

Central African Republic



Introduction Central African Republic

Background: The former French colony of Ubangi-Shari became the Central African Republic upon independence in 1960. After three tumultuous decades of misrule - mostly by military governments - civilian rule was established in 1993 and lasted for one decade. President Ange-Felix PATASSE's civilian government was plagued by unrest, and in March 2003 he was deposed in a military coup led by General Francois BOZIZE, who established a transitional government. Though the government has the tacit support of civil society groups and the main parties, a wide field of candidates contested the municipal, legislative, and presidential elections held in March and May of 2005 in which General BOZIZE was affirmed as president. The government still does not fully control the countryside, where pockets of lawlessness persist.

Geography Central African Republic

Location: Central Africa, north of Democratic Republic of the Congo

Geographic coordinates: 7 00 N, 21 00 E

Map references: Africa

Area: *total:* 622,984 sq km
land: 622,984 sq km
water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative: slightly smaller than Texas

Land boundaries: *total:* 5,203 km
border countries: Cameroon 797 km, Chad 1,197 km, Democratic Republic of the Congo 1,577 km, Republic of the Congo 467 km, Sudan 1,165 km

Coastline: 0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims: none (landlocked)

Climate: tropical; hot, dry winters; mild to hot, wet summers

Terrain: vast, flat to rolling, monotonous plateau; scattered hills in northeast and southwest

Elevation extremes: *lowest point:* Oubangui River 335 m
highest point: Mont Ngaoui 1,420 m

Natural resources: diamonds, uranium, timber, gold, oil, hydropower

Land use: *arable land:* 3.1%
permanent crops: 0.15%
other: 96.75% (2005)

Irrigated land: 20 sq km (2003)

Natural hazards: hot, dry, dusty harmattan winds affect northern areas; floods are common

Environment - current issues: tap water is not potable; poaching has diminished the country's reputation as one of the last great wildlife refuges; desertification; deforestation

Environment - international agreements: *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 94
signed, but not ratified: Law of the Sea

Geography - note: landlocked; almost the precise center of Africa

People	Central African Republic
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Population: 4,303,356
note: estimates for this country explicitly take into account the effects of excess mortality due to AIDS; this can result in lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality and death rates,

lower population and growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected (July 2006 est.)

Age structure:	<i>0-14 years:</i> 41.9% (male 907,629/female 897,153) <i>15-64 years:</i> 53.9% (male 1,146,346/female 1,173,268) <i>65 years and over:</i> 4.2% (male 71,312/female 107,648) (2006 est.)
Median age:	<i>total:</i> 18.4 years <i>male:</i> 18 years <i>female:</i> 18.8 years (2006 est.)
Population growth rate:	1.53% (2006 est.)
Birth rate:	33.91 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)
Death rate:	18.65 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)
Net migration rate:	0 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2006 est.)
Sex ratio:	<i>at birth:</i> 1.03 male(s)/female <i>under 15 years:</i> 1.01 male(s)/female <i>15-64 years:</i> 0.98 male(s)/female <i>65 years and over:</i> 0.66 male(s)/female <i>total population:</i> 0.98 male(s)/female (2006 est.)
Infant mortality rate:	<i>total:</i> 85.63 deaths/1,000 live births <i>male:</i> 92.44 deaths/1,000 live births <i>female:</i> 78.61 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)
Life expectancy at birth:	<i>total population:</i> 43.54 years <i>male:</i> 43.46 years <i>female:</i> 43.62 years (2006 est.)
Total fertility rate:	4.41 children born/woman (2006 est.)
HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:	13.5% (2003 est.)
HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:	260,000 (2003 est.)
HIV/AIDS - deaths:	23,000 (2003 est.)
Major infectious diseases:	<i>degree of risk:</i> very high <i>food or waterborne diseases:</i> bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A,

and typhoid fever
vectorborne disease: malaria
respiratory disease: meningococcal meningitis (2005)

Nationality: *noun*: Central African(s)
adjective: Central African

Ethnic groups: Baya 33%, Banda 27%, Mandjia 13%, Sara 10%, Mboum 7%, M'Baka 4%, Yakoma 4%, other 2%

Religions: indigenous beliefs 35%, Protestant 25%, Roman Catholic 25%, Muslim 15%
note: animistic beliefs and practices strongly influence the Christian majority

Languages: French (official), Sangho (lingua franca and national language), tribal languages

Literacy: *definition*: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 51%
male: 63.3%
female: 39.9% (2003 est.)

