



Australia-Oceania :: Samoa

Introduction :: Samoa

Background:

New Zealand occupied the German protectorate of Western Samoa at the outbreak of World War I in 1914. It continued to administer the islands as a mandate and then as a trust territory until 1962, when the islands became the first Polynesian nation to reestablish independence in the 20th century. The country dropped the "Western" from its name in 1997.

Geography :: Samoa

Location:

Oceania, group of islands in the South Pacific Ocean, about half way between Hawaii and New Zealand

Geographic coordinates:

13 35 S, 172 20 W

Map references:

Oceania

Area:

total: 2,831 sq km
country comparison to the world: 178
land: 2,821 sq km
water: 10 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than Rhode Island

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

403 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 12 nm
contiguous zone: 24 nm
exclusive economic zone: 200 nm

Climate:

tropical; rainy season (November to April), dry season (May to October)

Terrain:

two main islands (Savaii, Upolu) and several smaller islands and uninhabited islets; narrow coastal plain with volcanic, rocky, rugged mountains in interior

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Pacific Ocean 0 m
highest point: Mount Silisili 1,857 m

Natural resources:

hardwood forests, fish, hydropower

Land use:

arable land: 2.82%
permanent crops: 7.75%
other: 89.44% (2011)

Irrigated land:

NA

Natural hazards:

occasional typhoons; active volcanism

volcanism: Savai'I Island (elev. 1,858 m), which last erupted in 1911, is historically active

Environment - current issues:

soil erosion, deforestation, invasive species, overfishing

Environment - international agreements:

party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands
signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:

occupies an almost central position within Polynesia

People and Society:: Samoa

Nationality:

noun: Samoan(s)

adjective: Samoan

Ethnic groups:

Samoan 92.6%, Euronesians (persons of European and Polynesian blood) 7%, Europeans 0.4% (2001 census)

Languages:

Samoan (Polynesian) (official), English

Religions:

Protestant 59.9% (Congregationalist 34.8%, Methodist 15%, Assembly of God 6.6%, Seventh-Day Adventist 3.5%), Roman Catholic 19.6%, Mormon 12.7%, Worship Centre 1.3%, other Christian 4.5%, other 1.9%, unspecified 0.1% (2001 census)

Population:

195,476 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 185

note: prior estimates used official net migration data by sex, but a highly unusual pattern for 1993 lead to a significant imbalance in the sex ratios (more men and fewer women) and a seeming reduction in the female population; the revised total was calculated using a 1993 number that was an average of the 1992 and 1994 migration figures

Age structure:

0-14 years: 34% (male 34,291/female 32,170)

15-24 years: 20.1% (male 20,150/female 19,129)

25-54 years: 34.9% (male 35,391/female 32,746)

55-64 years: 5.7% (male 5,637/female 5,489)

65 years and over: 5.4% (male 4,583/female 5,890) (2013 est.)

Dependency ratios:

total dependency ratio: 75.1 %

youth dependency ratio: 66.1 %

elderly dependency ratio: 9 %

potential support ratio: 11.1 (2013)

Median age:

total: 22.7 years

male: 22.5 years

female: 22.9 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

0.59% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 145

Birth rate:

21.7 births/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 77

Death rate:

5.33 deaths/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 179

Net migration rate:

-10.46 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 212

Urbanization:

urban population: 20% of total population (2010)

rate of urbanization: 0% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Major urban areas - population:

APIA (capital) 36,000 (2009)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.07 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.06 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 1.09 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 1.02 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 0.78 male(s)/female

total population: 1.05 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Mother's mean age at first birth:

23.6

note: Median age at first birth among women 25-29 (2009 est.)

