

Burkina

Geography

Location: Western Africa, north of Ghana

Map references: Africa

Area:

total area: 274,200 sq km

land area: 273,800 sq km

comparative area: slightly larger than Colorado

Land boundaries: total 3,192 km, Benin 306 km, Ghana 548 km, Cote d'Ivoire 584 km, Mali 1,000 km, Niger 628 km, Togo 126 km

Coastline: 0 km (landlocked)

Maritime claims: none; landlocked

Climate: tropical; warm, dry winters; hot, wet summers

Terrain: mostly flat to dissected, undulating plains; hills in west and southeast

Natural resources: manganese, limestone, marble; small deposits of gold, antimony, copper, nickel, bauxite, lead, phosphates, zinc, silver

Land use:

arable land: 10%

permanent crops: 0%

meadows and pastures: 37%

forest and woodland: 26%

other: 27%

Irrigated land: 160 sq km (1989 est.)

Environment:

current issues: recent droughts and desertification severely affecting agricultural activities, population distribution, and the economy; overgrazing; soil degradation; deforestation

natural hazards: recurring droughts

Note: landlocked

People

Population: 10,422,828 (July 1995 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 48% (female 2,488,662; male 2,517,245)

15-64 years: 49% (female 2,707,601; male 2,378,957)

65 years and over: 3% (female 184,578; male 145,785) (July 1995 est.)

Population growth rate: 2.79% (1995 est.)

Birth rate: 48.05 births/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Death rate: 18.22 deaths/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Net migration rate: -1.9 migrant(s)/1,000 population (1995 est.)

Infant mortality rate: 116.9 deaths/1,000 live births (1995 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 46.6 years

male: 45.71 years

female: 47.51 years (1995 est.)

Total fertility rate: 6.88 children born/woman (1995 est.)

Nationality:

noun: Burkinabe (singular and plural)

adjective: Burkinabe

Ethnic divisions: Mossi (about 2.5 million), Gurunsi, Senufo, Lobi, Bobo, Mande, Fulani

Religions: indigenous beliefs 40%, Muslim 50%, Christian (mainly Roman Catholic) 10%

Languages: French (official), tribal languages belonging to Sudanic family, spoken by 90% of the population

Literacy: age 15 and over can read and write (1990 est.)

total population: 18%

male: 28%

female: 9%

Labour force: NA (most adults are employed in subsistence agriculture)

by occupation: agriculture 80%, industry 15%, commerce, services, and government 5%

note: 20% of male labor force migrates annually to neighboring countries for seasonal employment (1984)

Government

Names:

conventional long form: Burkina Faso

conventional short form: Burkina

former: Upper Volta

Type: parliamentary

Capital: Ouagadougou

Administrative divisions: 30 provinces; Bam, Bazega, Bougouriba, Boulgou, Boulkiemde, Ganzourgou, Gnagna, Gourma, Houet, Kadiogo, Kenedougou, Komoe, Kossi, Kouritenga, Mouhoun, Namentenga, Naouri, Oubritenga, Oudalan, Passore, Poni, Sanguie, Sanmatenga, Seno, Sissili, Soum, Sourou, Tapoa, Yatenga, Zoundweogo

Independence: 5 August 1960 (from France)

National holiday: Anniversary of the Revolution, 4 August (1983)

Constitution: 2 June 1991

Legal system: based on French civil law system and customary law

Suffrage: none

Flag: two equal horizontal bands of red (top) and green with a yellow five-pointed star in the center; uses the popular pan-African colors of Ethiopia

Economy

Overview: One of the poorest countries in the world, Burkina has a high population density and a high population growth rate, few natural resources, and a fragile soil. Economic development is hindered by a poor communications network within a landlocked country. Agriculture provides about 40% of GDP and is mainly of a subsistence nature. Industry, dominated by unprofitable government-controlled corporations, accounts for about 15% of GDP. Following the 50% currency devaluation in January 1994, the government updated its development program in conjunction with international agencies. Even with the best of plans, however, the government faces formidable problems on all sides.

Industries: cotton lint, beverages, agricultural processing, soap, cigarettes, textiles, gold mining and extraction

Agriculture: accounts for about 40% of GDP; cash crops - peanuts, shea nuts, sesame, cotton; food crops - sorghum, millet, corn, rice; livestock; not self-sufficient in food grains

Transportation

Railroads:

total: 620 km (520 km Ouagadougou to Cote d'Ivoire border and 100 km Ouagadougou to Kaya; single track)

Highways:

total: 16,500 km

Airports:

total: 48

Defence Forces

Branches: Army, Air Force, National Gendarmerie, National Police, People's Militia