rwanda

INTRODUCTION
A Rwandan kingdom dominated the region from the mid-18th century onward, with Tutsi rulers conquering others militarily and centralizing power. German colonial rule began in 1898, but Belgian forces captured Rwanda in 1916 during WW I. Rwandan independence came in 1962. Conflict between Tutsi and Hutu ethnic groups continued for decades. Rwanda held its first local elections in 1999 and its first presidential and legislative elections in 2003.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
President Paul KAGAME

Head of Government
Prime Minister Edouard NGIRENTE

Government Type
presidential republic

Capital
Kigali

Legislature
bicameral Parliament consists of the
Senate or Senat (26 seats) and the Chamber of Deputies or Chambre des Deputes (80 seats)

GEOGRAPHY
Area
Total: 26,338 sq km
Land: 24,668 sq km
Water: 1,670 sq km

Climate
temperate; two rainy seasons (February to April, November to January); mild in mountains with frost and snow possible

Natural Resources
gold, cassiterite (tin ore), wolframite (tungsten ore), methane, hydropower, arable land

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
fast-growing Sub-Saharan economy; major public investments; trade and tourism hit hard by COVID-19; increasing poverty after 2 decades of declines; Ugandan competition for regional influence; major coffee exporter; contested GDP figures

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $27.18 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $2,100 (2020 est.)

Industries - cement, agricultural products, small-scale beverages, soap, furniture, shoes, plastic goods, textiles, cigarettes

Agricultural products - bananas, sweet potatoes, cassava, potatoes, plantains, beans, maize, gourds, milk, taro

Exports $1.05 billion (2017 est.)
- gold, refined petroleum, coffee, tea, tin (2019)
- partners: UAE 35%, Democratic Republic of the Congo 28%, Uganda 5% (2019)

Imports $1.922 billion (2017 est.)
- refined petroleum, gold, raw sugar, packaged medicines, broadcasting equipment (2019)
- partners: China 17%, Kenya 10%, Tanzania 9%, UAE 9%, India 7%, Saudi Arabia 5% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
12.9 million (July 2021 est.)

Population Growth
1.8% (2021 est.)

Ethnicity
Hutu, Tutsi, Tw a (Pygmy)

Language
Kinyarwanda (official, universal Bantu vernacular) 93.2%, French (official) <0.1, English (official) <0.1, Swahili/Kiswahili (official, used in commercial centers) <0.1, more than one language, other 6.3%, unspecified 0.3% (2002 est.)

Religion
Protestant 57.7% (includes Adventist 12.6%), Roman Catholic 38.2%, Muslim 2.1%, other 1% (includes traditional, Jehovah’s Witness), none 1.1%

as of October 2021