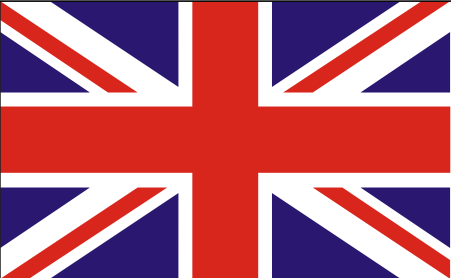




COOK ISLANDS
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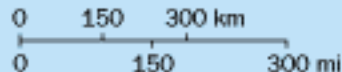




Pukapuka .
Rakahanga .
Manihiki .
Penrhyn .
Nassau Island .
Suvarrow .

South Pacific Ocean

Palmerston .
Aitutaki .
Manuae .
Takutea .
Mitiaro .
Atiu .
Mauke .
Rarotonga . ← ★ **AVARUA** .
Mangaia .



Introduction

Cook Islands

Background: Named after Captain COOK, who sighted them in 1770, the islands became a British protectorate in 1888. By 1900, administrative control was transferred to New Zealand; in 1965, residents chose self-government in free association with New Zealand. The emigration of skilled workers to New Zealand and government deficits are continuing problems.

Geography

Cook Islands

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

Geographic coordinates: 21 14 S, 159 46 W

Map references: Oceania

Area: *total*: 236.7 sq km
land: 236.7 sq km
water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative: 1.3 times the size of Washington, DC

Land boundaries: 0 km

Coastline: 120 km

Maritime claims: *territorial sea*: 12 nm
exclusive economic zone: 200 nm
continental shelf: 200 nm or to the edge of the continental margin

Climate: tropical oceanic; moderated by trade winds; a dry season from April to November and a more humid season from December to March

Terrain: low coral atolls in north; volcanic, hilly islands in south

Elevation extremes: *lowest point*: Pacific Ocean 0 m
highest point: Te Manga 652 m

Natural resources: NEGL

Land use: *arable land*: 16.67%
permanent crops: 8.33%
other: 75% (2005)

Irrigated land: NA

Natural hazards: typhoons (November to March)

Environment - NA
current issues:

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

Geography - note: the northern Cook Islands are seven low-lying, sparsely populated, coral
atolls; the southern Cook Islands, where most of the population lives, consist
of eight elevated, fertile, volcanic isles, including the largest, Rarotonga, at
67 sq km

People	Cook Islands
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Population: 21,923 (July 2008 est.)

Age structure: *0-14 years*: NA
15-64 years: NA
65 years and over: NA

Median age: *total*: 25.3 years
male: 24.7 years
female: 25.9 years (2001 census)

Population growth NA
rate:

Birth rate: 21 births/1,000 population (2001 census)

Death rate: NA (2008 est.)

Sex ratio: *total population*: 1.07 male(s)/female (2001 census)

Infant mortality *total*: NA
rate: *male*: NA
female: NA (2008 est.)

Life expectancy at *total population*: NA
birth: *male*: NA
female: NA (2008 est.)

Total fertility rate: 3.1 children born/woman (2008 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult NA
prevalence rate:

HIV/AIDS - NA
people living with
HIV/AIDS:

HIV/AIDS - NA
deaths:

Nationality: *noun*: Cook Islander(s)
adjective: Cook Islander

Ethnic groups: Cook Island Maori (Polynesian) 87.7%, part Cook Island Maori 5.8%, other 6.5% (2001 census)

Religions: Cook Islands Christian Church 55.9%, Roman Catholic 16.8%, Seventh-Day Adventists 7.9%, Church of Latter Day Saints 3.8%, other Protestant 5.8%, other 4.2%, unspecified 2.6%, none 3% (2001 census)

Languages: English (official), Maori

Literacy: *definition*: NA
total population: 95%
male: NA%
female: NA%

People - note: 2001 census counted a resident population of 15,017

Government

Cook Islands

Country name: *conventional long form*: none
conventional short form: Cook Islands
former: Harvey Islands

