



Africa :: 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. In March, 2003 President Ange-Felix PATASSE was deposed in a military coup led by General Francois BOZIZE, who established a transitional government. Elections held in 2005 affirmed General BOZIZE as president; he was reelected in 2011 in voting widely viewed as flawed. The government still does not fully control the countryside, where pockets of lawlessness persist. The militant group the Lord's Resistance Army continues to destabilize southeastern Central African Republic, and several rebel groups joined together in early December 2012 to launch a series of attacks that left them in control of numerous towns in the northern and central parts of the country. The rebels - who are unhappy with BOZIZE's government - participated in peace talks in early January 2013 which resulted in a coalition government including the rebellion's leadership. In March 2013, the coalition government dissolved, rebels seized the capital, and President BOZIZE fled the country. Rebel leader Michel DJOTODIA assumed the presidency, reappointed Nicolas TIANGAYE as Prime Minister, and established a transitional government on 31 March. On 13 April 2013, the National Transitional Council affirmed DJOTODIA as President.

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

country comparison to the world: 45

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, South Sudan 990 km, Sudan 175 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: 2.89%

permanent crops: 0.13%

other: 96.98% (2011)

Irrigated land:

1.35 sq km (2003)

Total renewable water resources:

144.4 cu km (2011)

Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):

total: 0.07 cu km/yr (83%/17%/1%)

per capita: 17.42 cu m/yr (2005)

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, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Ozone Layer Protection, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands

signed, but not ratified: Law of the Sea

Geography - note:

landlocked; almost the precise center of Africa

People and Society :: Central African Republic

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%

Languages:

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

Religions:

indigenous beliefs 35%, Protestant 25%, Roman Catholic 25%, Muslim 15%

note: animistic beliefs and practices strongly influence the Christian majority

Population:

5,166,510 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 118

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, higher death rates, lower population growth rates, and changes in the distribution of population by age and sex than would otherwise be expected

Age structure:

0-14 years: 40.7% (male 1,058,523/female 1,045,664)

15-24 years: 20.2% (male 525,581/female 520,274)

25-54 years: 31.5% (male 814,003/female 815,169)

55-64 years: 3.9% (male 86,860/female 113,190)

65 years and over: 3.6% (male 73,942/female 113,304) (2013 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 77.5 %

youth dependency ratio: 70.7 %

elderly dependency ratio: 6.8 %

potential support ratio: 14.7 (2013)

Median age:

total: 19.3 years

male: 19 years

female: 19.7 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

2.14% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 45

Birth rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 23

Death rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 6

Net migration rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 83

Urbanization:

urban population: 39.1% of total population (2011)

rate of urbanization: 2.6% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

BANGUI (capital) 740,000 (2011)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.03 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.01 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.01 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 1 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.75 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.66 male(s)/female

total population: 0.98 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

890 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)

country comparison to the world: 5

Infant mortality rate:

total: 95.04 deaths/1,000 live births

country comparison to the world: 4

male: 102.83 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 87.02 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 50.9 years

country comparison to the world: 218

male: 49.64 years

female: 52.2 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

4.52 children born/woman (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 30

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

19% (2006)

Health expenditures:

4% of GDP (2010)

country comparison to the world: 167

Physicians density:

0.08 physicians/1,000 population (2004)

Hospital bed density:

1 beds/1,000 population (2011)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 92% of population

rural: 51% of population

total: 67% of population

unimproved:

urban: 8% of population

rural: 49% of population

total: 33% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 43% of population

rural: 28% of population

total: 34% of population

unimproved:

urban: 57% of population

rural: 72% of population

total: 66% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

4.7% (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 16

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

130,000 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 36

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

11,000 (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 24

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: very high

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial and protozoal diarrhea, hepatitis A and E, and typhoid fever

vectorborne diseases: malaria and dengue fever

respiratory disease: meningococcal meningitis

water contact disease: schistosomiasis

animal contact disease: rabies (2013)

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

3.5% (2008)

country comparison to the world: 175

Children under the age of 5 years underweight:

28% (2006)

country comparison to the world: 21

Education expenditures:

1.2% of GDP (2011)

country comparison to the world: 169

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 56.6%

male: 69.6%

female: 44.2% (2011 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 7 years

male: 8 years

female: 5 years (2011)

Child labor - children ages 5-14:

total number: 532,518

percentage: 47 % (2006 est.)

