

## KEY FACTS

**Official name:** República Democrática de São Tomé e Príncipe (Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe)

**Head of State:** President Manuel Pinto da Costa (from 3 Sep 2011)

**Head of government:** Prime Minister Arcanjo Ferreira Dacosta (from 12 Dec 2012)

**Ruling party:** Coalition led by Acção Democrática Independente (ADI) (Independent Democratic Action) (from Aug 2010)

**Area:** 964 square km

**Population:** 172,000 (2012)\*

**Capital:** São Tomé

**Official language:** Portuguese

**Currency:** Dobra (Db) = 100 centavos

**Exchange rate:** Db17,914.00 per US\$ (Jul 2013)

**GDP per capita:** US\$1,535 (2012)\*

**GDP real growth:** 4.00% (2012)\*

**GDP:** US\$264.00 million (2012)\*

**Unemployment:** 14.23% (2012)\*

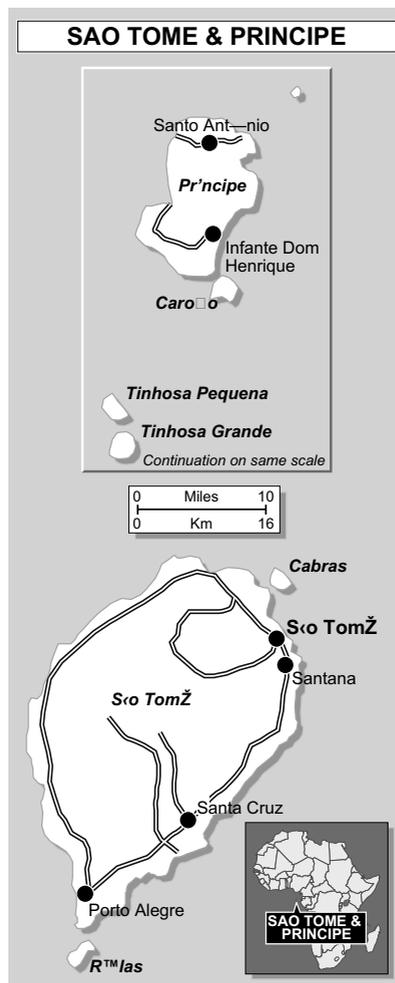
**Inflation:** 10.64% (2012)\*

**Balance of trade:** -US\$103.70 million (2011)\*

**Annual FDI:** US\$35.00 million (2011)

\* estimated figure

# São Tomé and Príncipe



sectors, reported the *African Economic Outlook 2013* (AEO). In 2012 the government reported a slight decrease in the growth rate to 4.0 per cent, the result of a reduction in foreign direct investment (FDI) and private and public consumption. Real GDP growth is projected to be 5.2 per cent and 5.8 per cent in 2013 and 2014, respectively, thanks to an increase in FDI, the oil signature bonus and the inception of the country's major infrastructure projects, notably the deep-water seaport.

## Oil on its way

São Tomé and Príncipe has established a joint authority with Nigeria to manage offshore oil exploration and development in the oil-rich Gulf of Guinea. Under the accord, Nigeria will receive 60 per cent of revenues and São Tomé and Príncipe 40 per cent. Preliminary indications suggest that there may be substantial commercial reserves of oil in the area. Production is expected to begin in 2016.

On the fiscal front, the emphasis has been on consolidation. As a result, the budget deficit was estimated to have fallen to a single digit of 9.4 per cent of GDP at the end of 2012, from 11.9 per cent in 2011. The strong performance is linked to structural reforms implemented in recent years aimed at improving revenue collection, including the establishment of a credit bureau, and enactment of legislation on natural resource management. Furthermore, the authorities are considering the implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility Framework aimed at tackling in 2013 the recurrent and chronic budget deficit and enhancing public accountability.

