



Central America and Caribbean :: Aruba (part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)

Introduction :: Aruba

Background:

Discovered and claimed for Spain in 1499, Aruba was acquired by the Dutch in 1636. The island's economy has been dominated by three main industries. A 19th century gold rush was followed by prosperity brought on by the opening in 1924 of an oil refinery. The last decades of the 20th century saw a boom in the tourism industry. Aruba seceded from the Netherlands Antilles in 1986 and became a separate, autonomous member of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Movement toward full independence was halted at Aruba's request in 1990.

Geography :: Aruba

Location:

Caribbean, island in the Caribbean Sea, north of Venezuela

Geographic coordinates:

12 30 N, 69 58 W

Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean

Area:

total: 180 sq km

country comparison to the world: 218

land: 180 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly larger than Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

68.5 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate:

tropical marine; little seasonal temperature variation

Terrain:

flat with a few hills; scant vegetation

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Caribbean Sea 0 m

highest point: Ceru Jamanota 188 m

Natural resources:

NEGL; white sandy beaches

Land use:

arable land: 11.11%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 88.89% (2005)

Irrigated land:

NA

Natural hazards:

hurricanes; lies outside the Caribbean hurricane belt and is rarely threatened

Environment - current issues:

NA

Geography - note:

a flat, riverless island renowned for its white sand beaches; its tropical climate is moderated by constant trade winds from the Atlantic Ocean; the temperature is almost constant at about 27 degrees Celsius (81 degrees Fahrenheit)

People and Society :: Aruba

Nationality:

noun: Aruban(s)

adjective: Aruban; Dutch

Ethnic groups:

mixed white/Caribbean Amerindian 80%, other 20%

Languages:

Papiamentu (a Spanish-Portuguese-Dutch-English dialect) 66.3%, Spanish 12.6%, English (widely spoken) 7.7%, Dutch (official) 5.8%, other 2.2%, unspecified or unknown 5.3% (2000 census)

Religions:

Roman Catholic 80.8%, Protestant 7.8% (Evangelist 4.1%, Methodist 1.2%, other Protestant 2.5%), Jehovah's Witnesses 1.5%, Jewish 0.2%, other 5.1%, none or unspecified 4.6%

Population:

109,153 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 191

note: estimate based on a revision of the base population, fertility, and mortality numbers, as well as a revision of 1985-99 migration estimates from outmigration to immigration, which is assumed to continue into the future; the new results are consistent with the 2000 census

Age structure:

0-14 years: 17.9% (male 9,786/female 9,735)

15-24 years: 13.6% (male 7,427/female 7,405)

25-54 years: 43.4% (male 22,938/female 24,467)

55-64 years: 13.2% (male 6,492/female 7,891)

65 years and over: 11.9% (male 5,113/female 7,899) (2013 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 44.3 %

youth dependency ratio: 28 %

elderly dependency ratio: 16.4 %

potential support ratio: 6.1 (2013)

Median age:

total: 38.6 years

male: 36.8 years

female: 40.4 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

1.39% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 88

Birth rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 156

Death rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 99

Net migration rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 13

Urbanization:

urban population: 47% of total population (2010)

rate of urbanization: 0.6% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

ORANJESTAD (capital) 37,000 (2011)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.02 male(s)/female

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

15-24 years: 1 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 0.94 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 0.81 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.65 male(s)/female

total population: 0.9 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Infant mortality rate:

total: 12.12 deaths/1,000 live births

country comparison to the world: 129

male: 15.97 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 8.2 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 76.14 years

country comparison to the world: 85

male: 73.09 years

female: 79.25 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

1.84 children born/woman (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 149

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 100% of population

rural: 100% of population

total: 100% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

NA

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

NA

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

NA

Education expenditures:

6.7% of GDP (2010)

country comparison to the world: 26

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 96.8%

male: 96.9%

female: 96.7% (2010 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 13 years

male: 13 years

female: 13 years (2011)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 23.2%

country comparison to the world: 42

male: 24.1%

female: 22.9% (2007)

Government:: Aruba

Country name:

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Aruba

Dependency status:

constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands; full autonomy in internal affairs obtained in 1986 upon separation from the Netherlands Antilles; Dutch Government responsible for defense and foreign affairs

Government type:

parliamentary democracy

Capital:

name: Oranjestad

geographic coordinates: 12 31 N, 70 02 W

time difference: UTC-4 (1 hour ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions:

none (part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)

