

Haiti

KEY FACTS

Official name: République d'Haiti
(Republic of Haiti)

Head of State: President Michel Martelly (from 14 May 2011)

Head of government: Prime Minister Laurent Lamothe (from 1 Mar 2012)

Ruling party: Coalition led by Fwon Lespwa (Front for Hope) (formed 7 June 2006)

Area: 27,750 square km

Population: 10.41 million (2012)*

Capital: Port-au-Prince

Official language: French and Creole

Currency: Gourde (G) = 100 centimes

Exchange rate: G43.35 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

GDP per capita: US\$759 (2012)*

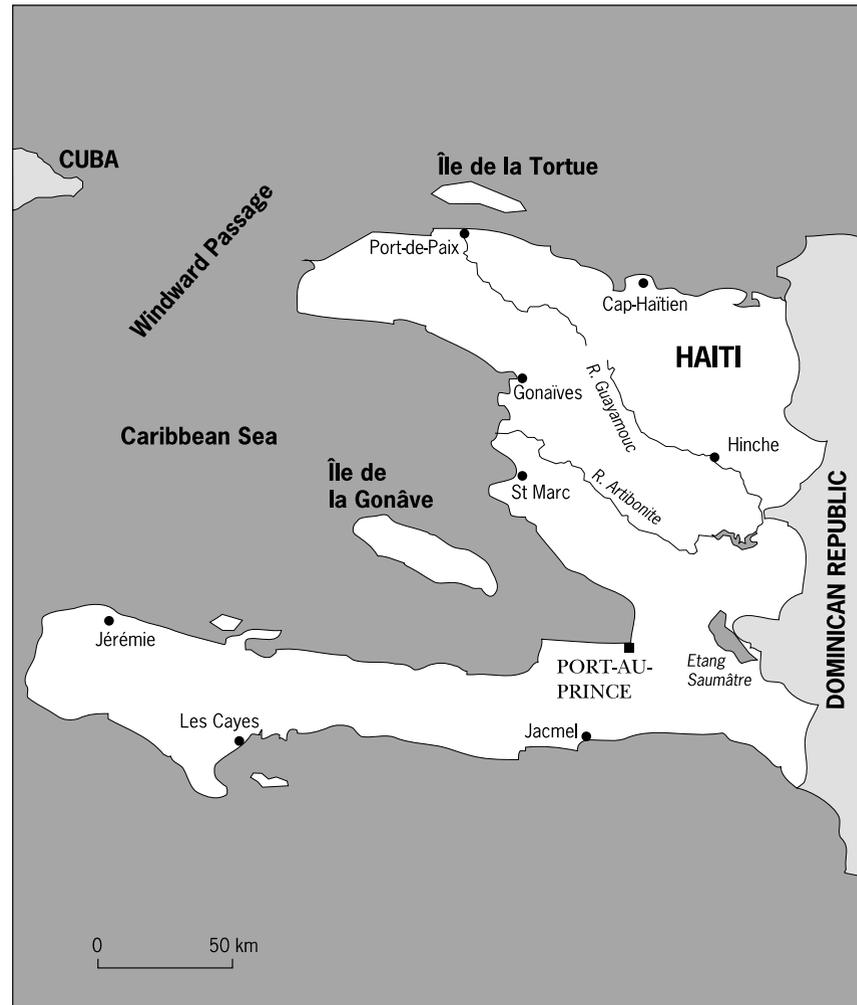
GDP real growth: 2.82% (2012)*

GDP: US\$7.90 billion (2012)*

Inflation: 6.78% (2012)*

Balance of trade: -US\$1.89 billion (2012)*

* estimated figure



In mid-2013 Haiti's President Michel Martelly hinted that the overdue elections might be held before the end of the year. The elections were needed to fill one-third of Haiti's 30-member Senate and dozens of municipal posts. The elections had been supposed to take place in late 2011, but disagreements over election legislation had halted the process. President Martelly has been under mounting international pressure to hold elections. Despite the President's hints, no schedule or budget has been announced for the elections. Meanwhile Haiti's Senate was barely operating with a quorum and one-third of the lower house were due to

finish their terms in early 2014. Any additional election delays could shut down an entire branch of Haiti's government. The President has often crossed swords with the upper and lower houses, where he has few allies. A depleted parliament would, it was thought, allow him to rule by decree.

Aftershock

In 2012 Haiti was still suffering and painfully suffering, from the effects of the earthquake, which struck the impoverished country in January 2010. According to the World Bank, the earthquake significantly worsened poverty, increased the vulnerability of Haiti's entire population

and exacerbated the country's development challenges. Widespread loss of life, destruction and massive economic losses left Haiti facing an unprecedented recovery and reconstruction operation. With over a million people homeless, the bulk of its infrastructure destroyed, the civil service decimated (one in three staff died), government buildings, data and information lost, the earthquake weakened an Haitian administration of already limited capacity. The Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) set damages and losses at US\$7.8 billion and reconstruction needs at almost US\$11.5 billion. At the March 2010 pledging conference, international donors promised US\$5.6 billion in support of the government of Haiti's National Recovery and Development Action Plan (PARDH) for 2010–11. There were calls to 'build back better' and optimistically high expectations of rapid reconstruction. The World Bank and its associate institutions pledged to provide US\$479 million over two years in new funding, disbursements, debt relief and International Finance Corp (IFC) support, of which 87 per cent had been provided by mid-2012.

Duvalier condemned

Perhaps scenting opportunity, Haiti's former dictator Jean Claude Duvalier had returned to Port au Prince in 2011. Instead, he found himself on the sharp end of indictments for financial and human rights crimes dating back to his years in power from 1971 to 1986. In 2012 the verdict was overturned on the grounds that if crimes had been committed, too much time had passed; this was bad news for the victims of his crimes which included torture, disappearances and murder. If Mr Duvalier thought he was in the clear, he hadn't counted on the perseverance of the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay. Ms Pillay criticised the Haitian government's decision and insisted that Haiti's authorities reconsider their decision. She also suggested that Haiti's statute of limitations did not cover human rights crimes committed on the scale seen in Haiti. Judicial rebukes of this sort from the United Nations (UN) are unusual. Sadly, in the case of Haiti the UN's authority was diluted by the view – internationally accepted – that it was UN peacekeepers who unintentionally introduced cholera into a defenceless Haiti in 2010. An estimated 8,000 Haitians died of cholera in the three years following the earthquake. Instead of acknowledging its responsibility, a clearly embarrassed UN

had resorted to legal wriggles and plain silence.