To strengthen the financial system and improve its credibility, the Banco Central de São Tomé e Príncipe (central bank) is planning to strengthen banking supervision by providing training to staff on risk management. The measure also includes revision of central bank activities and restructuring of unprofitable banks. In 2013 a new charter of accounts will enter into force which is expected to comply with international financial reporting standards. A sound legal framework for banks with problems is also envisaged for 2014 with a

São Tomé and Príncipe, located on the equator off the coast of West Africa, is Africa's smallest nation in terms of population, with an estimated gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$264 million and GDP per capita of US\$1,535 in 2012. It faces geographic constraints and economic challenges that condition its development prospects. Yet the country has great potential to become a middle-income country, based on its size and GDP per capita, if its resource wealth from oil is efficiently and transparently managed, thus avoiding the resource curse.

## The economy

Growth to date has been driven by the service, transport, construction and retail

view to assisting distressed banks with implementation, among other things, of appropriate monitoring and supervision instruments.

Conscious of the need to move the country away from the high risk of debt distress, with the support of the World Bank and Debt Relief International, in April 2012 the National Assembly approved a new Public Debt Management Law that defines the strategic framework and establishes the responsibilities and governance structure of the Bureau of Public Debt. In line with the sustainable growth objective of the country and to demonstrate further its commitment to improving transparency in the management of funds from its natural resources, the government enacted several laws on natural resources management including a framework for oil resource management, and the creation of a national petroleum agency and a national petroleum council. This effort was reinforced with the re-application of the archipelago to participate in the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the acceptance of the application. The efficient management of oil revenues will therefore be a key challenge with the production of oil expected in 2016.

### Risk assessment

Politics	Poor
Economy	Fair
Regional stability	Poor

### COUNTRY PROFILE

#### Historical profile

1469–72 The islands were first sighted by Portuguese sailors.

1485 The town of São Tomé was founded; Príncipe was not settled until 15 years later. The islands quickly became the largest sugar producing area in the world, using slave labour.

1700–1800 Coffee and cocoa plantations were also set up using slave labour.

1875 Slavery was abolished, only to be replaced by a system of forced labour. The labour force consisted mainly of workers brought by the Portuguese from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde. On several occasions they launched rebellions against their colonial rulers which were brutally suppressed.

1951 The islands became an overseas province of Portugal.

1974 The end of fascist rule in Portugal marked the beginning of independence for its overseas colonies. A transitional government was established.

1975 The Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe gained independence from Portugal. The only legal party, the

Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe (MLSTP) (Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé), made a clean sweep in the general elections and its leader, Manuel Pinto da Costa became the first president. The economy was hard-hit when Portugal withdrew support. Most plantations were quickly nationalised and foreign investors and workers left; the islands developed strong links with Cuba. Under colonial administration there had been little investment in education or healthcare systems for the local population; at independence the literacy rate was 10 per cent and there was only one doctor in the entire country.

1980s A severe drought and a drop in world prices for cocoa crippled the economy. Pinto da Costa began a process of dropping economic ties with the Eastern Bloc in favour of a capitalist, market economy.

1989 Changes within MLSTP began; multi-party democracy was introduced as an objective.

1990 The MLSTP changed its name and adopted MLSTP-PSD (Social Democratic Party) to fight the next election. A multi-party constitution was approved by referendum, allowing direct and free elections for the presidency and legislature.

1991 The ruling MLSTP-PSD lost the country's first election, defeated by the Partido da Convergencia Democrática-Grupo de Reflexão (PCD-GR) (Democratic Convergence Party-Reflection Group). Miguel Trovoada, an independent candidate supported by the PCD-GR, was elected president. The currency was devalued by 40 per cent as part of stringent austerity measures, imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank in exchange for economic assistance.

1994 The MLSTP-PSD won most seats in the National Assembly but fell short of an overall majority.

1995 Príncipe was granted autonomy; the MLSTP-PSD won most seats in its assembly. Strikes by public employees for promised pay rises destabilised the president and government. An abortive coup resulted in the formation of a coalition government which included members of the Ação Democrática Independente (ADI) (Independent Democratic Action), the Coligação Democrática da Oposição (CDO) (Democratic Opposition Coalition) and the Frente Democrática Crista (FDC) (Christian Democratic Front).

1996 Trovoada was re-elected president. Prime Minister Armindo Vaz d'Almeida was removed from office and his position was taken by Raw Wagner da Conceição Bragança Neto (MLSTP-PSD).

