

Denmark



2016 Country Review

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1	1
Country Overview	1
Country Overview	2
Key Data	3
Denmark	4
Europe	5
Chapter 2	7
Political Overview	7
History	8
Political Conditions	14
Political Risk Index	40
Political Stability	54
Freedom Rankings	69
Human Rights	81
Government Functions	83
Government Structure	85
Principal Government Officials	90
Leader Biography	92
Leader Biography	92
Foreign Relations	96
National Security	109
Defense Forces	113
Appendix: Greenland	114
Chapter 3	120
Economic Overview	120
Economic Overview	121
Nominal GDP and Components	128
Population and GDP Per Capita	130
Real GDP and Inflation	131
Government Spending and Taxation	132
Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment	133
Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate	134
Data in US Dollars	135

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units	136
Energy Consumption and Production QUADS	138
World Energy Price Summary	139
CO2 Emissions	140
Agriculture Consumption and Production	141
World Agriculture Pricing Summary	144
Metals Consumption and Production	145
World Metals Pricing Summary	148
Economic Performance Index	149
Chapter 4	161
Investment Overview	161
Foreign Investment Climate	162
Foreign Investment Index	166
Corruption Perceptions Index	179
Competitiveness Ranking	190
Taxation	199
Stock Market	201
Partner Links	201
Chapter 5	203
Social Overview	203
People	204
Human Development Index	207
Life Satisfaction Index	211
Happy Planet Index	222
Status of Women	231
Global Gender Gap Index	234
Culture and Arts	243
Etiquette	246
Travel Information	247
Diseases/Health Data	256
Chapter 6	262
Environmental Overview	262
Environmental Issues	263
Environmental Policy	266
Greenhouse Gas Ranking	268
Global Environmental Snapshot	279

Global Environmental Concepts	290
International Environmental Agreements and Associations	304
Appendices	329
Bibliography	330

Chapter 1

Country Overview

Country Overview

DENMARK

Denmark became a major North European power during the Viking period (9th – 11th centuries). In the late 14th century Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, and Greenland were united under the Danish rule. Sweden and Finland withdrew from the union in the 1500s, Norway was lost to Sweden in 1814, and Iceland gained independence following World War I.

The Danish liberal movement gained momentum in the 1830s, and in 1849, Denmark became a constitutional monarchy. Denmark remained neutral during World War I. Despite its declaration of neutrality at the beginning of World War II, it was invaded and occupied by Germany from 1940 to 1945.

Denmark has evolved into a modern, prosperous nation with extensive welfare system, and the country has participated in the general political and economic integration of Europe.

Denmark joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or NATO in 1949 and the European Economic Community -- now the European Union -- in 1973. However, the country has opted out of certain elements of the European Union's Maastricht Treaty, including the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and European defense cooperation.

Key Data

Key Data	
Region:	Europe
Population:	5581503
Climate:	This Scandinavian country has a temperate climate. Characteristics - humid and overcast; mild, windy winters and cool summers.
Languages:	Danish, Faroese, Greenlandic (an Inuit dialect), German
Currency:	1 Danish krone (DKr) = 100 oere
Holiday:	none designated; June 5 is Constitution Day
Area Total:	43094
Area Land:	43294
Coast Line:	7314

Denmark

Country Map



Europe

Regional Map



Chapter 2

Political Overview

History

Pre-History

Some of the oldest evidence of human habitation in Denmark was discovered at settlement sites of the reindeer hunters in the first warm phase at the end of the last Ice Age. After the ice age, hunters apparently moved across the area of north western Europe. There has also been evidence of settlement during the Mesolithic Period from 9300 to 3900 before the common era (B.C.E.), as exemplified by human artifacts found in the eastern part of present-day Denmark.

Early History

The Neolithic Period from 3900 B.C.E. to 1700 B.C.E. was marked by the spread of agriculture, animal husbandry, and the spread of peasant culture. The historic period augured the Stone Age and saw the construction of large assembly areas, moats, burial monuments, as well as the proliferation of flint tools and clay pots.

It was followed by the introduction of metals from Central Europe, evidenced by copper ornaments, weapons and axes. Most of these cultural artifacts were discovered in graves ancient grave mounds. The burial passage area known as King Svend's Mound on Lolland, which dates back to 3200 B.C.E., is an enduring illustration of the burial tombs of the early peasant culture. Concurrently, there was some suggestion about the development of fishing communities, as well as the use of carts as transportation.

By the last stage of the Stone Age -- 2400 B.C.E. to 1700 B.C.E. -- there was evidence of fairly sophisticated weaponry, such as bronze daggers, which suggested some degree of foreign contact. This era coincided with the start of the Bronze Age in other parts of Europe and Central Asia. As well, the production of metal implements advanced along with an increasingly complex social hierarchy. This hierarchy was reflected in evidence of settlements containing both modest and more elaborate housing, as well as burial mounds ranging from those of the simple variety to those set with stone cists or containing wooden coffins.