Maternal mortality rate:

100 deaths/100,000 live births (2010)

country comparison to the world: 70

Infant mortality rate:

total: 20.95 deaths/1,000 live births
country comparison to the world: 88
male: 24.8 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 16.91 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 72.94 years
country comparison to the world: 129
male: 70.06 years
female: 75.97 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

3.03 children born/woman (2013 est.)
country comparison to the world: 58

Contraceptive prevalence rate:

28.7% (2009)

Health expenditures:

6.5% of GDP (2010)
country comparison to the world: 98

Physicians density:

0.27 physicians/1,000 population (2005)

Hospital bed density:

0.97 beds/1,000 population (2005)

Drinking water source:

improved:

urban: 96% of population
rural: 96% of population
total: 96% of population

unimproved:

urban: 4% of population
rural: 4% of population
total: 4% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 98% of population
rural: 98% of population
total: 98% of population

unimproved:

urban: 2% of population
rural: 2% of population
total: 2% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

NA

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

NA

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

NA

Obesity - adult prevalence rate:

54.1% (2008)
country comparison to the world: 6

Education expenditures:

5.8% of GDP (2008)
country comparison to the world: 45

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write
total population: 98.8%
male: 99%
female: 98.6% (2003 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 12 years
male: 12 years
female: 13 years (2005)

Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:

total: 12.2%
country comparison to the world: 96
male: 10.6%
female: 15.5% (2001)

Government:: Samoa

Country name:

conventional long form: Independent State of Samoa
conventional short form: Samoa
local long form: Malo Sa'oloto Tuto'atasi o Samoa
local short form: Samoa
former: Western Samoa

Government type:
parliamentary democracy

Capital:
name: Apia
geographic coordinates: 13 49 S, 171 46 W
time difference: UTC+13 (18 hours ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)
+1hr, begins last Sunday in September; ends first Sunday in April

Administrative divisions:
11 districts; A'ana, Aiga-i-le-Tai, Atua, Fa'asaleleaga, Gaga'emauga, Gagaifomauga, Palauli, Satupa'itea, Tuamasaga, Va'a-o-Fonoti, Vaisigano

Independence:
1 January 1962 (from New Zealand-administered UN trusteeship)

National holiday:
Independence Day Celebration, 1 June (1962); note - 1 January 1962 is the date of independence from the New Zealand-administered UN trusteeship; it is observed in June

Constitution:
1 January 1962

Legal system:
mixed legal system of English common law and customary law; judicial review of legislative acts with respect to fundamental rights of the citizen

International law organization participation:
has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; accepts ICCt jurisdiction

Suffrage:
21 years of age; universal

Executive branch:
chief of state: TUI ATUA Tupua Tamasese Efi (since 20 June 2007)
head of government: Prime Minister TUILA'EPA Lupesoliai Sailele Malielegaoi (since 1998); Deputy Prime Minister FONOTOE Pierre Lauofo (since 2011)
cabinet: Cabinet consists of 12 members appointed by the chief of state on the prime minister's advice
(For more information visit the **World Leaders website** [↗](#))
elections: chief of state elected by the Legislative Assembly to serve a five-year term (no term limits); election last held on 20 July 2012 (next to be held in 2017); following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party usually appointed prime minister by the chief of state with the approval of the Legislative Assembly
election results: TUI ATUA Tupua Tamasese Efi unanimously elected by the Legislative Assembly

Legislative branch:
unicameral Legislative Assembly or Fono (49 seats, 47 members elected by voters affiliated with traditional village-based electoral districts, 2 elected by independent, mostly non-Samoan or part-Samoan, voters who cannot (or choose not to) establish a village affiliation; only chiefs (matai) may stand for election to the Fono from the 47 village-based electorates; members serve five-year terms)
elections: election last held on 4 March 2011 (next election to be held not later than March 2016)
election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - HRPP 29, Tautua Samoa 13, independents 7

Judicial branch:
highest court(s): Court of Appeal (consists of the chief justice and 2 Supreme Court judges and meets once or twice a year); Supreme Court (consists of the chief justice and several judges)
judge selection and term of office: chief justice appointed by the head of state upon the advice of the prime minister; other Supreme Court judges appointed by the Judicial Service Commission, a 3-member body chaired by the chief justice and includes the attorney general and an appointee of the Minister of Justice; judges normally appointed until retirement at age 68
subordinate courts: District Court; Magistrates' Courts; Land and Titles Courts; village fono or village chief councils

Political parties and leaders:
Human Rights Protection Party or HRPP [Sailele Malielegaoi TUILA'EPA]
Samoa Christian Party or TCP [Tuala Tiresa MALIETOA]
Samoa Progressive Political Party or SPPP
Tautua Samoa [Palusalue FA'APO II]