Government :: Central African Republic

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:

civil law system based on the French model

International law organization participation:

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; accepts ICtJ jurisdiction

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: President Michel DJOTODIA (since 24 March 2013 coup) note - a rebel force seized the capital in March 2013, forcing former president BOZIZE to flee the country; President DJOTODIA assumed the presidency, reinstated the Prime Minister, established a transitional government, and was subsequently affirmed as President by the National Transitional Council on 13 April 2013; an 18-month transition period officially began on 18 August 2013

head of government: Prime Minister Nicolas TIANGAYE (since 17 January 2013)

cabinet: Council of Ministers

(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [↗](#))

elections: president elected for a five-year term (eligible for a second term); elections last held on 23 January 2011 (next to be held in 2014 - as specified in the January 2013 Libreville agreement); prime minister appointed by the president

election results: Francois BOZIZE elected to a second term as president; percent of vote - Francois BOZIZE (KNK) 64.4%, Ange-Felix PATASSE 21.4%, Martin ZIGUELE (MLPC) 6.8%, Emile Gros Raymond NAKOMBO (RDC) 4.6%, Jean-Jacques DEMAFOUTH (NAP) 2.8%

Legislative branch:

unicameral National Assembly or Assemblée Nationale (105 seats; members are elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms)

elections: last held on 23 January 2011 and 27 March 2011 (next to be held in 2016)

election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - KNK 62, independents 26, MLPC 2, other 15

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Supreme Court (consists of NA judges); Constitutional Court (consists of 9 judges, at least 3 of which are women)

judge selection and term of office: Supreme Court judges appointed by the president; Constitutional Court judge appointments - 2 by the president, 1 by the speaker of the National Assembly, 2 elected by their peers, 2 are advocates elected by their peers, and 2 are law professors elected by their peers; judges serve 7-year non-renewable terms

subordinate courts: high courts; magistrates' courts

Political parties and leaders:

Alliance for Democracy and Progress or ADP [Jacques MBOLIEDAS]

Central African Democratic Rally or RDC [Louis-Pierre GAMBA]

Civic Forum or FC [Gen. Timothee MALENDOMA]

Democratic Forum for Modernity or FODEM [Saturnin NDOMBY]

Liberal Democratic Party or PLD [Nestor KOMBO-NAGUEMON]

Londo Association or LONDO

Movement for Democracy and Development or MDD

Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People or MLPC [Martin ZIGUELE]

National Convergence or KNK

National Unity Party or PUN [Jean-Paul NGOUPANDE]

New Alliance for Progress or NAP [Jean-Jacques DEMAFOUTH]

Patriotic Front for Progress or FPP [Alexandre Philippe GOUMBA]

People's Union for the Republic or UPR [Pierre Sammy MAKFOY]

Social Democratic Party or PSD [Enoch LAKOUE]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

NA

International organization participation:

ACP, AfDB, AU, BDEAC, CEMAC, EITI (compliant country), FAO, FZ, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, NAM, OIC, OIF, OPCW, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Stanislas MOUSSA-KEMBE

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 Laurence D. WOHLERS

embassy: Avenue David Dacko, Bangui

mailing address: B. P. 924, Bangui

telephone: [236] 21 61 02 00

FAX: [236] 21 61 44 94

note: the embassy temporarily suspended operations in December, 2012

Flag description:

four equal horizontal bands of blue (top), white, green, and yellow with a vertical red band in center; a yellow five-pointed star to the hoist side of the blue band; banner combines the Pan-African and French flag colors; red symbolizes the blood spilled in the struggle for independence, blue represents the sky and freedom, white peace and dignity, green hope and faith, and yellow tolerance; the star represents aspiration towards a vibrant future