The economy

According to preliminary estimates provided by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Haiti's economy grew by 2.5 per cent in 2012, which was considerably lower than the 7.8 per cent projected in the macro-economic programme at the start of the year and even below the revised estimates from August (4.5 per cent) for the 2013 budget. This result was due in part to the poor performance of the agricultural sector and the delay in reconstruction efforts, partly for political and institutional reasons (the long transition in installing the new administration) and partly because of the slower pace of disbursement of international funds. Haiti was expected to resume a stronger growth path (six per cent) in 2013. The average annual rate of inflation was 6.8 per cent, 0.5 percentage points lower than the 7.3 per cent posted in 2011. The balance of payments current account deficit narrowed from 4.6 per cent of GDP in 2011 to 4 per cent in 2012. This was the result of a 7.4 per cent drop in the value of imports, a slight rise in exports (2.4 per cent) and an increase in remittances (2.6 per cent), even though official transfers declined by 12 per cent.

The most relevant public finance measures taken in 2011–12 include combating fraud and tax evasion, increasing targeted taxes (on tobacco, alcohol and gambling), identifying new taxpayers to expand the fiscal base, enforcing collection of delinquent taxes and tightening

controls on tax and tariff exemptions. Government authorities and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) completed the fourth review under the Extended Credit Facility arrangement in July 2012, enabling an immediate disbursement of US\$7.4 million – the second in the year, following US\$15.1 million in March. The IMF arrangement has charted Haiti's general economic policy course since 2010. Although Haiti's macro-economic performance was generally satisfactory, several indicators of the central government's public finances did not meet their end of fiscal year targets. The fiscal deficit was contained, to a certain extent (1 per cent of GDP, as against a surplus of 2.1 per cent of GDP in 2011, on an accrual basis) by a drop in total government revenues (particularly grants).

Current tax revenue grew by only 1.7 per cent in real terms, owing in part to the 5.7 per cent decline in tariff revenues, although direct tax revenue (income tax) climbed 25.4 per cent and its contribution to total government revenue went up by 5 percentage points in comparison with 2011. Total expenditure increased by 18.6 per cent, of which 74 per cent was current expenditure. Capital expenditure expanded by 66 per cent after plunging 43 per cent in 2011. However, the overall 'under-execution' rate neared 20 per cent and, in the case of public works, hovered around the 50 per cent mark. Transfers and subsidies, particularly those for public works, were down by 20 per cent.

The Banque Nationale de la République d'Haiti's (National Bank of the Republic of Haiti) (central bank) monetary policy continued to be directed towards

KEY INDICATORS

Haiti

	Unit	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Population	m	*9.76	*9.92	*9.86	*10.01	*10.41
Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$bn	6.60	6.60	6.60	7.40	*7.90
GDP per capita	US\$	748	733	673	738	*759
GDP real growth	%	0.8	2.9	-5.4	5.6	*2.8
Inflation	%	14.4	3.4	4.1	7.4	*6.8
Exports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	490.2	551.0	563.4	768.1	*785.0
Imports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	-2,107.8	-2,032.1	2,810.1	3,014.0	*2,679.3
Balance of trade	US\$m	-1,617.6	-1,481.1	-2,246.7	-2,245.9	*-1,894.4
Current account	US\$m	-762.6	-626.6	-1,955.8	-339.0	*-316.0
Total reserves minus gold	US\$m	541.4	788.6	1,335.0	1,388.0	*1,284.5
Foreign exchange	US\$m	534.3	680.4	1,228.8	1,277.7	*1,178.6
Exchange rate	per US\$	39.11	41.20	39.80	40.28	*42.47
* estimated figure						

reactivating the economy, by maintaining the interbank reference rate on its bonds at 3 per cent to encourage lending, particularly in local currency, by gradually removing mandatory local-currency reserve coverage for dollar denominated commercial bank liabilities. At the close of the fiscal year, the monetary base was up by 0.6 per cent and domestic lending had expanded by 4.1 per cent on the strength of the 22 per cent jump in credit to the private sector.

The local-currency loan portfolio showed stronger growth than the portfolio in dollars (up by 34 per cent and 16 per cent respectively), which led to a two percentage-point decline in the dollarisation ratio (from 44.7 per cent to 42.5 per cent). As for exchange-rate policy, central bank interventions through dollar sales amounted to US\$72 million (US\$48 million sold since May) in an effort to contain further nominal depreciation (3.2 per cent) and real depreciation (5 per cent) of the gourde after the stability observed in previous years.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) grew by only 2.5 per cent in 2012 and is forecast to expand by 6 per cent in 2013 thanks to reconstruction efforts and greater institutional stability. The main cause was the lacklustre performance of key sectors such as agriculture, commerce, construction and manufacturing. In the case of agriculture, an unusual drought (starting in November 2011) affected the spring harvest; Tropical Storm Isaac (at the end of August 2012) made the sector even more vulnerable. Estimates put the cost of the damage caused by both events at US\$150 million; the harvest fell 40 per cent short of projections due to drought-related loss of some key crops (such as maize, sorghum, pulses, bananas and tubers).

These disasters, plus the estimated US\$104 million in damage caused by Hurricane Sandy in late October 2012, could create an output shortfall in the coming months. The implications in terms of food security caused alarm among national authorities and international organisations such as the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP).

Industrial output and the construction sector showed a variation of 5.9 per cent and 1.4 per cent, respectively, through the third quarter of the fiscal year. Among the reasons for these results are the delay in approving and executing some investment projects, as well as structural factors (land registers) and an unstable political and institutional environment until May. The

maquila industry (whereby foreign materials and parts are imported duty free and the finished product returned to the original market) slowdown resulted in a 9.6 per cent drop in its export volume and a mere 2 per cent rise in export value. This performance fell short of expectations, owing in part to the slowdown of the United States economy and the delay in setting up a new *maquila* zone in north-eastern Haiti (the Caracol industrial park, opened in October 2012).

