SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

INTRODUCTION
Portugal discovered and colonized the uninhabited islands in the late 15th century, setting up a sugar-based economy that gave way to coffee and cocoa in the 19th century. Independence was achieved in 1975, but democratic reforms were not instituted until the late 1980s. The country held its first free elections in 1991.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
President Carlos VILA NOVA
Head of Government
Prime Minister Jorge Bom JESUS
Government Type
semi-presidential republic
Capital
Sao Tome
Legislature
unicameral National Assembly or Assembleia Nacional (55 seats)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 964 sq km
Land: 964 sq km
Water: 0 sq km
Climate
tropical; hot, humid; one rainy season (October to May)
Natural Resources
fish, hydropower

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
lower middle-income Central African island economy; falling cocoa production due to drought and mismanagement; joint oil venture with Nigeria; government owns 90% of land; high debt, partly from fuel subsidies; tourism gutted by COVID-19
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $890 million (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $4,100 (2020 est.)
Industries - light construction, textiles, soap, beer, fish processing, timber
Agricultural products - plantains, oil palm fruit, coconuts, taro, bananas, fruit, cocoa, yams, cassava, maize
Exports $50 million (2020 est.)
gas turbines, cocoa beans, aircraft parts, iron products, chocolate (2019)
partners: Singapore 30%, Switzerland 24%, France 11%, Poland 7%, Belgium 7%, US 5% (2019)
Imports $160 million (2020 est.)
refined petroleum, cars, rice, flavored water, postage stamps (2019)
partners: Portugal 41%, Angola 17%, China 8% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
213,950 (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
1.5% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Mestico, Angolares, Forros, Servicais, Tongas, Europeans (primarily Portuguese), Asians (mostly Chinese)
Language
Portuguese 98.4% (official), Forro 36.2%, Cabo Verdián 8.5%, French 6.8%, Angolar 6.6%, English 4.9%, Lunguie 1%, other 2.4% (2012 est.)
Religion
Catholic 55.7%, Adventist 4.1%, Assembly of God 3.4%, New Apostolic 2.9%, Mana 2.3%, Universal Kingdom of God 2%, Jehovah's Witness 1.2%, other 6.2%, none 21.2%, unspecified 1% (2012 est.)

as of October 2021