INTRODUCTION
British explorers established the colony of Equatoria in 1870, which composed most of what is now South Sudan. When Sudan gained its independence in 1956, it was declared that the southerners would be able to participate fully in the political system. A referendum, held in January 2011, was in favor of secession and South Sudan gained independence on 9 July 2011.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
President Salva Kiir Mayardit
Head of Government
President Salva Kiir Mayardit
Government Type
presidential republic
Capital
Juba
Legislature
bicameral National Legislature consisting of a Council of States (50 seats) and Transitional National Legislative Assembly (400 seats; will be expanded to 550 members after the transitional government forms)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
11 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
5.05% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Dinka (Jieng) 35.8%, Nuer (Naath) 15.6%, Shilluk (Chollo), Azande, Bari, Kakwa, Kuku, Murle, Mandari, Didinga, Ndogo, Bviri, Lndi, Anuak, Bongo, Lango, Dungotona, Acholi, Baka, Fertit (2011 est.)
Language
English (official), Arabic (includes Juba and Sudanese variants), ethnic languages include Dinka, Nuer, Bari, Zande, Shilluk
Religion
Christian 60.5%, folk religion 32.9%, Muslim 6.2%, other <1%, unaffiliated <1% (2020 est.)
Urbanization
urban population: 20.5% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 4.12% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
low-income, oil-based Sahelian economy; extreme poverty and food insecurity; COVID-19 and ongoing violence threaten socioeconomic potential; environmentally fragile; ongoing land and property rights issues; natural resource rich but lacks infrastructure
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $20.01 billion (2017 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $1,600 (2017 est.)
Industries - N/A
Agricultural products - milk, sorghum, vegetables, cassava, goat milk, fruit, beef, sesame seed, sheep milk, mutton
Exports $1.13 billion (2016 est.)
crude petroleum, gold, forage crops, lumber, insect resins (2019)
partners: China 88%, UAE 5% (2019)
Imports $ 3.795 (2016 est.)
cars, delivery trucks, packaged medicines, foodstuffs, clothing, apparel (2019)
partners: UAE 37%, Kenya 18%, China 18% (2019)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 644,329 sq km
Land: 644,329 sq km
Water: 0 sq km
Climate
hot with seasonal rainfall, heaviest in upland areas of the south and diminishes to the north
Natural Resources
hydropower, fertile agricultural land, gold, diamonds, petroleum, hardwoods, limestone, iron ore, copper, chromium ore, zinc, tungsten, mica, silver

as of December 2021