Independence:

none (part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands)

National holiday:

Flag Day, 18 March (1976)

Constitution:

previous 1947, 1955; latest drafted and approved August 1985, enacted 1 January 1986 (regulates governance of Aruba, but is subordinate to the Charter for the Kingdom of the Netherlands); note - in October 2010, following dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba became a constituent country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Legal system:

civil law system based on the Dutch civil code

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: King WILLEM-ALEXANDER of the Netherlands (since 30 April 2013); represented by Governor General Fredis REFUNJOL (since 11 May 2004)

head of government: Prime Minister Michiel "Mike" Godfried EMAN (since 30 October 2009)

cabinet: Council of Ministers elected by the Staten
(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [↗](#))

elections: the monarchy is hereditary; governor general appointed for a six-year term by the monarch; prime minister and deputy prime minister elected by the Staten for four-year terms; election last held on 25 September 2009 (next to be held by September 2013)

election results: Michiel "Mike" Godfried EMAN elected prime minister; percent of legislative vote - NA

Legislative branch:

unicameral Legislature or Staten (21 seats; members elected by direct popular vote to serve four-year terms)

elections: last held on 27 September 2013 (next to be held in 2017)

election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - AVP 13, MEP 8

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Joint Court of Justice of Aruba, Curacao, Sint Maarten, and of Bonaire, Sint Eustatitus and Saba or "Joint Court of Justice" (consists of the presiding judge, NA members, and NA substitutes); final appeals heard by the Supreme Court, in The Hague, Netherlands

note - prior to 2010, the Joint Court of Justice was the Common Court of Justice of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba

judge selection and term of office: Joint Court judges appointed by the monarch for life

subordinate courts: Courts in First Instance

Political parties and leaders:

Aliansa/Aruban Social Movement or MSA [Robert WEVER]

Aruban Liberal Organization or OLA [Glenbert CROES]

Aruban Patriotic Movement or MPA [Monica ARENDS-KOCK]

Aruban Patriotic Party or PPA [Benny NISBET]

Aruban People's Party or AVP [Michiel "Mike" EMAN]

People's Electoral Movement Party or MEP [Nelson O. ODUBER]

Real Democracy or PDR [Andin BIKKER]

RED [Rudy LAMPE]

Workers Political Platform or PTT [Gregorio WOLFF]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

other: environmental groups

International organization participation:

Caricom (observer), FATF, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOC, ITUC (NGOs), UNESCO (associate), UNWTO (associate), UPU

Diplomatic representation in the US:

none (represented by the Kingdom of the Netherlands); note - Mr. Henry BAARH, Minister Plenipotentiary for Aruba at the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Diplomatic representation from the US:

the US does not have an embassy in Aruba; the Consul General to Curacao, currently Consul General Valerie BELON, is accredited to Aruba

Flag description:

blue, with two narrow, horizontal, yellow stripes across the lower portion and a red, four-pointed star outlined in white in the upper hoist-side corner; the star represents Aruba and its red soil and white beaches, its four points the four major languages (Papiamentu, Dutch, Spanish, English) as well as the four points of a compass, to indicate that its inhabitants come from all over the world; the blue symbolizes Caribbean waters and skies; the stripes represent the island's two main "industries": the flow of tourists to the sun-drenched beaches and the flow of minerals from the earth

National anthem:

name: "Aruba Deshi Tera" (Aruba Precious Country)

 [PLAY ANTHEM](#)

lyrics/music: Juan Chabaya 'Padu' LAMPE/Rufo Inocencio WEVER

note: local anthem adopted 1986; as part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, "Het Wilhelmus" is official (see Netherlands)

Economy:: Aruba

Economy - overview:

Tourism and offshore banking are the mainstays of the small open Aruban economy. Oil refining and storage ended in 2009. The rapid growth of the tourism sector over the last decade has resulted in a substantial expansion of other activities. Over 1.5 million tourists per year visit Aruba with 75% of those from the US. Construction continues to boom with hotel capacity five times the 1985 level. Tourist arrivals rebounded strongly following a dip after the 11 September 2001 attacks. Aruba is heavily dependent on imports and is making efforts to expand exports to achieve a more desirable trade balance. The government has also made cutting the budget and international development high priorities.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$2.516 billion (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 186

\$2.258 billion (2005 est.)

\$2.205 billion (2004 est.)

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$2.516 billion (2009 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

2.4% (2005 est.)

country comparison to the world: 126

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$25,300 (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 59

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 0.4%

industry: 33.3%

services: 66.3% (2002 est.)