1998 Elections to the National Assembly resulted in a victory for the centre-left MLSTP-PSD.

2001 Fradique de Menezes won the presidential election.

2002 National Assembly elections were won by the MLSTP; Gabriel Costa became prime minister. He was dismissed by de Menezes in September and replaced in October by Maria das Neves, the country's first female prime minister.

2002 MLSTP won parliamentary elections; Maria das Neves, the country's first female prime minister replaced Gabriel Costa.

2003 The constitution was revised. A military coup staged by Major Fernando Pereira toppled the government while President de Menezes was out of the country. President de Menezes signed an accord with the coup leaders, which restored democratic rule and included an amnesty for the insurgents. Prime Minister das Neves resigned but was reappointed several days later. Bidding began for

### KEY INDICATORS

### São Tomé and Príncipe

	Unit	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Population	m	0.16	*0.16	*0.17	*0.17	*0.17
Gross domestic product (GDP)	US\$bn	0.17	0.20	0.25	0.26	*0.26
GDP per capita	US\$	1,147	1,209	1,215	1,473	*1,535
GDP real growth	%	9.1	4.0	4.5	4.9	*4.0
Inflation	%	32.0	16.9	13.4	14.3	*10.6
Unemployment	%	15.9	15.5	15.1	14.7	*14.2
Exports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	7.8	9.2	10.9	10.9	12.2
Imports (fob) (goods)	US\$m	92.2	83.8	96.2	115.7	115.1
Balance of trade	US\$m	84.3	-74.6	-85.3	-104.7	-103.0
Current account	US\$m	-93.5	-78.8	-87.6	-57.7	*-70.0
Exchange rate	per US\$	15,450.00	16,208.00	18,499.00	17,435.57	18,893.00

\* estimated figure

offshore oil blocs controlled by São Tomé and Príncipe and Nigeria.

2004 The president and prime minister clashed over control of oil deals. Maria das Neves was dismissed after a series of corruption scandals and Damião Vaz d'Almeida became prime minister.

2005 Maria do Carmo Silveira was nominated prime minister after Vaz d'Almeida's resigned.

2006 MLSTP was defeated in parliamentary elections, by a coalition led by the president's Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe-Partido Social Democrata (MLSTP/PSD) (Movement for the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe/Social Democratic Party). Tomé Vera Cruz became prime minister. Fradique de Menezes was re-elected president.

2008 Prime Minister Tomé Vera Cruz resigned, having failed in parliament to get the 2008 budget passed; Patrice Trovoada (ADI) was appointed as prime minister, but he lost a censure motion (30–23). The president appointed Joaquim Rafael Branco (MLSTP/PSD) as prime minister.

2009 A coup attempt was foiled; 36 of its perpetrators were arrested and a cache of arms were discovered in the home of opposition politician, Arlecio Costa. The requirement that European visitors must have a vaccination certificate for yellow fever was withdrawn, with the hope this would boost tourism. A government agreement was signed with the Spanish Aresa Group to provide a regular ferry service between the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe. Portugal signed a loan agreement with the government, to allow the dobra currency to be anchored to the euro.

2010 Postponed parliamentary elections were won by the Acção Democrática Independente (ADI) (Independent Democratic Action) won 26 seats (out of 55) and the ruling MLSTP-PSD won 21, with a turnout of 88 per cent.

2011 In the first round of presidential elections, held in July, 10 candidates took part but none won the required 50 per cent of the vote for outright victory.

Manuel Pinto da Costa (independent), who had been leader of the MLSTP when São Tomé and Príncipe became independent in 1975 and was the country's first president, won most votes with 35.8 per cent. He duly won the run-off on 7 August with 52.88 per cent of the vote to 47.12 per cent for Evaristo Carvalho (Acção Democrática Independente) (ADI) (Independent Democratic Action), the speaker of parliament.

2012 On 23 September the government announced that the forecast food supply for 2013 had worsened and become

'pessimistic', due to the rise of international food prices. The government also said it could not keep basic commodity prices from rising. At the same time the government encouraged the population to cultivate more of their own food. On 26 November, the ADI had to choose a new leader following the resignation of Evaristo Carvalho. On 28 November parliament overwhelmingly moved a censure motion (29-0) against the government of Prime Minister Trovoada. On 4 December, President Pinto da Costa dismissed Prime Minister Trovoada and his cabinet. Arcanjo Ferreira Dacosta, a consensus builder, was appointed prime minister on 12 December. The assembly's second party MLSTP/PSD had nominated Mr Dacosta after the ADI had refused to put forward a candidate.

