



Australia-Oceania :: Nauru

Introduction :: Nauru

Background:
The exact origins of the Nauruans are unclear since their language does not resemble any other in the Pacific region. Germany annexed the island in 1888. A German-British consortium began mining the island's phosphate deposits early in the 20th century. Australian forces occupied Nauru in World War I; it subsequently became a League of Nations mandate. After the Second World War - and a brutal occupation by Japan - Nauru became a UN trust territory. It achieved independence in 1968 and joined the UN in 1999 as the world's smallest independent republic.

Geography :: Nauru

Location:
Oceania, island in the South Pacific Ocean, south of the Marshall Islands

Geographic coordinates:
0 32 S, 166 55 E

Map references:
Oceania

Area:
total: 21 sq km
country comparison to the world: 240
land: 21 sq km
water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:
about 0.1 times the size of Washington, DC

Land boundaries:
0 km

Coastline:
30 km

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

Climate:
tropical with a monsoonal pattern; rainy season (November to February)

Terrain:
sandy beach rises to fertile ring around raised coral reefs with phosphate plateau in center

Elevation extremes:
lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m
highest point: unnamed elevation along plateau rim 61 m

Natural resources:
phosphates, fish

Land use:
arable land: 0%
permanent crops: 20%
other: 80% (2011)

Irrigated land:
NA

Natural hazards:
periodic droughts

Environment - current issues:
limited natural freshwater resources, roof storage tanks collect rainwater but mostly dependent on a single, aging desalination plant; intensive phosphate mining during the past 90 years - mainly by a UK, Australia, and NZ consortium - has left the central 90% of Nauru a wasteland and threatens limited remaining land resources

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Whaling
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

Nauru is one of the three great phosphate rock islands in the Pacific Ocean - the others are Banaba (Ocean Island) in Kiribati and Makatea in French Polynesia; only 53 km south of Equator

People and Society:: Nauru

Nationality:

noun: Nauruan(s)
adjective: Nauruan

Ethnic groups:

Nauruan 58%, other Pacific Islander 26%, Chinese 8%, European 8%

Languages:

Nauruan (official, a distinct Pacific Island language), English (widely understood, spoken, and used for most government and commercial purposes)

Religions:

Protestant 45.8% (Nauru Congregational 35.4%, Nauru Independent Church 10.4%), Roman Catholic 33.2%, other 14.1%, none 4.5%, unspecified 2.4% (2002 census)

Population:

9,434 (July 2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 227

Age structure:

0-14 years: 32.5% (male 1,363/female 1,701)
15-24 years: 17.6% (male 857/female 801)
25-54 years: 42.3% (male 1,975/female 2,014)
55-64 years: 5.9% (male 225/female 327)
65 years and over: 1.8% (male 68/female 103) (2013 est.)

Median age:

total: 25 years
male: 25.2 years
female: 24.7 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

0.58% (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 146

Birth rate:

26.39 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 49

Death rate:

5.94 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 169

Net migration rate:

-14.63 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 216

Urbanization:

urban population: 100% of total population (2010)
rate of urbanization: 0.6% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 0.83 male(s)/female
0-14 years: 0.81 male(s)/female
15-24 years: 1.07 male(s)/female
25-54 years: 0.98 male(s)/female
55-64 years: 0.68 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.78 male(s)/female
total population: 0.91 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Infant mortality rate:

total: 8.36 deaths/1,000 live births
country comparison to the world: 154
male: 10.74 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 6.37 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 66.05 years
country comparison to the world: 169
male: 61.96 years
female: 69.47 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

2.98 children born/woman (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 59

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

35.6% (2007)

Health expenditures:

