

[Country List](#) | [World Factbook Home](#)

# The World Factbook



## Madagascar



**Introduction    Madagascar**

**Background:** Formerly an independent kingdom, Madagascar became a French colony in 1896, but regained its independence in 1960. During 1992-93, free presidential and National Assembly elections were held, ending 17 years of single-party rule. In 1997, in the second presidential race, Didier RATSIRAKA, the leader during the 1970s and 1980s, was returned to the presidency. The 2001 presidential election was contested between the followers of Didier RATSIRAKA and Marc RAVALOMANANA, nearly causing secession of half of the country. In April 2002, the High Constitutional Court announced RAVALOMANANA the winner.

**Geography        Madagascar**

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

**Geographic coordinates:** 20 00 S, 47 00 E

**Map references:** Africa

**Area:** *total:* 587,040 sq km  
*land:* 581,540 sq km  
*water:* 5,500 sq km

**Area - comparative:** slightly less than twice the size of Arizona

**Land boundaries:** 0 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 isobath

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

**Terrain:** narrow coastal plain, high plateau and mountains in center

**Elevation extremes:** *lowest point:* Indian Ocean 0 m  
*highest point:* Maromokotro 2,876 m

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

**Land use:** *arable land:* 5.03%  
*permanent crops:* 1.02%  
*other:* 93.95% (2005)

**Irrigated land:** 10,860 sq km (2003)

**Natural hazards:** periodic cyclones, drought, and locust infestation

**Environment - current issues:** soil erosion results from deforestation and overgrazing; desertification; surface water contaminated with raw sewage and other organic wastes; several endangered species of flora and fauna unique to the island

**Environment - international agreements:** *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands  
*signed, but not ratified:* none of the selected agreements

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

## People **Madagascar**

**Population:** 19,448,815 (July 2007 est.)

**Age structure:** *0-14 years:* 43.9% (male 4,297,985/female 4,243,369)  
*15-64 years:* 53% (male 5,117,874/female 5,190,032)  
*65 years and over:* 3.1% (male 270,411/female 329,144) (2007 est.)

**Median age:** *total:* 17.8 years  
*male:* 17.6 years  
*female:* 18 years (2007 est.)

**Population growth rate:** 3.008% (2007 est.)

**Birth rate:** 38.6 births/1,000 population (2007 est.)

**Death rate:** 8.51 deaths/1,000 population (2007 est.)

**Net migration rate:** 0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2007 est.)

**Sex ratio:** *at birth:* 1.03 male(s)/female  
*under 15 years:* 1.013 male(s)/female  
*15-64 years:* 0.986 male(s)/female  
*65 years and over:* 0.822 male(s)/female  
*total population:* 0.992 male(s)/female (2007 est.)

**Infant mortality rate:** *total:* 57.02 deaths/1,000 live births  
*male:* 62.09 deaths/1,000 live births  
*female:* 51.8 deaths/1,000 live births (2007 est.)

**Life expectancy at birth:** *total population:* 62.14 years  
*male:* 60.23 years  
*female:* 64.1 years (2007 est.)

**Total fertility rate:** 5.24 children born/woman (2007 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:** 1.7% (2003 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - people living** 140,000 (2003 est.)

**with HIV/AIDS:**

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:** 7,500 (2003 est.)

**Major infectious diseases:** *degree of risk:* high  
*food or waterborne diseases:* bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever  
*vectorborne diseases:* malaria and plague are high risks in some locations  
*water contact disease:* schistosomiasis (2007)

**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)

**Literacy:** *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write  
*total population:* 68.9%  
*male:* 75.5%  
*female:* 62.5% (2003 est.)

**Government Madagascar**

**Country name:** *conventional long form:* Republic of Madagascar  
*conventional short form:* Madagascar  
*local long form:* Repoblikan'i Madagasikara  
*local short form:* Madagasikara  
*former:* Malagasy Republic

**Government type:** republic

**Capital:** *name:* Antananarivo  
*geographic coordinates:* 18 55 S, 47 31 E  
*time difference:* UTC+3 (8 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

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

**Independence:** 26 June 1960 (from France)

**National holiday:** Independence Day, 26 June (1960)

**Constitution:** 19 August 1992 by national referendum

**Legal system:** based on French civil law system and traditional Malagasy law; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with reservations

- Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal
- Executive branch:** *chief of state:* President Marc RAVALOMANANA (since 6 May 2002)  
*head of government:* Prime Minister Charles RABEMANANJARA (25 January 2007)  
*cabinet:* Council of Ministers appointed by the prime minister  
*elections:* president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 3 December 2006 (next to be held in December 2011); prime minister appointed by the president  
*election results:* percent of vote - Marc RAVALOMANANA 54.8%, Jean LAHINIRIKO 11.7%, Roland RATSIRAKA 10.1%, Herizo RAZAFIMAHALEO 9.1%, Norbert RATSIRAHONANA 4.2%, Ny Hasina ANDRIAMANJATO 4.2%, Elia RAVELOMANANTSOA 2.6%, Pety RAKOTONIAINA 1.7%, other 1.6%
- Legislative branch:** bicameral legislature consists of a National Assembly or Assemblée Nationale (160 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms) and a Senate or Senat (100 seats; two-thirds of the seats filled by regional assemblies; the remaining one-third of seats appointed by the president; to serve four-year terms)  
*elections:* National Assembly - last held 15 December 2002 (next to be held in 2007)  
*election results:* National Assembly - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - TIM 103, FP 22, AREMA 3, LEADER/Fanilo 2, RPSD 5, others 3, independents 22
- Judicial branch:** Supreme Court or Cour Supreme; High Constitutional Court or Haute Cour Constitutionnelle
- Political parties and leaders:** Association for the Rebirth of Madagascar or AREMA [Pierrot RAJAONARIVELO]; Economic Liberalism and Democratic Action for National Recovery or LEADER/Fanilo [Herizo RAZAFIMAHALEO]; Fihaonana Party or FP [Guy-Willy RAZANAMASY]; I Love Madagascar or TIM [Marc RAVALOMANANA]; Renewal of the Social Democratic Party or RPSD [Evariste MARSON]
- Political pressure groups and leaders:** Committee for the Defense of Truth and Justice or KMMR; Committee for National Reconciliation or CRN [Albert Zafy]; National Council of Christian Churches or FFKM
- International organization participation:** ACCT, ACP, AfDB, AU, COMESA, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCt (signatory), ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, IMO, InOC, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ISO (correspondent), ITSO, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, NAM, OIF, OPCW, SADC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO
- Diplomatic representation in the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Jocelyn Bertin RADIFERA  
*chancery:* 2374 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008  
*telephone:* [1] (202) 265-5525, 5526  
*FAX:* [1] (202) 265-3034  
*consulate(s) general:* New York

**Diplomatic representation from the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador James D. McGEE  
*embassy:* 14-16 Rue Rainitovo, Antsahavola, Antananarivo 101  
*mailing address:* B. P. 620, Antsahavola, Antananarivo  
*telephone:* [261] (20) 22-212-57, 22-212-73, 22-209-56  
*FAX:* [261] (20) 22-345-39

**Flag description:** two equal horizontal bands of red (top) and green with a vertical white band of the same width on hoist side

## **Economy            Madagascar**

**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 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 US. 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 years.

**GDP (purchasing power parity):** \$17.27 billion (2006 est.)

**GDP (official exchange rate):** \$5.059 billion (2006 est.)

**GDP - real growth rate:** 4.7% (2006 est.)

**GDP - per capita (PPP):** \$900 (2006 est.)

**GDP - composition by sector:** *agriculture:* 28.2%  
*industry:* 16.3%  
*services:* 55.5% (2006 est.)

**Labor force:** 7.3 million (2000)

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

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

**Distribution of family income -** 47.5 (2001)

<b>Gini index:</b>	
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices):</b>	10.8% (2006 est.)
<b>Investment (gross fixed):</b>	25.4% of GDP (2006 est.)
<b>Budget:</b>	<i>revenues:</i> \$863.3 million <i>expenditures:</i> \$1.132 billion; including capital expenditures of \$331 million (2006 est.)
<b>Agriculture - products:</b>	coffee, vanilla, sugarcane, cloves, cocoa, rice, cassava (tapioca), beans, bananas, peanuts; livestock products
<b>Industries:</b>	meat processing, seafood, soap, breweries, tanneries, sugar, textiles, glassware, cement, automobile assembly plant, paper, petroleum, tourism
<b>Industrial production growth rate:</b>	3% (2000 est.)
<b>Electricity - production:</b>	984 million kWh (2004)
<b>Electricity - production by source:</b>	<i>fossil fuel:</i> 36.1% <i>hydro:</i> 63.9% <i>nuclear:</i> 0% <i>other:</i> 0% (2001)
<b>Electricity - consumption:</b>	915.1 million kWh (2004)
<b>Electricity - exports:</b>	0 kWh (2004)
<b>Electricity - imports:</b>	0 kWh (2004)
<b>Oil - production:</b>	90.59 bbl/day (2004 est.)
<b>Oil - consumption:</b>	14,500 bbl/day (2004 est.)
<b>Oil - exports:</b>	NA bbl/day
<b>Oil - imports:</b>	NA bbl/day
<b>Oil - proved reserves:</b>	0 bbl (1 January 2005)
<b>Natural gas - production:</b>	0 cu m (2004 est.)
<b>Natural gas - consumption:</b>	0 cu m (2004 est.)
<b>Natural gas - proved</b>	0 cu m (1 January 2005 est.)