The Bronze Age, from 1700 B.C.E. to 500 B.C.E., was a time of cultural development.

Denmark's National Museum showcases oak coffins with people dressed in finery, wearing bronze jewelry or helmets, and carrying bronze weapons. The period was also marked by the further expansion of both agriculture and farming, as well as social stratification, exemplified by elaborate burials sites, such as the Lusehoj mound near Voldtofte on Funen.

The Iron Age followed from about 500 B.C.E. to 750 C.E. (common era). The archaeological record is more limited for this era, however, it has indicated the presence of cremation graves, fenced-in farm dwellings, as well as villages. Agriculture and farming developed from being smaller, scattered enterprises of the early Iron Age to villages with extensive farms in the late Iron Age. By 300 C.E., there were also findings suggesting the existence of coastal trading centers as well as an increasingly powerful governing elite.

Discoveries of the late Roman Ice Age indicate remains of vessels, Celtic weapons and cauldrons, as well as wagons. They indicated foreign contact as various tribes roamed the expanse of Europe and were involved in power struggles along the northern boundary of the Roman Empire.

The Time of the Vikings

By 700 C.E., a seasonal trading center had been established at Rige, which would soon take on regional prominence as Denmark became a dominant player in the North Sea. The period coincided with the development of a ruling elite.

The ascendancy of Charlemagne and the Carolingians around 800 C.E., and their associated attempts to gain power over the Franks, resulted in conflicts with the Danes, who at the time were led by Godfred. At issue for Godfred was his refusal to abdicate either power or tributary income, which had been established as the Danes earlier gained prominence in the North Sea. His clashes with Charlemagne indicated the ongoing thrust for power. His murder in 810 C.E. heralded intense internal power struggles within the royal family, as well as those of an external nature, as rulers had to deal with rivals -- many of whom benefited from the riches plundered during Viking raids.

Burial findings from the 9th to 11th centuries suggest that Danes participated in Viking explorations and expeditions during the Viking era (circa 800 C.E. to 1050 C.E.). Viking explorations and raids, well known in legend and history, and a source of fear for Europeans at the time, involved pillaging, interference in the affairs of fellow Vikings, coastal raids, settlements in places such as England, Scotland, Ireland and Normandy, as well as full-scale war between states in the region.

During the early part of this Viking period, the Danes managed to conquer northern and eastern England, and by the latter part of the period, King Canute ruled a vast kingdom that included present-day Denmark, the island of Zealand, Norway, southern Sweden, western parts of Finland, and England. Its base was the Jutland Peninsula. As such, the area of Scandinavia evolved

concurrently and even developed a common Nordic culture. Christianity, which had been introduced in the early 9th century via Viking raids and interaction with other cultures, also took hold in the region and became widespread during King Canute's reign. Canute's empire, however, dissolved after his death.

At the start of the 10th century, a dynasty with Swedish connections seized power. This was followed by the Jelling dynasty, who had also returned from abroad. According to his runic stone at Jelling, Harald Bluetooth (Harald I) claims to have conquered all of Denmark during this period.

Meanwhile, in the 9th century, the name Denmark (Danmark) began to be used for the first time. The interpretation of the name supposedly means, "border district of the Danes." The name originally referred to Danish territory east of the Great Belt, but expanded under Harald. The time of Harald was also marked by sophisticated organization of resources and a proliferation of construction, exemplified by additions to the Dannevirke ramparts, fortresses of the Trelleborg type, the Raving Enge bridge and the Jelling complex. There have also been suggestions that Hedeby, Ribe and Århus were all fortified during Harald's reign.

At the close of the 10th century, there were renewed Viking raids on England, resulting in conquest of vast swaths of English territory. Svend Forkbeard, also known as Svend I, as the Danish ruler, demanded tributes from England. His death in 1014 occurred just after conquest of England. Knud the Great then took power and reconquered territory in 1016. Although he became the ruler of England, Denmark and Norway and even gained some dominance in Sweden, he was unable to forge a lasting empire.

Meanwhile, Denmark saw the development of great trading centers. By the 11th century, Ribe and Hedeby had expanded, and cultural, political and religious centers at Vidense, Oburg, Århus, Aalborg, Slagelse, and Roskilde were established.

The Middle Ages

The murder of Knud the Holy in 1086 by Danish nobles mitigated the expansion of royal power, and made it clear that rule would have to ensue with the interests of nobles and clergy in mind. Then, violent power struggles within the royal family followed, including the murder of Knud Lavard by his rival, Prince Magnus, in 1131. Knud Lavard enjoyed some degree of vindication -- albeit after his death -- when in 1157, his son, Valdemar the Great, conquered his rivals and took royal power.

The ascendancy of the Valdermars followed from 1157 to 1241 and was marked by the expansion

of Danish territory as well as economic growth. By 1219, terrain under the control of the Valdermars expanded to include areas such as Estonia and Holstein. Such dominance was short-lived with Valdermar II being taken prisoner, and released only after payment of a ransom. The incident was symbolic of waning rule, and loss of terrain ensued including loss of control over the Baltic.

