ERITREA

INTRODUCTION
After independence from Italian control and then UK oversight, the UN established Eritrea as an autonomous region within the Ethiopian federation in 1952. Ethiopian annexation sparked a 30-year struggle for independence that ended in 1991. Eritreans overwhelmingly approved independence in a 1993 referendum.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
President ISAIAS Afwerki
Head of Government
President ISAIAS Afwerki
Government Type
presidential republic
Capital
Asmara
Legislature
unicameral National Assembly (Hagerawi Baito) (150 seats)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 117,600 sq km
Land: 101,000 sq km
Water: 16,600 sq km
Climate
hot, dry desert strip along Red Sea coast; cooler and wetter in the central highlands (up to 61 cm of rainfall annually, heaviest June to September); semiarid in western hills and lowlands
Natural Resources
gold, potash, zinc, copper, salt, possibly oil and natural gas, fish

as of December 2021

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
largely agrarian economy with a significant mining sector; substantial fiscal surplus due to tight controls; high and vulnerable debts; increased Ethiopian trade and shared port usage decreasing prices; financial and economic data integrity challenges
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $9.702 billion (2017 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $1,600 (2017 est.)
Industries - food processing, beverages, clothing and textiles, light manufacturing, salt, cement
Agricultural products - sorghum, milk, vegetables, barley, cereals, pulses nes, roots/tubers nes, wheat, millet, beef
Exports $624.3 million (2017 est.)
gold and other minerals, livestock, sorghum, textiles, food, small industry manufactures
partners: China 62%, South Korea 28% (2017)
Imports $1.127 billion (2017 est.)
machinery, petroleum products, food, manufactured goods
partners: UAE 15%, China 13%, Saudi Arabia 13%, Italy 13%, Turkey 6%, South Africa 5% (2017)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
6.1 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
0.98% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Tigrinya 55%, Tigre 30%, Saho 4%, Kunama 2%, Rashaida 2%, Bilen 2%, other (Afar, Beni Amir, Nera) 5% (2010 est.)
Language
Tigrinya (official), Arabic (official), English (official), Tigre, Kunama, Afar, other Cushitic languages
Religion
Eritrean Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran, Sunni Muslim
Urbanization
urban population: 42% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 3.67% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)