Government	Central African Republic
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Country name: *conventional long form*: Central African Republic
conventional short form: none
local long form: Republique Centrafricaine
local short form: none
former: Ubangi-Shari, Central African Empire
abbreviation: CAR

Government type: republic

Capital: *name*: Bangui
geographic coordinates: 4 22 N, 18 35 E
time difference: UTC+1 (6 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions: 14 prefectures (prefectures, singular - prefecture), 2 economic prefectures* (prefectures economiques, singular - prefecture economique), and 1 commune**; Bamingui-Bangoran, Bangui**, Basse-Kotto, Haute-Kotto, Haut-Mbomou, Kemo, Lobaye, Mambere-Kadei, Mbomou, Nana-Grebizi*, Nana-Mambere, Ombella-Mpoko, Ouaka, Ouham, Ouham-Pende, Sangha-Mbaere*, Vakaga

Independence: 13 August 1960 (from France)

National holiday: Republic Day, 1 December (1958)

Constitution: ratified by popular referendum 5 December 2004; effective

27 December 2004

- Legal system:** based on French law
- Suffrage:** 21 years of age; universal
- Executive branch:** *chief of state:* President Francois BOZIZE (since 15 March 2003 coup)
head of government: Prime Minister Elie DOTE (since 13 June 2005); note - Celestin GAOMBALET resigned 11 June 2005
cabinet: Council of Ministers
elections: under the new constitution, the president elected to a five-year term (eligible for a second term); elections last held 13 March and 8 May 2005 (next to be held in 2010); prime minister appointed by the political party with a parliamentary majority
election results: Francois BOZIZE elected president; percent of second round balloting - Francois BOZIZE (KNK) 64.6%, Martin ZIGUELE (MLPC) 35.4%
- Legislative branch:** unicameral National Assembly or Assemblée Nationale (109 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms)
elections: last held 13 March 2005 and 8 May 2005 (next to be held NA 2010)
election results: percent of vote by party - MLPC 43%, RDC 18%, MDD 9%, FPP 6%, PSD 5%, ADP 4%, PUN 3%, FODEM 2%, PLD 2%, UPR 1%, FC 1%, independents 6%; seats by party - MLPC 47, RDC 20, MDD 8, FPP 7, PSD 6, ADP 5, PUN 3, FODEM 2, PLD 2, UPR 1, FC 1, independents 7
- Judicial branch:** Supreme Court or Cour Supreme; Constitutional Court (3 judges appointed by the president, 3 by the president of the National Assembly, and 3 by fellow judges); Court of Appeal; Criminal Courts; Inferior Courts
- Political parties and leaders:** Alliance for Democracy and Progress or ADP [Jacques MBOLIEDAS]; Central African Democratic Assembly or RDC [Andre KOLINGBA]; Civic Forum or FC [Gen. Timothee MALENDOMA]; Democratic Forum for Modernity or FODEM [Charles MASSI]; Liberal Democratic Party or PLD [Nestor KOMBO-NAGUEMON]; Movement for Democracy and Development or MDD [David DACKO]; Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People or MLPC [Ange-Felix PATASSE] (the party of deposed president); National Convergence or KNK; Patriotic Front for Progress or FPP [Abel GOUMBA]; People's Union for the Republic or UPR [Pierre Sammy MAKFOY]; National Unity Party or PUN [Jean-Paul NGOUPANDE]; Social Democratic Party or

PSD [Enoch LAKOUE]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

NA

International organization participation:

ACCT, ACP, AfDB, AU, BDEAC, CEMAC, FAO, FZ, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOC, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, NAM, OIC (observer), OIF, OPCW, OPCW (signatory), UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Emmanuel TOUABOY
chancery: 1618 22nd Street NW, Washington, DC 20008
telephone: [1] (202) 483-7800
FAX: [1] (202) 332-9893

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Charge d'Affaires James PANOS
embassy: Avenue David Dacko, Bangui
mailing address: B. P. 924, Bangui
telephone: [236] 61 02 00
FAX: [236] 61 44 94
note: the embassy is currently operating with a minimal staff

Flag description:

four equal horizontal bands of blue (top), white, green, and yellow with a vertical red band in center; there is a yellow five-pointed star on the hoist side of the blue band

Economy	Central African Republic
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Economy - overview:

Subsistence agriculture, together with forestry, remains the backbone of the economy of the Central African Republic (CAR), with more than 70% of the population living in outlying areas. The agricultural sector generates more than half of GDP. Timber has accounted for about 16% of export earnings and the diamond industry, for 40%. Important constraints to economic development include the CAR's landlocked position, a poor transportation system, a largely unskilled work force, and a legacy of misdirected macroeconomic policies. Factional fighting between the government and its opponents remains a drag on economic revitalization. Distribution of income is extraordinarily unequal. Grants from France and the international community can only partially meet humanitarian needs.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$4.913 billion (2006 est.)