Indeed, by the late 13th century, royal power had waned, and the nobility forced the king to grant a charter, which is now considered Denmark's first constitution. Although the struggle between crown and nobility continued into the 14th century, Queen Margrethe I succeeded in uniting Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, and Greenland under the Danish crown. This unified entity would become known as the Kalmar Union.

Note: Sweden and Finland left the Kalmar Union around 1520 (some sources state 1523), however, Norway remained a part of the union until 1814. Iceland, in a "personal union" under the king of Denmark after 1918, became independent in 1944. Denmark's provinces in today's southwestern Sweden were lost in 1658, and Norway was transferred from the Danish to the Swedish crown in 1814, following the defeat of Napoleon, with whom Denmark was allied.

The Post-Reformation Period and Absolutism

The Protestant Reformation was introduced in Denmark in 1536, and brought with it the establishment of the Lutheran State Church. The new Christian denomination was inculcated into the consciousness of subjects through its influence over schools. Lutheran orthodoxy remained unchallenged until around 1700 when German Evangelical movements urged more personal devotion. Nevertheless, the dominance of the national church, especially through schools, was responsible for the establishment of Danish language as part of the cultural fabric (although Latin was still taught), which would eventually set the foundation for modern notions of Danish identity.

Meanwhile, in the period of rule by Christian III, Denmark formed a personal union with Norway, whose holdings included the Faeroe Islands, Iceland and Greenland in the North Atlantic. Earlier, as noted above in the 1520s, Sweden had left the Kalmar Union and was now a rival of Denmark for domination of northwestern Europe. In fact, it was this rivalry, along with issues related to access to the Baltic region, that drove foreign policy of the time.

For the common people -- Denmark's peasantry -- more than half the land continued to be held by the aristocracy, yet farming continued to be the main activity for people, although there was a burgeoning mining industry in Norway.

From that time in the 16th century until 1720, many economic and social changes took place. Notably, the 16th century was a time in which the economy flourished, however, by 1600, Denmark was beset with a trade crisis, which plagued the economy for some time, and only abating in 1740. Meanwhile, the financing of wars and rivalries -- notably Karl Gustav's wars against Sweden around 1660 -- took a toll on the overall economy, with taxes having a particularly deleterious effect on the lowest classes.

In the political sphere, the aristocracy had maintained great institutional influence and domination until around 1660 when Denmark, and many other European kingdoms, established absolute monarchy. The start of absolutism in Denmark could be identified at the point in 1648 when Frederik III's managed to oust two of his main rivals among the aristocracy in the Rigsråd. Then, in 1659, the king's management of the siege of Copenhagen in the winter of that year, consolidated his popularity and influence among the people. Concurrent with the increasing esteem commanded by the king was the fact that the aristocracy was decreasing in credibility and influence.

By 1660, this shift in political influence led the aristocracy to reluctantly create a hereditary monarchy. This move essentially transformed the political system so that the king was no longer beholden to the nobles of the Rigsråd. As a result, in 1661, he was able to temporarily set forth the Hereditary Monarchy Act. Then, in 1665, the Kongeloven (the Royal Law), was established as the basic law of Danish absolutism. Over the next few decades, the new system of government consolidated both monarchical power and hierarchical society.

As noted above, the wars with Sweden were raging on, as Denmark attempted to retrieve territory, such as Scania, from Sweden. Danish victories in the Scania War from 1675 to 1679, and the Great Nordic War from 1709 to 1720, did not manage to return Scania to the fold of Denmark, due to opposition from other European powers. On the other side of the equation, Sweden's geopolitical influence was in its own waning stages. Both Denmark and Sweden were also watching the advance of Russian power to the east. Thus, both countries moved toward a more cooperative relationship and coexistence between Denmark and Sweden came with the peace of 1720.

Modernity

In 1773, Denmark entered into an alliance with Russia, which subordinated its foreign policy to the interests of the Russians. Nevertheless, Denmark was able to enjoy protection from the alliance, and concentrate on its growing trade and shipping industries, which were beneficial to the economy.

Still, Denmark's geopolitical position resulted in a conflict with Great Britain in 1801, and a war with that country ensued from 1807 to 1814. This ended with the Peace of Kiel, however, one consequence was that Norway was ceded to Sweden.

This was also a period in which the notion of Danish identity (intimated above) began to take hold among the bourgeoisie. Meanwhile, Enlightenment Era principles of freedom and equality gave rise to intellectual questioning of the divine right of monarchical rule.

In the political realm, there was also a drive for more representation across regions. Typically, only property owners were allowed to participate in assemblies. But by about 1837, with an increasing demand for more say and financial control, consultative assemblies were convened, and a system of local self-government was established in Copenhagen, market towns and rural municipalities. At the same time, peasants were calling for agricultural reforms, while commercial types wanted a more liberal economy, and liberals as well as academics were advocating greater freedom of the press and more influence for the constitutional assemblies. Indeed, the Danish liberal and reform movements gained momentum in the 1830s.