2013 President Manuel Pinto da Costa visited Portugal in late-September; on his return he passed through Angola, paying a visit to President José Eduardo dos Santos for discussions of bilateral and international interest.

### Political structure

#### Constitution

The 5 November 1975 constitution was revised in September 1990, following a national referendum, which approved a multi-party constitution, allowing direct and free elections for the presidency and legislature. The constitution was revised again in January 2003.

The island of Príncipe was granted political and administrative autonomy in April 1995.

#### Form of state

Sovereign, unitary and democratic state.

#### The executive

The president is elected for a maximum of two five-year terms of office.

#### National legislature

The unicameral Assembleia Popular Nacional (National People's Assembly) 55 members elected by proportional representation in seven multi-seat constituencies (districts), to serve for four-year terms. There are six district assemblies on São Tomé and a seven-member regional assembly on the island of Príncipe.

#### Legal system

Portuguese legal system. The Supreme Court is appointed by the National Assembly.

#### Last elections

1 August 2010 (parliamentary); 17 July and 7 August 2011 (presidential first round and runoff)

**Results:** Parliamentary: Acção Democrática Independente (ADI) (Independent Democratic Action) won 26 seats (out of 55), Movimento de Libertação de São Tomé e Príncipe-Partido Social Democrata (MLSTP-PSD) (Movement for

the Liberation of São Tomé and Príncipe-Social Democratic Party) won 21, Partido de Convergência Democrática-Grupa de Reflexão (PCD-GR) (Democratic Convergence Party-Reflection Group) won seven, Movimento Democrático das Forças da Mudança-Partido Liberal (MDFM-PL) (Force for Democratic Change Movement-Liberal Party) won one. Turnout was 88 per cent.

Presidential (first round): Manuel Pinto da Costa won (independent) 35.8 per cent of the vote, Evaristo Carvalho (ADI) 21.8 per cent, Maria das Neves (independent) 14 per cent, and Delfim Neves (four-party coalition of PCD-GR, MDFM-PL) 13.9 per cent; six other candidates each won less than 5 per cent. Turnout was 68.4 per cent. Runoff: Costa 52.88 per cent, Carvalho 47.12 per cent; turnout was 74.0 per cent.

#### Next elections

2014 (parliamentary); 2016 (presidential)

### Political parties

#### Ruling party

Coalition led by Acção Democrática Independente (ADI) (Independent Democratic Action) (from Aug 2010)

#### Main opposition party

Movimento Democrático das Forças da Mudança-Partido Liberal (MDFM-PL) (Force for Change Democratic Movement-Liberal Party)

### Population

172,000 (2012)\*

Around 54 per cent of the population live below the national poverty line. About 94 per cent of the total population live on São Tomé; around 8,000 people live on Príncipe.

**Last census:** August 2001: 137,599

**Population density:** 151 inhabitants per square km. Urban population 62 per cent (2010 Unicef).

**Annual growth rate:** 1.8 per cent, 1990–2010 (Unicef).

#### Ethnic make-up

There are five groups among the islands' inhabitants: the Filhos da Terra are the descendants of imported slaves and Europeans (mostly Portuguese); the Angolares are descendants of former castaway slaves from Angola, now primarily fishermen; the Forros are descendants of slaves freed when slavery was abolished in 1875; the Servicais are migrant labourers from Angola, Mozambique and Cape Verde, and the Tongas are their children, born on the islands.

#### Religions

Eighty per cent of the population are Roman Catholic, Evangelical Protestant or Seventh-Day Adventist.

## Education

The literacy rate for the period 1995–2001 was estimated at 63 per cent.

## Health

**Life expectancy:** 59 years, 2004 (WHO 2006)

**Fertility rate/Maternal mortality rate:** 3.7 births per woman, 2010 (Unicef)

**Birth rate/Death rate:** 42 births per 1,000 population; seven deaths per 1,000 population (2003).

**Child (under 5 years) mortality rate (per 1,000):** 53 per 1,000 live births (WHO 2012)

**Head of population per physician:** 0.49 physicians per 1,000 people, 2004 (WHO 2006)

## Main cities

São Tomé (capital, estimated population 67,868 in 2012) Trindade (8,392), Santo Amaro (8,339), Neves (7,548), Santana (7,410), Santo António, on Príncipe, (1,342).