Year-on-year inflation to September, at 6.5 per cent, was significantly lower than the 10.4 per cent posted in 2011 despite some upward spikes since July. A moderate rate of 8.3 per cent is expected for the year-end rate, barring significant external food and fuel price shocks. However, these rates are in a setting of sluggish economic activity, low job creation and a 6 per cent drop in the purchasing power of wages.

The smaller current account deficit (4 per cent of GDP as against 4.6 per cent in 2011) was the result of declining import volume and value (down 13 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively). On the external demand side, exports went up by 2 per cent in terms of value and down by 8 per cent in terms of volume. This meant that the terms of trade improved by 4.7 per cent. Remittances (US\$1.591 billion) slackened but still offset the 12 per cent drop in official grants (US\$1.274 billion). Net international reserves stood at US\$1.219 billion at the close of the fiscal year (September 2012), which was an increase of US\$42 million compared with 2011 (US\$1.177 billion) and covered nearly five months of imports. The external debt balance saw a sharp increase of 60 per cent to stand at US\$1.049 billion, owing almost entirely to flows under the PetroCaribe energy co-operation agreement with Venezuela.

Risk assessment

Economy	Fair
Politics	Poor
Regional stability	Good

COUNTRY PROFILE

Historical profile

1492 Christopher Columbus landed and named the island Hispaniola, or 'little Spain'.
 1496 The Spanish established the first European settlement in the Western hemisphere at Santo Domingo, now the capital of the Dominican Republic.
 1697 The island of Hispaniola was divided between France and Spain. The

western half became Haiti (Land of Mountains).

1801 A former black slave, Toussaint Louverture, led a guerrilla rebellion, conquering Haiti, abolishing slavery and proclaiming himself governor general of all Hispaniola. He was captured by the French and died in their custody.

1804 Independence was declared by former slave Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who declared himself emperor. There were various monarchical periods until 1859.

1806 Dessalines was assassinated and Haiti became divided into the black-controlled north and the mulatto-controlled south.

1818–43 Pierre Boyer unified Haiti, but excluded blacks from power.

1915 The US invaded Haiti claiming it was protecting its property and investments threatened by clashes between blacks and mulattos.

1934 The US withdrew its troops.

1956 François 'Papa Doc' Duvalier, a voodoo physician, seized power in a military coup and became president in the following year.

1964 Duvalier declared himself president-for-life and established a dictatorship with the help of the violent Tontons Macoute militias.

1971 Duvalier died and was succeeded by his son, the 19-year-old Jean-Claude 'Baby Doc' Duvalier, who declared himself president-for-life.

1986 Baby Doc fled Haiti amid riots and a multitude of coup attempts. Lieutenant General Henri Namphy assumed power as the head of a governing junta.

1988 Leslie Manigat became president but was overthrown in a coup led by Brigadier General Prosper Avril, who installed a civilian government under military control.

1990 Jean-Bertrand Aristide was elected president.

1991 Aristide was expelled from the country following a military coup headed by Brigadier-General Raoul Cedras. The new junta promised elections at a future date. The US, France and Canada suspended aid to Haiti and refused to recognise the new government.

1992 Marc Louis Bazin served as interim prime minister in 1992–93.

1993 The UN imposed sanctions on Haiti after the military regime rejected an accord designed to facilitate Aristide's return to power.

1994 After US forces removed the military government of General Raoul Cedras, Aristide returned from exile and was reinstated as president. He was not permitted by law to stand for re-election in 1995.

1995 René Préval was elected to replace Aristide.

1997 US troops left Haiti. Prime Minister Rosny Smarh resigned.

Former prime minister, Marc Louis Bazin, who was known as 'Mr Clean' for his attempts to improve the lot of ordinary Haitians during his term as interim prime minister in 1992–93, died in August.

1999 President Préval dissolved the legislature and a Provisional Electoral Council (CEP) was created to organise elections; Jacques Eduard Aléxis was appointed prime minister and a government was sworn in.

2000 The Fanmi Lavalas (FL) (Lavalas Family) party won control of the Senate and President Jean-Bertrand Aristide won the controversial presidential election.

2001 President Aristide appointed Jean-Marie Chéréal as prime minister. Aristide agreed to hold new parliamentary elections in return for the Organisation of American States (OAS) helping Haiti to receive the US\$500 million of suspended aid. There was an unsuccessful coup attempt.

2002 Prime Minister Chéréal resigned amid allegations of corruption and incompetence. Aristide appointed Yvon Neptune as prime minister. Government and opposition factions clashed violently, with attacks by government loyalists on civic groups and armed anti-government gangs.

2004 Opposition rebels, led by Guy Philippe, won control of several towns. President Aristide resigned and left the country; Chief Justice Boniface Alexandre became caretaker president. The UN approved a multi-national security force to restore law and order. Gérard Latortue became prime minister. Hurricane Mitch devastated large areas and left a death toll of around 2,000. UN forces assumed Haiti peacekeeping duties. The US made available US\$9 million to Haiti to assist in election preparations for 2005. Hurricane Jeanne swept through Haiti, killing as many as 1,500 Haitians.

2006 Presidential and legislative elections, postponed since 2005, finally took place and former president René Préval won. Fwon Lespwa (Lespwa) (Front de l'Espoir) won the largest share of votes in parliamentary elections in both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

Jacques-Edouard Alexis became prime minister and formed a six-party coalition cabinet under Lespwa leadership.

2008 Prime Minister Alexis lost support in the Senate following widespread rioting over soaring food prices and the perceived lack of government action to increase national food production. Both houses of parliament accepted President Préval's third nominee, Michèle Pierre-Louis, as prime minister. A series of two tropical storms, Hanna and Fay, and

two hurricanes, Gustav and Ike, collectively killed over 800 Haitians and left more than one million homeless. The hurricanes were estimated to have caused almost US\$1 billion in damage.

