

## Namibia



### Introduction Namibia

**Background:** South Africa occupied the German colony of South-West Africa during World War I and administered it as a mandate until after World War II, when it annexed the territory. In 1966 the Marxist South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) guerrilla group launched a war of independence for the area that was soon named Namibia, but it was not until 1988 that South Africa agreed to end its administration in accordance with a UN peace plan for the entire region. Namibia won its independence in 1990 and has been governed by SWAPO since. Hifikepunye POHAMBHA was elected president in November 2004 in a landslide victory replacing Sam NUJOMA who led the country during its first 14 years of self rule.

### Geography Namibia

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

**Geographic coordinates:** 22 00 S, 17 00 E

**Map references:** Africa

**Area:** *total:* 825,418 sq km  
*land:* 825,418 sq km  
*water:* 0 sq km

**Area - comparative:** slightly more than half the size of Alaska

**Land boundaries:** *total:* 3,936 km  
*border countries:* Angola 1,376 km, Botswana 1,360 km, South Africa 967 km, Zambia 233 km

**Coastline:** 1,572 km

**Maritime claims:** *territorial sea:* 12 nm  
*contiguous zone:* 24 nm  
*exclusive economic zone:* 200 nm

**Climate:** desert; hot, dry; rainfall sparse and erratic

**Terrain:** mostly high plateau; Namib Desert along coast; Kalahari Desert in east

**Elevation extremes:** *lowest point:* Atlantic Ocean 0 m  
*highest point:* Konigstein 2,606 m

**Natural resources:** diamonds, copper, uranium, gold, lead, tin, lithium, cadmium, zinc, salt, hydropower, fish  
*note:* suspected deposits of oil, coal, and iron ore

**Land use:** *arable land:* 0.99%  
*permanent crops:* 0.01%  
*other:* 99% (2005)

**Irrigated land:** 80 sq km (2003)

**Natural hazards:** prolonged periods of drought

**Environment - current issues:** very limited natural fresh water resources; desertification; wildlife poaching; land degradation has led to few conservation areas

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

**Geography - note:** first country in the world to incorporate the protection of the environment into its constitution; some 14% of the land is protected, including virtually the entire Namib Desert coastal strip

People	Namibia
<b>Population:</b>	2,044,147 <i>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.)</i>
<b>Age structure:</b>	<i>0-14 years: 38.2% (male 393,878/female 387,147)</i> <i>15-64 years: 58.1% (male 596,557/female 591,350)</i> <i>65 years and over: 3.7% (male 34,245/female 40,970) (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Median age:</b>	<i>total: 20 years</i> <i>male: 19.8 years</i> <i>female: 20.1 years (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Population growth rate:</b>	0.59% (2006 est.)
<b>Birth rate:</b>	24.32 births/1,000 population (2006 est.)
<b>Death rate:</b>	18.86 deaths/1,000 population (2006 est.)
<b>Net migration rate:</b>	0.47 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2006 est.)
<b>Sex ratio:</b>	<i>at birth: 1.03 male(s)/female</i> <i>under 15 years: 1.02 male(s)/female</i> <i>15-64 years: 1.01 male(s)/female</i> <i>65 years and over: 0.84 male(s)/female</i> <i>total population: 1.01 male(s)/female (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Infant mortality rate:</b>	<i>total: 48.1 deaths/1,000 live births</i> <i>male: 51.99 deaths/1,000 live births</i> <i>female: 44.09 deaths/1,000 live births (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Life expectancy at birth:</b>	<i>total population: 43.39 years</i> <i>male: 44.46 years</i> <i>female: 42.29 years (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Total fertility rate:</b>	3.06 children born/woman (2006 est.)
<b>HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:</b>	21.3% (2003 est.)
<b>HIV/AIDS - people</b>	210,000 (2001 est.)

**living with HIV/AIDS:**

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:** 16,000 (2003 est.)