## Languages spoken

Portuguese is spoken by 95 per cent of the population; Lungwa Santomé is the main national dialect and Fôrro and Crioulo are also spoken.

## Official language/s

Portuguese

## Media

### Press

In Portuguese, there are two weekly newspapers, *Diário da República* ([www.cstome.net](http://www.cstome.net)) and the official organ of Ministry of Information *Revolução*. The weekend newspaper and magazine is *Povo* and the sole independent periodical is *O Parvo*.

*Jornal de São Tomé and Príncipe* ([www.jornal.st](http://www.jornal.st)) is an online news outlet, in Portuguese.

### Broadcasting

**Radio:** Radio Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe broadcasts two FM services in Portuguese from Lisbon, Portugal. The French radio station RFI ([www.rfi.fr](http://www.rfi.fr)), from neighbouring Cameroon, can also be picked up along with Voice of America (VOA).

**Television:** The state-run television service is Televisao Saotomense (TVS).

## Economy

Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, with cocoa being the major cash crop, representing around 80 per cent of total commodity exports. Foreign aid, most particularly from Portugal, is also an important factor, along with revenue from oil exploration companies prospecting for oil offshore in São Tomé and Príncipe's territorial waters in the Gulf of Guinea. Nigeria and São Tomé have a contract

whereby joint development will result in 60 per cent of proceeds going to Nigeria and the remainder to São Tomé. Although the dominant crop on São Tomé is cocoa, other export crops include copra, palm kernels, and coffee. Domestically, fishing and a small industrial sector processing local agricultural products and producing a few basic consumer goods provide an inadequate employment environment. However, the islands have potential for tourism, and the government is attempting to improve the undeveloped tourism infrastructure.

GDP growth in 2008 was 9.1 per cent, falling to 4 per cent in 2009 as the global financial crisis forced a decline in foreign investment, before rising modestly by 4.5 per cent in 2010; in 2011 the growth rose by an estimated 4.9 per cent. Inflation, which had been a long-term problem, peaked at 32 per cent in 2008, but in 2009, Portugal signed a loan agreement with the government, to allow the dobra currency to be anchored to the euro and stabilising the exchange rate. The fall in world food and oil prices meant average inflation fell to around 14 per cent in 2011.

Oil production is unlikely to come on-stream before late-2015, when the enormous impact of oil receipts will be managed by an oil revenue management law, with a percentage of the profits channelled into a trust fund for future generations. Revenue from oil is expected to pay debts and provide more government spending, particularly on poverty reduction schemes. There are already some benefits as construction and other activities increase to cater for the industry. On 20 July 2012 the International Monetary Fund agreed to a three-year extended credit facility (ECF) of around US\$3.9 million (with an immediate disbursement of about US\$560,000) to maintain macro-economic stability and accelerate structural reforms geared to the start of oil production in 2015.

In 2011, the UN Human Development Index (HDI) ranked São Tomé e Príncipe 144 (out of 187) for national development in health, education and income. Since 2005, São Tomé e Príncipe's progress has grown above the rate of other countries in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2010, 44.7 per cent of the population experienced at least one indicator of poverty, while the headcount poverty rate was 34.2 per cent of the population (2000–10).

## External trade

São Tomé and Príncipe is a member of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Comesa), and operates

within a free trade zone with 13 of the 19 member states.

It is a mono-exporter with around 80 per cent of all commodity exports being cocoa that is shipped mainly to Europe. New found oil deposits are not expected to be in production until 2010, when it will radically increase foreign earnings.

## Imports

Principal imports are machinery and electrical equipment, food products and petroleum products.

**Main sources:** Portugal (typically 56 per cent of total), Belgium (10 per cent), Japan (9 per cent).

## Exports

Principal exports are cocoa, copra, coffee, palm oil.