2009 Swiss banks agreed to return the frozen assets of former dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier (US\$6 million, sequestered since 1986). An aid package of US\$324 million was agreed by international donors to help Haiti recover from the damage and food shortages caused by the 2008 storm damage. Prime Minister Pierre-Louis lost a vote of no-confidence in parliament and was dismissed; parliament unanimously voted for Jean-Max Bellerive as her replacement.

2010 A massive 7.0 point magnitude earthquake struck on 13 January, centred close to the capital, Port au Prince, causing extensive damage and loss of life. Around three million people were in need of initial aid. There were over 230,000 confirmed deaths and 1.5 million homeless. The government estimated that US\$11.5 billion would be needed to rebuild the country. Following a donor meeting, US\$9.9 billion was pledged in immediate and long-term aid for reconstruction in Haiti. The money was to be provided in three stages with the first focussing on rebuilding infrastructure, government buildings, hospitals and schools. Long-term plans included environmental reconstruction and agricultural recovery and services and help for the maimed. The IMF agreed to cancel Haiti's US\$268 million debt and to lend a further US\$60 million. Election campaigning for parliament and the presidency got underway, despite concern by democracy advocates that the country was too disrupted to undertake free and fair elections.

A cholera outbreak in a refugee camp spread to others in Port au Prince. The number of deaths and infection grew steadily, killing over 2,000 people and infecting a further 90,000 within eight weeks. A cholera awareness campaign was initiated. Local people attacked UN and relief workers accusing them of bringing cholera to Haiti. Aid flights and water purification projects around the country were suspended until order was restored. In the first round of presidential elections held in November no candidate won more than 23 per cent; 12 of the 18 candidates denounced the election results as fraudulent. In the parliamentary elections held at the same time, political parties formed and merged to back individual presidential candidates. The new *Initié* (Unity) won 33 seats (out of 99), *Alternative pour le Progrès* (Altnativ) (Alternative for Progress and Democracy) 14, *Ansanm Nou Fò* nine, *L'Ayiti an Aksyon* (AAA) (Haiti in Action) eight and *Lavni*

Organisation (Lavni) seven. There were reports of voters unable to cast a vote as their names were missing from voter-lists, general mismanagement, with vote stuffing by some officials, and violence in voting stations. However, observers from the OAS declared the elections valid, despite 'serious irregularities' which were not reason enough to cancel the election.

A French epidemiologist concluded that Nepalese troops were the source of the cholera outbreak; the UN continued to deny a link between the arrival of these troops and Haiti's first ever outbreak of cholera. Jude Celestin and Mirlande Manigat were approved to contest the runoff presidential election. The announcement caused violent protests in the capital by supporters of Michel Martelly (known as 'Sweet Micky' in his musical career) who had narrowly missed the runoff.

2011 In January, Jean-Claude 'Baby Doc' Duvalier returned to Haiti from exile in France, 25 years after being overthrown by a popular revolt. The state prosecutors charged him with corruption and embezzlement. A former UN spokeswoman, Michele Montas, and three other Haitians brought a suit of torture against him. Duvalier denied all accusations. In February Jude Celestin (*Initié* (Unity)) withdrew from the second round of the presidential election allowing Michel Martelly to contest the runoff. Officials said that former president Jean-Bertrand Aristide would be given a diplomatic passport, allowing him to return to Haiti. A Swiss bank froze the assets of Jean-Claude Duvalier; he claimed the US\$6 million involved was not his, but belonged to a foundation set up by his family and should be released and used to rebuild Haiti. Aristide returned from exile in South Africa in March.

Parliament approved an extension of President Préval's mandate in office until May, to cover the time necessary to complete the presidential election and the official handover in administration. Mirlande Manigat and Michel Martelly were officially named as the candidates to contest the runoff, which was eventually held on 28 May, after two postponements. Michel Martelly won 67.6 per cent of the vote, Manigat 31.74 per cent. None of the new political parties, *Initié*, *Altnativ*, *AAA* or *Lavni* that had won seats in the new parliament had backed either of the two run-off candidates. President Michel Martelly was sworn into office in May and proposed Daniel-Gerard Rouzier as prime minister. A USAID report was leaked to the media in May, which stated that there had been significantly fewer deaths (46,000–85,000) during the 2010 earthquake and not 361,000 as previously

estimated. However, it also stated that the majority of survivors were still living in tent cities 18 months later. The report used a door-to-door survey carried out over most of January. In June parliament rejected Rouzier's nomination as prime minister. In July, Rouzier was again proposed, and rejected, as prime minister. In September, President Martelly nominated Garry Conille as his third choice for prime minister. In September hundreds of demonstrators were dispersed by security forces while protesting in Port-au-Prince against the UN peace-keeping force, demanding that it be removed. In October and after months of procrastination parliament finally approved Garry Conille as prime minister together with his new cabinet. 2012 Prime Minister Garry Conille resigned on 24 February, following a power struggle and division within the government. A source of conflict was the number of parliamentarians, some in senior positions, who have dual nationality contrary to the constitution. The UN noted that Conille's resignation could hamper Haiti's efforts to achieve foreign investment for redevelopment and a stronger civic society. The president appointed Laurent Lamothe as prime minister-designate on 1 March. On 10 April parliament endorsed Lamothe's appointment. On 20 July, the US Congress called on the UN to take responsibility for the cholera epidemic in Haiti since the arrival of Nepalese UN peacekeepers in 2010 and which was estimated to have killed 7,500 victims. Congress called on the UN to raise money to build a water and sewage system to combat the disease. On 18 September, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) granted an initial US\$50 million to the second phase of the Caracol Industrial Park (CIP), a major job-creation project. By 2018 the IDB expects to invest up to US\$180 million in the CIP, providing employment for up to 40,000 workers. On 11 October, the IDB gave a grant of US\$53 million to upgrade RN1, between Gonaïves and Ennery, part of the principal highway between the capital and Cap-Haïtien. Although the death toll from Hurricane Sandy, which hit on 27 October, was 54, the damage to already makeshift homes and agricultural production was extensive. Over 70 per cent of the total crop output (of maize, plantains and bananas) was destroyed in the south of Haiti and caused an immediate rise in food prices. On 5 November, the government again called for international emergency aid to help it deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy. On 12 December, the UN launched a US\$2 billion fund to fight the cholera epidemic, which is currently the world's worst outbreak and in a country with no innate immunity.

