North America (includes Central America and the Caribbean)

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Antigua and Barbuda	171	24	St. John's	English, local dialects	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Gaston Browne	1981	98/99	$23,900
	93,000	1.2				24	74/80	0.783
Bahamas	5,382	83	Nassau	English, Creole	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Perry Christie	1973	95/97	$25,500
	382,000	0.8				26	72/78	0.790
Barbados	166	32	Bridgetown	English, Bajan	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Freundel Stuart	1966	99/99	$17,000
	282,000	0.3				19	73/78	0.785
Belize	8,867	45	Belmopan	English, Spanish, Mayan, Garifuna	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Dean Barrow	1981	82/83	$8,500
	378,000	1.8				36	71/77	0.715
Canada	3,855,103	82	Ottawa	English, French	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Justin Trudeau	1867	99/99	$46,200
	36,219,000	0.7				16	79/84	0.913
Costa Rica	19,730	77	San José	Spanish, English	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Luis Guillermo Solís	1821	98/98	$16,100
	4,890,000	1.2				23	77/82	0.766
Cuba	42,426	77	Havana	Spanish	Communist one-party state; President Raúl Castro	1902	99/99	$20,700
	11,208,000	-0.3				16	78/82	0.769
Dominica	290	70	Roseau	English, French patois	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit	1978	94/94	$11,400
	73,000	0.2				22	72/77	0.724
Dominican Republic	18,653	79	Santo Domingo	Spanish	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Danilo Medina	1844	92/93	$15,800
	10,630,000	1.2				30	71/77	0.715
El Salvador	8,124	67	San Salvador	Spanish, Nahua	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Salvador Sánchez Cerén	1821	90/86	$8,600
	6,408,000	0.3				27	68/78	0.666
Grenada	133	36	St. George's	English, French patois	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Keith Mitchell	1974	96	$13,600
	112,000	0.5				26	74/79	0.750
Guatemala	42,042	52	Guatemala City	Spanish, Amerindian dialects	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Jimmy Morales	1821	85/74	$7,900
	16,554,000	1.8				40	69/76	0.627
Haiti	10,695	59	Port-au-Prince	French, Creole	Presidential-legislative system (transitional); Interim President Jocelerme Privert*	1804	64/57	$1,800
	11,093,000	1.7				35	61/65	0.483
Honduras	43,433	55	Tegucigalpa	Spanish, Amerindian dialects	Presidential-parliamentary (military dominated); President Juan Orlando Hernández	1821	88/89	$5,000
	8,200,000	1.6				32	71/76	0.606
Jamaica	4,244	55	Kingston	English, English patois	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Andrew Holness	1962	84/93	$9,000
	2,732,000	0.7				24	73/78	0.719
Mexico	758,450	79	Mexico City	Spanish, Mayan, other indigenous languages	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Enrique Peña Nieto	1810	96/94	$17,900
	128,632,000	1.2				28	74/79	0.756
Nicaragua	50,337	59	Managua	Spanish, Miskito, others	Presidential-legislative system; President Daniel Ortega*	1821	82/83	$5,200
	6,328,000	1.0				30	72/78	0.631
Panama	28,640	67	Panama City	Spanish, English	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Juan Carlos Varela	1903	96/94	$22,900
	4,041,000	1.3				27	75/81	0.780
Saint Kitts and Nevis	104	32	Basseterre	English	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Timothy Harris	1983	98	$25,900
	50,000	0.8				21	73/78	0.752
Saint Lucia	238	18	Castries	English, French patois	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Allen Chastanet	1979	90/91	$11,900
	177,000	0.3				22	75/82	0.729
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	150	51	Kingstown	English, French patois	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves	1979	96/96	$11,300
	110,000	-0.3				25	71/75	0.720
Trinidad and Tobago	1,980	8	Port-of-Spain	English, Hindi, French, Spanish, Chinese	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Keith Rowley	1962	99/99	$32,400
	1,355,000	-0.2				21	71/78	0.772
United States	3,678,190	81	Washington, D.C.	English, Spanish, others	President-elect Donald Trump*	1776	99/99	$57,200
	323,890,000	0.8				19	76/81	0.915

* Trump is expected to take office on January 20, 2017

South America

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Argentina	1,073,520	92	Buenos Aires	Spanish, English, Italian, German, French	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Mauricio Macri	1816	98/98	$22,300
	43,625,000	0.9				25	73/80	0.836
Bolivia	424,164	68	La Paz *and* Sucre	Spanish, Quechua, Aymara	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Evo Morales	1825	97/93	$6,700
	10,985,000	1.5				33	68/74	0.662
Brazil	3,287,956	86	Brasília	Portuguese, Amerindian dialects	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Michel Temer	1822	92/93	$15,000
	206,147,000	0.8				23	72/79	0.755
Chile	291,930	83	Santiago	Spanish	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Michelle Bachelet	1810	97/97	$23,800
	18,198,000	0.8				20	77/82	0.832
Colombia	440,831	76	Bogotá	Spanish	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Juan Manuel Santos	1810	94/95	$14,200
	48,762,000	1.0				27	72/79	0.720
Ecuador	98,985	64	Quito	Spanish, Quechua, Amerindian dialects	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Rafael Correa	1822	95/94	$10,700
	16,529,000	1.3				29	73/79	0.732
Guyana	83,012	29	Georgetown	English, Amerindian dialects, Creole, Hindi, Urdu	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President David Granger	1966	86/89	$7,800
	759,000	0.2				29	64/69	0.636
Paraguay	157,048	60	Asunción	Spanish, Guarani	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Horacio Cartes	1811	96/95	$8,900
	7,033,000	1.2				32	71/75	0.679
Peru	496,225	79	Lima	Spanish, Quechua, Aymara	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Pedro Pablo Kuczynski	1821	97/92	$12,600
	31,489,000	1.0				28	72/77	0.734
Suriname	63,251	66	Paramaribo	Dutch, English, Sranang Tongo, Hindustani, Javanese	Parliamentary democracy; President Dési Bouterse	1975	96/95	$16,000
	548,000	1.1				27	68/74	0.714
Uruguay	68,679	95	Montevideo	Spanish, Portunol, Brazilero	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Tabaré Vázquez	1825	98/99	$21,900
	3,480,000	0.3				21	74/81	0.793
Venezuela	353,841	89	Caracas	Spanish, Amerindian dialects	Presidential-legislative system; President Nicolás Maduro	1811	95/96	$15,200
	31,029,000	1.3				28	72/78	0.762