**reserves:****Current account** -\$579 million (2006 est.)**balance:****Exports:** \$898 million f.o.b. (2006 est.)**Exports - commodities:** coffee, vanilla, shellfish, sugar, cotton cloth, chromite, petroleum products**Exports - partners:** France 32%, US 25.3%, Germany 6%, Italy 5%, UK 4.1% (2006)**Imports:** \$1.467 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)**Imports - commodities:** capital goods, petroleum, consumer goods, food**Imports - partners:** France 13.5%, China 11.7%, Iran 9%, Mauritius 7.4%, Hong Kong 4.6% (2006)**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:** \$574 million (2006 est.)**Debt - external:** \$4.6 billion (2002)**Economic aid - recipient:** \$354 million (2001)**Currency (code):** Madagascar ariary (MGA)**Currency code:** MGF**Exchange rates:** Malagasy ariary per US dollar - 2,161.4 (2006), 2,003 (2005), 1,868.9 (2004), 1,238.3 (2003), 1,366.4 (2002)**Fiscal year:** calendar year**Communications Madagascar****Telephones - main lines in use:** 129,800 (2006)**Telephones - mobile cellular:** 1.046 million (2006)**Telephone system:** *general assessment:* system is above average for the region  
*domestic:* open-wire lines, coaxial cables, microwave radio relay, and tropospheric scatter links connect regions  
*international:* country code - 261; submarine cable to Bahrain; satellite earth stations - 1 Intelsat (Indian Ocean), 1 Intersputnik (Atlantic Ocean region)**Radio broadcast** AM 2 (plus a number of repeater stations), FM 9, shortwave 6 (2001)

**stations:****Radios:** 3.05 million (1997)**Television broadcast stations:** 1 (plus 36 repeaters) (2001)**Televisions:** 325,000 (1997)**Internet country code:** .mg**Internet hosts:** 9,734 (2007)**Internet Service Providers (ISPs):** 2 (2000)**Internet users:** 110,000 (2006)**Transportation Madagascar****Airports:** 104 (2007)**Airports - with paved runways:** *total: 27*  
*over 3,047 m: 1*  
*2,438 to 3,047 m: 2*  
*1,524 to 2,437 m: 6*  
*914 to 1,523 m: 17*  
*under 914 m: 1 (2007)***Airports - with unpaved runways:** *total: 77*  
*1,524 to 2,437 m: 2*  
*914 to 1,523 m: 41*  
*under 914 m: 34 (2007)***Railways:** *total: 854 km*  
*narrow gauge: 854 km 1.000-m gauge (2006)***Roadways:** *total: 49,827 km*  
*paved: 5,780 km*  
*unpaved: 44,047 km (1999)***Waterways:** 600 km (2006)**Merchant marine:** *total: 9 ships (1000 GRT or over) 13,896 GRT/18,466 DWT*  
*by type: cargo 5, passenger/cargo 2, petroleum tanker 2 (2007)***Ports and terminals:** Antsiranana, Mahajanga, Toamasina, Toliara**Military Madagascar****Military branches:** People's Armed Forces: Intervention Force, Development Force, and Aeronaval Force (navy and air); National Gendarmerie**Military service:** 18-50 years of age for compulsory military service; 18-month conscript

**age and obligation:** service obligation (either military or equivalent civil service) (2006)

**Manpower available for military service:** *males age 18-49: 3,542,797*  
*females age 18-49: 3,551,447 (2005 est.)*

**Manpower fit for military service:** *males age 18-49: 2,218,662*  
*females age 18-49: 2,408,810 (2005 est.)*

**Manpower reaching military service age annually:** *males age 18-49: 187,000*  
*females age 18-49: 184,833 (2005 est.)*

**Military expenditures - percent of GDP:** 1% (2006)

### **Transnational Issues**      **Madagascar**

**Disputes - international:** claims Bassas da India, Europa Island, Glorioso Islands, and Juan de Nova Island (all administered by France)

**Illicit drugs:** illicit producer of cannabis (cultivated and wild varieties) used mostly for domestic consumption; transshipment point for heroin

This page was last updated on 18 October, 2007