2013 On 10 October a lawsuit against the UN was filed in New York on behalf of victims of the cholera epidemic. The UN had rejected claims for compensation and said that it is immune from prosecution.

Political structure

Constitution

Under the 1987 constitution, executive power is held by an elected president, serving a five-year term, and a cabinet of ministers.

Independence date

1 January 1804

Form of state

Republic

The executive

The president is elected for a five-year term by universal suffrage. A president may be elected for a maximum of two, non-continuous terms. The prime minister is appointed by the president whose decision is ratified by the senate.

National legislature

The bicameral Assemblée Nationale (National Assembly) consists of the *Chambre des Députés* (House of Representatives) (lower house) with 99 members elected every four years in single-seat constituencies, and a 30-member *Sénat* (Senate) (upper house), elected for six years (one-third renewed every two years) in single-seat constituencies.

Legal system

Haiti's judicial system is based on the French Napoleonic Code. Judges are appointed by the president. The supreme court is the *Court de Cassation*, which may make rulings on constitutional matters. There is a court of appeal and civil courts in the major administrative centres.

Last elections

28 November 2010 (parliamentary and senate (10 seats), presidential, first round); 20 March 2011 (presidential runoff),

Results: Parliamentary: political parties formed and merged to back individual presidential candidates.

Chamber of Deputies: *Inité* (Unity) won 33 seats (out of 99), *Alternative pour le Progrès* (Altnativ) (Alternative for Progress and Democracy) 14, *Ansanm Nou* *Fò* nine, *L'Ayiti an Aksyon* (AAA) (Haiti in Action) eight, *Lavni Organisation* (Lavni) seven; 11 other political parties and two independent candidates shared the remaining 37 seats and none won more than four seats. Senate (10 seats in contention): *Altnativ* won three seats, *Inity* three, *Lavni* one (other seats unknown). Presidential: Second round: Martelly won 67.57 per cent of the vote, Manigat 31.74 per cent.

Next elections

2015 (Chamber of Deputies and presidential); 2013 (senate 10 seats)

Political parties

Ruling party

Coalition led by Fwon Lespwa (Front for Hope) (formed 7 June 2006)

Population

10.41 million (2012)*

An estimated 40 per cent of the total population is under 15 years. Life expectancy is 52 years.

Haiti is the poorest country in the western hemisphere. In 2002, it was estimated that 23 per cent of children under the age of five suffered from chronic malnutrition with a 30 per cent increase in cases of severe malnutrition in some areas.

Last census: January 2003: 8,373,750

Population density: 283 inhabitants per square km. Urban population 52 per cent (2010 Unicef).

Annual growth rate: 1.7 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

Ethnic make-up

Approximately 95 per cent are Afro-Caribbean; the remainder are white or of mixed race.

Religions

Roman Catholic (80 per cent), Protestant (16 per cent). Around half the population also practices voodoo, an African-derived belief.

Education

Only 20 per cent of the population complete primary schooling which is theoretically compulsory and the pass rate for secondary school exams is 7–8 per cent. Secondary education is provided by the state and *lycées* (private secondary schools). There are also vocational training and domestic science establishments. There is a state-run university and an administration and management institute (which offers courses in medical subjects, agricultural and veterinary sciences, law, economics and ethnology) and an Institute of Administration and Management.

Literacy rate: 52 per cent adult rate; 66 per cent youth rate (15–24) (Unesco 2005).

Compulsory years: 6 to 15.

Enrolment rate: 64 per cent total primary school enrolment of the relevant age group (including repetition rates) (World Bank).

Pupils per teacher: 35 in primary schools.

Health

According to the UN's food aid agency, in 2006, over 50 per cent of women suffer from anaemia, most of which is often caused by insufficient iron in their generally poor diet, plus worm infestation and malaria. The percentage of pregnant women suffering from anaemia is even higher at two out of three and is the

leading cause of spontaneous miscarriage and infant mortality during delivery.

An outbreak of cholera in refugee camps had, by December 2010, killed over 2,000 people and infected a further 90,000. A cholera awareness campaign was initiated, urging everyone to boil food and water, avoid raw vegetables and wash their hands regularly with soap. By January 2012, around 7,000 people were reported to have died of the disease.

HIV/Aids

HIV/Aids has become a leading cause of death, and urban infection rates are over twice the number of rural population infection rates.

For the first time, in June 2004, a joint mission was undertaken by the UN and UNAids, who have sent teams into the field with peacekeepers, in an attempt to limit HIV in a conflict zone. This initiative is designed to pre-empt the spread of the disease before the main contingent of peacekeepers arrive. There are fears that as 1 in 20 Haitians are HIV positive and with the arrival of a peacekeeping force with an almost inevitable sex-industry that will develop, Haiti could become a flashpoint of transmission. UNAids provides condoms, education and testing services to the peacekeepers.

HIV prevalence: 5.6 per cent aged 15–49 in 2003 (World Bank).

Life expectancy: 55 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate:

3.3 births per woman, 2010 (Unicef)

Birth rate/Death rate: 34 births per 1,000 population; 13.4 deaths per 1,000 population (2003).

Child (under 5 years) mortality rate (per 1,000): 76 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2012)

Welfare

Since 80 per cent of Haiti's population live below the poverty line and its social and economic indicators remain far lower than the average for Latin America and the Caribbean, the country is not eligible for the IMF's Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief initiative.

In the public sector, still only 20 per cent of resources go to rural areas, where approximately two-thirds of the people live. Poor welfare provision is one factor which causes migration both from the countryside to the capital and out of the country. As many as 330,000 Haitians are thought to be living in the US.