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

**Nationality:** *noun:* Namibian(s)  
*adjective:* Namibian

**Ethnic groups:** black 87.5%, white 6%, mixed 6.5%  
*note:* about 50% of the population belong to the Ovambo tribe and 9% to the Kavangos tribe; other ethnic groups includes Herero 7%, Damara 7%, Nama 5%, Caprivian 4%, Bushmen 3%, Baster 2%, Tswana 0.5%

**Religions:** Christian 80% to 90% (Lutheran 50% at least), indigenous beliefs 10% to 20%

**Languages:** English 7% (official), Afrikaans common language of most of the population and about 60% of the white population, German 32%, indigenous languages (Oshivambo, Herero, Nama)

**Literacy:** *definition:* age 15 and over can read and write  
*total population:* 84%  
*male:* 84.4%  
*female:* 83.7% (2003 est.)

<b>Government</b>	<b>Namibia</b>
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**Country name:** *conventional long form:* Republic of Namibia  
*conventional short form:* Namibia  
*local long form:* Republic of Namibia  
*local short form:* Namibia  
*former:* German Southwest Africa, South-West Africa

**Government type:** republic

**Capital:** *name:* Windhoek  
*geographic coordinates:* 22 34 S, 17 06 E  
*time difference:* UTC+1 (6 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)  
*daylight saving time:* +1hr, begins first Sunday in September; ends first Sunday in April

**Administrative** 13 regions; Caprivi, Erongo, Hardap, Karas, Khomas,

- divisions:** Kunene, Ohangwena, Okavango, Omaheke, Omusati, Oshana, Oshikoto, Otjozondjupa
- Independence:** 21 March 1990 (from South African mandate)
- National holiday:** Independence Day, 21 March (1990)
- Constitution:** ratified 9 February 1990, effective 12 March 1990
- Legal system:** based on Roman-Dutch law and 1990 constitution
- Suffrage:** 18 years of age; universal
- Executive branch:** *chief of state:* President Hifikepunye POHAMBANDA (since 21 March 2005)  
*head of government:* Prime Minister Nahas ANGULA (since 21 March 2005)  
*cabinet:* Cabinet appointed by the president from among the members of the National Assembly  
*elections:* president elected by popular vote for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); election last held 15 November 2004 (next to be held November 2009)  
*election results:* Hifikepunye POHAMBANDA elected president; percent of vote - Hifikepunye POHAMBANDA 76.4%, Den ULENGA 7.3%, Katuutire KAURA 5.1%, Kuaima RIRUAKO 4.2%, Justus GAROEB 3.8%, other 3.2%
- Legislative branch:** bicameral legislature consists of the National Council (26 seats; 2 members are chosen from each regional council to serve six-year terms) and the National Assembly (72 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms)  
*elections:* National Council - elections for regional councils, to determine members of the National Council, held 29-30 November 2004 (next to be held November 2010); National Assembly - last held 15-16 November 2004 (next to be held November 2009)  
*election results:* National Council - percent of vote by party - SWAPO 89.7%, UDF 4.7%, NUDO 2.8%, DTA 1.9%; seats by party - SWAPO 24, UDF 1, DTA 1; National Assembly - percent of vote by party - SWAPO 76.1%, COD 7.3%, DTA 5.1%, NUDO 4.2%, UDF 3.6%, RP 1.9%, MAG 0.8%, other 1.0%; seats by party - SWAPO 55, COD 5, DTA 4, NUDO 3, UDF 3, RP 1, MAG 1  
*note:* the National Council is primarily an advisory body
- Judicial branch:** Supreme Court (judges appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission)
- Political** Congress of Democrats or COD [Ben ULENGA];

**parties and leaders:** Democratic Turnhalle Alliance of Namibia or DTA [Katuutire KAURA, president]; Monitor Action Group or MAG [Jurie VILJOEN]; National Democratic Movement for Change or NamDMC; National Unity Democratic Organization or NUDO [Kuaima RIRUAKO]; Republican Party or RP [Henk MUDGE]; South West Africa National Union or SWANU [Rihupisa KANDANDO]; South West Africa People's Organization or SWAPO [Sam Shafishuna NUJOMA]; United Democratic Front or UDF [Justus GAROEB]

**Political pressure groups and leaders:** NA

**International organization participation:** ACP, AfDB, AU, C, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCT, ICRM, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM (observer), IPU, ISO (correspondent), ITU, MIGA, NAM, ONUB, OPCW, SACU, SADC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNMEE, UNMIL, UNMIS, UNOCI, UNWTO, UPU, WCL, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

