INTRODUCTION
The original Arawak Indian settlers who arrived on the island from South America in about 1000, were largely enslaved by the Spanish early in the 16th century. Curacao was seized by the Dutch from the Spanish in 1634. Curacao and several other Dutch Caribbean possessions were reorganized as the Netherlands Antilles in 1954. In referenda in 2005 and 2009, the citizens of Curacao voted to become a self-governing country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
King WILLEM-AXELANDER of the Netherlands represented by Governor Lucille A. GEORGE-WOUT
Head of Government
Prime Minister Gilmar PISAS
Government Type
parliamentary democracy
Capital
Willemstad
Legislature
unicameral Parliament of Curacao (21 seats)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 444 sq km
Land: 444 sq km
Water: 0 sq km
Climate
tropical marine climate, ameliorated by northeast trade winds; semiarid in interior
Natural Resources
calcium phosphates, protected harbors, hot springs

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
high-income island economy; developed infrastructure; tourism and financial services-based economy; investing in information technology incentives; oil refineries service Venezuela and China; unique COVID-19 stimulus support applied to government debts rather than household support
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $3.856 billion (2019 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $24,480 (2019 est.)
Industries - tourism, petroleum refining, petroleum transshipment, light manufacturing, financial and business services
Agricultural products - aloe, sorghum, peanuts, vegetables, tropical fruit
Exports $839.7 million (2017 est.)
gold, precious metal scraps, petroleum coke, frozen fish, coal tar oil (2019)
partners: Switzerland 27%, US 17%, Spain 14%, Ecuador 7%, India 7%, Antigua and Barbuda 5% (2019)
Imports $540.3 billion (2017 est.)
refined petroleum, cars, crude petroleum, packaged medicines, perfumes (2019)
partners: US 35%, Netherlands 24%, China 5% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
151,890 (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
0.33% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Curacaan 75.4%, Dutch 6%, Dominican 3.6%, Colombian 3%, other 11.1%, unspecified 0.9% (2011 est.)
Language
Papiamo (official), 80%, Dutch (official) 8.8%, Spanish 5.6%, English (official) 3.1%, other 2.3%, unspecified 0.3% (2011 est.)
Religion
Roman Catholic 72.8%, Pentecostal 6.6%, Protestant 3.2%, Adventist 3%, Jehovah's Witness 2%, Evangelical 1.9%, other 3.8%, none 6%, unspecified 0.6% (2011 est.)
as of October 2021