By the close of the 1830s, when Christian VIII ascended the throne, there were hopes about political reform since he had introduced the constitutional monarchy of Norway in 1814. These hopes were not to be realized since he did not believe in limits to his absolute power in Denmark. But with the public's sentiment at stake, it was clear that absolutism was in its death throes. In fact, Christian VIII began to prepare the foundation for constitutional changes. By 1848, the National Constitutional Assembly came into being; many debates took place within its chambers about a free constitution.

Finally, in 1849, Frederik VII signed into law the country's constitution, which provided for the civic rights of the people and introduced a bicameral system of legislative government (the Folketing and the Landsting). The move made Denmark into a constitutional monarchy.

After the war with Prussia and Austria in 1864, Denmark was forced to cede Schleswig-Holstein to Prussia and adopt a policy of neutrality. Toward the end of the 19th century, Denmark inaugurated important social and labor market reforms, laying the basis for the present welfare state.

Denmark remained neutral during World War I. Despite its declaration of a continued policy of neutrality at the beginning of World War II, Denmark was invaded by the Germans in 1940 and occupied until Allied forces liberated it in May 1945. Denmark became a charter member of the United Nations and was one of the original signers of the North Atlantic Treaty establishing the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Supplementary source: Denmark Foreign Ministry Online; available at URL: <http://denmark.dk/portal/>

Note on History: In certain entries, open source content from the State Department Background Notes and Country Guides have been used. A full listing of sources is available in the Bibliography.

Political Conditions

Party Politics

Historically, Denmark has been well-regarded for its moderate, consensus-based policymaking. Indeed, political life in Denmark today is regarded as orderly and democratic. Denmark is also notable for the high, nearly equal, representation of women in parliament and in the government (cabinet).

Denmark is also known politically for its coalition governments. The vulnerability implicit in a minority coalition led by the Social Democrats was evidenced in its failure to achieve consensus on issues such as extensive labor, tax, and welfare reforms. Meanwhile, consensus decision-making has been the most prominent feature of Danish politics. It has often allows the small centrist parties to play a larger role than their size suggests. Although the centrist Radikale party sometimes shows traces of its pacifist past, particularly on defense spending, most major legislation is passed by sizeable majorities.

As regards the political balance of power, the Social Democratic Party (SDP), Denmark's largest and closely identified with a large, well-organized labor movement, held power either alone or in coalition for a significant portion of the postwar period except from 1982 to 1993.

After the parliamentary elections in September 1994, Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen and his SDP led a minority coalition government, which at first included the centrist Radikales and the Center Democrats. The Center Democrats left the government in December 1996.

In parliamentary elections held in March 1998, the Social Democrats won 36 percent of the vote, followed by the Liberal Party with 24 percent. The Conservative People's Party polled 8.9 percent, the Socialist People's Party 7.5 percent, and the Danish People's Party 7.4 percent. Several other parties, including the Center Democrats, the Radical Liberals, the Unity List, the Progress Party, and the Christian People's Party each received less than five percent of the total votes cast.

After the election, the Social Democrats, with 63 seats, and the Radical Liberals, with seven seats, formed a minority coalition led by Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen. Rasmussen had been prime minister - with various coalition partners - since 1993, as noted just above.

While Denmark continued to experience moderate economic growth with low unemployment and low inflation, the Rasmussen government witnessed something of a decline in its popularity. The two main sources of dissatisfaction seemed to be the high level of taxation in Denmark and problems with Danish public services. The Rasmussen government decided not to reduce taxes, allotting budget surpluses instead toward paying off a high level of public debt. Later, the government also faced the contradictory pressures of reducing taxes while increasing the already high levels of welfare services.

In late October 2001, Prime Minister Rasmussen called a snap election; regularly scheduled elections were not due to be held until March 2002. In the aftermath of the events in the United States on September 11, 2001, public support for Rasmussen was quite high. Observers believed the prime minister hoped to use this increased popularity to his advantage and secure another four-year term for his Social Democratic-led left-wing coalition.

Unfortunately for Rasmussen, the events of September 11, 2001 created, according to many observers, an increased voter concern about immigration issues, specifically limiting immigration. Although the far-right, nationalist Danish People's Party, led by Pia Kjaersgaard, had long demanded reform of Denmark's immigration and asylum policies, the issue never received the amount of attention it did during the more recent campaign.

In the run-up to the November 18, 2001 election, other parties also keyed in on this issue, namely the Liberal Party, which was led by Anders Fogh Rasmussen. Rasmussen's Liberals promised to tighten immigration controls - and make it more difficult for immigrants to obtain access to Danish welfare state services and benefits - and also more difficult to obtain residency and citizenship. Despite the fact that foreign nationals, immigrants, and the children of immigrants make up less than eight percent of the total Danish population, many voters, it would seem, were receptive to these promises. Other Liberal Party campaign promises that might have appealed to voters included capping taxes and getting tough on crime.