**Main destinations:** Japan (typically 77 per cent of total), Belgium (8 per cent), The Netherlands (6 per cent).

## Agriculture

Plantation agriculture forms the basis of the economy, but growth is slowing. Cocoa is the main crop, accounting for around 90 per cent of exports. Cocoa production, once the biggest in the world, has fallen over the years and now totals about 4,000 tonnes a year. The plantations were nationalised after independence to their detriment, but have since been privatised.

The second-largest export crop is coffee; other cash crops are copra, palm kernels, cinnamon, pepper and breadfruit. Priority is being given to the diversification of food crops in an effort to reduce the large food import bill.

Fishing remains small-scale, but is being encouraged for local consumption and possible future export.

## Industry and manufacturing

The industrial sector is limited to small-scale manufacturing concerns such as soap, soft drinks, timber processing, palm oil, bricks and textiles. The development of oil fields in the Gulf of Guinea is likely to increase industrial activity associated with the sector, particularly construction. In 2002, the government announced it was developing a number of export processing zones (EPZs) in order to exploit the country's position as a regional trading platform. These will give incentives to investors, with tax breaks and free movement of goods.

## Tourism

Tourism plays an important role in the economy of the islands, but the infrastructure to provide for visitors' needs is underdeveloped. Almost 30 per cent of the country is rainforest with some unique flora and fauna. There are beach-fronted tourist resorts with individual accommodation units and combined amenities.

Activities on offer are largely centred on water sports such as diving (to see the green sea turtles among other marine creatures), fishing and yachting. Travel and tourism contributed over 12 per cent to GDP (2009–11), and provide employment to over 8 per cent of the workforce (over 8,000 jobs). Direct, international flights arrive six days a week (not Wednesday) into São Tomé, from Portugal. Flights from Angola have a 30 minute duration but only operates once per day and not daily.

### Mining

São Tomé and Príncipe has no mineral resources.

### Hydrocarbons

São Tomé and Príncipe has established a joint authority with Nigeria to manage off-shore oil exploration and development in the oil-rich Gulf of Guinea. Under the accord, Nigeria will receive 60 per cent of revenues and São Tomé and Príncipe 40 per cent. Preliminary indications suggest that there may be substantial commercial reserves of oil in the area. Production is expected to begin in 2016.

In 2013 São Tomé and Príncipe was still dependent on imported refined oil products, which was 1,000 barrels per day in 2007. Oil-derived products supply 96 per cent of commercial energy requirements. The World Bank estimated that oil imports consume 20–25 per cent of total export revenue. Distribution and marketing of fuels is carried out by the state-owned oil company, Empresa Nacional de Combustíveis e Oleos (Enco).

### Energy

Installed electricity generating capacity is around 12MW, of which over 50 per cent is provided by hydro plants and the remainder by diesel generators. The national power grid is only operational in the densely populated area of northeast São Tomé. There is great need to increase capacity, by at least 3MW, just to meet demand; blackouts are frequent. The state-owned monopoly, Empresa Nacional de Água e Electricidade (EMAE) (National Water and Electricity Enterprise) is responsible for generation, transmission and distribution of electricity. But the government is considering privatising the utility in an attempt to find investment and instil commercial principles. EMAE owed Angola US\$5 million for fuel in December 2008.

The World Bank has stated that São Tomé and Príncipe has the potential to increase capacity, estimated up to a potential of 6,000MW, through development of major and minor hydroelectric power plants. However it also questioned São Tomé and Príncipe's ability to service the loan.

### Banking and insurance

#### Central bank

Banco Central de São Tomé e Príncipe

#### Main financial centre

São Tomé.

#### Time

GMT.

#### Geography

The islands of the Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe, are located in the equatorial Atlantic Ocean, about 300–250km off the coast of Gabon, in the Gulf of Guinea. Both islands are remnants of an extinct volcanic mountain range. The tallest mountain is São Tomé Peak (2,024 metres) on the island of São Tomé. Príncipe's mountains have lush forests with swift streams flowing down to the sea. The country also includes the rocky islets of Carçoço, Pedras and Tinhosas, off Príncipe, and Rôlas, off São Tomé.

#### Hemisphere

Northern

#### Climate

Equatorial with high temperatures and humidity. Average temperatures remain fairly constant throughout the year with a daily range from 20–32 degrees Celsius (C). Driest month July, wettest March.