Political pressure groups and leaders:
NA

International organization participation:
ACP, ADB, AOSIS, C, FAO, G-77, IBRD, ICAO, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCs, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IPU, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, OPCW, PIF, Sparteca, SPC, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

Diplomatic representation in the US:
chief of mission: Ambassador Aliioaiga Feturi ELISAIA
chancery: 800 Second Avenue, Suite 400J, New York, NY 10017
telephone: [1] (212) 599-6196 through 6197
FAX: [1] (212) 599-0797
consulate(s) general: Pago Pago (American Samoa)

Diplomatic representation from the US:
chief of mission: US Ambassador to New Zealand is accredited to Samoa
embassy: Accident Corporation Building, 5th Floor, Matafele, Apia
mailing address: P. O. Box 3430, Matafele, Apia
telephone: [685] 21436/21631/21452/22696
FAX: [685] 22030

Flag description:

red with a blue rectangle in the upper hoist-side quadrant bearing five white five-pointed stars representing the Southern Cross constellation; red stands for courage, blue represents freedom, and white signifies purity

National symbol(s):

Southern Cross constellation (five, five-pointed stars)

National anthem:

name: "O le Fu'a o le Sa'olotoga o Samoa" (The Banner of Freedom)
lyrics/music: Sauni Liga KURESA
note: adopted 1962; the anthem is also known as "Samoa Tula'i" (Samoa Arise)

Economy:: Samoa

Economy - overview:

The economy of Samoa has traditionally been dependent on development aid, family remittances from overseas, agriculture, and fishing. The country is vulnerable to devastating storms. Agriculture employs roughly two-thirds of the labor force and furnishes 90% of exports, featuring coconut cream, coconut oil, and copra. The manufacturing sector mainly processes agricultural products. One factory in the Foreign Trade Zone employs 3,000 people to make automobile electrical harnesses for an assembly plant in Australia. Tourism is an expanding sector accounting for 25% of GDP; 122,000 tourists visited the islands in 2007. In late September 2009, an earthquake and the resulting tsunami severely damaged Samoa, and nearby American Samoa, disrupting transportation and power generation, and resulting in about 200 deaths. In December 2012, extensive flooding and wind damage from Tropical Cyclone Evan killed four people, displaced over 6,000, and damaged or destroyed an estimated 1,500 homes in Samoa's Upolu island. The Samoan Government has called for deregulation of the financial sector, encouragement of investment, and continued fiscal discipline, while at the same time protecting the environment. Observers point to the flexibility of the labor market as a basic strength for future economic advances. Foreign reserves are in a relatively healthy state, the external debt is stable, and inflation is low.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$1.146 billion (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 203
\$1.132 billion (2011 est.)
\$1.11 billion (2010 est.)
note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP (official exchange rate):

\$683 million (2012 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:

1.2% (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 158
2% (2011 est.)
0.4% (2010 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$6,300 (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 145
\$6,200 (2011 est.)
\$6,100 (2010 est.)
note: data are in 2012 US dollars

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 9.4%
industry: 26.5%
services: 64.1% (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:

coconuts, bananas, taro, yams, coffee, cocoa

Industries:

food processing, building materials, auto parts

Industrial production growth rate:

2% (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 97

Labor force:

47,930 (2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 193

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 65%
industry: NA%
services: NA%

Unemployment rate:

NA%

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: NA%
highest 10%: NA%

Budget:

revenues: \$233.4 million
expenditures: \$263.9 million (2012 est.)

Taxes and other revenues:

34.2% of GDP (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 70

Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):

-4.5% of GDP (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 158

Fiscal year:

June 1 - May 31

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

2.1% (2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 46
5.2% (2011 est.)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

9.86% (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 89
9.97% (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$97.71 million (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 182
\$94.92 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$327.9 million (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 185
\$307.6 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$312.1 million (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 181
\$304 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Market value of publicly traded shares:

\$NA

Current account balance:

-\$76.11 million (2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 67
-\$58.66 million (2010 est.)

