LAOS

INTRODUCTION
Modern-day Laos has its roots in the ancient Lao kingdom of Lan Xang. Laos came under the domination of Siam (Thailand) from the late 18th century until the late 19th century, when it became part of French Indochina. In 1975, the communist Pathet Lao took control of the government. A gradual, limited return to private enterprise and the liberalization of foreign investment laws began in 1988.

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
lower middle-income, socialist Southeast Asian economy; one of the fastest growing economies; declining but still high poverty; natural resource rich; new anticorruption efforts; already high and growing public debt; service sector hit hard by COVID-19
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $56.79 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $7,800 (2020 est.)
Industries - mining (copper, tin, gold, gypsum), timber, electric power, agricultural processing, rubber, construction, garments, cement, tourism
Agricultural products - rice, roots/tubers, nes, cassava, sugarcane, vegetables, bananas, maize, watermelons, coffee, taro
Exports $3.654 billion (2017 est.)
electricity, copper, rubber, gold, flavored water (2019)
partners: Thailand 36%, China 28%, Vietnam 16% (2019)
Imports $4.976 billion (2017 est.)
refined petroleum, cars, cattle, iron structures, steel products (2019)
partners: Thailand 53%, China 26%, Vietnam 10% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population 7.57 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth 1.46% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity Lao 53.2%, Khmou 11%, Hmong 9.2%, Phouthay 3.4%, Tai 3.1%, Makong 2.5%, Katong 2.2%, Lue 2%, Akha 1.8%, other 11.6% (2015 est.)
Language Lao (official), French, English, various ethnic languages
Religion Buddhist 64.7%, Christian 1.7%, none 31.4%, other/not stated 2.1% (2015 est.)
Urbanization urban population: 36.9% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 2.99% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

as of October 2021