

SOLOMON ISLANDS



INTRODUCTION

The UK established a protectorate over the Solomon Islands in the 1890s. Self-government came in 1976 and independence in 1978. Ethnic violence, government malfeasance, endemic crime, and other issues undermined stability. From 2003 to 2017, the Australian-led multi-national Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands was generally effective in restoring law and order and rebuilding government institutions.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

Queen ELIZABETH II
Represented by Governor General Sir David VUNAGI

Head of Government

Prime Minister Manasseh SOGAVARE

Government Type

parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy; a Commonwealth realm

Capital

Honiara

Legislature

unicameral National Parliament (50 seats)

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 28,896 sq km
Land: 27,986 sq km
Water: 910 sq km

Climate

tropical monsoon; few temperature and weather extremes

Natural Resources

fish, forests, gold, bauxite, phosphates, lead, zinc, nickel

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

lower middle-income Pacific island economy; natural resource rich; primarily subsistent agriculture and fishing; land rights conflicts; fairly low public debt; underdeveloped financial sector; large, state-owned enterprise presence

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$1.71 billion (2020 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$2,500 (2020 est.)

Industries - fish (tuna), mining, timber

Agricultural products - oil palm fruit, sweet potatoes, coconuts, taro, yams, fruit, pulses nes, vegetables, cocoa, cassava

Exports \$430 million (2020 est.)

lumber, fish, aluminum, palm oil, cocoa beans (2019)

partners: China 65%, Italy 9%, India 6% (2019)

Imports \$560 million (2020 est.)

refined petroleum, fish, insulated wiring, broadcasting equipment, excavation machinery (2019)

partners: China 24%, Australia 13%, South Korea 12%, Singapore 12%, Malaysia 10% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

690,600 (July 2021 est.)

Population Growth

1.75% (2021 est.)

Ethnicity

Melanesian 95.3%,
Polynesian 3.1%, Micronesian 1.2%, other 0.3% (2009 est.)

Language

Melanesian pidgin (in much of the country is lingua franca), English (official but spoken by only 1%-2% of the population), 120 indigenous languages

Religion

Protestant 73.4%, Roman Catholic 19.6%, other Christian 2.9%, other 4%, unspecified 0.1% (2009 est.)

Urbanization

urban population: 25.1% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 3.57% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

