

## Congo, Republic of the



### Introduction Congo, Republic of the

**Background:** Upon independence in 1960, the former French region of Middle Congo became the Republic of the Congo. A quarter century of experimentation with Marxism was abandoned in 1990 and a democratically elected government took office in 1992. A brief civil war in 1997 restored former Marxist President Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO, and ushered in a period of ethnic and political unrest. Southern-based rebel groups agreed to a final peace accord in March 2003, but the calm is tenuous and refugees continue to present a humanitarian crisis. The Republic of Congo was once one of Africa's largest petroleum producers, but with declining production it will need to hope for new offshore oil finds to sustain its oil earnings over the long term.

### Geography Congo, Republic of the

**Location:** Western Africa, bordering the South Atlantic Ocean, between Angola and Gabon

**Geographic coordinates:** 1 00 S, 15 00 E

**Map references:** Africa

**Area:** *total:* 342,000 sq km  
*land:* 341,500 sq km  
*water:* 500 sq km

**Area - comparative:** slightly smaller than Montana

**Land boundaries:** *total:* 5,504 km  
*border countries:* Angola 201 km, Cameroon 523 km, Central African Republic 467 km, Democratic Republic of the Congo 2,410 km, Gabon 1,903 km

**Coastline:** 169 km

**Maritime claims:** *territorial sea:* 200 nm

**Climate:** tropical; rainy season (March to June); dry season (June to October); persistent high temperatures and humidity; particularly enervating climate astride the Equator

**Terrain:** coastal plain, southern basin, central plateau, northern basin

**Elevation extremes:** *lowest point:* Atlantic Ocean 0 m  
*highest point:* Mount Berongou 903 m

**Natural resources:** petroleum, timber, potash, lead, zinc, uranium, copper, phosphates, gold, magnesium, natural gas, hydropower

**Land use:** *arable land:* 1.45%  
*permanent crops:* 0.15%  
*other:* 98.4% (2005)

**Irrigated land:** 20 sq km (2003)

**Natural hazards:** seasonal flooding

**Environment - current issues:** air pollution from vehicle emissions; water pollution from the dumping of raw sewage; tap water is not potable; deforestation

**Environment - international agreements:** *party to:* Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands  
*signed, but not ratified:* Law of the Sea

**Geography - note:** about 70% of the population lives in Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, or along the railroad between them

People	Congo, Republic of the
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**Population:** 3,702,314  
*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.)

<b>Age structure:</b>	<i>0-14 years:</i> 46.4% (male 864,407/female 853,728) <i>15-64 years:</i> 50.7% (male 930,390/female 945,545) <i>65 years and over:</i> 2.9% (male 44,430/female 63,814) (2006 est.)
<b>Median age:</b>	<i>total:</i> 16.6 years <i>male:</i> 16.4 years <i>female:</i> 16.9 years (2006 est.)
<b>Population growth rate:</b>	2.6% (2006 est.)
<b>Birth rate:</b>	42.57 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)
<b>Death rate:</b>	12.93 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)
<b>Net migration rate:</b>	-3.62 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2006 est.)
<b>Sex ratio:</b>	<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> 0.7 male(s)/female <i>total population:</i> 0.99 male(s)/female (2006 est.)
<b>Infant mortality rate:</b>	<i>total:</i> 85.29 deaths/1,000 live births <i>male:</i> 91 deaths/1,000 live births <i>female:</i> 79.41 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)
<b>Life expectancy at birth:</b>	<i>total population:</i> 52.8 years <i>male:</i> 51.65 years <i>female:</i> 53.98 years (2006 est.)
<b>Total fertility rate:</b>	6.07 children born/woman (2006 est.)
<b>HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:</b>	4.9% (2003 est.)
<b>HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:</b>	90,000 (2003 est.)
<b>HIV/AIDS - deaths:</b>	9,700 (2003 est.)

