

Country Profile

Vietnam



Official Name:
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

► Geography

Area: 329,560 sq. km. (127,243 sq. mi.); larger than Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina combined.

Cities: *Capital*—Hanoi (3.5 million).

Other cities—Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon, 5 million); Haiphong (1.5 million).

Terrain: Varies from mountainous to coastal delta.

Climate: Tropical monsoon.

► People

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*—Vietnamese (sing. and pl.).

Population: 74 million.

Annual growth rate: 2.4%.

Ethnic groups: Vietnamese (85-90%), Chinese, Muong, Thai, Khmer, Cham, mountain groups.

Religions: Buddhism, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, Christian (predominantly Roman Catholic, some Protestant), animism, Islam.

Languages: Vietnamese, English (increasingly favored as a second language), some French, Chinese, Khmer, mountain area languages.

Literacy: 88%.

Health: *Infant mortality rate*—36/1,000.

Life expectancy—65 yrs. male, 67 yrs. female.

► Government

Type: Communist people's republic.

Independence: Sept. 2, 1945.

Reunification: July 2, 1976.

New constitution: 1992.

Branches: *Executive*—president (head of state and chair of national Defense and Security council) and prime minister (heads cabinet of ministries and commissions); "People's Committees" govern in local jurisdictions. *Legislative*—National Assembly; locally, People's Councils. *Judicial*—Supreme People's Court.

Administrative subdivisions: 50 provinces, 3 municipalities under central government control, one special zone; urban quarters and rural districts; urban precincts and rural communes.

Political party: Vietnamese Communist Party, formerly (1951-76) Vietnam Worker's Party, itself the successor of the Indochinese Communist Party founded in 1930.

Suffrage: Universal over 18.

► Economy

GDP (1995 est.): \$16.9 billion.

Real growth rate (1995 est.): 9.5%.

Per capita income: \$220.

Inflation rate (1995 est.): 12.7%.

Natural resources: Phosphates, coal, manganese, bauxite, chromate, offshore oil deposits, forests, rubber, marine products.

Agriculture (36% of GDP; 38% of export earnings): *Products*—rice, rubber, fruit, vegetables, manioc, sugar cane, coffee, fish.

Industry (26% of GDP; 34% of total exports): Food processing, textiles, cement, chemical fertilizers, steel, electric power.

Trade (1995): *Exports*—\$5.3 billion: crude oil, textiles, marine products, rice (third-largest exporter in the world), coffee, and coal. *Major partners*—Japan (\$1.5 billion), Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and China. *Imports*—\$7.5 billion: petroleum, steel products, transport-related products, chemicals, fertilizer, medicines, raw cotton. *Major partners*—Singapore (\$2 billion), Japan, South Korea, France, and Taiwan.

Exports to U.S.—\$199 million. *Imports from U.S.*—\$253 million.

► Principal Government Officials

General Secretary of the Communist Party—Do Muoi

Chairman, National Assembly—Nong Duc Manh

President—Le Duc Anh

Vice President—Nguyen Thi Binh

Prime Minister—Vo Van Kiet

Foreign Minister—Nguyen

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