Incidences of crime and violence are very high in Haiti. The strengthening of the Haitian police force with improvements in the penal system is likely to improve the situation. The government will need to spread the cost of maintaining social welfare services including those on

education, health, water, sanitation and family planning with private sectors.

Main cities

Port-au-Prince (capital, estimated population 807,301 in 2012), Carrefour (541,511), Delmas (425,509), Gonaïves (154,140), Pétionville (142,999), Cap Haïtien (132,772).

Languages spoken

Official language/s

French and Creole

Media

Freedom of the press was a casualty of political instability, nevertheless, as the situation improved self-censorship has remained as journalists avoided reporting on politicians and commercial sponsors.

Press

Dailies: In French, private newspapers include *Le Nouvelliste* (www.lenouvelliste.com) and *Le Matin* (www.lematinhaiti.com).

Weeklies: In French, *Haiti Progrès* (www.haiti-progres.com) has online editions in English and Creole. In English *Haitian Times* (www.haitiantimes.com).

Business: In French, *Haiti en Marche* (www.haitienmarche.com) is a weekly newspaper.

Broadcasting

The Conseil National des Télécommunications

(www.conatel.gouv.ht) is responsible for broadcasting regulations. The national, public broadcaster is Radio Télévision Nationale d'Haïti (RTNH).

Radio: With a low literacy rate radio is the principal medium for news and information. There are over 250 radio stations in operation in both private and public service. The government-owned Radio Nationale d'Haïti

(www.radionationalehaiti.net) broadcasts in French. Private, independent radio stations include Radyo Atlantik (www.atlantikhaiti.com), Radio Metropole Haïti (www.metropolehaiti.com) and Signal FM (www.signalfmhaiti.com).

Television: Télévision Nationale D'Haïti (www.tnh.ht) has a tie-in with the pay-to-view Jump-TV, the international TV cable and satellite service. Private, commercial TV stations include Télé-Haïti (www.telehaitionline.com), which is a cable station relaying captured satellite signals on four channels, Tele Quisqueya Saint-Marc (TQ) (www.haitipal.com/tq) and PVS Antenne.

National news agency: Agence Haïtienne de Presse

Other news agencies: Caribbean Net News: www.caribbeanetnews.com

Haiti Press Network (in French): www.haitipressnetwork.com

Economy

Before the devastating earthquake that struck close to the capital, Port au Prince, in 2010, Haiti was deemed the poorest country in the western hemisphere. After the massive 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck, the country lost vital infrastructure including parliament and government buildings, roads, bridges, the presidential palace and homes for around 1.5 million people, its prospects fell further. In the aftermath of the destruction that killed around 230,000 people and injured a further 311,000, international aid amounting to US\$9.9 billion was pledged in short and long-term aid for reconstruction of Haiti. The money was to be provided in three stages, with the first focussing on rebuilding infrastructure, government buildings, hospitals and schools. Long-term plans included environmental reconstruction and agricultural recovery and services and help for the maimed.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Eclac), estimated that 15 per cent of the population were made homeless and the total damage caused by the earthquake was around US\$7.8 billion, equivalent to over 120 per cent of 2009 GDP.

In July 2010 the IMF announced it had agreed to cancel Haiti's US\$268 million debt and would lend a further US\$60 million.

GDP growth, which had been 2.9 per cent in 2009, dropped to -5.4 per cent in 2010 as supply and production were disrupted. However, as reconstruction got underway GDP growth reached an estimated 5.6 per cent in 2011. High unemployment has been a long-term problem, with a typical rate of 65 per cent. With the destruction of so many businesses, unemployment has inevitably grown.

Haiti's public sector was in disarray and the country's infrastructure network badly fragmented and in need of significant investment even before the earthquake, so that the work to be undertaken will provide the opportunity to provide a better environment for the population and economic growth. The Inter-American Development Bank and the Water and Sanitation Spanish Co-operation Fund provided an initial US\$35 million to repair reservoirs and pumping stations and refurbish and expand Port au Prince's drinking water and sanitation system, as well as construct water projects in rural communities.

In 2011, the UN Human Development Index (HDI) ranked Haiti 158 (out of 187) for national development in health, education and income. Since 2005, Haiti's progress has grown but has not matched the improvement of other countries in

Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2010, 53 per cent of the population experienced at least one indicator of poverty, while the headcount poverty rate was 56.4 per cent of the population (2000–10). Migrant workers provided US\$1.5 billion in remittances in 2010 (11.7 per cent of GDP), which was estimated to have reached US\$1.6 billion in 2011.

External trade

Although Haiti is member of the Caribbean Community (Caricom), it did not adopt the single market and economy (CSME), which was ratified by 12 other member states in 2006.

The main Haitian port and secondary port facilities along the coast from Port-au-Prince were damaged in the January 2010 earthquake. Two piers in the capital's port collapsed and containers fell into the harbour. Imports and exports by sea will be hampered until work to clear-up and re-construct the damaged facilities are completed. Likewise, roads and bridges were damaged along with business premises and electrical installations, all of which need repair or replacement before Haiti returns to pre-earthquake productivity.

In May 2010 the US extended its conditions for favourable trade preferences for Haiti, giving it greater access to US markets and prolonging the current duty-free access.

Imports

Main imports are foodstuffs, manufactured goods, machinery and transport equipment, fuels and raw materials.

Post-earthquake imports include construction materials, communications equipment and primary products, such as food and fuels.

Main sources: Dominican Republic (31.9 per cent of total in 2011), US (25.3 per cent), Netherlands Antilles (8.7 per cent).

Exports

Main exports are clothing, mangoes, manufactured goods, leather and raw hides, seafood and cocoa.

Main destinations: US (83.3 per cent of total in 2011), Canada (3.1 per cent), Dominican Republic (2.3 per cent).

Agriculture

Before the 2010 earthquake, agriculture accounted for around 27 per cent of GDP and employs two-thirds of the working population. The main cash crops are coffee, sisal and sugar.