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For head of government:
Based on information from the GeoCities "Rulers" website (rulers.org); The World Factbook (C.I.A.); and news accounts

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All figures are the latest available from each source for each country; all information is as of November 2016 unless otherwise noted.

DATA COMPILED AND EDITED BY BRYAN BROWN, GABRIEL CHARLES TYLER, AND CARLIN MCCARTHY

Africa

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Algeria	919,595	71	Algiers	Arabic, French, Berber dialects	Dominant party; President Abdelaziz Bouteflika	1962	86/73	$14,900
	40,830,000	1.8				29	73/78	0.736
Angola	481,354	62	Luanda	Portuguese, Bantu, others	Presidential-parliamentary system; President José Eduardo dos Santos	1975	82/61	$7,400
	25,831,000	2.7				48	51/54	0.532
Benin	44,310	44	Porto-Novo	French, Fon, Yoruba, others	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Patrice Talon	1960	50/27	$2,200
	10,800,000	2.8				45	58/61	0.480
Botswana	224,607	57	Gaborone	English, Setswana, others	Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs; President Ian Khama	1966	87/89	$16,900
	2,226,000	1.2				33	62/67	0.698
Burkina Faso	104,543	30	Ouagadougou	French, Sudanic languages	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (transitional); President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré	1960	48/28	$1,800
	18,980,000	3.0				49	57/60	0.402
Burundi	10,747	12	Bujumbura	Kirundi, French, Swahili	Presidential-legislative system; President Pierre Nkurunziza	1962	88/83	$800
	11,099,000	3.3				46	58/61	0.400
Cameroon	183,920	54	Yaoundé	English, French, African languages	Dominant party; President Paul Biya	1960	81/69	$3,200
	24,361,000	2.6				43	56/59	0.512
Cape Verde	1,557	66	Praia	Portuguese, Crioulo	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva	1975	92/85	$6,700
	528,000	1.4				28	71/80	0.646
Central African Republic	240,324	40	Bangui	French, Sangho, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (transitional); President Faustin Archange Touadéra	1960	51/24	$700
	5,004,000	2.1				39	49/53	0.350
Chad	495,755	22	N'Djamena	French, Arabic, Sara, others	Dominant party; President Idriss Déby Itno	1960	48/32	$2,600
	14,511,000	1.9				48	51/53	0.392
Comoros	719	28	Moroni	Arabic, French, Shikomoro	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Azali Assoumani	1975	82/74	$1,500
	806,000	1.7				40	62/65	0.503
Congo, Democratic Rep.	905,568	42	Kinshasa	French, Lingala, Kingwana, Kikongo, Tshiluba	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Joseph Kabila	1960	89/66	$800
	79,799,000	2.4				46	49/52	0.433
Congo, Republic	132,047	65	Brazzaville	French, Lingala, Monokutuba, Kikongo, others	Military; President Denis Sassou-Nguesso	1960	86/73	$6,900
	4,852,000	2.1				41	57/60	0.591
Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)	124,504	54	Yamoussoukro	French, Dioula, others	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Alassane Ouattara	1960	53/33	$3,500
	23,853,000	1.9				42	51/53	0.462
Djibouti	8,960	77	Djibouti	French, Arabic, Somali, Afar	Dominant party; President Ismail Omar Guelleh	1977	78/58	$3,400
	900,000	2.2				33	60/64	0.470
Egypt[6]	384,790	43	Cairo	Arabic, English, French	Dominant party; President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi	1922	84/68	$12,100
	93,492,000	2.5				31	70/73	0.690
Equatorial Guinea	10,831	40	Malabo	Spanish, French, Fang, Bubi, others	Presidential dictatorship; President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo	1968	97/93	$28,900
	870,000	2.5				39	56/59	0.587
Eritrea	46,760	23	Asmara	Tigrinya, Arabic, English, Tigre, Kunama, Afar, others	One-party dictatorship; President Isaias Afewerki	1993	82/66	$1,300
	5,352,000	0.8				43	62/66	0.391
Ethiopia	410,678	20	Addis Ababa	Amharic, Tigrinya, Arabic, Oromiga, English, others	Dominant party; Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn	1000 B.C.	57/41	$1,900
	101,746,000	2.9				41	62/66	0.442
Gabon	103,347	87	Libreville	French, Fang, Myene, others	Dominant party; President Ali Bongo Ondimba	1960	85/81	$19,100
	1,765,000	1.9				37	64/65	0.684
Gambia	4,491	60	Banjul	English, Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, others	Dominant party; President Yahya Jammeh*	1965	64/48	$1,700
	2,086,000	2.1				46	59/62	0.441
Ghana	92,098	54	Accra	English, Asante, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President John Dramani Mahama*	1957	82/71	$4,400
	28,231,000	2.2				39	60/63	0.579