**Major infectious diseases:** *degree of risk:* very high  
*food or waterborne diseases:* bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever  
*vectorborne disease:* malaria (2005)

**Nationality:** *noun:* Congolese (singular and plural)  
*adjective:* Congolese or Congo

**Ethnic groups:** Kongo 48%, Sangha 20%, M'Bochi 12%, Teke 17%, Europeans and other 3%

**Religions:** Christian 50%, animist 48%, Muslim 2%

**Languages:** French (official), Lingala and Monokutuba (lingua franca trade languages), many local languages and dialects (of which Kikongo is the most widespread)

**Literacy:** *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write  
*total population:* 83.8%  
*male:* 89.6%  
*female:* 78.4% (2003 est.)

Government	Congo, Republic of the
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**Country name:** *conventional long form:* Republic of the Congo  
*conventional short form:* Congo (Brazzaville)  
*local long form:* Republique du Congo  
*local short form:* none  
*former:* Middle Congo, Congo/Brazzaville, Congo

**Government type:** republic

**Capital:** *name:* Brazzaville  
*geographic coordinates:* 4 16 S, 15 17 E  
*time difference:* UTC+1 (six hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

**Administrative divisions:** 10 regions (regions, singular - region) and 1 commune\*; Bouenza, Brazzaville\*, Cuvette, Cuvette-Ouest, Kouilou, Lekoumou, Likouala, Niari, Plateaux, Pool, Sangha

**Independence:** 15 August 1960 (from France)

**National holiday:** Independence Day, 15 August (1960)

**Constitution:** approved by referendum 20 January 2002

**Legal system:** based on French civil law system and customary law

**Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:** *chief of state:* President Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO (since 25 October 1997, following the civil war in which he

toppled elected president Pascal LISSOUBA); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government  
*head of government*: President Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO (since 25 October 1997, following the civil war in which he toppled elected president Pascal LISSOUBA); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government  
*cabinet*: Council of Ministers appointed by the president  
*elections*: president elected by popular vote for a seven-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 10 March 2002 (next to be held in 2009)  
*election results*: Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO reelected president; percent of vote - Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO 89.4%, Joseph Kignoumbi Kia MBOUNGOU 2.7%

**Legislative branch:** bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate (66 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms) and the National Assembly (137 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms)  
*elections*: Senate - last held 11 July 2002 (next to be held July 2007); National Assembly - last held 27 May and 26 June 2002 (next to be held by May 2007)  
*election results*: Senate - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - FDP 56, other 10; National Assembly - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - FDP 83, UDR 6, UPADS 3, other 45

**Judicial branch:** Supreme Court or Cour Supreme

**Political parties and leaders:** the most important of the many parties are the Democratic and Patriotic Forces or FDP [Denis SASSOU-NGUESSO, president] (an alliance of Convention for Alternative Democracy, Congolese Labor Party or PCT, Liberal Republican Party, National Union for Democracy and Progress, Patriotic Union for the National Reconstruction, and Union for the National Renewal); Congolese Movement for Democracy and Integral Development or MCDDI [Michel MAMPOUYA]; Pan-African Union for Social Development or UPADS [Martin MBERI]; Rally for Democracy and Social Progress or RDPS [Jean-Pierre Thystere TCHICAYA, president]; Rally for Democracy and the Republic or RDR [Raymond Damasge NGOLLO]; Union for Democracy and Republic or UDR; Union of Democratic Forces or UFD [Sebastian EBAO]

**Political pressure groups and leaders:** Congolese Trade Union Congress or CSC; General Union of Congolese Pupils and Students or UGEEC; Revolutionary Union of Congolese Women or URFC; Union of Congolese Socialist Youth or UJSC

**International organization** ACCT, ACP, AfDB, AU, BDEAC, CEMAC, FAO, FZ, G-

**participation:** 77, IBRD, ICAO, ICCt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, IPU, ITU, ITUC, MIGA, NAM, OIF, OPCW (signatory), UN, UN Security Council (temporary), UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

**Diplomatic representation in the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Serge MOMBOULI  
*chancery:* 4891 Colorado Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20011  
*telephone:* [1] (202) 726-5500  
*FAX:* [1] (202) 726-1860

**Diplomatic representation from the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Robert WEISBERG  
*embassy:* NA  
*mailing address:* NA  
*telephone:* [243] (88) 43608  
*note:* the embassy is temporarily collocated with the US Embassy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (US Embassy Kinshasa, 310 Avenue des Aviateurs, Kinshasa)