An estimated 47 per cent of the total land area is cultivated and 20 per cent is pasture. Subsistence farming and animal husbandry predominate. Only 10 per cent of cultivation is carried out on large plantations. Maize, rice, sorghum, millet, beans,

fruit and vegetables are grown. Production is largely outside the cash economy. Recurrent drought, insufficient irrigation, low producer prices and a weak infrastructure have kept production levels down and necessitated the import of foodstuffs, particularly cereals.

The total annual fish catch is typically around 5,000 tonnes, three-quarters of which is through marine fishing. Around 10 per cent is exported.

Forests cover around 88,000 hectares (ha) or 1 per cent of the total land area. This compares to around 40 per cent of land area in 1940. Deforestation is causing serious soil erosion and desertification. The rapid decline of the forests is partly due to the demand for fuel wood. There are no large-scale forest industries. The local demand for industrial wood and paper products is mainly met by imports.

Industry and manufacturing

Industry accounted for around 16 per cent of GDP in 2004 and employed 10 per cent of the workforce. It is concentrated in Port-au-Prince.

Besides the traditional food processing, construction and textile industries, there is an important artisan manufacturing sector producing handicrafts, such as baskets, leather goods, brushes, and rugs. Manufacturing operations are concentrated in electronic and electrical equipment, sporting goods, toys and garments. Haiti is the world's leading producer of baseballs and one of the Caribbean's largest suppliers of garments and electronic components to the US market. There is very little production for local consumption.

Manufacturing output in Haiti continues to suffer in an uncertain political and business climate and international pressures for massive internal structural reforms.

Tourism

With a reputation as the Caribbean and Latin America's poorest nation, plus endemic street violence and political instability, Haiti was not a destination many tourists chose. Following the devastating earthquake in 2010 tourism along with the rest of economy had not fully recovered by the end of 2011, with infrastructure damaged and around 600,000 Haitians still living in tents and other temporary structures, leaving little available for visitors. Many Western governments advise their citizens not to visit the most badly affected areas of Port-au-Prince and other larger towns.

By September 2011 reconstruction of the popular coastal tourist town of Jacmel was showing sufficient progress for the US-based Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) to agree to organise the US\$1 million necessary to support, rebuild and

safeguard the cultural heritage of Jacmel and its annual carnival.

Mining

The mining and export of bauxite ceased in 1983 with the closure of Reynolds mine at Miragoane. There are known, but not commercially viable, deposits of copper, silver, gold, marble, lignite and natural asphalt.

Hydrocarbons

Haiti relies on imported petroleum products to meet domestic demand, which was over 12,000 barrels per day in 2007.

Most of this is supplied by Mexico and Venezuela, which sell oil to 11 Caribbean and Central American countries on favourable terms under the San José Pact of 1980.

Any use of import natural gas or coal is commercially insignificant.

Energy

Total installed generating capacity is over 220MW, of which over two-thirds is produced by thermal power stations and the remainder by hydropower, although dry seasons can limit production. The electricity supply is restricted to main towns as the country lacks a national power grid.

Power cuts are experienced on a regular basis, as the purchase of imported petroleum is restricted by foreign-exchange shortages. Local wood provides three-quarters of total domestic energy and is a major cause of deforestation and soil erosion.

Financial markets

Stock exchange

Haitian Stock Exchange

Banking and insurance

The banking sector is underdeveloped and in disarray. The crowding out of private sector credit has undermined the banks' ability to function as an important part of the economy. Few people have bank accounts and the large informal sector and black market tends to keep the savings ratio and therefore banks' capital at low levels.

Central bank

Banque Nationale de la République d'Haiti

Main financial centre

Port-au-Prince

Time

GMT minus five hours.

Geography

Haiti occupies the western part of the Caribbean island of Hispaniola (the Dominican Republic occupies the remaining two-thirds), and some smaller offshore islands. Cuba is to the west and is less than 80km away.

Much of Haiti's land area is covered by mountains, which rise up to about 3,000 metres. Environmental damage caused primarily by population pressure has reduced the area of forests to about 6–8 per cent of land area. A number of rivers flow vigorously during the rainy season only, and there are large lakes in the centre of the country close to the border with the Dominican Republic.

Hemisphere

Northern

Climate

Year-round temperatures in Port-au-Prince varies only slightly from 24–27 degrees Celsius (C). The rainy season is from May–November. The climate is tropical, with the rainy seasons in October–November and May–June. May is the wettest month (231mm average rainfall) and December to February the driest and coldest. Temperatures vary from around 22 degrees C on the coast in January to 34 degrees C in July.

Dress codes

Jackets (tropical weight) and ties are normally worn for business. Swimwear is only worn at beaches and pools. Dresses of at least knee-length are recommended for women.

Entry requirements

Passports

Passports are required by all and must have at least six months validity beyond the date of departure. Proof of return/onward passage is required.

Visa

Required by all. Business and tourist visas are not required by citizens of North America or Argentina.

Business visitors from other destinations should supply a letter of introduction from their company and proof of sufficient funds for length of stay. For further information contact the nearest embassy.

Currency advice/regulations

There are no restrictions on the import or export of foreign or local currency. Nevertheless, amounts over G200,000 should be declared.

Travellers cheques are widely accepted, however it is difficult in banks, hotels and shops to exchange foreign currency other than US dollars.

Health (for visitors)

The rate of HIV/Aids is high and precautions should always be taken.

Mandatory precautions

Yellow fever vaccination is required if arriving from an infected area.

Anti-malaria precautions are essential.

Tap water is not safe to drink, and therefore ice, salads, raw vegetables and unpeeled fruits are suspect.

Advisable precautions

Inoculations against typhoid, polio and tetanus are recommended. Malaria prophylaxis and a mosquito net may be necessary. There is a very high prevalence of HIV/Aids. Use only bottled or boiled water for drinks, washing teeth and be wary of ice in restaurants. Eat only well cooked meals, preferably served hot; vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled. Medical facilities are very limited and offer a poor standard of care. Adequate supplies of essential medicines should be carried by visitors, with their prescription details. Local emergency services are inadequate, so full travel insurance, which includes emergency medical evacuation, should be obtained.