**Diplomatic representation in the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Patrick NANDAGO  
*chancery:* 1605 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009  
*telephone:* [1] (202) 986-0540  
*FAX:* [1] (202) 986-0443

**Diplomatic representation from the US:** *chief of mission:* Ambassador Joyce BARR  
*embassy:* Ausplan Building, 14 Lossen Street, Windhoek  
*mailing address:* Private Bag 12029 Ausspannplatz, Windhoek  
*telephone:* [264] (61) 221601  
*FAX:* [264] (61) 229792

**Flag description:** a large blue triangle with a yellow sunburst fills the upper left section and an equal green triangle (solid) fills the lower right section; the triangles are separated by a red stripe that is contrasted by two narrow white-edge borders

Economy	Namibia
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**Economy - overview:** The economy is heavily dependent on the extraction and processing of minerals for export. Mining accounts for 20% of GDP. Rich alluvial diamond deposits make Namibia a primary source for gem-quality diamonds. Namibia is the fourth-largest exporter of nonfuel minerals in Africa, the world's fifth-largest producer of uranium, and the producer of large quantities of lead, zinc, tin,

silver, and tungsten. The mining sector employs only about 3% of the population while about half of the population depends on subsistence agriculture for its livelihood. Namibia normally imports about 50% of its cereal requirements; in drought years food shortages are a major problem in rural areas. A high per capita GDP, relative to the region, hides the world's worst inequality of income distribution. The Namibian economy is closely linked to South Africa with the Namibian dollar pegged one-to-one to the South African rand. Privatization of several enterprises in coming years may stimulate long-run foreign investment. Increased fish production and mining of zinc, copper, uranium, and silver spurred growth in 2003-06.

<b>GDP (purchasing power parity):</b>	\$15.04 billion (2006 est.)
<b>GDP (official exchange rate):</b>	\$5.304 billion (2006 est.)
<b>GDP - real growth rate:</b>	4.1% (2006 est.)
<b>GDP - per capita (PPP):</b>	\$7,400 (2006 est.)
<b>GDP - composition by sector:</b>	<i>agriculture: 11.8%</i> <i>industry: 30.2%</i> <i>services: 58.1% (2006 est.)</i>
<b>Labor force:</b>	653,000 (2006 est.)
<b>Labor force - by occupation:</b>	<i>agriculture: 47%</i> <i>industry: 20%</i> <i>services: 33% (1999 est.)</i>
<b>Unemployment rate:</b>	5.3% (2006 est.)
<b>Population below poverty line:</b>	the UNDP's 2005 Human Development Report indicated that 34.9% of the population live on \$1 per day and 55.8% live on \$2 per day
<b>Household income or consumption by percentage share:</b>	<i>lowest 10%: 0.5%</i> <i>highest 10%: 64.5%</i>
<b>Distribution of family income</b>	70.7 (2003)

**- Gini index:**

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):** 5% (2006 est.)

**Investment (gross fixed):** 25% of GDP (2006 est.)

**Budget:** *revenues:* \$2.233 billion  
*expenditures:* \$2.214 billion; including capital expenditures of \$NA (2006 est.)

**Public debt:** 31.6% of GDP (2006 est.)

**Agriculture - products:** millet, sorghum, peanuts, grapes; livestock; fish

**Industries:** meatpacking, fish processing, dairy products; mining (diamonds, lead, zinc, tin, silver, tungsten, uranium, copper)