[6] Egypt is also included in the Middle East table.
* Pending December elections

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Guinea	94,926	37	Conakry	French, other African languages	Presidential-legislative system; President Alpha Condé	1958	38/23	$1,200
	11,197,000	2.6				43	58/59	0.411
Guinea-Bissau	13,948	49	Bissau	Portuguese, Crioulo, others	Presidential-legislative system (military-dominated); President José Mário Vaz	1973	72/48	$1,600
	1,888,000	1.9				43	54/57	0.420
Kenya	224,961	26	Nairobi	English, Swahili, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Uhuru Kenyatta	1963	81/75	$3,300
	45,397,000	1.9				42	60/65	0.548
Lesotho	11,720	27	Maseru	Sesotho, English, Zulu, Xhosa	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili	1966	70/88	$3,100
	2,163,000	0.3				36	50/50	0.497
Liberia	37,420	50	Monrovia	English, ethnic languages	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	1847	62/33	$900
	4,615,000	2.4				42	60/62	0.430
Libya	647,184	79	Tripoli	Arabic, Italian, English, Berber	In transition amid ongoing conflict; Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj	1951	97/86	$14,300
	6,330,000	1.8				30	69/75	0.724
Madagascar	226,756	35	Antananarivo	French, Malagasy	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Hery Rajaonarimampianina	1960	67/63	$1,500
	23,667,000	2.5				41	64/67	0.510
Malawi	45,747	16	Lilongwe	English, Chichewa, others	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Peter Mutharika	1964	73/59	$1,100
	17,225,000	3.3				40	62/64	0.445
Mali	482,077	40	Bamako	French, Bambara, others	In transition amid ongoing conflict; President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita	1960	45/22	$2,300
	17,260,000	3.0				47	54/54	0.419
Mauritania	397,955	60	Nouakchott	Arabic, Pulaar, Soninke, Wolof, French	Presidential-legislative system; President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz	1960	63/42	$4,500
	4,166,000	2.2				40	62/65	0.506
Mauritius	788	41	Port Louis	Creole, Bhojpuri, French, English, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Sir Anerood Jugnauth	1968	93/88	$20,400
	1,263,000	0.6				20	71/78	0.777
Morocco	170,773	60	Rabat	Arabic, Berber dialects, French	Constitutional monarchy; King Mohammed VI	1956	82/62	$8,300
	34,705,000	1.0				25	73/75	0.628
Mozambique	308,642	32	Maputo	Portuguese, African languages	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Filipe Nyussi	1975	73/46	$1,200
	27,181,000	2.5				45	52/56	0.416
Namibia	318,772	47	Windhoek	Afrikaans, German, English, local African languages	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Hage Geingob	1990	91/91	$11,900
	2,537,000	2.0				34	62/67	0.628
Niger	489,191	22	Niamey	French, Hausa, Djerma	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Mahamadou Issoufou	1960	27/11	$1,100
	19,749,000	3.2				50	61/62	0.348
Nigeria	356,669	48	Abuja	English, Hausa, Yoruba, Ibo, Fulani, others	Presidential-legislative system; President Muhammadu Buhari	1960	69/50	$6,100
	186,510,000	2.4				43	53/53	0.514
Rwanda	10,185	29	Kigali	Kinyarwanda, French, English, Kiswahili	Dominant party; President Paul Kagame	1962	75/68	$1,900
	11,896,000	2.5				41	62/66	0.483
São Tomé and Príncipe	386	67	São Tomé	Portuguese	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Evaristo Carvalho	1975	96/88	$3,400
	198,000	1.8				42	64/68	0.555
Senegal	75,955	45	Dakar	French, Wolof, Pulaar, Jola, Mandinka	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Macky Sall	1960	68/44	$2,600
	14,800,000	2.4				44	65/68	0.466
Seychelles	174	54	Victoria	Creole, English, others	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Danny Faure	1976	95/96	$27,200
	94,000	0.8				22	70/79	0.772
Sierra Leone	27,699	40	Freetown	English, Mende, Temne, Krio	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Ernest Bai Koroma	1961	59/38	$1,600
	6,567,000	2.4				42	50/52	0.413
Somalia	246,201	40	Mogadishu	Somali, Arabic, Italian, English	Presidential-parliamentary system (transitional); President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud	1960	50/26	$400
	11,079,000	1.9				47	54/57	NA

