



# MISSION POSSIBLE

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Equipping the Next Generation of Christ Centered Leaders

Team Member Guide

Dominican Republic Information

Dominican Republic information from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs at: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/35639.htm>

## Dominican Republic<sup>1</sup>



### OFFICIAL NAME:

[Dominican Republic](#)

### Geography

Area: 48,442 sq. km. (18,704 sq. mi.), about the size of Vermont and New Hampshire combined.

Cities: *Capital*--Santo Domingo (pop. 2.25 million). *Other city*--Santiago de los Caballeros (908,230).

Terrain: Mountainous.

Climate: Maritime tropical.

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<sup>1</sup> Information accessed via Web on September 2, 2008.

## **People**

Nationality: *Noun and adjective*--Dominican(s).

Population (2007): 9.365 million.

Annual growth rate (2007): 1.5%.

Ethnic groups: Mixed 73%, European 16%, African origin 11%.

Religion: Roman Catholic 95%.

Language: Spanish.

Education: *Years compulsory*--6 *Attendance*--70%. *Literacy*--84.7%.

Health: *Infant mortality rate*: 28.3/1,000. *Life expectancy*--70.2 years for men, 73.3 years for women.

Work force: 60.2% services (tourism, transportation, communications, finances, others), 15.5% industry (manufacturing), 11.5% construction, 11.3% agriculture, 1.5% mining.

## **Government**

Type: Representative democracy.

Independence: February 27, 1844. Restoration of independence, August 16, 1863.

Constitution: November 28, 1966; amended July 25, 2002.

Branches: *Executive*--president (chief of state and head of government), vice president, cabinet. *Legislative*--bicameral Congress (Senate and House of Representatives).

*Judicial*--Supreme Court of Justice.

## **Economy (2007)**

GDP: \$36.4 billion.

Growth rate: 8%.

Per capita GDP: \$4,147.

Non-fuel minerals (1.4% of GDP): Nickel, gold, silver.

Agriculture (6.5% of GDP): *Products*--sugarcane, coffee, cocoa, bananas, tobacco, rice, plantains, beef.

Industry (27.4% of GDP): *Types*--sugar refining, pharmaceuticals, cement, light manufacturing, construction.

Services, including tourism and transportation: 58.6% of GDP.

Trade: *Exports*--\$6.484 billion (FOB), including processing zones: textiles, sugar, coffee, ferronickel, cacao, tobacco, meats and medical supplies.

## **PEOPLE**

About half of Dominicans live in rural areas; many are small landholders. Haitians form the largest foreign minority group. All religions are tolerated; the state religion is Roman Catholicism.

## **HISTORY**

The island of Hispaniola, of which the Dominican Republic forms the eastern two-thirds and Haiti the remainder, was originally occupied by Tainos, an Arawak-speaking people. The Tainos welcomed Columbus in his first voyage in 1492, but subsequent colonizers were brutal, reducing the Taino population from about 1 million to about 500 in 50 years. To ensure adequate labor for plantations, the Spanish brought African slaves to the island beginning in 1503.

In the next century, French settlers occupied the western end of the island, which Spain ceded to France in 1697, and which, in 1804, became the Republic of Haiti. The Haitians conquered the whole island in 1822 and held it until 1844, when forces led by Juan Pablo Duarte, the hero of Dominican independence, drove them out and established the Dominican Republic as an independent state. In 1861, the Dominicans voluntarily returned to the Spanish Empire; in 1865, independence was restored. Economic difficulties, the threat of European intervention, and ongoing internal disorders led to a U.S. occupation in 1916 and the establishment of a military government in the Dominican Republic. The occupation ended in 1924, with a democratically elected Dominican Government.

## **GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS**

The Dominican Republic is a representative democracy with national powers divided among independent executive, legislative, and judicial branches. The president appoints the cabinet, executes laws passed by the legislative branch, and is commander in chief of the armed forces. The president and vice president run for office on the same ticket and are elected by direct vote for 4-year terms. Legislative power is exercised by a bicameral Congress--the Senate (32 members) and the House of Representatives (178 members).

The Dominican Republic has a multi-party political system with national elections every 2 years (alternating between presidential elections and congressional/municipal elections).

The Dominican Republic maintains an [embassy](#) in the United States at 1715 22d Street NW, Washington, DC 20008 (tel. 202-332-6280).

## **DEFENSE**

Congress authorizes a combined military force of 44,000 active duty personnel. Actual active duty strength is approximately 32,000. However, approximately 50% of those are used for non-military activities such as security providers for government-owned non-military facilities, highway toll stations, prisons, forestry work, state enterprises, and private businesses. The Commander in Chief of the military is the President.

## **ECONOMY**

After a decade of little to no growth in the 1980s, the Dominican Republic's economy boomed in the 1990s, expanding at an average rate of 7.7% per year from 1996 to 2000. Tourism (the leading foreign exchange earner), telecommunications, and free-trade-zone manufacturing are the most important sectors, although agriculture is still a major part of the economy. The Dominican Republic owed much of its success to the adoption of sound macroeconomic policies in the early 1990s and greater opening to foreign investment. Growth turned negative in 2003 (-0.4%) due to the effects of government handling of major bank frauds and to lower U.S. demand for Dominican manufacturers.

The U.S. Embassy in the Dominican Republic is located at:  
The corner of César Nicolás Penson Street and Máximo Gómez Avenue  
Santo Domingo, DR  
Telephone: (809) 221-2171

Web site: <http://santodomingo.usembassy.gov/index.html>

The Canadian Embassy in the Dominican Republic is located at:  
Av. Winston Churchill 1099  
Torre Citigroup en Acrópolis Center, piso 18  
Ensanche Piantini, Santo Domingo, DR  
Telephone: (809)-262-3100

Web site: [http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/dominican\\_republic-republique\\_dominicaine/index.aspx?lang=eng](http://www.canadainternational.gc.ca/dominican_republic-republique_dominicaine/index.aspx?lang=eng)