

Tuvalu

Asia Pacific • Oceania

In 1974, ethnic differences within the British colony of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands caused the Polynesians of the Ellice Islands to vote for separation from the Micronesians of the Gilbert Islands. The following year, the Ellice Islands became the separate British colony of Tuvalu. Independence was granted in 1978. In 2000, Tuvalu...

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MEDIAN AGE

24.9 years

GINC INDICES

Where this nation stands

No index data is published for this nation yet.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The making of the modern nation

Background	In 1974, ethnic differences within the British colony of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands caused the Polynesians of the Ellice Islands to vote for separation from the Micronesians of the Gilbert Islands. The following year, the Ellice Islands became the separate British colony of Tuvalu. Independence was granted in 1978. In 2000, Tuvalu negotiated a contract leasing its Internet domain name ".tv" for \$50 million in royalties over a 12-year period.
Independence	1 October 1978 (from the UK)
National holiday	Independence Day, 1 October (1978)

GEOGRAPHY

The ground beneath the state

LOCATION AND AREA

Location	Oceania, island group consisting of nine coral atolls in the South Pacific Ocean, about one-half of the way from Hawaii to Australia
Geographic coordinates	8 00 S, 178 00 E
Map references	Oceania
Area	total: 26 sq km; land: 26 sq km; water: 0 sq km
Area — comparative	0.1 times the size of Washington, DC
Land boundaries	0 km
Coastline	24 km
Maritime claims	territorial sea: 12 nm; contiguous zone: 24 nm; exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

TERRAIN AND RESOURCES

Terrain	low-lying and narrow coral atolls
Natural resources	fish
Land use	arable land: 0%; permanent crops: 60%; other: 40% (2011)
Irrigated land	NA

SETTLEMENT AND HAZARDS

Natural hazards	severe tropical storms are usually rare, but in 1997 there were three cyclones; low levels of islands make them sensitive to changes in sea level
Geography note	one of the smallest and most remote countries on Earth; six of the nine coral atolls - Nanumea, Nui, Vaitupu, Nukufetau, Funafuti, and Nukulaelae - have lagoons open to the ocean; Nanumaya and Niutao have landlocked lagoons; Niulakita does not have a lagoon

STRATEGIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Ports, grids and pipelines: the working state

TRANSPORT

Airports	1 (2013)
Merchant marine	total: 58; by type: bulk carrier 4, cargo 24, chemical tanker 15, container 1, passenger 2, passenger/cargo 1, petroleum tanker 10, refrigerated cargo 1; foreign-owned: 33 (China 4, Indonesia 1, Maldives 1, Singapore 19, South Korea 1, Turkey 1, Vietnam 6) (2010)

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Telephones - mobile cellular	2,800 (2012)
Internet users	4,200 (2008)
Internet country code	.tv

HUMAN CAPITAL

The human foundation of national strength

DEMOGRAPHY

Population	10,782 (July 2014 est.)
Nationality	noun: Tuvaluan(s); adjective: Tuvaluan
Age structure	0-14 years: 29.6% (male 1,636/female 1,553); 15-24 years: 20.6% (male 1,176/female 1,048); 25-54 years: 36.2% (male 1,901/female 1,999); 55-64 years: 8.2% (male 360/female 525); 65 years and over: 5.3% (male 242/female 342) (2014 est.)
Median age	total: 24.9 years; male: 23.7 years; female: 26.4 years (2014 est.)
Population growth rate	0.8% (2014 est.)
Birth rate	23.74 births/1,000 population (2014 est.)
Death rate	8.9 deaths/1,000 population (2014 est.)
Sex ratio	at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female; 0-14 years: 1.05 male(s)/female; 15-24 years: 1.12 male(s)/female; 25-54 years: 0.95 male(s)/female; 55-64 years: 0.97 male(s)/female; 65 years and over: 0.73 male(s)/female; total population: 0.97 male(s)/female (2014 est.)
Total fertility rate	3.03 children born/woman (2014 est.)
Mother's mean age at first birth	23.5

MIGRATION AND URBANISATION

Net migration rate	-6.86 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2014 est.)
Urbanisation	urban population: 50% of total population (2011); rate of urbanization: 1.04% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)
Major urban areas — population	FUNAFUTI (capital) 5,000 (2011)

HEALTH

Life expectancy at birth	total population: 65.81 years; male: 63.69 years; female: 68.05 years (2014 est.)
Infant mortality rate	total: 31.69 deaths/1,000 live births; male: 34.44 deaths/1,000 live births; female: 28.81 deaths/1,000 live births (2014 est.)
Hospital bed density	5.6 beds/1,000 population (2001)
Drinking water source	improved: urban: 98.3% of population; rural: 97% of population; total: 97.7% of population; unimproved: urban: 1.7% of population; rural: 3% of population; total: 2.3% of population (2012 est.)
Sanitation facility access	improved: urban: 86.3% of population; rural: 80.2% of population; total: 83.3% of population; unimproved: urban: 13.7% of population; rural: 19.8% of population; total: 16.7% of population (2012 est.)
Children under the age of 5 years underweight	1.6% (2007)

EDUCATION

Literacy	NA
School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education)	total: 11 years; male: 10 years; female: 11 years (2001)

WELFARE AND EQUITY

Population below poverty line	NA%
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Household income or consumption by percentage share lowest 10%: NA%; highest 10%: NA%