**Flag description:** divided diagonally from the lower hoist side by a yellow band; the upper triangle (hoist side) is green and the lower triangle is red; uses the popular pan-African colors of Ethiopia

Economy	Congo, Republic of the
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**Economy - overview:** The economy is a mixture of village agriculture and handicrafts, an industrial sector based largely on oil, support services, and a government characterized by budget problems and overstaffing. Oil has supplanted forestry as the mainstay of the economy, providing a major share of government revenues and exports. In the early 1980s, rapidly rising oil revenues enabled the government to finance large-scale development projects with GDP growth averaging 5% annually, one of the highest rates in Africa. The government has mortgaged a substantial portion of its oil earnings through oil-backed loans that have contributed to a growing debt burden and chronic revenue shortfalls. Economic reform efforts have been undertaken with the support of international organizations, notably the World Bank and the IMF. However, the reform program came to a halt in June 1997 when civil war erupted. Denis SASSOUNGUSSO, who returned to power when the war ended in October 1997, publicly expressed interest in moving forward on economic reforms and privatization and in renewing cooperation with international financial institutions. Economic progress was badly hurt by slumping oil prices and the resumption of armed conflict in

December 1998, which worsened the republic's budget deficit. The current administration presides over an uneasy internal peace and faces difficult economic challenges of stimulating recovery and reducing poverty. Recovery of oil prices has boosted the economy's GDP and near-term prospects. In March 2006, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) treatment for Congo.

<b>GDP (purchasing power parity):</b>	\$4.958 billion (2006 est.)
<b>GDP (official exchange rate):</b>	\$5.093 billion (2006 est.)
<b>GDP - real growth rate:</b>	6% (2006 est.)
<b>GDP - per capita (PPP):</b>	\$1,300 (2006 est.)
<b>GDP - composition by sector:</b>	<i>agriculture: 6.2%</i> <i>industry: 55.3%</i> <i>services: 38.5% (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Labor force:</b>	NA
<b>Unemployment rate:</b>	NA%
<b>Population below poverty line:</b>	NA%
<b>Household income or consumption by percentage share:</b>	<i>lowest 10%: NA%</i> <i>highest 10%: NA%</i>
<b>Inflation rate (consumer prices):</b>	2.6% (2006 est.)
<b>Investment (gross fixed):</b>	27.2% of GDP (2006 est.)
<b>Budget:</b>	<i>revenues: \$2.985 billion</i> <i>expenditures: \$1.664 billion; including capital expenditures of \$NA (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Agriculture - products:</b>	cassava (tapioca), sugar, rice, corn, peanuts, vegetables, coffee, cocoa; forest products
<b>Industries:</b>	petroleum extraction, cement, lumber, brewing, sugar, palm

oil, soap, flour, cigarettes

<b>Industrial production growth rate:</b>	0% (2002 est.)
<b>Electricity - production:</b>	6.847 billion kWh (2004)
<b>Electricity - production by source:</b>	<i>fossil fuel:</i> 0.3% <i>hydro:</i> 99.7% <i>nuclear:</i> 0% <i>other:</i> 0% (2001)
<b>Electricity - consumption:</b>	5.127 billion kWh (2004)
<b>Electricity - exports:</b>	1.25 billion kWh (2004)
<b>Electricity - imports:</b>	9 million kWh (2004)
<b>Oil - production:</b>	267,100 bbl/day (2005 est.)
<b>Oil - consumption:</b>	6,000 bbl/day (2004 est.)
<b>Oil - exports:</b>	NA bbl/day (2001)
<b>Oil - imports:</b>	NA bbl/day (2001)
<b>Oil - proved reserves:</b>	93.5 million bbl (1 January 2002)
<b>Natural gas - production:</b>	0 cu m (2004 est.)
<b>Natural gas - consumption:</b>	0 cu m (2004 est.)
<b>Natural gas - exports:</b>	0 cu m (2004 est.)
<b>Natural gas - imports:</b>	0 cu m (2004 est.)
<b>Natural gas - proved reserves:</b>	90.61 billion cu m (1 January 2005 est.)
<b>Current account balance:</b>	\$1.215 billion (2006 est.)
<b>Exports:</b>	\$5.996 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)
<b>Exports - commodities:</b>	petroleum, lumber, plywood, sugar, cocoa, coffee, diamonds

