

CIA World Factbook–Style Country Report

Country of Curaçao





Curaçao

Kingdom of the Netherlands (Constituent Country)

Background

Curaçao is a self-governing constituent country within the Kingdom of the Netherlands, located in the southern Caribbean Sea approximately 65 km (40 miles) north of Venezuela. Formerly part of the Netherlands Antilles, Curaçao became an autonomous country within the Kingdom on 10 October 2010 following the dissolution of the Netherlands Antilles.

Its strategic location has made it an important maritime trading center for centuries. Today it serves as a regional financial center, tourism destination, petroleum transshipment hub, and logistics gateway between the Caribbean and northern South America.

National Symbols

- **Flag:** Blue field with a horizontal yellow stripe and two white stars.
- **Coat of Arms:** Features a sailing ship, orange tree, and crowned shield representing Dutch sovereignty and maritime heritage.
- **National Anthem:** *Himno di Kòrsou*
- **Capital:** Willemstad
- **Largest City:** Willemstad

Geography

Category	Information
Location	Southern Caribbean Sea
Coordinates	12°11'N 69°00'W
Area	444 sq km
Coastline	Approximately 364 km
Highest Point	Christoffelberg (372 m)
Climate	Tropical semi-arid

Category	Information
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Natural Hazards	Occasional drought; generally outside the Atlantic hurricane belt
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Unlike many Caribbean islands, Curaçao receives relatively little rainfall and enjoys stable weather year-round.

Map

- Southern Caribbean
- North of Venezuela
- West of Aruba
- East of Bonaire

Population

Category	Estimate
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Population	~155,000
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Urbanization	>90%
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Population Growth Slow

Life Expectancy	~78 years
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Ethnic Composition

- Mixed Afro-European majority
- European
- Latin American
- Caribbean
- Asian minorities

Languages

Official:

- Dutch
- Papiamentu
- English

Widely spoken:

- Spanish

The population is highly multilingual.

Religion

- Roman Catholic majority
 - Protestant
 - Evangelical
 - Jewish community
 - Muslim minority
 - Other faiths and secular population
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Government

Category	Information
Political Status	Constituent Country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Head of State	King of the Netherlands
Representative	Governor of Curaçao
Head of Government	Prime Minister
Legislature	Parliament (21 seats)
Legal System	Dutch civil law

Defense and foreign affairs remain responsibilities of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Economy

Overview

Curaçao possesses one of the Caribbean's most diversified economies.

Primary sectors include:

- Tourism
- Financial services
- Maritime logistics
- Petroleum refining and storage
- International trade
- Information technology
- Offshore services

Major Trading Partners

- Netherlands
- United States
- Venezuela (historically)
- Caribbean Community
- European Union

Currency

Caribbean guilder (XCG), which replaced the Netherlands Antillean guilder.

Infrastructure

Airports

Curaçao International Airport (Hato Airport) serves North America, South America, Europe, and the Caribbean.

Ports

Port of Willemstad is among the Caribbean's major:

- Cruise ports
- Container ports
- Fuel terminals
- Ship repair facilities

The natural deep-water harbor is one of Curaçao's greatest strategic assets.

Energy

Energy sources include:

- Imported petroleum
- Renewable solar generation
- Wind power
- Fuel storage and distribution

The island is increasingly investing in renewable energy.

Communications

Modern telecommunications include:

- High-speed fiber internet
 - Cellular coverage
 - International submarine cables
 - Digital banking infrastructure
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Education

Education follows the Dutch system.

Major institution:

- University of Curaçao Dr. Moises da Costa Gomez

Literacy is high by regional standards.

Healthcare

Universal healthcare coverage is available through a combination of public and private providers.

Medical standards are among the highest in the Caribbean.

Transportation

Road network:

- Modern paved highways
- Extensive urban roads
- Public buses
- Taxi services

No railways exist.

Military and Security

Defense responsibilities belong to the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Security assets include:

- Dutch Caribbean Coast Guard
- Royal Netherlands Navy
- Royal Netherlands Marechaussee
- Curaçao Police Force

The island hosts periodic Dutch naval deployments and supports regional maritime security operations.

Intelligence Assessment

Strategic Importance

Curaçao occupies a highly significant position at the southern entrance to the Caribbean.

Its value includes:

- Deep-water harbor
- Petroleum storage infrastructure
- Regional logistics
- Financial services
- Maritime surveillance
- Disaster response hub
- NATO partner access through the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Its proximity to Venezuela makes it strategically relevant for monitoring migration, organized crime, sanctions enforcement, and regional security developments.

Current Security Environment

Overall internal security remains stable.

Primary concerns include:

- Drug trafficking routes
- Illegal migration
- Cybersecurity
- Financial crime
- Organized criminal networks using Caribbean transit corridors

Violent crime levels remain lower than many neighboring jurisdictions, though authorities continue targeting transnational criminal organizations.

Environmental Issues

- Coral reef protection
- Water scarcity
- Coastal erosion

- Marine conservation
- Renewable energy transition

International Organizations

Through the Kingdom of the Netherlands and regional participation, Curaçao engages with:

- Caribbean Community institutions
- Caribbean Development Bank
- Dutch Kingdom organizations
- International financial regulatory bodies
- Regional disaster-response frameworks

Quick Facts

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Area	444 sq km
Currency	Caribbean guilder (XCG)
Official Languages	Dutch, Papiamentu, English
Climate	Tropical semi-arid
Highest Point	Christoffelberg (372 m)
Main Industries	Tourism, finance, logistics, petroleum, maritime services
Defense	Kingdom of the Netherlands

ATLAS Intelligence Summary

Overall Strategic Risk: LOW

Economic Importance: MODERATE–HIGH

Regional Security Importance: HIGH

Political Stability: HIGH

Military Significance: MODERATE

ATLAS Assessment:

Although small in population and territory, Curaçao holds strategic importance far beyond its size. Its deep-water port, petroleum infrastructure, modern financial sector, and location near the Venezuelan coast make it a key logistics and security node in the southern Caribbean. Continued Dutch defense support and strong governance contribute to long-term political stability, while organized crime, narcotics trafficking, and regional migration pressures remain the principal security challenges. As a result, Curaçao is assessed as a stable but strategically valuable territory whose importance derives primarily from geography, maritime infrastructure, and its role within the Kingdom of the Netherlands.