Africa

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South Africa	471,359	65	Cape Town, Pretoria, *and* Bloemfontein	English, Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, Swazi, Sotho, others	Parliamentary democracy; President Jacob Zuma	1910	96/93	$13,200
	55,654,000	1.0				30	60/64	0.666
South Sudan	248,777	19	Juba	Arabic, Dinka, Nuer, English, others	Presidential-legislative system (transitional); President Salva Kii	2011	39/25	$1,800
	12,733,000	3.9				42	55/57	0.467
Sudan	712,280	34	Khartoum	Arabic, Nubian, Ta Bedawie, English, others	Dominant party; President Omar Hassan al-Bashir	1956	83/69	$4,400
	42,127,000	1.7				43	61/64	0.479
Swaziland	6,704	21	Mbabane *and* Lobamba	English, Siswati	Monarchy; King Mswati III	1968	87/87	$8,500
	1,304,000	1.1				37	50/48	0.531
Tanzania	364,963	30	Dar es Salaam *and* Dodoma	Kiswahili, English, Arabic, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President John Magufuli	1964	76/65	$3,100
	54,207,000	2.8				45	64/66	0.521
Togo	21,853	38	Lomé	French, Ewe, Mina, Dagomba, Kabye	Dominant party; President Faure Gnassingbé	1960	78/55	$1,500
	7,505,000	2.7				42	59/61	0.484
Tunisia	63,170	68	Tunis	Arabic, French, Berber	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (transitional); Prime Minister Youssef Chahed	1956	90/73	$11,700
	11,303,000	0.9				24	73/77	0.721
Uganda	93,263	20	Kampala	English, Luganda, Swahili, others	Dominant party; President Yoweri Museveni	1962	81/67	$2,100
	36,593,000	3.2				48	62/64	0.483
Zambia	290,585	40	Lusaka	English, Bemba, Tonga, others	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Edgar Lungu	1964	90/81	$3,900
	15,934,000	2.9				46	51/56	0.586
Zimbabwe	150,872	33	Harare	English, Shona, Sindebele, others	Dominant party; President Robert Mugabe	1980	89/85	$2,200
	15,987,000	2.2				42	56/59	0.509

Political Systems Around the World

Communist one-party state: Land and businesses are government-owned, and individual and political freedoms are severely limited. *(Example: North Korea)* The definition has become muddied, since China and Vietnam are allowing an increasing amount of private enterprise.

Constitutional monarchy: A king or queen is head of state but has limited power. An elected parliament (legislature) chooses the prime minister, who leads the government. *(Bhutan)*

Dominant party: A system in which one political party rules. Other parties may exist but have relatively little power. *(Russia)*

Military rule: The leader of a country's armed forces controls the government. *(Republic of Congo)*

Monarchy: A king, queen, or prince rules the government, usually for life and by hereditary right. *(Saudi Arabia)*

One-party dictatorship: A single party and its leader hold power. *(Eritrea)*

Parliamentary democracy: Voters elect the parliament. A prime minister, usually leader of the party with the most seats in parliament, heads the government. *(Canada)*

Presidential dictatorship: The president has almost complete power. *(Syria)*

Presidential-legislative democracy: An elected president leads the government, sharing power with a legislature and with the courts. *(Brazil)*

Presidential-parliamentary democracy: An elected president is chief executive. A prime minister leads the government. *(Croatia)*

Traditional chiefs: A body of tribal leaders plays a role in governing. *(Marshall Islands)*

Notes on Country Data

Head of government: The person most responsible for running the government. Many countries have both a head of government and a head of state. For example, Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state in the United Kingdom (U.K.), but Prime Minister Theresa May runs the government.

Literacy rate: Experts question some of the estimates provided. A single number means a gender breakdown is not available.

Per capita gross domestic product (GDP): This figure is given in U.S. dollars. The numbers are adjusted to account for differences in the cost of living from country to country.

NA: Figures not available.

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Bahrain	297	100	Manama	Arabic, English, Farsi, Urdu	Constitutional monarchy (transitional); King Hamad bin Isa al-Khalifa	1971	97/93	$50,100
	1,446,000	2.3				17	76/78	0.824
Cyprus[7]	2,276	67	Nicosia	Greek, Turkish, English	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Nikos Anastasiades	1960	99/99	$33,300
	1,177,000	1.4				17	78/82	0.850
Egypt[8]	384,790	43	Cairo	Arabic, English, French	Dominant party; President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi	1922	84/68	$12,100
	93,492,000	2.5				31	70/73	0.690
Iran	628,872	72	Tehran	Farsi, Turkic, Kurdish, Luri, others	Presidential-parliamentary system under religious control; President Hassan Rouhani	1502	91/83	$17,900
	79,482,000	1.2				24	74/77	0.766
Iraq	167,618	70	Baghdad	Arabic, Kurdish, Turkmen, Assyrian, Armenian	Parliamentary system; Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi	1932	86/74	$16,300
	38,146,000	2.9				40	67/72	0.654
Israel[9]	8,357	92	Jerusalem	Hebrew, Arabic, English	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu	1948	99/97	$34,300
	8,201,000	1.5				28	80/84	0.894
Jordan	34,277	84	Amman	Arabic, English	Constitutional monarchy; King Abdullah II	1946	99/97	$12,400
	8,185,000	0.8				37	73/76	0.748
Kuwait	6,880	98	Kuwait	Arabic, English	Constitutional monarchy; Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah	1961	97/95	$70,200
	4,409,000	1.5				22	74/76	0.816
Lebanon	4,036	88	Beirut	Arabic, French, Armenian, English	Presidential-parliamentary system; Acting President Tammam Salam	1943	96/92	$18,400
	6,238,000	0.9				25	76/78	0.769
Oman	119,500	75	Muscat	Arabic, English, Baluchi, Urdu, others	Monarchy; Sultan Qaboos bin Said al-Said	1650	96/90	$44,500
	4,351,000	2.1				21	75/78	0.793
Qatar	4,481	99	Doha	Arabic, English	Monarchy; Emir Tamin bin Hamad al-Thani	1971	98/98	$129,500
	2,477,000	2.6				15	77/80	0.850
Saudi Arabia	830,000	83	Riyadh	Arabic	Monarchy; King Salman bin Abdulaziz al Saud	1932	97/92	$53,700
	31,677,000	1.5				30	73/75	0.837
Syria	71,498	58	Damascus	Arabic, Kurdish, Armenian, French, others	Presidential dictatorship amid civil war; President Bashar al-Assad	1946	92/81	$5,100
	17,185,000	1.6				33	64/77	0.594
Turkey[10]	303,224	73	Ankara	Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Recep Tayyip Erdogan	1923	99/93	$21,200
	79,472,000	0.9				24	75/79	0.761
United Arab Emirates	32,280	86	Abu Dhabi	Arabic, Farsi, English, Hindi, Urdu	Federation of traditional monarchies; President Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayid al-Nahayan	1971	92/95	$67,900
	9,267,000	2.5				14	76/79	0.835
Yemen	203,891	35	Sanaa	Arabic	Presidential-parlimentary system (transitional); President Saheh al-Sammad	1990	85/55	$2,600
	27,460,000	2.4				40	63/67	0.498