Agriculture - products:

aloes; livestock; fish

Industries:

tourism, transshipment facilities, banking

Industrial production growth rate:

NA%

Labor force:

51,610

country comparison to the world: 190

note: of the 51,610 workers aged 15 and over in the labor force, 32,252 were born in Aruba and 19,353 came from abroad; foreign workers are 38% of the employed population (2007 est.)

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: NA%

industry: NA%

services: NA%

note: most employment is in wholesale and retail trade and repair, followed by hotels and restaurants

Unemployment rate:

6.9% (2005 est.)

country comparison to the world: 73

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: NA%

highest 10%: NA%

Budget:

revenues: \$568.3 million

expenditures: \$815.3 million (2012 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

22.6% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 148

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-9.8% of GDP (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 198

Public debt:

46.3% of GDP (2005)

country comparison to the world: 72

Fiscal year:

calendar year

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

0.6% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 9

4.4% (2011 est.)

Central bank discount rate:

1% (31 December 2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 102

3% (31 December 2009 est.)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

8.4% (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 99

9% (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$1.022 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 149

\$868.5 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$1.765 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 153

\$1.762 billion (31 December 2010 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$1.594 billion (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 137

\$1.448 billion (31 December 2011 est.)

Exports:

\$1.389 billion (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 148

\$5.18 billion (2011 est.)

Exports - commodities:

live animals and animal products, art and collectibles, machinery and electrical equipment, transport equipment

Exports - partners:

Colombia 39.4%, Venezuela 29.3%, US 13%, Netherlands Antilles 4.1% (2012)

Imports:

\$2.039 billion (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 163

\$5.917 billion (2011 est.)

Imports - commodities:

machinery and electrical equipment, crude oil for refining and reexport, chemicals; foodstuffs

Imports - partners:

US 46.4%, Netherlands 11.5%, UK 5.4% (2012)

Debt - external:

\$533.4 million (2005 est.)

country comparison to the world: 174

Exchange rates:

Aruban guilders/florins per US dollar -

1.79 (2012 est.)

1.79 (2011 est.)

Energy:: Aruba

Electricity - production:

980 million kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 148

Electricity - consumption:

911.4 million kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

266,000 kW (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 151

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

88.7% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 79

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 31

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

0% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 150

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

11.3% of total installed capacity (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 23

Crude oil - production:

2,811 bbl/day (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 104

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 75

Crude oil - imports:

228,800 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 30

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 100

Refined petroleum products - production:

234,200 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 52

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

5,661 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 163

Refined petroleum products - exports:

234,200 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 27

Refined petroleum products - imports:

6,725 bbl/day (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 137

Natural gas - production:

1 cu m (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 96

Natural gas - consumption:

1 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 114

Natural gas - exports:

1 cu m (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 53

Natural gas - imports:

1 cu m (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 78

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 107

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

1.237 million Mt (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 161

Communications :: Aruba

Telephones - main lines in use:

43,000 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 169

Telephones - mobile cellular:

135,000 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 188

Telephone system:

general assessment: modern fully automatic telecommunications system

domestic: increased competition through privatization; 3 mobile-cellular service providers are now licensed

international: country code - 297; landing site for the PAN-AM submarine telecommunications cable system that extends from the US Virgin Islands through Aruba to Venezuela, Colombia, Panama, and the west coast of South America; extensive interisland microwave radio relay links (2007)

Broadcast media:

2 commercial TV stations; cable TV subscription service provides access to foreign channels; about 20 commercial radio stations broadcast (2007)

Internet country code:

.aw

Internet hosts:

40,560 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 101

Internet users:

24,000 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 188

Transportation :: Aruba

Airports:

1 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 210

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 1

2,438 to 3,047 m: 1 (2013)

Ports and terminals:

major seaport(s): Barcadera, Oranjestad

oil terminal(s): Sint Nicolaas

cruise port(s): Oranjestad

Military :: Aruba

Military branches:

no regular military forces (2011)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 24,891

females age 16-49: 26,202 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 20,527
females age 16-49: 21,493 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 767
female: 743 (2010 est.)

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of the Netherlands; the Aruba security services focus on organized crime and terrorism (2011)

Transnational Issues:: Aruba

Disputes - international:

none

Illicit drugs:

transit point for US- and Europe-bound narcotics with some accompanying money-laundering activity; relatively high percentage of population consumes cocaine