After being in opposition since January 1993, the Liberal Party experienced a surge in support in the November 2001 election, winning 56 seats - up from 42 in the 1998 election. The right-wing Conservative People's Party kept its 16 seats. The Danish People's Party won 22 seats - a significant increase from its 1998 total of 13 seats. The formerly governing Social Democratic Party lost 11 seats, to finish with 52. The Social Democrats' coalition partner, the Radical Liberals, gained two (2) seats, for a total of nine (9). The remainder of the "Folketing" (Parliament) consisted of the following: 16 seats for the Conservative People's Party (KF); 12 seats for the

Socialist People's Party (SF); and four (4) seats each for the Unity List - The Red Greens (E); and the Christian People's Party (KrF). One reserved Faroe Islands seat went to the "Fólkaflokkurin" (People's Party), with the other seat going to the "Tjóðveldisflokkurin" (Party for People's Government). The two reserved Greenland seats went to the "Inuit Ataqatigiit" (Inuit Brotherhood) and the left-leaning "Siumut" (Forward Party).

After the election, the Liberal Party and the Conservative People's Party formed a right-wing coalition. With only 72 out of 179 seats in the "Folketing" (Parliament) however, this minority coalition would have to rely on the support of other parties, and in particular, the right-wing Danish People's Party. While not a formal member of the government, it was expected that the Danish People's Party would have significant ability to influence the government's policy-making, in particular, regarding the party's most salient issue - immigration control.

By 2002, however, the Danish government was heavily criticized for its legislative measures limiting the number of immigrants into Denmark and prolonging the time for immigrants to gain permanent residency. The United Nations observed that the new laws did not correspond with international refugee and human rights laws. The Danish government argued that the new laws were established to actually help integrate immigrants into Danish society.

Identity Politics and the European Union

Party politics aside, the country's role in the regional and international sphere has prevailed as a pressing concern since the late 1980s. Indeed, since the 1988 elections in Denmark, which led to a domestic truce on North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and security questions, Denmark's role in the European Union (EU) has come to be a key political issue.

Denmark emerged from two referendums with four important exemptions (or "opt-outs") to the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union: common defense, common currency, EU citizenship, and certain aspects of legal cooperation, including law enforcement. In a June 1992 referendum, the Danish public voted against ratifying the Maastricht Treaty. In May 1993, it was only after Denmark was allowed to "opt out" of EU citizenship, the common currency, common defense, and other cooperation issues (for example, law enforcement) that the treaty was ratified.

Fear of losing Denmark's identity in an integrating Europe ran deeply among the country's population. As such, Denmark's role in the European Union (EU) had been, and has continued to be, a key domestic and foreign policy issue which causes much ambivalence and consternation.

In a referendum on relations with the European Union held May 28, 1998, Denmark acceded to the Amsterdam Treaty. The treaty outlined several major issues, such as employment and free internal border crossing, which would become main objectives of the European Union. Unlike the

Maastricht Treaty, Denmark acceded to the whole of the Amsterdam Treaty without opt-outs.

As noted above, one of the opt-outs Denmark obtained from the Maastricht Treaty in 1993 involved the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the single European currency, the euro. After months of intense campaigning, Denmark voted in a national referendum on Sept. 28, 2000, against joining the euro, with 53 percent opposed to joining and 47 percent in favor.

Proponents of joining the EMU and adopting the euro included then-Prime Minister Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the government, 80 percent of the members of parliament, the mainstream political parties, the business leadership, and much of the trade union membership. In short, almost all of Denmark's political elites favored joining the euro club. Supporters campaigned primarily upon economic reasons for joining the euro, pointing out that the Danish krone was already pegged to the euro. Additionally, it was argued that a very large percentage of Danish trade is conducted with other euro members; joining would decrease the costs of trade.

Opponents of the euro included the anti-EU political parties, the growing nationalist Danish People's Party, the far-left political parties, as well as public sector workers and pensioners. The opponents' campaign was based more on political issues than on economic issues. Opponents stressed the loss of sovereignty and argued that adopting the euro would endanger Denmark's substantial welfare programs by leading to greater harmonization of taxation and spending among euro-members. The victorious opponents of joining the EMU were assisted in their effort by the weakness of the euro in the days and weeks preceding the referendum.

In 2003, the issue of EMU membership emerged once again. Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen announced that Denmark would hold a new referendum on euro membership, despite the fact that the proposal was rejected in 2000 (as aforementioned). The Danish Prime Minister noted that Denmark has had less influence in key matters affecting cooperation within the European Union because of its decision to opt-out of euro usage. Indeed, both the Danish leader, parliamentarians and political analysts have said there may be a need to remove the "opt out" provisions that affect Danish membership in the European body. Still, Prime Minister Rasmussen did not express urgency on the matter, preferring instead to hold the referendum after the provisions of the EU's revised basic treaty had been revealed.