National symbol(s):

elephant

National anthem:

name: "Le Renaissance" (The Renaissance)

► [PLAY ANTHEM](#)

lyrics/music: Barthélemy BOGANDA/Herbert PEPPER

note: adopted 1960; Barthélemy BOGANDA, who wrote the anthem's lyrics, was the first prime minister of the autonomous French territory

Economy :: Central African Republic

Economy - overview:

Subsistence agriculture, together with forestry and mining, remains the backbone of the economy of the Central African Republic (CAR), with about 60% of the population living in outlying areas. The agricultural sector generates more than half of GDP. Timber and diamonds account for most export earnings, followed by cotton. 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. Since 2009 the IMF has worked closely with the government to institute reforms that have resulted in some improvement in budget transparency, but other problems remain. The government's additional spending in the run-up to the election in 2011 worsened CAR's fiscal situation. Distribution of income is extraordinarily unequal. Grants from France and the international community can only partially meet humanitarian needs. In 2012 the World Bank approved \$125 million in funding for transport infrastructure and regional trade, focused on the route between CAR's capital and the port of Douala in Cameroon. After a two year lag in donor support, the IMF's first review of CAR's extended credit facility for 2012-15 praised improvements in revenue collection but warned of weak management of spending.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$3.955 billion (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 177

\$3.799 billion (2011 est.)

\$3.677 billion (2010 est.)

note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$2.172 billion (2012 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

4.1% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 75

3.3% (2011 est.)

3% (2010 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$800 (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 223

\$800 (2011 est.)

\$800 (2010 est.)

note: data are in 2012 US dollars

Gross national saving:

4.9% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 138

3.6% of GDP (2011 est.)

4% of GDP (2010 est.)

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 89.5%
government consumption: 8.1%
investment in fixed capital: 12.5%
investment in inventories: 0%
exports of goods and services: 12.5%
imports of goods and services: -22.7%
(2012 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 55.8%
industry: 14.8%
services: 29.5% (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:

cotton, coffee, tobacco, manioc (tapioca), yams, millet, corn, bananas; timber

Industries:

gold and diamond mining, logging, brewing, sugar refining

Industrial production growth rate:

3% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 88

Labor force:

1.926 million (2007)

country comparison to the world: 124

Unemployment rate:

8% (2001 est.)

country comparison to the world: 92

note: 23% unemployment in Bangui

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: 2.1%
highest 10%: 33% (2003)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:

61.3 (1993)

country comparison to the world: 5

Budget:

revenues: \$340.8 million
expenditures: \$356.9 million (2012 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

15.7% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 187

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-0.7% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 58

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

5% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 144

1.3% (2011 est.)

Central bank discount rate:

4.25% (31 December 2009)

country comparison to the world: 75

4.75% (31 December 2008)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

15% (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 44

15% (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$349 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 163

\$329.7 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$459.7 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 178

\$406.6 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$488.6 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 172

\$444.7 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$NA

Current account balance:

-\$179.5 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 75

-\$191.4 million (2011 est.)

Exports:

\$208 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 182

\$186.3 million (2011 est.)

Exports - commodities:

diamonds, timber, cotton, coffee

Exports - partners:

Belgium 31.5%, China 27.7%, Democratic Republic of the Congo 8.6%, Indonesia 5.2%, France 4.5% (2012)

Imports:

\$332.4 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 196

\$319.8 million (2011 est.)

Imports - commodities:

food, textiles, petroleum products, machinery, electrical equipment, motor vehicles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals

Imports - partners:

Netherlands 19.5%, Cameroon 9.7%, France 9.3%, South Korea 8.7% (2012)

Debt - external:

\$623.9 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 170

\$573 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Exchange rates:

Cooperation Financiere en Afrique Centrale francs (XAF) per US dollar -

510.53 (2012 est.)

471.87 (2011 est.)

