed African, Malayo-Indonesian, and Arab)

ancestry - Betsimisaraka, Tsimihety, Antaisaka, Sakalava), French, Indian, Creole, Comoran

Religions: indigenous beliefs 52%, Christian 41%, Muslim 7%.

Languages: French (official), Malagasy (official)

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of Madagascar

conventional short form: Madagascar

local long form: Republique de Madagascar

local short form: Madagascar

former: Malagasy Republic

Government type: republic.

Capital: Antananarivo.

Administrative divisions: 6 provinces (faritany); Antananarivo, Antsiranana, Fianarantsoa, Mahajanga, Toamasina, Toliara.

Independence: 26 June 1960 (from France)

Legal system: based on French civil law system and traditional Malagasy law; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction.

Economy - overview:

Having discarded past socialist economic policies, Madagascar has since the mid 1990s followed a World Bank and IMF led policy of privatization and liberalization. This strategy has placed the country on a slow and steady growth path from an extremely low level. Agriculture, including fishing and forestry, is a mainstay of the economy, accounting for more than one-fourth of GDP and employing 80% of the population. Exports of apparel have boomed in recent years primarily due to duty-free access to the United States. Deforestation and erosion, aggravated by the use of firewood as the primary source of fuel are serious concerns. President RAVALOMANANA has worked aggressively to revive the economy following the 2002 political crisis, which triggered a 12% drop in GDP that year. Poverty reduction and combating corruption will be the centerpieces of economic policy for the next few.

GDP: purchasing power parity - \$14.56 billion (2004 est.)

GDP - real growth rate: 5.5% (2004 est.)

GDP - per capita: purchasing power parity - \$800 (2004 est.).

GDP - composition by sector: agriculture: 29.3%
industry: 16.7%
services: 54% (2004 est.)

Investment (gross fixed): 14.7% of GDP (2004 est.)

Population below poverty line: 50% (2004 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:
lowest 10%: 3%
highest 10%: 29% (1999).

Inflation rate (consumer prices): 7.5% (2004 est.).

Labor force: 7.3 million (2000).

Budget:

revenues: \$783.7 million
expenditures: \$1.079 billion, including capital expenditures of \$331 million (2004 est.)

Agriculture - products: coffee, vanilla, sugarcane, cloves, cocoa, rice, cassava (tapioca), beans, bananas, peanuts; livestock products.

Industries: meat processing, soap, breweries, tanneries, sugar, textiles, glassware, cement, automobile assembly plant, paper, petroleum, tourism.

Industrial production growth rate: 3% (2000 est.)

Electricity - production: 840.2 million kWh (2002)

Electricity - consumption: 781.4 million kWh (2002)

Electricity - exports: 0 kWh (2002)

Electricity - imports: 0 kWh (2002)

Oil - production: 0 bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - consumption: 13,000 bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - exports: NA

Oil - imports: NA

Oil - proved reserves: 0 bbl (1 January 2002)

Natural gas - proved reserves: 0 cu m (1 January 2002)

Current account balance: \$-281.9 million (2004 est.)

Exports: \$868.2 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Exports - commodities: coffee, vanilla, shellfish, sugar; cotton cloth, chromite, petroleum products

Exports - partners: US 35.7%, France 30.7%, Germany 7.1%, Mauritius 4.4% (2004)

Imports: \$1.147 billion f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Imports - commodities: capital goods, petroleum, consumer goods, food

Imports - partners: France 17.6%, China 11.1%, Hong Kong 6.7%, Iran 6.2%, South Africa 5.8% (2004)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold: \$500.3 million (2004 est.)

Debt - external: \$4.6 billion (2002)

Economic aid - recipient: \$354 million (2001)

Currency: Malagasy franc (MGF)

Currency code: MGF

Exchange rates: Malagasy francs per US dollar - 1,868.9 (2004),

Fiscal year: calendar year.

Railways:

total: 732 km

narrow gauge: 732 km 1.000-m gauge (2004)

Highways:

total: 49,827 km

paved: 5,780 km

unpaved: 44,047 km (1999 est.)

Waterways:

600 km (2004)

Ports and harbors: Antsiranana, Antsohimbondrona, Mahajanga, Toamasina, Toliara

Merchant marine: total: 9 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 14,865 GRT/17,936 DWT

by type: cargo 5, passenger/cargo 2, petroleum tanker 2
registered in other countries: 1 (2005)

Airports: 116 (2004 est.)