GOVERNANCE AND INTEGRITY

Trust, law and institutions that hold

STATE STRUCTURE

Country name	conventional long form: none; conventional short form: Tuvalu; local long form: none; local short form: Tuvalu; former: Ellice Islands
Government type	parliamentary democracy and a Commonwealth realm
Capital	name: Funafuti; note - administrative offices are in Vaiaku Village on Fongafale Islet; geographic coordinates: 8 31 S, 179 13 E; time difference: UTC+12 (17 hours ahead of Washington, DC, during Standard Time)
Administrative divisions	7 island councils and 1 town council*; Funafuti*, Nanumaga, Nanumea, Niutao, Nui, Nukufetau, Nukulaelae, Vaitupu
Constitution	previous 1978 (at independence); latest effective 1 October 1986; amended 2007, 2010 (2010)
Suffrage	18 years of age; universal

LEGAL SYSTEM

Legal system	mixed legal system of English common law and local customary law
International law organisation participation	has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCt

POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

Executive branch	chief of state: Queen ELIZABETH II (since 6 February 1952); represented by Governor General Iakoba TAEIA Italeli (since May 2010); head of government: Prime Minister Enele SOPOAGA (since 5 August 2013); cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the governor general on recommendation of the prime minister; elections: the monarchy is hereditary; governor general appointed by the monarch on recommendation of the prime minister; prime minister and deputy prime minister elected by and from members of parliament following parliamentary elections; election results: Willie TELAVI removed as prime minister by the governor-general on 1 August 2013; Enele SOPOAGA elected 4 August 2013 in a 8 to 5 vote by the House of Assembly
Legislative branch	unicameral Parliament or Fale I Fono, also called House of Assembly (15 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms)
Judicial branch	highest court(s): Court of Appeal is the Fiji Court of Appeal on Fiji Island (consists of the chief justice who visits twice a year); High Court, located on Fiji, consists of the chief justice of Fiji who presides over its sessions; judge selection and term of office: chief justice appointed by the president of Fiji on the advice of the prime minister following consultation with the parliamentary leader of the opposition; justices of the Court of Appeal, and puisne judges of the High Court are appointed by the president of Fiji, upon the nomination of the Judicial Service Commission, after consulting with the Cabinet Minister and the committee of the House of Representatives responsible for the administration of justice; the chief justice and justices of Appeal generally required to retire at age 70; puisne judges appointed for not less than 4 years nor more than 7 years with mandatory retirement at age 65; subordinate courts: magistrates' courts; island courts; lands courts

INFORMATION AND INFLUENCE

Narrative, reach and regard

IDENTITY AND CULTURE

Languages	Tuvaluan (official), English (official), Samoan, Kiribati (on the island of Nui)
Religions	Protestant 98.4% (Church of Tuvalu (Congregationalist) 97%, Seventh-Day Adventist 1.4%), Baha'i 1%, other 0.6%
Ethnic groups	Polynesian 96%, Micronesian 4%

MEDIA

Broadcast media	no TV stations; many households use satellite dishes to watch foreign TV stations; 1 government-owned radio station, Radio Tuvalu, includes relays of programming from international broadcasters (2009)
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DIPLOMATIC NETWORK

International organisation participation	ACP, ADB, AOSIS, C, FAO, IBRD, IDA, IFRCS (observer), ILO, IMF, IMO, IOC, ITU, OPCW, PIF, Sparteca, SPC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WHO
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Aunese Makoi SIMATI (since 11 January 2013); chancery: Note - Tuvalu does not have an embassy in Washington, D.C.; UN office located at 800 2nd Avenue, Suite 400D, New York, NY 10017; telephone: [1] (212) 490-0534; FAX: [1] (212) 937-0692
Diplomatic representation from the US	the US does not have an embassy in Tuvalu; the US ambassador to Fiji, currently Ambassador Frankie A. REED, is accredited to Tuvalu

FINANCIAL STRENGTH

The fiscal depth behind every decision

FISCAL

Budget	revenues: \$21.54 million; expenditures: \$23.05 million (2006)
Taxes and other revenues	56.7% of GDP (2006)
Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-)	-4% of GDP (2006)

MONETARY AND EXTERNAL

Inflation rate (consumer prices)	3.8% (2006 est.)
Debt — external	\$NA
Exchange rates	Tuvaluan dollars or Australian dollars (AUD) per US dollar -//1.031 (2011)//1.67 (2011 est.)//1.67 (2010)//1.2822 (2009)//1.2059 (2008)

PRODUCTION AND INNOVATION

The engine room of national prosperity

OUTPUT

GDP (official exchange rate)	\$38 million (2013 est.)
GDP composition, by sector of origin	agriculture: 16.6%; industry: 27.2%; services: 56.2% (2002)

SECTORS AND INDUSTRY

Industries	fishing, tourism, copra
Industrial production growth rate	NA%

LABOUR

Labour force	3,615 (2004 est.)
Unemployment rate	NA%

TRADE AND INVESTMENT

Markets, capital and the terms of exchange

EXTERNAL BALANCE

Current account balance	-\$7.7 million (2010 est.)//-\$11.68 million (2003)
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EXPORTS

Exports	\$600,000 (2010 est.)//\$1 million (2004 est.)
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Exports — commodities	copra, fish
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IMPORTS

Imports	\$16.5 million (2010 est.)//\$12.91 million (2005)
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Imports — commodities	food, animals, mineral fuels, machinery, manufactured goods
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