Although there is a prevailing fear that the adoption of the euro would threaten Danish sovereignty by centering decision-making by the EU in Brussels, opinion polls in recent years have demonstrated that despite such fears, support for joining the EMU has been significantly increasing. Indeed, according to such polls, nearly 66 percent of the Danish population have now said they favor the adoption of the euro. A majority in the Danish Parliament also appear to be supportive of EMU membership. The current prime minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, has been a consistent supporter of the European Union. .

Identity Politics and Greenland

Issues regarding Greenland came to the forefront of politics in late 2002. Classified as a self-governing dependency, the island of Greenland has been ruled since 1721 by the Danes. Greenland has been semi-autonomous since 1979, but Denmark remains in charge of foreign affairs and defence policy.

In December 2002, Greenlanders voted in an election that was expected to garner significant gains for Inuit Atagatigiit (the Inuit Brotherhood party), which has been interested in pursuing independence from Denmark. The left-leaning Siumut party has also expressed interest in Greenland's independence. The results of the election gave Inuit Atagatigiit and the Siumut party together 18 out of 31 seats in the parliament and a stronger position from which to advance their joint agenda. In this regard, the new government of Greenland has adopted a program which would push for greater influence in foreign affairs, as well as a referendum on full independence in 2005.

As well, Inuit Atagatigiit has said it is interested in increasing the payments by the United States to Greenland for the military base at Thule, in the northwest part of the island. This particular issue is complicated because although Greenlanders can use the increased revenue in order to operate independently of Denmark, the base is supposed to be used in the United States' plan to create a ballistic missile defense shield. The people of Greenland are worried that a more intensified United States' military presence on the island would create safety hazards and risks.

International Relations

In 2003, the main geopolitical issue for Denmark, as with much of the world, was the invasion and occupation of Iraq. In this regard, Denmark sent 400 troops to Iraq. In September 2003, Denmark agreed to send an extra 90 troops to Iraq, adding to its contingent on the ground in that Middle Eastern country. Parliamentary support for the idea was bolstered after the death of a Danish soldier in Iraq. Opposition members, however, railed against the government when it was discovered that the soldier did not actually die in combat as had been reported but rather in a friendly fire incident.

In 2004, some of the justification for Denmark's support for the war in Iraq was questioned when a Danish newspaper reported an intelligence official's assertion that there was no evidence to support the government's case for war. The government of Prime Minister Rasmussen's case had been based on Danish intelligence reports about Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. The intelligence official's assertions repudiated the prime minister's position. In response, the government declassified the reports noting that its contents vindicated their claims. Critics, however, said that the declassified intelligence reports revealed that the more nuanced

aspects of the intelligence had not been shared with the public. For example, while the Danish Defense Intelligence Service's assessment was that Iraq probably had such weaponry, it also did not have reliable evidence on the matter. Indeed, an article by the Associated Press in 2003 reported a Danish intelligence report's conclusion that there was no "certain information that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction."

How these points of distinction should have been interpreted caused much debate and consternation among lawmakers. In the aftermath of the controversy, the Defense Minister Svend Aage Jensby resigned, saying that he did not want to "burden the government or [his] family with the smear campaign." amid criticism of government reports about alleged weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Meanwhile, the intelligence official who made the assertion that there was no evidence for war was charged with breaching the information act. Two journalists who published the claims were charged with exploiting information emerging from a crime.

Elections of 2005

In mid-2004, just after European Union enlargement was formalized, Danes went to the polls for European Parliament elections. Results in Denmark reflected a trend throughout Europe whereby opposition parties triumphed over incumbents. Indeed, based on partial results issued by the Danish Ministry of the Interior, the Social Democrats claimed victory with 32.8 percent of the vote.

In January 2005, Danish Liberal Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen told parliament that he was calling a snap election on the home front. New parliamentary elections were then set for Feb. 8, 2005. The decision was largely spurred by plans to reform the Danish municipal system, which would invariably change the structure of Denmark's local government. The Liberals were to be challenged by Mogens Lykketoft and the Social Democrats, who said that employment was not heading in the right direction and as a result, they laid out a detailed plan for dealing with this issue. For its part, however, the Liberals said that the country's economy was in good shape. Regardless of the outcome, a Gallup poll showed the Liberals leading the Social Democrats a few weeks prior to the actual election.

On February 8, Denmark's centre-right coalition led by Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen performed as expected and won a second term. The prime minister's bloc won 95 seats in the 179-seat Folketing or parliament while the opposition secured 80 seats. Meanwhile, Mogens Lykketoft, the leader of the opposition Social Democrats, conceded and said he would resign.

Diplomacy and Democratic Freedom

In early 2006, riots were sparked across the globe in the aftermath of the publication of a few cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad as a terrorist in a Danish newspaper. The actual publication by the Jyllands-Posten newspaper took place in the fall of 2005, however, the matter ignited in early 2006 when the cartoons were republished by another newspaper in Norway in early 2006.

