MADAGASCAR

INTRODUCTION
Madagascar was one of the last major habitable landmasses on earth settled by humans. Madagascar was a pirate stronghold during the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The island was conquered by the French in 1896 who made it a colony. Independence was regained in 1960.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
President Andry RAJOELINA
Head of Government
Prime Minister Christian NTSAY
Government Type
semi-presidential republic
Capital
Antananarivo
Legislature
bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate or Antenimieran-Doholona (63 seats) and the National Assembly or Antenimierampirenena (151 seats)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
total: 587,041 sq km
land: 581,540 sq km
water: 5,501 sq km
Climate
tropical along coast, temperate inland, arid in south
Natural Resources
graphite, chromite, coal, bauxite, rare earth elements, salt, quartz, tar sands, semiprecious stones, mica, fish, hydropower

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
low-income East African island economy; natural resource rich; extreme poverty; return of political stability has helped growth; sharp tax revenue drop due to COVID-19; leading vanilla producer; environmentally fragile
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $41.82 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $1,500 (2020 est.)
Industries - meat processing, seafood, soap, beer, leather, sugar, textiles, glassware, cement, automobile assembly plant, paper, petroleum, tourism, mining
Agricultural products - rice, sugarcane, cassava, sweet potatoes, milk, vegetables, bananas, mangoes/guavas, tropical fruit, potatoes
Exports $5.272 billion (2019 est.)
vanilla, nickel, gold, clothing and apparel, gemstones (2019)
partners: US 19%, France 18%, UAE 7%, China 6%, Japan 6%, Germany 5%, India 5% (2019)
Imports $5.855 billion (2019 est.)
refined petroleum, rice, cars, packaged medicines, clothing and apparel (2019)
partners: China 24%, France 11%, UAE 9%, India 7%, South Africa 5% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
27.5 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
2.31% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Malayo-Indonesian (Merina and related Betsileo), Cotiers (mixed African, Malayo-Indonesian, and Arab ancestry - Betsimisaraka, Tsimihety, Antaisaka, Sakalava), French, Indian, Creole, Comoran
Language
Malagasy (official) 99.9%, French (official) 23.6%, English 8.2%, other 0.6% (2018 est.)
Religion
Christian, indigenous, Muslim

as of October 2021