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.)
as of October 2021