

Swaziland



Background:

Autonomy for the Swazis of southern Africa was guaranteed by the British in the late 19th century; independence was granted in 1968. Student and labor unrest during the 1990s pressured the monarchy (one of the oldest on the continent) to grudgingly allow political reform and greater democracy. Swaziland recently surpassed Botswana as the country with the world's highest known rates of HIV/AIDS infection

Geography Swaziland

Location:

Southern Africa, between Mozambique and South Africa

Area:

total: 17,363 sq km

land: 17,203 sq km

water: 160 sq km

Climate:

varies from tropical to near temperate

Terrain:

mostly mountains and hills; some moderately sloping plains

Natural resources:

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

Environment - current issues:

limited supplies of potable water; wildlife populations being depleted because of excessive hunting; overgrazing; soil degradation; soil erosion

People Swaziland**Population:**

1,173,900

Population growth rate:

0.25%

Net migration rate:

0 migrant(s)/1,000 populations

Languages:

English (official, government business conducted in English), siSwati (official)

Government Swaziland**Country name:**

conventional long form: Kingdom of Swaziland

Government type:

monarchy; independent member of Commonwealth

Capital:

Mbabane; note - Lobamba is the royal and legislative capital

Independence:

6 September 1968 (from UK)

Legal system:

based on South African Roman-Dutch law in statutory courts and Swazi traditional law and custom in traditional courts; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Executive branch:

chief of state: King MSWATI III

International organization participation:

ACP, AfDB, AU, C, FAO, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOC, ISO (correspondent), ITU, MIGA, NAM, OPCW, PCA, SACU, SADC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WToO, WTO

Economy Swaziland**Economy - overview:**

In this small, landlocked economy, subsistence agriculture occupies more than 80% of the population. The manufacturing sector has diversified since the mid-1980s. Sugar and wood pulp remain important foreign exchange earners. Mining has declined in importance in recent years with only coal and quarry stone mines remaining active. Surrounded by South Africa, except for a short border with Mozambique, Swaziland is heavily dependent on South Africa from which it receives about nine-tenths of its imports and to which it sends nearly three-quarters of its exports. Customs duties from the Southern African Customs Union and worker remittances from South Africa substantially supplement domestically earned income. The government is trying to improve the atmosphere for foreign investment. Overgrazing, soil depletion, drought, and sometimes floods persist as problems for the future. More than one-fourth of the population needed emergency food aid in 2004 because of drought, and more than one-third of the adult population was infected by HIV/AIDS.

GDP:

purchasing power parity - \$6.018 billion

GDP - real growth rate:

2.5%

GDP - per capita:

purchasing power parity - \$5,100

GDP - composition by sector:

agriculture: 16.1%

industry: 43.4%

services: 40.5%

Investment (gross fixed):

23.6% of GDP

Population below poverty line:

40%

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

5.4%

Labor force:

383,200

Unemployment rate:

34%

Budget:

revenues: \$494.6 million

expenditures: \$552.7 million, including capital expenditures of \$147 million (2004 est.)

Agriculture - products:

sugarcane, cotton, corn, tobacco, rice, citrus, pineapples, sorghum, peanuts; cattle, goats, sheep

Industries:

mining (coal, raw asbestos), wood pulp, sugar, soft drink concentrates, textile and apparel

Oil - consumption:

3,500 bbl/day

Current account balance:

-\$82.4 million

Exports:

\$900.1 million f.o.b.

Exports - commodities:

soft drink concentrates, sugar, wood pulp, cotton yarn, refrigerators, citrus and canned fruit

Exports - partners:

South Africa 59.7%, EU 8.8%, US 8.8%, Mozambique 6.2%

Imports:

\$1.14 billion f.o.b.

Imports - commodities:

motor vehicles, machinery, transport equipment, foodstuffs, petroleum products, chemicals

Imports - partners:

South Africa 95.6%, EU 0.9%, Japan 0.9%, Singapore 0.3% (2004)

Currency:

lilangeni (SZL)

Exchange rates:

emalangi per US dollar - 6.4597 (2004), 7.5648 (2003), 10.5407 (2002),
8.6092 (2001), 6.9398 (2000)

Transportation Swaziland**Railways:**

total: 301 km

narrow gauge: 301 km 1.067-m gauge

Highways:

total: 3,107 km

paved: NA

unpaved: NA

Airports:

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