Dependency status: self-governing in free association with New Zealand; Cook Islands is fully responsible for internal affairs; New Zealand retains responsibility for external affairs and defense, in consultation with the Cook Islands

Government type: self-governing parliamentary democracy

Capital: *name*: Avarua
geographic coordinates: 21 12 S, 159 46 W
time difference: UTC-10 (5 hours behind Washington, DC during Standard Time)

Administrative divisions: none

Independence: none (became self-governing in free association with New Zealand on 4 August 1965 and has the right at any time to move to full independence by unilateral action)

National holiday: Constitution Day, first Monday in August (1965)

Constitution: 4 August 1965

Legal system: based on New Zealand law and English common law

Suffrage: NA years of age; universal (adult)

Executive branch: *chief of state*: Queen ELIZABETH II (since 6 February 1952); represented by Frederick GOODWIN (since 9 February 2001); New Zealand High Commissioner Brian DONNELLY (since 21 February 2008), representative of New Zealand
head of government: Prime Minister Jim MARURAI (since 14 December 2004); Deputy Prime Minister Terepai MAOATE (since 9 August 2005)
cabinet: Cabinet chosen by the prime minister; collectively responsible to Parliament
elections: the monarch is hereditary; the UK representative is appointed by the monarch; the New Zealand high commissioner is appointed by the New Zealand Government; following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party or the leader of the majority coalition usually becomes prime minister

Legislative branch: bicameral Parliament consisting of a Legislative Assembly (or lower house) (24 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve four-year terms) and a House of Ariki (or upper house) made up of traditional leaders
note: the House of Ariki advises on traditional matters and maintains considerable influence but has no legislative powers
elections: last held 26 September 2006 (next to be held by 2011)
election results: percent of vote by party - Demo 51.9%, CIP 45.5%, independent 2.7%; seats by party - Demo 15, CIP 8, independent 1

Judicial branch: High Court

Political parties and leaders: Cook Islands Party or CIP [Henry PUNA]; Democratic Party or Demo [Dr. Terepai MAOATE]

Political pressure groups and leaders: Reform Conference (lobby for political system changes)
other: various groups lobbying for political change

International organization participation: ACP, ADB, FAO, ICAO, ICRM, IFAD, IFRC, IOC, ITUC, OPCW, PIF, Sparteca, SPC, UNESCO, UPU, WHO, WMO

Diplomatic representation in the US: none (self-governing in free association with New Zealand)

Diplomatic representation from the US: none (self-governing in free association with New Zealand)

Flag description: blue, with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant and a large circle of 15 white five-pointed stars (one for every island) centered in the outer half of the flag

Economy**Cook Islands**

Economy - Like many other South Pacific island nations, the Cook Islands' economic overview: development is hindered by the isolation of the country from foreign markets, the limited size of domestic markets, lack of natural resources, periodic devastation from natural disasters, and inadequate infrastructure. Agriculture, employing about one-third of the working population, provides the economic base with major exports made up of copra and citrus fruit. Black pearls are the Cook Islands' leading export. Manufacturing activities are limited to fruit processing, clothing, and handicrafts. Trade deficits are offset by remittances from emigrants and by foreign aid, overwhelmingly from New Zealand. In the 1980s and 1990s, the country lived beyond its means, maintaining a bloated public service and accumulating a large foreign debt. Subsequent reforms, including the sale of state assets, the strengthening of economic management, the encouragement of tourism, and a debt restructuring agreement, have rekindled investment and growth.

GDP (purchasing power parity): \$183.2 million (2005 est.)

GDP (official exchange rate): \$183.2 million (2005 est.)

GDP - real growth rate: 0.1% (2005 est.)

GDP - per capita (PPP): \$9,100 (2005 est.)