#### Entry requirements

##### Passports

Required by all.

##### Visa

Required by all; apply well in advance. European visitors should contact the São Tomé e Príncipe consulate in Brussels; US visitors should contact the consulate in either New York or Atlanta; visitors from Canada and Australia should contact the Canadian embassy in Libreville in Gabon (See: Other useful addresses, for further information).

##### Currency advice/regulations

There are no restrictions on the import of local or foreign currency. Export is allowed up to the amount declared on entry.

Travellers cheques are not widely accepted. US dollars and euro are easily converted, other currencies may attract higher exchange fees.

#### Health (for visitors)

##### Mandatory precautions

Yellow fever vaccination certificate is required by all, except visitors from Europe (from April 2009).

##### Advisable precautions

Inoculations and boosters should be current for cholera, tetanus, yellow fever, hepatitis A, diphtheria, typhoid and polio. There may be a need for vaccinations for tuberculosis, hepatitis B and meningitis. Use malaria prophylaxis (which will also provide protection against yellow fever,

dengue fever, hepatitis B and encephalitis) including mosquito repellents, sleeping nets and clothing that cover the body after dark. To avoid bilharzia, avoid exposure to fresh water and use only well-maintained, chlorinated swimming pools. There is a risk of rabies.

Use only bottled or boiled water for drinks, washing teeth and making ice. Eat only well cooked meals, preferably served hot; vegetables should be cooked and fruit peeled. Dairy products are unpasteurised and should be avoided, unless cooked. There is a shortage of routine medications, including sun-screens, and visitors should take all necessary medicines with them. A first aid kit that includes disposable syringes, is a reasonable precaution.

Healthcare is not to Western standards and medical insurance, including emergency evacuation, is necessary.

#### Hotels

There is a limited number of reasonable hotels.

#### Public holidays (national)

##### Fixed dates

1 Jan (New Year's Day), 3 Feb (Heroes' Day), 1 May (Labour Day), 12 Jul (Independence Day), 6 Sep (Armed Forces Day), 30 Sep (Agricultural Reform Day), 26 Nov (Argel Accord Day), 21 Dec (São Tomé Day, Catholic), 25 Dec (Christmas Day).

##### Variable dates

Ash Wednesday, Good Friday.

#### Working hours

##### Banking

Mon–Fri: 0730–1130, 1430–1630.

##### Business

Mon–Fri: 0730–1200, 1430–1800.

##### Government

Mon–Fri: 0800–1200, 1500–1800; Sat: 0800–1300.

##### Shops

Mon–Sat: 0800–1200, 1500–1900.

#### Telecommunications

##### Mobile/cell phones

A 900 GSM service is available over most of the islands of São Tomé and Príncipe.

#### Electricity supply

220V AC

#### Weights and measures

Metric

#### Social customs/useful tips

Business is conducted in Portuguese. Many executives speak French, and some speak English.

#### Getting there

##### Air

The national airlines of Portugal (TAP) and Angola (TAAG), fly services to São Tomé.

**National airline:** Air São Tomé e Príncipe (KY), flies to Gabon only.

**International airport/s:** São Tomé (TMS), 5.5km from town. A minibus, taxi and buses provide transport to the centre of town.

**Airport tax:** Departure tax: US\$21 or eur24, in cash.

**Surface**

**Water:** A high-speed ferry service between São Tomé and Cape Verde is planned by the ferry company Expresso LDA with a one-way journey taking five days. The ferry will have 400 berths and a capacity of 800 passengers. Although planning began in 2010, the service was still not operational in July 2011.

**Main port/s:** São Tomé, this is not a deep-water harbour so few international ships visit.

**Getting about**

**National transport**

**Air:** Restricted services link the two islands. Travellers should book their seats well in advance, to avoid being stranded.

**Road:** There are only about 300km of roads, of which about two-thirds are asphalted, but the network is being improved.

**Buses:** Frequent, efficient service on São Tomé. Limited bus service on Príncipe.

**City transport**

**Taxis:** On São Tomé a minivan or *colectivo* shared taxi can be taken to anywhere on the island. There are no fixed schedules and they leave only when they are full; this is no other public transport available.