Hotels

There is not a good range of accommodation, the best hotels are in the capital and in tourist resorts. Hotels are fully booked during Carnival. There is a government tax of 10 per cent and hotels add a 5 per cent service charge to bills.

Credit cards

Major credit cards are accepted.

Public holidays (national)

Fixed dates

1 Jan (Independence Day), 2 Jan (Ancestors' Day), 14 Apr (Pan American Day), 1 May (Labour Day), 18 May (Flag and University Day), 15 Aug (Assumption Day), 17 Oct (Dessalines Day), 24 Oct (United Nations Day), 1 Nov (All Saints' Day), 2 Nov (All Souls' Day), 18 Nov (Vertières Battle Day), 25 Dec (Christmas Day).

Variable dates

Carnival (two days, Feb), Ash Wednesday, Good Friday (Mar/Apr), Ascension Day, Corpus Christi (May/Jun).

Working hours

Banking

Mon–Fri: 0900–1300, 1500–1700; Sat: 0900–1300.

Business

Mon–Fri: 0800–1600. (Visits are best arranged between November–March).

Government

Mon–Fri: 0800–1400.

Telecommunications

Mobile/cell phones

There is a 850 GSM service in operation.

Electricity supply

110–220V AC

Weights and measures

Officially the metric system is in force but many US measures are also used.

Social customs/useful tips

Careful observance of polite formalities such as handshaking, direct eye contact, formal use of titles such as Monsieur, etc, is essential, and offence may be taken if

they are not observed. All officials should be treated with careful respect.

Security

Crime is widespread and often violent. The kidnapping of foreign nationals for ransom money is increasingly common. Random shootings, during robbery, has become more common, and pickpockets are numerous. Do not leave property in vehicles and always travel with doors locked and windows up. Armed hold-ups of vehicles take place, even in daylight, in busy parts of Port-au-Prince. Some areas of Port-au-Prince should be avoided at all times. Whenever possible avoid going out after dark. Whenever possible leave documents in a safety deposit box.

Getting there

Air

National airline: Haiti Trans Air offers limited flights to the US.

International airport/s: Port-au-Prince International Airport (PAP), 10km from city; duty-free shop, bar, bank, car hire. Cap-Haitien (CAP), 10km from the city.

Airport tax: Departure tax US\$30 and security charge G10, excluding transit passengers.

Surface

Road: Access is possible from Dominican Republic, although sometimes, bureaucratic delays can occur.

Main port/s: Port-au-Prince, Cap Haitien, Gonaives.

Getting about

National transport

Air: Caribintair flies to Cap Haitien. Other towns can be reached from Port-au-Prince by charter flights.

Road: The total road network is around 4,000km, although not all passable/practicable in wet weather. There are surfaced roads from Port-au-Prince to Cap Haitien, Jacmel and Les Cayes.

Camionettes (large, out-of-town taxis) are available.

Buses: Unscheduled services operate from Port-au-Prince to Les Cayes, Jacmel, Jérémie, Hinche, Port de Paix and Cap Haitien.

City transport

Taxis: *Publiques* (shared taxis) can be identified by red ribbon in the window and registration number beginning 'P'. Tipping is not usual.

Car hire

Cars can be hired in Port-au-Prince and Petionville, at the airport and from hotels. International licence is required. Petrol is hard to find outside cities. Hire cars have registration numbers beginning with 'L'.

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

The addresses listed below are a selection only. While World of Information makes every endeavour to check these addresses, we cannot guarantee that changes have not been made, especially to telephone numbers and area codes. We would welcome any corrections.

Telephone area codes

The international direct dialling code (IDD) for Haiti is +509, followed by subscriber's number.

Chambers of Commerce

Haiti Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Boulevard Harry Truman, PO Box 982, Port-au-Prince (tel: 222-8661; fax: 222-0281; e-mail: ccih@acn2.net).

Banking

Banque Commerciale d'Haiti, Champ de Mars, Port-au-Prince.

Central bank

Banque de la République d'Haiti, Rues des Miracles et du Magasin de l'Etat et, PO Box 1570, Port-au-Prince (tel: 299-1200; fax: 299-1045; e-mail: webmaster@brh.net).

Stock exchange

Haitian Stock Exchange,
www.haitianstockexchange.com

Travel information

Air Haiti, 35 ave Marie-Jeanne, Port-au-Prince.

Association Hotelière et Touristique d'Haiti, Hotel Montana, rue F. Cardozo, route de Pétienville, BP 2562, Port-au-Prince.

National tourist organisation offices

Office National du Tourisme d'Haiti, Avenue Marie Jeanne, Port-au-Prince (tel: 223-5631).

Ministries

Ministry of Economy and Finance, Palais des Ministères, Port-au-Prince.

Ministry of Information and Co-ordination, 300 Route de Delmas, Port-au-Prince.

Other useful addresses

Association des Industries d'Haiti (ADIH), Delmas 31 et 33, Etase Galeria 128, BP 2568, Port-au-Prince.

Association des Producteurs Agricoles (APA), c/o Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie d'Haiti, blvd Harry S. Truman, Cite de l'Exposition, Port-au-Prince.

Centre de Promotion des Investissements et des Exportations Haitiennes (Prominex), Angle rue Lamarre et ave John Brown, Port-au-Prince.

Haitian Embassy (USA), 2311 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington DC 20008 (tel: (+1-202) 332-4090; fax: (+1-202) 745-7215; e-mail: embassy@haiti.org).

Haitian International Business Center, 444 Brickell Avenue, Brickell Suite 650, Miami, Florida 33131, USA (tel: (+1-305) 374-8300).

National news agency: Agence Haitienne de Presse

6 Rue Fernand, Port-au-Prince (tel: 245-7222; fax: 245-5836; internet: www.ahphaiti.org).

Other news agencies: Caribbean Net News: www.caribbeannetnews.com

Haiti Press Network (in French):
www.haitipressnetwork.com

Internet sites

Embassy of Haiti: www.haiti.org

Haiti Business Directory:
www.ascnet.net/haiti/directory.htm

Haiti website (in French):
www.haitiwebs.com/

Latin America Network Information Center: www.lanic.utexas.edu