At the time of the original publication, ambassadors from several Islamic countries expressed their dismay about the cartoons with the Danish government. Then, in late January 2006, several Muslim countries closed their embassies in Denmark to protest the cartoons. For example, Tripoli accused Copenhagen of failing to act against the cartoons in the Jyllands-Posten's newspaper saying, "Because the Danish media had continued to show disrespect to the Prophet Muhammad and because the Danish authorities failed to take any action on that, Libya decided to close its embassy in Copenhagen," the Libyan foreign ministry said in a statement. Libya also said it would enact unspecified "economic measures" against Denmark. In addition to Libya, several other Muslim countries also expressed dismay to Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, and likewise warned they might take action of their own. Saudi Arabia also recalled its own ambassador from Denmark.

At home in Denmark, when the original cartoons were published, a group of Muslim organizations issued a complaint to the Danish authorities saying that the Jyllands-Posten had committed an offense under Section 140 and Section 266b of the Danish Criminal Code, which respectively prohibits any person from publicly insulting the dogmas of worship of any lawfully existing religious community, and criminalizes the dissemination of statements that threaten, insult or degrade on the basis of religion. The investigation into the matter ended with a conclusion that there had been no wrong-doing. Meanwhile, the Danish government maintained its position that it could not intervene in matters involving free speech. To this end, Prime Minister Rasmussen said, "The government can in no way influence the media. And the Danish government and the Danish nation as such cannot be held responsible for what is published in independent media."

For its part, the Jyllands-Posten said that although the caricatures were intended to test the boundaries of expression about Islam, there was never an intent to impugn the religion. The newspaper also made an apology expressing regret for the harm caused by its publication of the cartoons as follows, "In our opinion, the 12 drawings were sober. They were not intended to be offensive, nor were they at variance with Danish law, but they have indisputably offended many Muslims for which we apologize." Still, one of the editors of the publication noted in an interview on American television that it had produced other cartoons that similarly negatively depicted Judaism and Christianity.

By early February 2006, violence across the world broke out as Muslims attacked European interests with demonstrators promising "death to Denmark" and other European powers. The Danish and Norwegian embassies in Syria were attacked by violent mobs leading to demands by

Norway for compensation for the damage. The Danish embassy in Lebanon was set on fire and resulted in the resignation of the Interior Minister Hassan Sabeh. In Gaza, gunmen invaded the office of the European Union demanding an apology for the cartoons. In London, protestors held signs promising retribution worse than the terrorist attacks that took place in the London Underground in the summer of 2005. That particular incident prompted promises of an inquiry by the British government. In Afghanistan, at least five people died during demonstrations against cartoons increased across the country. In Somalia, a teenage boy was killed and several others were injured when protestors attacked the police. In Nigeria, parliamentarians in the Muslim Kano state burned flags of Denmark and Norway. Other violent protests ensued in Thailand, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Palestinian territories. In Iran, a newspaper said that it would hold a contest for cartoons about the Jewish Holocaust. As well, Iranian President Ahmadinejad announced that Iran would be cutting trade ties with Denmark.

In an act of solidarity with Denmark and in order to foreground the principle of free speech, several other newspapers in Western countries -- France, Germany, Italy and Spain -- also made the decision to reprint the cartoons. In the United States, newspapers of record, such as the New York Times, offered an editorial explaining why it would not be publishing the cartoons while the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Austin American Statesmen were among the first American newspapers to do so. In Jordan, the editors of the al-Shihan and al-Mehwar newspapers were arrested after their respective publications of the cartoons; the charges were later dropped.

While some Muslims have reacted by saying that the cartoons offensively attacked their faith and culture, others have decried the violent protests as being inappropriate and have called for calm instead. At the same time, some observers have argued that even in countries with apparent free speech, there are limits that should be exercised. For example, some countries have "anti-hate" laws while others, particularly in Europe, have barred the use of disturbing historic symbols, such as the swastika. As noted above, even in Denmark, there are certain prohibitions on discriminatory dissemination. Nevertheless, other observers have drawn attention to what they described as "the hypocrisy" of the position of Muslim protestors who have chosen to oppose the representation of their religion as violent with precisely violent means. Indeed, it is that very fear of violent reprisals against critics of Islam that spurred support for the publication of the cartoons in the first place. Still others have noted that some extremist factions of the Arab and Islamic press have often demonized Jews, Judaism and the Israeli state in their own representations and there have not been global outcries of violence as a result.

The discord between Islamic countries and the West has also been exacerbated by the fact that the very concept of media freedom does not have the same understanding across the board. Some cultures and countries do not entertain the notion of a free and independent press, which cannot be controlled by the government; as such, they may react with anger to national authorities. Likewise, the notion of individual free speech, which occasionally offends but which should be protected nonetheless, tends to be a concept that does not fully resonate in places where censorship is

normative. Overall, the matter has illuminated philosophical questions about the tensions between (1) democratic principles of free speech, and (2) modern understandings of cultural sensitivity in a globalized world.