**Exports - partners:** China 38.4%, US 28.6%, Taiwan 11.6%, South Korea 7.1% (2005)

**Imports:** \$1.964 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

**Imports - commodities:** capital equipment, construction materials, foodstuffs

**Imports - partners:** France 23.2%, China 10.2%, US 7.3%, India 7.2%, Italy 6.7%, Belgium 4.6% (2005)

**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:** \$547 million (2006 est.)

**Debt - external:** \$5 billion (2000 est.)

**Economic aid - recipient:** \$159.1 million (1995)

**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 - 513.168 (2006), 527.47 (2005), 528.29 (2004), 581.2 (2003), 696.99 (2002)

**Fiscal year:** calendar year

Communications	Congo, Republic of the
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**Telephones - main lines in use:** 13,800 (2004)

**Telephones - mobile cellular:** 490,000 (2005)

**Telephone system:** *general assessment:* services barely adequate for government use; key exchanges are in Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, and Loubomo; intercity lines frequently out of order  
*domestic:* primary network consists of microwave radio relay and coaxial cable  
*international:* country code - 242; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

**Radio broadcast stations:** AM 1, FM 5, shortwave 3 (2001)

**Radios:** 341,000 (1997)

**Television broadcast stations:** 1 (2002)

**Televisions:** 33,000 (1997)

**Internet country code:** .cg

**Internet hosts:** 46 (2004)

**Internet Service Providers (ISPs):** 1 (2000)

**Internet users:** 36,000 (2005)

## Transportation Congo, Republic of the

**Airports:** 32 (2006)

**Airports - with paved runways:** *total:* 4  
*over 3,047 m:* 1  
*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 1  
*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 2 (2006)

**Airports - with unpaved runways:** *total:* 28  
*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 6  
*914 to 1,523 m:* 11  
*under 914 m:* 11 (2006)

**Pipelines:** gas 89 km; liquid petroleum gas 4 km; oil 744 km (2006)

**Railways:** *total:* 894 km  
*narrow gauge:* 894 km 1.067-m gauge (2005)

**Roadways:** *total:* 17,289 km  
*paved:* 864 km  
*unpaved:* 16,425 km (2004)

**Waterways:** 4,385 km (on Congo and Oubanqui rivers) (2005)

**Merchant marine:** *registered in other countries:* 1 (Congo, Democratic Republic of the 1) (2006)

**Ports and terminals:** Brazzaville, Djeno, Impfondo, Ouesso, Oyo, Pointe-Noire

## Military Congo, Republic of the

**Military branches:** Congolese Armed Forces (FAC): Army, Congolese Air Force (Armee de l'Air Congolaise), Navy, Gendarmerie, Republican Guard (2005)

**Military service age and obligation:** 18 years of age for voluntary military service (2001)

**Manpower available for military service:** *males age 18-49:* 688,628  
*females age 18-49:* 685,388 (2005 est.)

**Manpower fit for military service:** *males age 18-49:* 406,016  
*females age 18-49:* 394,745 (2005 est.)

**Manpower reaching military service age annually:** *males age 18-49:* 38,464  
*females age 18-49:* 38,082 (2005 est.)

**Military expenditures - dollar figure:** \$85.22 million (2005 est.)

**Military expenditures - percent of GDP:** 1.4% (2005 est.)

Transnational Issues	Congo, Republic of the
<b>Disputes - international:</b>	about 7,000 Congolese refugees fleeing internal civil conflicts since the mid-1990s still reside in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; the location of the boundary in the broad Congo River with the Democratic Republic of the Congo is indefinite except in the Pool Malebo/Stanley Pool area
<b>Refugees and internally displaced persons:</b>	<i>refugees (country of origin):</i> 56,380 (Democratic Republic of Congo), 6,478 (Rwanda) <i>IDPs:</i> 48,000 (multiple civil wars since 1992; most IDPs are ethnic Lari) (2006)