495.28 (2010)

472.19 (2009)

447.81 (2008)

Energy:: Central African Republic

Electricity - production:

160 million kWh (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 185

Electricity - consumption:

148.8 million kWh (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 190

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 181

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 173

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

46,000 kW (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 185

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

45.7% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 164

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 70

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

54.3% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 38

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 123

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 97

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 172

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 119

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 166

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

3,175 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 179

Refined petroleum products - exports:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 166

Refined petroleum products - imports:

2,481 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 175

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 116

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 132

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 82

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 179

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 124

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

227,400 Mt (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 194

Communications :: Central African Republic

Telephones - main lines in use:

5,400 (2011)

country comparison to the world: 209

Telephones - mobile cellular:

1.824 million (2011)

country comparison to the world: 144

Telephone system:

general assessment: network consists principally of microwave radio relay and low-capacity, low-powered radiotelephone communication

domestic: limited telephone service with less than 1 fixed-line connection per 100 persons; spurred by the presence of multiple mobile-cellular service providers, cellular usage is increasing from a low base; most fixed-line and mobile-cellular telephone services are concentrated in Bangui

international: country code - 236; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean) (2011)

Broadcast media:

government-owned network, Radiodiffusion Television Centrafricaine, provides domestic TV broadcasting; licenses for 2 private TV stations are pending; state-owned radio network is supplemented by a small number of privately owned broadcast stations as well as a few community radio stations; transmissions of at least 2 international broadcasters are available (2007)

Internet country code:

.cf

Internet hosts:

20 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 221

Internet users:

22,600 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 192

Transportation :: Central African Republic

Airports:

39 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 106

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 2

2,438 to 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 1 (2013)

Airports - with unpaved runways:

total: 37

2,438 to 3,047 m: 1

1,524 to 2,437 m: 11

914 to 1,523 m: 19

under 914 m:

6 (2013)

Roadways:

total: 20,278 km (2010)

country comparison to the world: 106

Waterways:

2,800 km (the primary navigable river is the Ubangi, which joins the River Congo; it was the traditional route for the export of products because it connected with the Congo-Ocean railway at Brazzaville; because of the warfare on both sides of the River Congo from 1997, however, routes through Cameroon became preferred by importers and exporters) (2011)

country comparison to the world: 35

Ports and terminals:

river port(s): Bangui (Oubangui); Nola (Sangha)

Military :: Central African Republic**Military branches:**

Central African Armed Forces (Forces Armees Centrafricaines, FACA): Ground Forces (includes Military Air Service), General Directorate of Gendarmerie Inspection (DGIG), National Police (2011)

Military service age and obligation:

18 years of age for selective military service; 2-year conscript service obligation (2012)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 1,149,856

females age 16-49: 1,145,897 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 655,875

females age 16-49: 661,308 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 54,843

female: 53,999 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures:

2.6% of GDP (2011)

country comparison to the world: 50

Transnational Issues :: Central African Republic**Disputes - international:**

periodic skirmishes over water and grazing rights among related pastoral populations along the border with southern Sudan persist

Refugees and internally displaced persons:

refugees (country of origin): 10,662 (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (2012)

IDPs: 206,000 (clashes between army and rebel groups since 2005; tensions between ethnic groups) (2013)

Trafficking in persons:

current situation: Central African Republic (CAR) is a source and destination country for children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking and possibly women subjected to forced prostitution; most victims appear to be CAR citizens exploited within the country, and that a smaller number are transported back and forth between the CAR and Cameroon, Chad, Nigeria, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and South Sudan; children are forced into domestic servitude, commercial sexual exploitation, agricultural labor, mining, and street vending; armed groups operating in the CAR, including the Lord's Resistance Army, continue to recruit and use children for military activities, while village self-defense units use children as combatants, lookouts, and porters

tier rating: Tier 3 - Central African Republic does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and is not making significant efforts to do so; the government does not investigate or prosecute any suspected cases of human trafficking, including the use of child soldiers; the government also fails to identify, provide protection to, or refer to service providers any trafficking victims; in collaboration with an NGO, the government has convened a working group to develop a national action plan to combat human trafficking (2013)