GDP - composition by sector: *agriculture*: 15.1%
industry: 9.6%
services: 75.3% (2004)

Labor force: 6,820 (2001)

Labor force - by occupation: *agriculture*: 29%
industry: 15%
services: 56% (1995)

Unemployment rate: 13.1% (2005)

Population below poverty line: NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share: *lowest 10%*: NA%
highest 10%: NA%

Inflation rate 2.1% (2005 est.)
(consumer prices):

Budget: *revenues*: \$70.95 million
expenditures: \$69.05 million (FY05/06)

Agriculture - copra, citrus, pineapples, tomatoes, beans, pawpaws, bananas, yams, taro,
products: coffee; pigs, poultry

Industries: fruit processing, tourism, fishing, clothing, handicrafts

Industrial 1% (2002)
production growth
rate:

Electricity - 30 million kWh (2005)
production:

Electricity - 27.9 million kWh (2005 est.)
consumption:

Electricity - 0 kWh (2005)
exports:

Electricity - 0 kWh (2005)
imports:

Oil - production: 0 bbl/day (2005)

Oil - 450 bbl/day (2005 est.)
consumption:

Oil - exports: 0 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - imports: 429.3 bbl/day (2004)

Oil - proved 0 bbl (1 January 2006 est.)
reserves:

Natural gas - 0 cu m (2005 est.)
production:

Natural gas - 0 cu m (2005 est.)
consumption:

Natural gas - 0 cu m (2005 est.)
exports:

Natural gas - 0 cu m (2005)
imports:

Natural gas - 0 cu m (1 January 2006 est.)
proved reserves:

Current account \$26.67 million (2005)
balance:

Exports: \$5.222 million (2005)

Exports - copra, papayas, fresh and canned citrus fruit, coffee; fish; pearls and pearl
commodities: shells; clothing

Exports - partners: Australia 34%, Japan 27%, NZ 25%, US 8% (2006)

Imports: \$81.04 million (2005)

Imports - foodstuffs, textiles, fuels, timber, capital goods
commodities:

Imports - partners: NZ 61%, Fiji 19%, US 9%, Australia 6% (2006)

Economic aid - \$13.1 million; note - New Zealand continues to furnish the greater part
recipient: (1995)

Debt - external: \$141 million (1996 est.)

Currency (code): NZ dollar (NZD)

Exchange rates: NZ dollars per US dollar - 1.3811 (2007), 1.5408 (2006), 1.4203 (2005),
1.5087 (2004), 1.7221 (2003)

Fiscal year: 1 April - 31 March

Communications Cook Islands

Telephones - main 6,200 (2002)
lines in use:

Telephones - 1,500 (2002)
mobile cellular:

Telephone *general assessment:* Telecom Cook Islands offers international direct
system: dialing, Internet, email, fax, and Telex
domestic: individual islands are connected by a combination of satellite
earth stations, microwave systems, and VHF and HF radiotelephone; within
the islands, service is provided by small exchanges connected to subscribers
by open-wire, cable, and fiber-optic cable
international: country code - 682; satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Pacific
Ocean)

Radio broadcast AM 1, FM 1, shortwave 0 (2004)
stations:

Television 1 (outer islands receive satellite broadcasts) (2004)
broadcast stations:

Internet country .ck
code:

Internet hosts: 1,479 (2007)

Internet users: 3,600 (2002)

Transportation	Cook Islands
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Airports: 9 (2007)

Airports - with *total: 2*
paved runways: *1,524 to 2,437 m: 2* (2007)

Airports - with *total: 7*
unpaved runways: *1,524 to 2,437 m: 2*
914 to 1,523 m: 4
under 914 m: 1 (2007)

Roadways: *total: 320 km*
paved: 33 km
unpaved: 287 km (2003)

Merchant marine: *total: 25 ships* (1000 GRT or over) 151,026 GRT/186,075 DWT
by type: cargo 12, chemical tanker 1, petroleum tanker 1, refrigerated cargo 9, roll on/roll off 2
foreign-owned: 19 (China 1, Lithuania 1, Netherlands 1, Nigeria 1, Norway 5, NZ 1, Sweden 9) (2008)

Ports and Avatiu
terminals:

Military	Cook Islands
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Military branches: no regular military forces; National Police Department (2007)

Military - note: defense is the responsibility of New Zealand, in consultation with the Cook Islands and at its request

Transnational Issues	Cook Islands
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Disputes - none
international:

Information current as of 7 August, 2008

SOURCES: The CIA World Factbook

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