[7] Statistics don't include the separate Turkish Cypriot-controlled area in the north.
[8] Egypt is also included in the Africa table.
[9] Statistics don't include the West Bank.
[10] Turkey is also included in the Europe table.

What Is the Middle East?

The Middle East is a region, not a continent. It's mostly in Asia, but also includes a part of Africa (Egypt) and a corner of Europe (the small European section of Turkey).

Rich in oil and predominantly Muslim, the Middle East is both strategically important and an area of great tension. To many people, the region is defined by the decades-long conflict between Israel and its Arab neighbors. Negotiations on a peace settlement between Israel and the Palestinians, which would result in a Palestinian state alongside Israel, remain stalled despite U.S. efforts to revive them.

In 2003, the U.S. invaded Iraq and ousted its strongman leader, Saddam Hussein. That left a power vacuum that enabled the emergence of a militant group called the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Starting in 2014, ISIS took control of parts of northern Iraq and western Syria. The U.S. has been providing air support for Iraq's fight to reclaim that territory and conducting air strikes against ISIS in Syria.

Syria is in the midst of a violent civil war that grew out of the Arab Spring protests, which roiled the Middle East in 2011. Syria's civil war has killed almost 500,000 and made 4 million others flee the country.

Europe

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Albania	11,082	58	Tirana	Albanian, Greek	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Edi Rama	1912	98/97	$11,800
	2,889,000	0.3				18	76/80	0.733
Andorra	180	85	Andorra la Vella	Catalan, French, Castilian Spanish, Portuguese	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Head of Government Antoni Martí Petit	1278	99/99	$37,200
	80,000	0.1				15	NA	0.845
Austria	32,386	66	Vienna	German	Parliamentary democracy; Chancellor Christian Kern	1156	98	$48,100
	8,758,000	0.5				14	79/84	0.885
Belarus	80,153	78	Minsk	Belarusian, Russian, others	Presidential dictatorship; President Aleksandr Lukashenko	1991	99/99	$17,400
	9,508,000	-0.2				16	68/78	0.798
Belgium	11,787	98	Brussels	Flemish, French, German	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Charles Michel	1830	99/99	$44,100
	11,297,000	0.7				17	79/84	0.890
Bosnia and Herzegovina	19,772	40	Sarajevo	Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (transitional); rotating Chairman of the Presidency[1]	1992	99/97	$10,900
	3,519,000	-0.1				15	74/79	0.733
Bulgaria	42,858	73	Sofia	Bulgarian, Turkish, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Boiko Borisov	1908	99/98	$19,800
	7,130,000	-0.6				14	71/78	0.782
Croatia	21,851	59	Zagreb	Croatian, Serbian, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Interim Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic	1991	99/99	$22,300
	4,175,000	-0.5				15	74/81	0.818
Czech Republic	30,450	73	Prague	Czech, Slovak	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Bohuslav Sobotka	1993	99/99	$32,600
	10,562,000	0.1				15	76/82	0.870
Denmark	16,640	88	Copenhagen	Danish, Greenlandic, Faroese, German	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Lars Løkke Rasmussen	900s	99/99	$46,700
	5,731,000	0.2				17	79/82	0.923
Estonia	17,462	69	Tallinn	Estonian, Ukrainian, Russian, others	Parliamentary democracy[2]	1991	99/99	$29,500
	1,317,000	-0.5				16	72/82	0.861
Finland	150,928	84	Helsinki	Finnish, Swedish, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Sauli Niinistö	1917	99/99	$41,700
	5,494,000	0.4				16	78/85	0.883
France	210,026	80	Paris	French, regional dialects	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President François Hollande	486	99/99	$41,900
	64,631,000	0.4				18	79/85	0.888
Germany	137,879	75	Berlin	German	Parliamentary democracy; Chancellor Angela Merkel	1871	99/99	$47,500
	82,625,000	-0.2				13	78/83	0.916
Greece	50,949	78	Athens	Greek, English, French	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras	1830	99/94	$26,600
	10,756,000	0				15	78/84	0.865
Hungary	35,919	71	Budapest	Hungarian, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Viktor Orbán	1000	99/99	$27,100
	9,807,000	-0.2				14	72/79	0.828
Iceland	39,777	94	Reykjavík	Icelandic, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Sigurdur Ingi Jóhannsson	1944	99/99	$48,000
	334,000	1.2				20	81/84	0.899
Ireland	27,133	63	Dublin	English, Gaelic	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Enda Kenny	1921	99/99	$58,400
	4,668,000	1.2				22	79/83	0.916
Italy	116,346	69	Rome	Italian, German, French, Slovene	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Matteo Renzi	1861	99/99	$36,200
	60,601,000	0.2				14	80/85	0.873
Kosovo[3]	4,212	38	Pristina	Albanian, Serbian, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy (transitional); Prime Minister Isa Mustafa	2008	97/88	NA
	1,755,000	NA				24	74/79	NA
Latvia	24,938	68	Riga	Lettish, Lithuanian, Russian, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Maris Kucinskis	1991	99/99	$25,900
	1,964,000	-1.1				15	69/80	0.819
Liechtenstein	62	14	Vaduz	German, Alemannic dialect	Constitutional monarchy; Prince Alois	1719	99/99	$89,400
	38,000	0.8				15	81/84	0.908
Lithuania	25,212	67	Vilnius	Lithuanian, Polish, Russian, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Dalia Grybauskaite	1991	99/99	$29,700
	2,872,000	-1.1				15	69/80	0.839

