

Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)

(dependent territory of the UK)

Geography

Location: Southern South America, islands in the South Atlantic Ocean, east of southern Argentina

Area:

total area: 12,170 sq km

land area: 12,170 sq km

note: includes the two main islands of East and West Falkland and about 200 small islands

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 1,288 km

Maritime claims:

continental shelf: 200 nm

exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm

territorial sea: 12 nm

Climate: cold marine; strong westerly winds, cloudy, humid; rain occurs on more than half of days in year; occasional snow all year, except in January and February, but does not accumulate

Terrain: rocky, hilly, mountainous with some boggy, undulating plains

Natural resources: fish, wildlife

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 99%

forest and woodland: 0%

other: 1%

Environment:

natural hazards: strong winds persist throughout the year

Note: deeply indented coast provides good natural harbors; short growing season

People

Population: 2,317 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: NA

15-64 years: NA

65 years and over: NA

Population growth rate: 2.43% (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Falkland Islander(s)

adjective: Falkland Island

Ethnic divisions: British

Religions: primarily Anglican, Roman Catholic, United Free Church, Evangelist Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, Lutheran, Seventh-Day Adventist

Languages: English

Labor force: 1,100 (est.)

by occupation: agriculture 95% (mostly shepherding)

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Colony of the Falkland Islands

conventional short form: Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)

Type: dependent territory of the UK

Capital: Stanley

Independence: none (dependent territory of the UK)

National holiday: Liberation Day, 14 June (1982)

Constitution: 3 October 1985

Legal system: English common law

Suffrage: 18 years of age; universal

Flag: blue with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant and the Falkland Island coat of arms in a white disk centered on the outer half of the flag; the coat of arms contains a white ram (sheep raising is the major economic activity) above the sailing ship *Desire* (whose crew discovered the islands) with a scroll at the bottom bearing the motto DESIRE THE RIGHT

Economy

Industries: wool and fish processing

Agriculture: predominantly sheep farming; small dairy herds; some fodder and vegetable crops

Transportation

Railroads: 0 km

Highways:
total: 510 km

Ports: Stanley

Airports:
total: 5

Defence Forces

Branches: British Forces Falkland Islands (includes Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, and Royal Marines), Police Force

Note: defense is the responsibility of the UK