



Australia-Oceania :: Fiji

Introduction :: Fiji

Background:

Fiji became independent in 1970 after nearly a century as a British colony. Democratic rule was interrupted by two military coups in 1987 caused by concern over a government perceived as dominated by the Indian community (descendants of contract laborers brought to the islands by the British in the 19th century). The coups and a 1990 constitution that cemented native Melanesian control of Fiji led to heavy Indian emigration; the population loss resulted in economic difficulties, but ensured that Melanesians became the majority. A new constitution enacted in 1997 was more equitable. Free and peaceful elections in 1999 resulted in a government led by an Indo-Fijian, but a civilian-led coup in May 2000 ushered in a prolonged period of political turmoil. Parliamentary elections held in August 2001 provided Fiji with a democratically elected government led by Prime Minister Laisenia QARASE. Re-elected in May 2006, QARASE was ousted in a December 2006 military coup led by Commodore Voreqe BAINIMARAMA, who initially appointed himself acting president but in January 2007 became interim prime minister. Since taking power BAINIMARAMA has neutralized his opponents, crippled Fiji's democratic institutions, and initially refused to hold elections. In 2012, he promised to hold elections in 2014.

Geography :: Fiji

Location:

Oceania, island group in the South Pacific Ocean, about two-thirds of the way from Hawaii to New Zealand

Geographic coordinates:

18 00 S, 175 00 E

Map references:

Oceania

Area:

total: 18,274 sq km

country comparison to the world: 157

land: 18,274 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than New Jersey

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

1,129 km

Maritime claims:

measured from claimed archipelagic straight baselines

territorial sea: 12 nm

exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

continental shelf: 200 m depth or to the depth of exploitation; rectilinear shelf claim added

Climate:

tropical marine; only slight seasonal temperature variation

Terrain:

mostly mountains of volcanic origin

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m

highest point: Tomanivi 1,324 m

Natural resources:

timber, fish, gold, copper, offshore oil potential, hydropower

Land use:

arable land: 9.17%

permanent crops: 4.65%

other: 86.17% (2011)

Irrigated land:

30 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:

28.55 cu km (2011)

Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):

total: 0.08 cu km/yr (30%/11%/59%)

per capita: 100.1 cu m/yr (2005)

Natural hazards:

cyclonic storms can occur from November to January

Environment - current issues:

deforestation; soil erosion

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Law of the Sea, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

includes 332 islands; approximately 110 are inhabited

People and Society :: Fiji

Nationality:

noun: Fijian(s)

adjective: Fijian

Ethnic groups:

Fijian 57.3% (predominantly Melanesian with a Polynesian admixture), Indian 37.6%, Rotuman 1.2%, other 3.9% (European, other Pacific Islanders, Chinese) (2007 census)

Languages:

English (official), Fijian (official), Hindustani

Religions:

Protestant 55.4% (Methodist 34.6%, Assembly of God 5.7%, Seventh-Day Adventist 3.9%, Anglican 0.8%, other 10.4%), Hindu 27.9%, Roman Catholic 9.1%, Muslim 6.3%, Sikh 0.3%, other or unspecified 0.3%, none 0.7% (2007 census)

Population:

896,758 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 162

Age structure:

0-14 years: 28.4% (male 129,938/female 124,374)

15-24 years: 17.4% (male 79,597/female 76,080)

25-54 years: 41.1% (male 188,488/female 179,760)

55-64 years: 7.6% (male 34,251/female 33,753)

65 years and over: 5.6% (male 23,212/female 27,305) (2013 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 52.2 %

youth dependency ratio: 43.9 %

elderly dependency ratio: 8.3 %

potential support ratio: 12.1 (2013)

Median age:

total: 27.6 years

male: 27.4 years

female: 27.8 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

0.73% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 140

Birth rate:

20.28 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 86

Death rate:

5.96 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 166

Net migration rate:

-6.99 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 200

Urbanization:

urban population: 52% of total population (2010)

rate of urbanization: 1.3% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

SUVA (capital) 174,000 (2009)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female
0-14 years: 1.05 male(s)/female
15-24 years: 1.05 male(s)/female
25-54 years: 1.05 male(s)/female
55-64 years: 1.01 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.85 male(s)/female
total population: 1.03 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

26 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)

country comparison to the world: 130

Infant mortality rate:

total: 10.46 deaths/1,000 live births

country comparison to the world: 141

male: 11.53 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 9.33 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 71.87 years

country comparison to the world: 139

male: 69.26 years

female: 74.62 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

2.54 children born/woman (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 82

Health expenditures:

4.9% of GDP (2010)

country comparison to the world: 146

Physicians density:

0.45 physicians/1,000 population (2003)

Hospital bed density:

2.1 beds/1,000 population (2009)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 100% of population

rural: 95% of population

total: 98% of population

unimproved:

urban: 0% of population

rural: 5% of population

total: 2% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 94% of population

rural: 71% of population

total: 83% of population

unimproved:

urban: 6% of population

rural: 29% of population

total: 17% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

0.1% (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

fewer than 1,000 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 141

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

fewer than 100 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 151

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

30.6% (2008)

country comparison to the world: 25

Education expenditures:

4.1% of GDP (2011)

country comparison to the world: 106

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 93.7%

male: 95.5%

female: 91.9% (2003 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 15.7 years (2011)

Government:: Fiji

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of Fiji
conventional short form: Fiji
local long form: Republic of Fiji/Matanitu ko Viti
local short form: Fiji/Viti

Government type:

republic

Capital:

name: Suva (on Viti Levu)
geographic coordinates: 18 08 S, 178 25 E
time difference: UTC+12 (17 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)
daylight saving time: +1hr, begins fourth Sunday in October; ends third Sunday in January

Administrative divisions:

4 divisions and 1 dependency*; Central, Eastern, Northern, Rotuma*, Western

Independence:

10 October 1970 (from the UK)

National holiday:

Independence Day, second Monday of October (1970)

Constitution:

enacted 25 July 1997; effective 28 July 1998; note - constitution encourages multiculturalism and makes multiparty government mandatory

Legal system:

common law system based on the English model

International law organization participation:

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; accepts ICCT jurisdiction

Suffrage:

21 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President Ratu Epeli NAILATIKAU (since 30 July 2009)
head of government: Prime Minister Laisenia QARASE (since 10 September 2000); note - although QARASE is still the legal prime minister, he has been confined to his home island; former President ILOILOVATU appointed Commodore Voreqe "Frank" BAINIMARAMA interim prime minister under the military regime
cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the prime minister from among the members of Parliament and responsible to Parliament; note - coup leader Commodore Voreqe BAINIMARAMA has appointed an interim cabinet
(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#))
elections: under the constitution, president elected by the Great Council of Chiefs for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); in 2007 the Great Council of Chiefs was suspended from its role in electing the president; prime minister appointed by the president
election results: Ratu Epeli NAILATIKAU was appointed by Chief Justice Anthony GATES

Legislative branch:

bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate (32 seats; 14 members appointed by the president on the advice of the Great Council of Chiefs, 9 appointed by the president on the advice of the Prime Minister, 8 on the advice of the opposition leader, and 1 appointed on the advice of the council of Rotuma) and the House of Representatives (71 seats; 23 members reserved for ethnic Fijians, 19 reserved for ethnic Indians, 3 reserved for other ethnic groups, 1 reserved for the council of Rotuma constituency encompassing the whole of Fiji, and 25 open seats; members serve five-year terms)
elections: House of Representatives - last held on 6-13 May 2006 (long delayed, the next elections reportedly will be held in 2014)
election results: House of Representatives - percent of vote by party - SDL 44.6%, FLP 39.2%, UPP 0.8%, independents 4.9%, other 10.5%; seats by party - SDL 36, FLP 31, UPP 2, independents 2

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Supreme Court (consists of the chief justice, all justices of the Court of Appeal, and judges appointed specifically as Supreme Court judges); Court of Appeal (consists of the court president, all puisne judges of the High Court, and judges specifically appointed to the Court of Appeal); High Court (chaired by the chief justice and includes a minimum of 10 puisne judges; High Court organized into civil, criminal, family, employment, and tax divisions)
note - in 1987, the Supreme Court assumed functions formerly performed by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (in London)
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; judges of the Supreme Court, the president of the Court of Appeal, the 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, Supreme Court judges, and justices of Appeal generally required to retire at age 70, but may be waived for one or more sessions of the court; puisne judges appointed for not less than 4 years nor more than 7 years with mandatory retirement at age 65
subordinate courts: Magistrates' Court (organized into civil, criminal, juvenile, and small claims divisions)

Political parties and leaders:

Dodonu Ni Taukei Party or DNT [Fereti S. DEWA]
Fiji Democratic Party or FDP [Filipe BOLE] (a merger of the Christian Democrat Alliance or VLV [Poesci Waqalevu BUNE], Fijian Association Party or FAP, Fijian Political Party or SVT [Sitiveni RABUKA] (primarily Fijian), and New Labor Unity Party or NLUP [Ofa SWANN])
Fiji Labor Party or FLP [Mahendra CHAUDHRY]
General Voters Party or GVP (became part of United General Party)
Girmit Heritage Party or GHP
Justice and Freedom Party or AIM
Lio 'On Famor Rotuma Party or LFR
National Federation Party or NFP [Pramond RAE] (primarily Indian)