[1] Bosnia and Herzegovina has a collective presidency that alternates among three members (one Croat, one Bosnian Muslim, and one Serb).
[2] New Prime Minister not yet named at press time.
[3] Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia on February 17, 2008. As of November 2016, it had been recognized by 112 countries.

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Luxembourg	999	90	Luxembourg	Luxembourgish, German, French	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Xavier Bettel	1839	99/99	$101,000
	583,000	2.1				16	80/85	0.892
Macedonia	9,928	57	Skopje	Macedonian, Albanian, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Emil Dimitriev*	1991	99/97	$14,600
	2,073,000	0.2				17	73/77	0.747
Malta	122	95	Valletta	Maltese, English	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Joseph Muscat	1964	93/96	$37,600
	433,000	0.3				14	80/84	0.839
Moldova	13,067	42	Chisinau	Moldovan, Russian, Gagauz	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Pavel Filip	1991	99/99	$5,100
	3,552,000	-1.0				16	68/76	0.693
Monaco	1	100	Monaco	French, English, Italian, Monégasque	Constitutional monarchy; Prince Albert II	1419	99/99	$78,700
	39,000	0.2				13	NA	NA
Montenegro	5,333	64	Podgorica	Serbian, Montenegrin, Bosnian, Albanian	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Filip Vujanovic	2006	99/98	$17,000
	619,000	-0.4				18	74/79	0.802
Netherlands	16,158	90	Amsterdam	Dutch	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Mark Rutte	1579	99/99	$50,300
	17,020,000	0.4				17	80/83	0.922
Norway	148,718	81	Oslo	Norwegian, Finnish	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Erna Solberg	1905	99/99	$69,000
	5,238,000	1.1				18	80/84	0.944
Poland	120,726	60	Warsaw	Polish	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Andrzej Duda	1918	99/99	$27,700
	38,417,000	-0.1				15	74/82	0.843
Portugal	35,603	64	Lisbon	Portuguese, Mirandese	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister António Costa	1143	97/94	$28,500
	10,303,000	0.1				14	77/83	0.830
Romania	92,043	55	Bucharest	Romanian, Hungarian, German	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Klaus Johannis	1878	99/98	$21,900
	19,756,000	-0.3				16	72/79	0.793
Russia[4]	6,601,700	74	Moscow	Russian, others	Dominant party; President Vladimir Putin	1991	99/99	$25,200
	144,326,000	0.1				17	66/77	0.798
San Marino	24	94	San Marino	Italian	Parliamentary democracy; co-Captains Regent elected every six months from the Great and General Council	301	97/95	$64,500
	33,000	0.8				15	84/89	NA
Serbia	29,922	60	Belgrade	Serbian, Hungarian, Bosniak, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Tomislav Nikolic	1992	99/97	$14,000
	7,063,000	-0.5				14	73/78	0.771
Slovakia	18,932	54	Bratislava	Slovak, Hungarian	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Robert Fico	1993	99/99	$31,000
	5,429,000	0				15	73/80	0.844
Slovenia	7,827	50	Ljubljana	Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Miro Cerar	1991	99/99	$31,900
	2,065,000	-0.3				15	78/84	0.880
Spain	195,364	80	Madrid	Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Galician, Basque	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy	1492	99/97	$36,100
	43,285,000	0.8				15	80/85	0.876
Sweden	172,750	86	Stockholm	Swedish, Finnish	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Stefan Löfven	1523	99/99	$49,400
	9,903,000	0.8				17	80/84	0.907
Switzerland	15,940	84	Bern	German, French, Italian, Romansch, others	Parliamentary democracy; rotating president from seven-member Federal Council	1291	99/99	$59,200
	8,387,000	0.7				15	81/85	0.930
Turkey[5]	303,224	73	Ankara	Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Recep Tayyip Erdogan	1923	99/93	$21,200
	79,472,000	0.9				24	75/79	0.761
Ukraine[6]	233,062	70	Kiev	Ukrainian, Russian, Romanian, Polish, Hungarian	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Petro Poroshenko	1991	99/99	$8,200
	42,677,000	-0.4				15	66/76	0.747
United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland)	93,628	83	London	English, Welsh, Scottish, Gaelic	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Theresa May	circa 900	99/99	$42,000
	65,627,000	0.5				18	79/83	0.907
Vatican City	109 acres	100	Vatican City	Italian, Latin, French, others	Papal state; Pope Francis	1929	NA	NA
	842	0				NA	NA	NA