11.2% of GDP (2010)
country comparison to the world: 17

Physicians density:
0.71 physicians/1,000 population (2008)
Drinking water source:
improved:
urban: 88% of population
total: 88% of population
unimproved:
urban: 12% of population
total: 12% of population (2010 est.)
Sanitation facility access:
improved:
urban: 65% of population
total: 65% of population
unimproved:
urban: 35% of population
total: 35% of population (2010 est.)
HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:
NA
HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:
NA
HIV/AIDS - deaths:
NA
Obesity - adult prevalence rate:
71.1% (2008)
country comparison to the world: 2
Children under the age of 5 years underweight:
4.8% (2007)
country comparison to the world: 90
Education expenditures:
NA
Literacy:
NA
School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):
total: 9 years
male: 9 years
female: 10 years (2008)
Government:: Nauru
Country name:
conventional long form: Republic of Nauru
conventional short form: Nauru
local long form: Republic of Nauru
local short form: Nauru
former: Pleasant Island
Government type:
republic
Capital:
no official capital; government offices in Yaren District
time difference: UTC+12 (17 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)
Administrative divisions:
14 districts; Aiwo, Anabar, Anetan, Anibare, Baiti, Boe, Buada, Denigomodu, Ewa, Ijuw, Meneng, Nibok, Uaboe, Yaren
Independence:
31 January 1968 (from the Australia-, NZ-, and UK-administered UN trusteeship)
National holiday:
Independence Day, 31 January (1968)
Constitution:
29 January 1968; amended 17 May 1968
Legal system:
mixed legal system of common law based on the English model and customary law
International law organization participation:
has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; accepts ICCt jurisdiction
Suffrage:
20 years of age; universal and compulsory
Executive branch:

chief of state: President Baron WAQA (since 11 June 2013); note - the president is both chief of state and head of government
head of government: President Baron WAQA (since 11 June 2013)
cabinet: Cabinet appointed by the president from among the members of parliament
(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [↗](#))
elections: president elected by parliament for a three-year term; election last held on 11 June 2013 (next to be held in 2016)
election results: Baron WAQA elected in a parliamentary vote of 13 to 5

Legislative branch:

unicameral parliament (19 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms)
elections: last held on 8 June 2013 (next to be held in 2016)
election results: percent of vote - NA; seats - independents 19

Judicial branch:

highest court(s): Supreme Court (consists of a chief justice and 1 judge)
judge selection and term of office: judges appointed by the president to serve until age 65
subordinate courts: District Court, Family Court

Political parties and leaders:

Democratic Party [Kennan ADEANG]
Nauru First (Naoero Amo) Party
Nauru Party (informal)

note: loose multiparty system

Political pressure groups and leaders:

Woman Information and News Agency (women's issues)

International organization participation:

ACP, ADB, AOSIS, C, FAO, G-77, ICAO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ITU, OPCW, PIF, Sparteca, SPC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UPU, WHO

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Marlene I. MOSES
chancery: 800 2nd Avenue, Suite 400 D, New York, NY 10017
telephone: [1] (212) 937-0074
FAX: [1] (212) 937-0079
consulate(s): Agana (Guam)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

the US does not have an embassy in Nauru; the US Ambassador to Fiji is accredited to Nauru

Flag description:

blue with a narrow, horizontal, yellow stripe across the center and a large white 12-pointed star below the stripe on the hoist side; blue stands for the Pacific Ocean, the star indicates the country's location in relation to the Equator (the yellow stripe) and the 12 points symbolize the 12 original tribes of Nauru

National anthem:

name: "Nauru Bwiema" (Song of Nauru)
lyrics/music: Margaret HENDRIE/Laurence Henry HICKS
note: adopted 1968

Economy:: Nauru

Economy - overview:

Revenues of this tiny island traditionally have come from exports of phosphates. Few other resources exist, with most necessities being imported, mainly from Australia, its former occupier and later major source of support. In 2005 an Australian company entered into an agreement to exploit remaining supplies. Primary reserves of phosphates were exhausted and mining ceased in 2006, but mining of a deeper layer of "secondary phosphate" in the interior of the island began the following year. The secondary phosphate deposits may last another 30 years. The rehabilitation of mined land and the replacement of income from phosphates are serious long-term problems. In anticipation of the exhaustion of Nauru's phosphate deposits, substantial amounts of phosphate income were invested in trust funds to help cushion the transition and provide for Nauru's economic future. As a result of heavy spending from the trust funds, the government faced virtual bankruptcy. To cut costs the government has frozen wages and reduced overstuffed public service departments. Nauru lost further revenue in 2008 with the closure of Australia's refugee processing center, making it almost totally dependent on food imports and foreign aid. Housing, hospitals, and other capital plant are deteriorating. The cost to Australia of keeping the government and economy afloat continues to climb. Few comprehensive statistics on the Nauru economy exist with estimates of Nauru's GDP varying widely.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$60 million (2005 est.)
country comparison to the world: 224

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$NA

GDP - real growth rate:

NA%

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$5,000 (2005 est.)
country comparison to the world: 160

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 6.1%
industry: 33%
services: 60.8% (2009 est.)

Agriculture - products:

coconuts

Industries:

phosphate mining, offshore banking, coconut products

Industrial production growth rate:

NA%

Labor force - by occupation:
note: employed in mining phosphates, public administration, education, and transportation
Unemployment rate:
90% (2004 est.)
country comparison to the world: 201
Population below poverty line:
NA%
Household income or consumption by percentage share:
lowest 10%: NA%
highest 10%: NA%
Budget:
revenues: \$13.5 million
expenditures: \$13.5 million (2005)
Fiscal year:
1 July - 30 June
Inflation rate (consumer prices):
NA% (2011 est.)
Exports:
\$64,000 (2005 est.)
country comparison to the world: 220
Exports - commodities:
phosphates
Imports:
\$20 million (2004 est.)
country comparison to the world: 220
Imports - commodities:
food, fuel, manufactures, building materials, machinery
Debt - external:
\$33.3 million (2004 est.)
country comparison to the world: 195
Exchange rates:
Australian dollars (AUD) per US dollar -
0.9658 (2012)
0.9695 (2011 est.)
1.0902 (2010)
1.2822 (2009)
1.2059 (2008)

Energy :: **Nauru**

Electricity - production:
33 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 208
Electricity - consumption:
30.69 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 208
Electricity - exports:
0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 113
Electricity - imports:
0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 115
Electricity - installed generating capacity:
11,000 kW (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 200
Electricity - from fossil fuels:
100% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 30
Electricity - from nuclear fuels:
0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 153
Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:
0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 189
Electricity - from other renewable sources:
0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 169

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 174

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 162

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 173

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 121

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

1,000 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 200

Refined petroleum products - exports:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 209

Refined petroleum products - imports:

1,044 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 191

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 175

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 181

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 155

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 178

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

219,700 Mt (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 195

Communications :: Nauru

Telephones - main lines in use:

1,900 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 218

Telephones - mobile cellular:

6,700 (2011)

country comparison to the world: 212

Telephone system:

general assessment: adequate local and international radiotelephone communication provided via Australian facilities

international: country code - 674; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Pacific Ocean)

Broadcast media:

1 government-owned TV station broadcasting programs from New Zealand sent via satellite or on videotape; 1 government-owned radio station, broadcasting on AM and FM, utilizes Australian and British programs (2009)

Internet country code:

.nr

Internet hosts:

8,162 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 138

Transportation :: Nauru

Airports:

1 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 229

Airports - with paved runways:

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

Roadways:

total: 24 km
country comparison to the world: 220
paved: 24 km (2002)

Ports and terminals:

Nauru

Military :: Nauru

Military branches:

no regular military forces (2012)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 2,542 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 1,823
females age 16-49: 2,034 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 74
female: 78 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures:

NA

Military - note:

Nauru maintains no defense forces; under an informal agreement, defense is the responsibility of Australia

Transnational Issues:: Nauru

Disputes - international:

none