Nationalist Vanua Takolavo Party or NVTLP [Saula TELAWA]
Party of National Unity or PANU [Ponipate LESAVUA]
Party of the Truth or POTT
United Fiji Party/Sogoso Duavata ni Lewenivanua or SDL [Laisenia QARASE]
United Peoples Party or UPP [Millis Mick BEDDOES]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

Group Against Racial Discrimination or GARD [Dr. Anirudk SINGH] (for restoration of a democratic government)
Viti Landowners Association

International organization participation:

ACP, ADB, AOSIS, C (suspended), CP, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, NAM, OPCW, PCA, PIF, Sparteca (suspended), SPC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNMISS, UNMIT, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Winston THOMPSON
chancery: 2000 M Street, NW, Suite 710, Washington, DC 20036
telephone: [1] (202) 466-8320
FAX: [1] (202) 466-8325

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Frankie A. REED
embassy: 158 Princes Rd, Tamavua
mailing address: P. O. Box 218, Suva
telephone: [679] 331-4466
FAX: [679] 330-2267

Flag description:

light blue with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant and the Fijian shield centered on the outer half of the flag; the blue symbolizes the Pacific ocean and the Union Jack reflects the links with Great Britain; the shield - taken from Fiji's coat of arms - depicts a yellow lion above a white field quartered by the cross of Saint George; the four quarters depict stalks of sugarcane, a palm tree, bananas, and a white dove

National anthem:

name: "God Bless Fiji"

 **PLAY ANTHEM**

lyrics/music: Michael Francis Alexander PRESCOTT/C. Austin MILES (adapted by Michael Francis Alexander PRESCOTT)
note: adopted 1970; the anthem is known in Fijian as "Meda Dau Doka" (Let Us Show Pride); adapted from the hymn, "Dwelling in Beulah Land," the anthem's English lyrics are generally sung, although they differ in meaning from the official Fijian lyrics

Economy:: Fiji

Economy - overview:

Fiji, endowed with forest, mineral, and fish resources, is one of the most developed of the Pacific island economies though still with a large subsistence sector. Sugar exports, remittances from Fijians working abroad, and a growing tourist industry - with 400,000 to 500,000 tourists annually - are the major sources of foreign exchange. Fiji's sugar has special access to European Union markets but will be harmed by the EU's decision to cut sugar subsidies. Sugar processing makes up one-third of industrial activity but is not efficient. Fiji's tourism industry was damaged by the December 2006 coup and is facing an uncertain recovery time. In 2007 tourist arrivals were down almost 6%, with substantial job losses in the service sector, and GDP dipped. The coup has created a difficult business climate. The EU has suspended all aid until the interim government takes steps toward new elections. Long-term problems include low investment, uncertain land ownership rights, and the government's inability to manage its budget. Overseas remittances from Fijians working in Kuwait and Iraq have decreased significantly. Fiji's current account deficit peaked at 23% of GDP in 2006, and declined to 12.5% of GDP in 2012.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$4.373 billion (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 174
\$4.283 billion (2011 est.)
\$4.205 billion (2010 est.)
note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$3.996 billion (2012 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

2.1% (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 130
1.9% (2011 est.)
0.1% (2010 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$4,900 (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 162
\$4,800 (2011 est.)
\$4,700 (2010 est.)
note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 76.6%
government consumption: 13.7%
investment in fixed capital: 19.3%
investment in inventories: 0%
exports of goods and services: 40.7%
imports of goods and services: -50.2%
(2012 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 12.3%
industry: 19.1%
services: 68.6% (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:

sugarcane, coconuts, cassava (manioc), rice, sweet potatoes, bananas; cattle, pigs, horses, goats; fish

Industries:

tourism, sugar, clothing, copra, gold, silver, lumber, small cottage industries

Industrial production growth rate:

4%
country comparison to the world: 66

Labor force:

335,000 (2007 est.)
country comparison to the world: 163

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 70%
industry and services: 30% (2001 est.)

Unemployment rate:

7.6% (1999)
country comparison to the world: 86

Population below poverty line:

31% (2009 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 2.6%
highest 10%: 34.9% (2009 est.)

Budget:

revenues: \$1.062 billion
expenditures: \$1.229 billion (2012 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

26.6% of GDP (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 113

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-4.2% of GDP (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 148

Public debt:

48.2% of GDP (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 71
54.1% of GDP (2011 est.)

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

5% (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 145
8.7% (2011 est.)

