

# INTRODUCTION

Present day Benin was the site of Dahomey, a West African kingdom that rose to prominence in about 1600 and over the next two and a half centuries became a regional power. French Dahomey achieved independence in 1960 and changed its name to the Republic of Benin in 1975.

# GOVERNMENT

#### Chief of State

President Patrice TALON

Head of Government

President Patrice TALON

# Government Type

presidential republic

# Capital

Porto-Novo (constitutional capital); Cotonou (seat of government)

#### Legislature

unicameral National Assembly (83 seats)

# GEOGRAPHY

#### Area

Total: 112,622 sq km Land: 110,622 sq km Water: 2,000 sq km

#### Climate

tropical; hot, humid in south; semiarid in north

#### **Natural Resources**

small offshore oil deposits, limestone, marble, timber

# BENIN





# ECONOMY

# **Economic Overview**

robust economic growth; slightly declining but still widespread poverty; strong trade relations with Nigeria; cotton exporter; COVID-19 has led to capital outflows and border closures; WAEMU member with currency pegged to the euro; recent fiscal deficit and debt reductions

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$40.3 billion (2020 est.) GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$3,300 (2020 est.) Industries - textiles, food processing, construction materials, cement Agricultural products - cassava, yams, maize, cotton, oil palm fruit,

rice, pineapples, tomatoes, vegetables, soybeans **Exports** \$3.056 billion (2018 est.)

cotton, refined petroleum, gold, cashews, copper (2019) partners: Nigeria 25%, Bangladesh 14%, UAE 14%, India 13%, China 8%, Vietnam 5% (2019)

Imports \$5.458 billion (2019 est.)

rice, cars, palm oil, electricity, cotton (2019)

partners: China 28%, Thailand 9%, India 8%, Togo 6%, US 5% (2019)

# **PEOPLE & SOCIETY**

#### Population

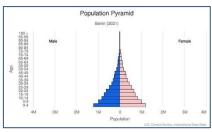
13.3 million (July 2021 est.)

Population Growth

3.36% (2021 est.)

#### Ethnicity

Fon and related 38.4%,



Adja and related 15.1%, Yoruba and related 12%, Bariba and related 9.6%, Fulaini and related 8.6%, Ottamari and related 6.1%, other 10% (2013 est.)

# Language

55 languages; French (official); Fon (a Gbe language) and Yoruba are the most important indigenous languages in the south; half a dozen regionally important languages in the north, including Bariba (once counted as a Gur language) and Fulfulde

# Religion

Muslim 27.7%, Roman Catholic 25.5%, Protestant 13.5%, Vodoun 11.6%, other Christian 9.5%, other traditional religions 2.6%, other 2.6%, none 5.8% (2013 est.)