GDP (official exchange rate):	\$1.542 billion (2006 est.)
GDP - real growth rate:	3% (2006 est.)
GDP - per capita (PPP):	\$1,100 (2006 est.)
GDP - composition by sector:	<i>agriculture: 55%</i> <i>industry: 20%</i> <i>services: 25%</i> (2001 est.)
Labor force:	NA
Unemployment rate:	8% (23% for Bangui) (2001 est.)
Population below poverty line:	NA%
Household income or consumption by percentage share:	<i>lowest 10%: 0.7%</i> <i>highest 10%: 47.7%</i> (1993)
Distribution of family income - Gini index:	61.3 (1993)
Inflation rate (consumer prices):	3.6% (2001 est.)
Budget:	<i>revenues: \$NA</i> <i>expenditures: \$NA</i>
Agriculture - products:	cotton, coffee, tobacco, manioc (tapioca), yams, millet, corn, bananas; timber
Industries:	gold and diamond mining, logging, brewing, textiles, footwear, assembly of bicycles and motorcycles
Industrial production growth rate:	3% (2002)
Electricity - production:	109 million kWh (2004)
Electricity - production by source:	<i>fossil fuel: 19.8%</i> <i>hydro: 80.2%</i> <i>nuclear: 0%</i> <i>other: 0%</i> (2001)

Electricity - consumption: 101.4 million kWh (2004)

Electricity - exports: 0 kWh (2004)

Electricity - imports: 0 kWh (2004)

Oil - production: 0 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - consumption: 2,420 bbl/day (2004 est.)

Oil - exports: NA bbl/day

Oil - imports: NA bbl/day

Natural gas - production: 0 cu m (2004 est.)

Natural gas - consumption: 0 cu m (2004 est.)

Exports: \$131 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Exports - commodities: diamonds, timber, cotton, coffee, tobacco

Exports - partners: Belgium 34.9%, France 9.6%, Spain 8.7%, Italy 8.1%, China 7.1%, Indonesia 6.3%, Democratic Republic of the Congo 4.7%, US 4.5%, Turkey 4.5% (2005)

Imports: \$203 million f.o.b. (2004 est.)

Imports - commodities: food, textiles, petroleum products, machinery, electrical equipment, motor vehicles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals

Imports - partners: France 16.6%, Netherlands 10.3%, Cameroon 9.7%, US 7.3% (2005)

Debt - external: \$1.06 billion (2002 est.)

Economic aid - recipient: ODA, \$59.8 million; note - traditional budget subsidies from France (2002 est.)

Currency (code): Communauté Financière Africaine franc (XAF); note - responsible authority is the Bank of the Central African States

Currency code: XAF

Exchange rates: Communauté Financière Africaine francs (XAF) per US dollar - 527.47 (2005), 528.29 (2004), 581.2 (2003), 696.99 (2002)

Fiscal year: calendar year

Communications Central African Republic

Telephones - main lines in use: 10,000 (2004)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 60,000 (2004)

Telephone system: *general assessment:* fair system
domestic: network consists principally of microwave radio relay and low-capacity, low-powered radiotelephone communication
international: country code - 236; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 1, FM 5, shortwave 1 (2002)

Radios: 283,000 (1997)

Television broadcast stations: 1 (2001)

Televisions: 18,000 (1997)

Internet country code: .cf

Internet hosts: 10 (2006)

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 1 (2002)

Internet users: 9,000 (2005)

Transportation Central African Republic

Airports: 50 (2006)

Airports - with paved runways: *total:* 3
2,438 to 3,047 m: 1
1,524 to 2,437 m: 2 (2006)

Airports - with unpaved runways: *total:* 47
2,438 to 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 10
 914 to 1,523 m: 23
 under 914 m: 13 (2006)

Roadways: *total:* 23,810 km (1999)

Waterways: 2,800 km (primarily on the Oubangui and Sangha rivers) (2005)

Ports and terminals: Bangui, Nola, Salo, Nzinga

Military	Central African Republic
Military branches:	Central African Armed Forces (FACA): Ground Forces, Military Air Service; General Directorate of Gendarmerie Inspection (DGIG), Republican Guard, National Police (2006)
Military service age and obligation:	18 years of age for voluntary and compulsory military service; conscript service obligation is two years (2005)
Manpower available for military service:	<i>males age 18-49:</i> 853,760 <i>females age 18-49:</i> 835,426 (2005 est.)
Manpower fit for military service:	<i>males age 18-49:</i> 416,091 <i>females age 18-49:</i> 383,056 (2005 est.)
Military expenditures - dollar figure:	\$16.37 million (2005 est.)
Military expenditures - percent of GDP:	1% (2005 est.)

Transnational Issues	Central African Republic
Disputes - international:	about 30,000 refugees fleeing the 2002 civil conflict in the CAR still reside in southern Chad; periodic skirmishes over water and grazing rights among related pastoral populations along the border with southern Sudan persist
Refugees and internally displaced persons:	<i>refugees (country of origin):</i> 19,960 (Sudan) 3,325 (Democratic Republic of the Congo); note - UNHCR resumed repatriation of Southern Sudanese refugees in 2006 <i>IDPs:</i> 150,000 (ongoing unrest following coup in 2003) (2006)

Trafficking in persons: *current situation:* Central African Republic is a source and destination country for children trafficked for domestic servitude, sexual exploitation, and forced labor in shops and commercial labor activities; while the majority of child victims are trafficked within the country, some are also trafficked to and from Cameroon and Nigeria
tier rating: Tier 2 Watch List - the Central African Republic failed to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat trafficking in persons during 2005, specifically its inadequate law enforcement response to trafficking crimes