Asia

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Afghanistan	252,072	27	Kabul	Pashto, Afghan Persian, Turkic, others	Presidential-parliamentary system (transitional); President Ashraf Ghani	1919	51/24	$2,000
	33,403,000	2.3				44	59/62	0.465
Armenia	11,484	64	Yerevan	Armenian, Russian, others	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Serzh Sargsyan	1991	99/99	$8,700
	2,993,000	-0.2				19	72/78	0.733
Azerbaijan	33,436	53	Baku	Azeri, Russian, Armenian, others	Dominant party; President Ilham Aliyev	1991	99/99	$17,500
	9,762,000	0.9				22	72/77	0.751
Bangladesh	56,977	34	Dhaka	Bengali, English	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina Wajed	1971	65/58	$3,800
	162,911,000	1.1				33	71/73	0.570
Bhutan	14,824	39	Thimphu	Dzongkha, Sharchhopka, others	Constitutional monarchy; Prime Minister Lyonchen Tshering Tobgay	1949	71/55	$8,800
	770,000	1.1				31	69/70	0.605
Brunei	2,226	77	Bandar Seri Begawan	Malay, English, Chinese	Monarchy; Sir Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzadin Waddaulah	1984	98/95	$77,700
	424,000	1.6				23	77/81	0.856
Cambodia	69,898	21	Phnom Penh	Khmer, French, English	Dominant party; Prime Minister Hun Sen	1953	85/72	$3,700
	15,797,000	1.6				32	61/66	0.555
China	3,696,100	56	Beijing	Mandarin, other Chinese languages, other languages	Communist one-party state; President Xi Jinping	1912	98/94	$15,100
	1,386,040,000	0.4				17	75/78	0.727
Georgia	26,911	54	Tbilisi	Georgian, Russian, Armenian, Azeri, Ossetian, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Giorgi Margvelashvili	1991	99/99	$10,000
	3,976,000	-0.1				17	71/79	0.754
India	1,222,550	33	New Delhi	Hindi, English, Bengali, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Narendra Modi	1947	81/63	$6,600
	1,328,853,000	1.2				29	67/70	0.609
Indonesia	737,815	54	Jakarta	Bahasa Indonesian, English, Dutch, others	Parliamentary democracy; President Joko Widodo	1945	97/94	$11,600
	259,448,000	0.9				28	69/73	0.684
Japan	145,898	94	Tokyo	Japanese	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Shinzo Abe	660 B.C.	99/99	$38,700
	125,310,000	-0.2				13	80/87	0.891
Kazakhstan	1,052,089	53	Astana	Kazakh, Russian, others	Dominant party; President Nursultan Nazarbayev	1991	99/99	$24,200
	17,799,000	1.1				25	68/77	0.788
Korea, North	47,399	61	Pyongyang	Korean	Communist one-party state; First Secretary Kim Jong Un	1945	99/99	$1,800
	25,115,000	0.5				21	66/74	NA
Korea, South	38,486	82	Seoul	Korean, English	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Park Geun-hye	1945	99/99	$37,700
	50,801,000	0.5				14	79/86	0.898
Kyrgyzstan	77,199	36	Bishkek	Kirghiz, Russian, Uzbeck, others	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Almazbek Atambayev	1991	99/99	$3,500
	6,083,000	1.1				33	67/74	0.655
Laos	91,429	39	Vientiane	Lao, French, English, others	Communist one-party state; President Boungnang Vorachith	1949	87/73	$5,700
	7,077,000	1.5				35	65/68	0.575
Malaysia	127,526	75	Kuala Lumpur	Bahasa Malaysia, English, Chinese, others	Dominant party; Prime Minister Najib Tun Razak	1957	96/93	$27,300
	30,791,000	1.4				25	72/77	0.779
Maldives	115	46	Male	Maldivian Dhivehi, English	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Abdulla Yameen	1965	99/99	$15,300
	414,000	-0.1				27	76/78	0.706
Mongolia	603,908	67	Ulaanbaatar	Khalkha Mongolian, Turkic, Russian	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Jargaltulga Erdenebat	1921	98/99	$12,100
	3,095,000	1.3				27	65/75	0.727
Myanmar (Burma)	261,228	34	Naypyidaw	Burmese, others	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Htin Kyaw	1948	95/91	$6,000
	52,414,000	1.0				28	64/68	0.536
Nepal	56,827	20	Kathmandu	Nepali, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal	1768	76/55	$2,500
	28,431,000	1.2				31	66/69	0.548
Pakistan	340,499	39	Islamabad	Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Siraiki, English, others	Presidential-parliamentary system (military-dominated); Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif	1947	70/43	$5,200
	203,447,000	1.5				36	66/67	0.538
Philippines	115,831	44	Manila	Filipino, English	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Rodrigo Duterte	1898	96/97	$7,600
	102,572,000	1.6				32	65/72	0.668
Russia[11]	6,601,700	74	Moscow	Russian, others	Dominant party; President Vladimir Putin	1991	99/99	$25,200
	144,326,000	0.1				17	66/77	0.798

[11] Russia is also included in the Europe table. Statistics don't include Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in March 2014.