**Industrial production growth rate:** NA%

**Electricity - production:** 1.397 billion kWh (2004)

**Electricity - production by source:** NA

**Electricity - consumption:** 2.819 billion kWh (2004)

**Electricity - exports:** 80 million kWh (2004)

**Electricity - imports:** 1.6 billion kWh; note - electricity supplied by South Africa (2004)

**Oil - production:** 0 bbl/day (2004 est.)

**Oil - consumption:** 18,000 bbl/day (2004 est.)

**Oil - exports:** NA bbl/day (2001)

**Oil - imports:** 12,770 bbl/day (2003)

**Oil - proved reserves:** 0 bbl (1 January 2002)

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

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

**Natural gas - proved reserves:** 62.3 billion cu m (1 January 2005 est.)

**Current account balance:** \$572 million (2006 est.)

**Exports:** \$2.321 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

**Exports - commodities:** diamonds, copper, gold, zinc, lead, uranium; cattle, processed fish, karakul skins

**Exports - partners:** South Africa 33.4%, US 4% (2004)

**Imports:** \$2.456 billion f.o.b. (2006 est.)

**Imports - commodities:** foodstuffs; petroleum products and fuel, machinery and equipment, chemicals

**Imports - partners:** South Africa 85.2%, US (2004)

**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:** \$480 million (2006 est.)

**Debt - external:** \$887 million (2006 est.)

**Economic aid - recipient:** ODA, \$160 million (2000 est.)

**Currency (code):** Namibian dollar (NAD); South African rand (ZAR)

**Currency code:** NAD; ZAR

**Exchange rates:** Namibian dollars per US dollar - 6.85 (2006), 6.3593 (2005), 6.4597 (2004), 7.5648 (2003), 10.5407 (2002)

**Fiscal year:** 1 April - 31 March

## Communications Namibia

**Telephones - main lines in use:** 127,900 (2004)

**Telephones:** 495,000 (2005)

**- mobile  
cellular:**

**Telephone system:** *general assessment:* good system; about 6 telephones for each 100 persons  
*domestic:* good urban services; fair rural service; microwave radio relay links major towns; connections to other populated places are by open wire; 100% digital  
*international:* country code - 264; fiber-optic cable to South Africa, microwave radio relay link to Botswana, direct links to other neighboring countries; connected to Africa ONE and South African Far East (SAFE) submarine cables through South Africa; satellite earth stations - 4 Intelsat (2002)

**Radio broadcast stations:** AM 2, FM 39, shortwave 4 (2001)

**Radios:** 232,000 (1997)

**Television broadcast stations:** 8 (plus about 20 low-power repeaters) (1997)

**Televisions:** 60,000 (1997)

**Internet country code:** .na

**Internet hosts:** 3,527 (2006)

**Internet Service Providers (ISPs):** 2 (2000)

**Internet users:** 75,000 (2005)

## Transportation Namibia

**Airports:** 137 (2006)

**Airports - with paved runways:** *total:* 21  
*over 3,047 m:* 3  
*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 2  
*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 13  
*914 to 1,523 m:* 3 (2006)

**Airports - with unpaved:** *total:* 116  
*2,438 to 3,047 m:* 2  
*1,524 to 2,437 m:* 22

**runways:** 914 to 1,523 m: 72  
under 914 m: 20 (2006)

**Railways:** total: 2,382 km  
narrow gauge: 2,382 km 1.067-m gauge (2005)

**Roadways:** total: 42,237 km  
paved: 5,406 km  
unpaved: 36,831 km (2002)

**Merchant marine:** total: 1 ship (1000 GRT or over) 2,265 GRT/3,605 DWT  
by type: cargo 1 (2006)

**Ports and terminals:** Luderitz, Walvis Bay

Military	Namibia
<b>Military branches:</b>	Namibian Defense Force: Army, Air Wing, Navy (2006)
<b>Military service age and obligation:</b>	18 years of age for voluntary military service (2001)
<b>Manpower available for military service:</b>	males age 18-49: 441,293 (2005 est.)
<b>Manpower fit for military service:</b>	males age 18-49: 217,118 (2005 est.)
<b>Military expenditures - dollar figure:</b>	\$149.5 million (2005 est.)
<b>Military expenditures - percent of GDP:</b>	2.3% (2005 est.)

Transnational Issues	Namibia
<b>Disputes - international:</b>	border commission has yet to resolve small residual disputes with Botswana along the Caprivi Strip, including the Situngu marshlands along the Linyanti River; Botswana residents protest Namibia's planned construction of the Okavango hydroelectric dam on Popa Falls; managed dispute with South Africa over the location of the boundary

in the Orange River; Namibia has supported and in 2004 Zimbabwe dropped objections to plans between Botswana and Zambia to build a bridge over the Zambezi River, thereby de facto recognizing a short, but not clearly delimited, Botswana-Zambia boundary in the river

**Refugees  
and  
internally  
displaced  
persons:** *refugees (country of origin): 11,900 (Angola) (2006)*