**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 dialling code (IDD) for São Tomé and Príncipe is +239, followed by subscriber's number.

**Chambers of Commerce**

Camara de Comercio, Industria, Agricultura e Servicios, Avenida Marginal

12 de Julho, PO Box 527, Saõ Tomé (tel: 22-2723; fax: 22-1409; e-mail: ccias@cstome.net).

**Banking**

Banco Comercial do Equador, CP 361, Rua de Moçambique, São Tomé (tel: 22-3829; fax: 22-1989).

Banco Internacional de S Tomé e Príncipe, CP 536, Praça da Independência 3, São Tomé (tel: 22-1445; 22-5821; fax: 22-2427, 22-3462).

**Central bank**

Banco Central de São Tomé e Príncipe, CP 13, Praça da Independencia, São Tomé (tel: 22-1269, 22-1300; fax: 22-501, 22-2777; email: bcentral@cstome.net; internet: www.bcstp.st).

**Travel information**

TAP (Air Portugal), CP 414; Avenida Marginal 12 de Julho, São Tomé (tel: 22-2307, 22-1528).

**National tourist organisation offices**

Tourism Office, CP40, Avenue Marginal, 12 de Julho, São Tomé (tel: 221-542).

**Ministries**

Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Largo das Alfândegas São Tomé; CP 201, São Tomé e Príncipe (tel: 22-4657, 22-4872, 22-4975).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Avenida 12 de Julho, São Tomé (tel: 22-2309; fax: 22-3237; email: popgenger@sctome.net).

Ministry of Planning and Finance, Largo das Alfândegas São Tomé (tel: 22-4172/3; fax: 22-2182; email: fpublica@cstome.net).

Office of the President, Avenida da Independência, São Tomé (tel: 22-1143; fax: 22-1226).

Office of the Prime Minister, Rua do Município, São Tomé (tel: 22-3596, 22-4189; fax: 22-1670).

National Assembly, Palácio dos Congressos, São Tomé (tel: 22-1899, 22-2986; fax: 22-2835).

**Other useful addresses**

Canadian embassy, PO Box 4037 Libreville, Gabon (tel: (+241) 737-354;

fax: 737-388; email: ibrve@dfait-maeci.gc.ca).

Directorate of Finance, Praça da Independência, São Tomé; CP 168, São Tomé and Príncipe (tel: 22-2372, 22-1484; fax: 22-1182; email: financas@cstome.net).

Nigeria-São Tomé and Príncipe Joint Development Authority, Plot 1101 Aminu Kano Crescent, Wuse II, Abuja, Nigeria (tel: (+234-9) 524-1069; fax: (234-9) 524-1052; e-mail: enquiries@nigeriasaotomejda.com; internet: www.nigeriasaotomejda.com).

São Tomé and Príncipe Embassy (USA), 7th Floor, 400 Park Avenue, New York 10044 (tel: (+1-212) 317-0533; fax 317-0580; email: stp1@attglobal.net; internet: www.saotome.org).

São Tomé and Príncipe Consulate (USA), Suite 305, 512 Means Street, Atlanta GA 30318, USA (tel: (+1-404) 221-0203; fax: (+1-404) 221-1006; e-mail: consul@saotome.org; internet: www.saotome.org).

São Tomé and Príncipe Embassy, Square Montgomery, 175 Avenue de Tervuren, 1150 Brussels, Belgium (tel: (+32-2) 734-9966; fax: (+32-2) 734-8815).

STP-Press, c/o Rádio Nacional de São Tomé e Príncipe, Avenida Marginal de 12 de Julho, CP 44, São Tomé (tel: 22-217).

São Tomé and Príncipe Telecom (CST), Av Marginal 12 de Julho, São Tomé; CP 141, São Tomé and Príncipe (tel: 22-2273; internt: www.cst.st).

**Internet sites**

AllAfrica information: <http://allafrica.com/saotomeandprincipe>

National Assembly (in Portuguese): [www.parlamento.st](http://www.parlamento.st)

São Toméand Príncipe tourist site: [www.saotome.st](http://www.saotome.st)

São Tomé and Príncipe website: [www.sao-tome.com](http://www.sao-tome.com)