Exports:

\$11.4 million (2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 211

Exports - commodities:

fish, coconut oil and cream, copra, taro, automotive parts, garments, beer

Exports - partners:

American Samoa 50.4%, Australia 22.6% (2012)

Imports:

\$318.7 million (2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 197
\$280 million (2010 est.)

Imports - commodities:

machinery and equipment, industrial supplies, foodstuffs

Imports - partners:

Fiji 19%, NZ 18.8%, Singapore 18.2%, China 15.5%, Australia 5.8%, US 5.3% (2012)

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$168.7 million (31 December 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 162
\$166.8 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Debt - external:

\$368.3 million (31 December 2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 178
\$235.5 million (31 December 2009 est.)

Exchange rates:

tala (SAT) per US dollar -
2.2923 (2012 est.)
2.3175 (2011 est.)
2.4847 (2010 est.)

Energy :: Samoa

Electricity - production:

104.2 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 194

Electricity - consumption:

96.91 million kWh (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 195

Electricity - exports:
0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 148
Electricity - imports:
0 kWh (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 149
Electricity - installed generating capacity:
41,100 kW (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 186
Electricity - from fossil fuels:
70.6% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 104
Electricity - from nuclear fuels:
0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 204
Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:
29.2% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 78
Electricity - from other renewable sources:
0.2% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 86
Crude oil - production:
0 bbl/day (2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 206
Crude oil - exports:
0 bbl/day (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 206
Crude oil - imports:
0 bbl/day (2009 est.)
country comparison to the world: 142
Crude oil - proved reserves:
0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 205
Refined petroleum products - production:
0 bbl/day (2008 est.)
country comparison to the world: 145
Refined petroleum products - consumption:
1,070 bbl/day (2011 est.)
country comparison to the world: 198
Refined petroleum products - exports:
0 bbl/day (2008 est.)
country comparison to the world: 144
Refined petroleum products - imports:
1,125 bbl/day (2008 est.)
country comparison to the world: 190
Natural gas - production:
0 cu m (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 209
Natural gas - consumption:
0 cu m (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 209
Natural gas - exports:
0 cu m (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 207
Natural gas - imports:
0 cu m (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 79
Natural gas - proved reserves:
0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)
country comparison to the world: 206
Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:
147,400 Mt (2010 est.)
country comparison to the world: 201
Communications :: Samoa
Telephones - main lines in use:

35,300 (2010)
country comparison to the world: 173

Telephones - mobile cellular:
167,400 (2010)
country comparison to the world: 183

Telephone system:
general assessment: adequate
domestic: combined fixed-line and mobile-cellular teledensity roughly 100 telephones per 100 persons
international: country code - 685; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Pacific Ocean) (2007)

Broadcast media:
state-owned TV station privatized in 2008; 4 privately-owned television broadcast stations; about a half dozen privately owned radio stations and one state-owned radio station; TV and radio broadcasts of several stations from American Samoa are available (2009)

Internet country code:
.ws

Internet hosts:
18,013 (2012)
country comparison to the world: 120

Internet users:
9,000 (2009)
country comparison to the world: 202

Transportation :: Samoa

Airports:
4 (2013)
country comparison to the world: 187

Airports - with paved runways:
total: 1
2,438 to 3,047 m: 1 (2013)

Airports - with unpaved runways:
total: 3
under 914 m:
3 (2013)

Roadways:
total: 2,337 km
country comparison to the world: 171
paved: 332 km
unpaved: 2,005 km (2001)

Merchant marine:
total: 2
country comparison to the world: 146
by type: cargo 1, passenger/cargo 1
foreign-owned: 1 (NZ 1) (2010)

Ports and terminals:
Apia

Military :: Samoa

Military branches:
no regular military forces; Samoa Police Force (2008)

Manpower available for military service:
males age 16-49: 47,906 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:
males age 16-49: 38,260
females age 16-49: 38,032 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:
male: 2,221
female: 2,062 (2010 est.)

Military expenditures:
NA

Military - note:
Samoa has no formal defense structure or regular armed forces; informal defense ties exist with NZ, which is required to consider any Samoan request for assistance under the 1962 Treaty of Friendship

Transnational Issues :: Samoa

Disputes - international:
none