Asia

COUNTRY	AREA (SQ MI) / POPULATION	URBAN POP. % / POP. RISE %/YEAR	CAPITAL	LANGUAGES	POLITICAL SYSTEM & HEAD OF GOVERNMENT	DATE OF ORIGIN / % OF POP. UNDER 15	LITERACY RATE (%) / LIFE EXPECTANCY	PER CAPITA GDP / HDI
Singapore	277	100	Singapore	Mandarin Chinese, Malay, Tamil, English, others	Dominant party; Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong	1965	99/95	$86,900
	5,601,000	1.9				15	80/85	0.912
Sri Lanka	25,332	18	Colombo	Tamil, Sinhala, English	Presidential-parliamentary system; President Maithripala Sirisena	1948	94/92	$11,100
	21,163,000	0.8				25	72/78	0.757
Taiwan	13,973	77	Taipei	Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese, others	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; President Tsai Ing-wen	1949	99/97	$47,800
	23,499,000	0.2				14	77/83	NA
Tajikistan	55,251	26	Dushanbe	Tajik, Russian	Dominant party; President Emomalii Rakhmon	1991	99/99	$2,800
	8,645,000	1.7				35	66/73	0.624
Thailand	198,117	50	Bangkok	Thai, English, regional dialects	Military after coup; Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha	1238	95/93	$16,700
	65,323,000	0.3				18	72/79	0.726
Timor-Leste (East Timor)	5,773	33	Dili	Tetun, Portuguese, Indonesian, English	Presidential-parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Rui Maria de Araújo	2002	69/60	$5,100
	1,266,000	2.4				42	67/70	0.595
Turkmenistan	189,657	50	Ashgabat	Turkmen, Uzbek, Russian, others	Presidential dictatorship; President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov	1991	99/99	$17,100
	5,439,000	1.1				28	62/70	0.688
Uzbekistan	172,742	36	Tashkent	Uzbek, Russian, Tajik, others	Presidential dictatorship; President Shavkat Mirziyayev*	1991	99/99	$6,400
	31,855,000	0.9				29	71/76	0.675
Vietnam	127,882	34	Hanoi	Vietnamese, French, Chinese, English, Khmer, others	Communist one-party state; Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc	1945	96/93	$6,400
	92,699,000	1.0				24	71/76	0.666

Oceania

Australia	2,969,976	89	Canberra	English, aboriginal languages, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull	1901	99/99	$48,200
	24,103,000	1.1				19	80/84	0.935
Fiji	7,055	51	Suva	English, Fijian, Hindustani	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Voreqe "Frank" Bainimarama	1970	96/92	$9,300
	871,000	0.6				29	67/73	0.727
Kiribati	313	54	Tarawa	English, Gilbertese	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Taneti Maamau	1979	NA	$1,800
	116,000	1.1				35	63/68	0.590
Marshall Islands	70	74	Majuro	Marshallese, English	Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs; President Hilda C. Heine	1986	98/98	$3,200
	55,000	1.6				41	71/72	NA
Micronesia	271	22	Palikir	English, Chuukese, Pohnpeian, Yapese, Kosrean, others	Parliamentary democracy; President Peter M. Christian	1986	91/88	$3,000
	103,000	-0.5				34	68/72	0.640
Nauru	8	100	Yaren District	Nauruan, English	Presidential-legislative democracy; President Baron Waqa	1968	NA	$14,800
	11,000	0.5				37	63/70	NA
New Zealand	104,515	86	Wellington	English, Maori, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister John Key	1907	99/99	$37,000
	4,698,000	0.8				20	80/83	0.913
Palau	188	87	Melekeok	Palauan, Sonsoralese, English, others	Presidential-legislative democracy and traditional chiefs; President Tommy Remengesau	1994	99/99	$15,500
	19,000	0.4				20	70/76	0.780
Papua New Guinea	178,704	13	Port Moresby	Tok Pisin, English, Hiri Motu, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Peter O'Neill	1975	65/62	$2,700
	8,151,000	1.8				39	61/65	0.505
Samoa	1,075	18	Apia	Samoan, English	Parliamentary democracy and traditional chiefs; Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi	1962	99/99	$5,200
	195,000	0.6				38	73/76	0.702
Solomon Islands	10,954	20	Honiara	Melanesian pidgin, English, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare	1978	89/79	$2,000
	658,000	2.0				39	66/73	0.506
Tonga	289	24	Nuku'alofa	Tongan, English	Constitutional monarchy; King Tupou VI	1970	99/99	$5,200
	103,000	0				37	74/78	0.717
Tuvalu	10	60	Funafuti	Tuvaluan, English	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga	1978	NA	$3,500
	11,000	0.9				33	67/72	NA
Vanuatu	4,707	26	Port-Vila	English, French, Bislama, others	Parliamentary democracy; Prime Minister Charlot Salwai	1980	86/84	$2,600
	284,000	1.9				40	72/75	0.594