Central bank discount rate:

1.75% (31 December 2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 104
3% (31 December 2009 est.)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

7% (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 122
7.47% (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$796.7 million (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 154
\$781.7 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$2.495 billion (31 December 2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 147
\$2.24 billion (31 December 2010 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$1.79 billion (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 137
\$1.758 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$1.372 billion (31 December 2011)
country comparison to the world: 103
\$1.404 billion (31 December 2010)
\$1.607 billion (31 December 2009)

Current account balance:

-\$493.4 million (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 95
-\$428.8 million (2011 est.)

Exports:

\$991.6 million (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 158
\$901.5 million (2011 est.)

Exports - commodities:

sugar, garments, gold, timber, fish, molasses, coconut oil

Exports - partners:

US 13.3%, Australia 12%, Japan 6.3%, Samoa 5.8%, Tonga 5.1% (2012)

Imports:

\$1.938 billion (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 166
\$1.762 billion (2011 est.)

Imports - commodities:

manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, petroleum products, food, chemicals

Imports - partners:

Singapore 32.6%, Australia 15.4%, NZ 14.4%, China 10.7% (2012)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$1.007 billion (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 136
\$833.5 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Debt - external:

\$661.9 million (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 168
\$860.7 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of direct foreign investment - at home:

\$NA

Stock of direct foreign investment - abroad:

\$NA

Exchange rates:

Fijian dollars (FJD) per US dollar -
1.7899 (2012 est.)
1.7932 (2011 est.)
1.9183 (2010 est.)

Energy:: Fiji

Electricity - production:

869.1 million kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 151

Electricity - consumption:

753.4 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 157

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 192

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 184

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

219,100 kW (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 154

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

54.8% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 146

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 87

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

38.8% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 57

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

6.4% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 32

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 133

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 110

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 182

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 131

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 176

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

17,810 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 135

Refined petroleum products - exports:

1,739 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 104

Refined petroleum products - imports:

16,110 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 112

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 128

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 141

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 97

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 191

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 135

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

2.5 million Mt (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 145

Communications:: Fiji

Telephones - main lines in use:

129,800 (2011)

country comparison to the world: 142

Telephones - mobile cellular:

727,000 (2011)

country comparison to the world: 160

Telephone system:

general assessment: modern local, interisland, and international (wire/radio integrated) public and special-purpose telephone, telegraph, and teleprinter facilities; regional radio communications center

domestic: telephone or radio telephone links to almost all inhabited islands; most towns and large villages have automatic telephone exchanges and direct dialing; combined fixed and mobile-cellular teledensity roughly 100 per 100 persons

international: country code - 679; access to important cable links between US and Canada as well as between NZ and Australia; satellite earth stations - 2 Inmarsat (Pacific Ocean) (2011)

Broadcast media:

Fiji TV, a publicly traded company, operates a free-to-air channel as well as Sky Fiji and Sky Pacific multi-channel pay-TV services; state-owned commercial company, Fiji Broadcasting Corporation, Ltd, operates 6 radio stations - 2 public broadcasters and 4 commercial broadcasters with multiple repeaters; 5 radio stations with repeaters operated by Communications Fiji, Ltd; transmissions of multiple international broadcasters are available (2009)

Internet country code:

.fj

Internet hosts:

21,739 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 115

Internet users:

114,200 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 157

Transportation :: Fiji

Airports:

28 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 121

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 4

over 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1

914 to 1,523 m: 2 (2013)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 24

914 to 1,523 m: 5

under 914 m:

19 (2013)

Railways:

total: 597 km

country comparison to the world: 108

narrow gauge: 597 km 0.600-m gauge

note: belongs to the government-owned Fiji Sugar Corporation; used to haul sugarcane during the harvest season, which runs from May to December (2008)

Roadways:

total: 3,440 km

country comparison to the world: 162

paved: 1,692 km

unpaved: 1,748 km (2000)

Waterways:

203 km (122 km are navigable by motorized craft and 200-metric-ton barges) (2012)

country comparison to the world: 98

Merchant marine:

total: 11

country comparison to the world: 108

by type: passenger 4, passenger/cargo 4, refrigerated cargo 1, roll on/roll off 2

foreign-owned: 2 (Australia 2) (2010)

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Lautoka, Levuka, Suva

Military :: Fiji

Military branches:

Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF): Land Forces, Naval Forces (2011)

Military service age and obligation:

18 years of age for voluntary military service; mandatory retirement at age 55 (2013)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 233,240

females age 16-49: 222,587 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 183,730

females age 16-49: 188,325 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 8,403

female: 8,039 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures:

1.6% of GDP (2012)

country comparison to the world: 88

Transnational Issues:: Fiji

Disputes - international:

none