Threat of Terrorism in Denmark

In September 2006, police in Denmark said that they had arrested nine suspected terrorists following raids in the suburb of Vollsmose in Odense -- one of Denmark's largest cities. They were being held under the aegis of anti-terrorism laws that were established in the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States. All those arrested were young men under the age of 30 years of age who had been placed under surveillance for several months.

Justice Minister Lene Espersen said that those arrested were very likely plotting a terrorist attack in Denmark. To this end, he said, "The clues police found indicate that they were very likely planning an attack somewhere in Denmark. It was the most serious matter I have had in my time as justice minister. Police went in and stopped the group as it was preparing an attack." Lars Findsen, the head of the Danish Security Intelligence Service (Pet), acknowledged that those arrested had procured material used in the making of explosives.

There was no word of any specific target of attack or regarding the extent of the terrorist plans, however, it was surmised that the Danish authorities decided to move quickly in order to minimize any possible risk to the public.

Instability in Copenhagen

Spring 2007 in Denmark was marked by a spate of riots in the capital city of Copenhagen. At issue was the ownership and occupation of a youth hostel. The Ungdomshuset" Youth House had been occupied by left-wing activists for over two decades. In 2000, the building was sold to Christian fundamentalists, who garnered eviction orders from a court in 2006. For their part, the activist occupants vowed not to leave.

Outrage over the looming eviction led to violent protests in December 2006. Months later in March 2007, following the actual eviction of the squatters by an anti-terrorism squad, further riots ensued. As well, a number of fires were ignited. On March 3, 2007, protesters set fire to barricades erected close to the district of Christiania. Meanwhile, there were reports about explosives, such as "molotov cocktails," being flung at buildings in the district of Noerbro.

In response to the increasingly unstable scenario, there were intensified police patrols, leading to more than 600 arrests over the course of several days. With a heavier police presence at hand,

subsequent protests in the districts of Noerrebro and Christiania were quickly dispersed. Meanwhile, peaceful protests attracting thousands of people also took place in the same period.

Elections of 2007

November 13, 2007 saw Danes go to the polls to vote in parliamentary elections. Turnout was high -- indeed, participation in the democratic process was higher than usual with over 86 percent of the electorate casting ballots. Key issues for voters included immigration, the environment, tax reform and welfare. Incumbent Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was hoping for a renewed mandate.

Before the election, polls suggested that Rasmussen, at the helm of the center-right ruling coalition, would eke out a slim victory over the center-left and leftist opposition thanks to positive approval ratings. Acknowledging the closeness of the impending race, Rasmussen cautioned against over-confidence saying, "This election is very close. You can't count your chickens before they're hatched."

When the polling stations closed, exit poll data showed that Rasmussen's coalition would likely hold a slight lead. Yet undetermined was whether or not Rasmussen would have command of an absolute majority in parliament, or if he would have to preside over a minority government. The role of the New Alliance party, led by a Syrian-born immigrant, Naser Khader, and parliamentarians from Danish dependencies, such as the Faroe Islands and Greenland, promised to be significant, particularly if Rasmussen did not gain the 90 seats needed for an absolute majority in the 179-member Folketing (parliament). Prior to the announcement of the official vote count, Khader said that he would likely align his party with Rasmussen.

With almost all the votes counted, Rasmussen's Liberal-Conservative coalition and allies won 90 of the 179 seats at stake, while the center-left opposition, led by the Social Democrats, garnered 84 seats. Rasmussen celebrated his victory saying, "It's a good day for Denmark. Everything indicates that the government can continue." Meanwhile, Social Democrat leader, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, acknowledged that her bloc had fallen short, saying: "It was not enough."

With the formation of the government in the offing, attention turned to the possible addition of the immigrant-led New Alliance in the governing coalition. Also at issue was the inclusion of the anti-immigration Danish People's Party, which had aligned itself with Rasmussen in the previous parliament. The question remained whether a stable government could be formed including both these two parties. Nevertheless, Rasmussen put forth his new coalition government, which included both the nationalist Danish People's Party, and the centrist New Alliance. His decision to include Birthe Ronn Hornbech as Integration Minister signaled a centrist orientation toward complex social issues, such as immigration.

The coalition was quickly tested in early 2008 over the issue of asylum seekers. Had Khader's New Alliance not decided to support the policy, a new election could have been triggered. Such an end could have been detrimental to Khader's young party, which -- for now -- would continue to have a voice in government. At the same time, Rasmussen's government would prevail with the knowledge that it had passed a key test and its stability was in tact.

Revisiting the Euro

In other developments, Rasmussen said that Denmark would hold a new referendum on the adoption of the euro as the country's currency. In 2000, the Danish people rejected the euro; Rasmussen said that it was time to make a new decision about the matter, given the changing landscape. A vote was expected within the ensuing four years.

Other Recent Developments

Religious controversy and the notion of free expression returned to the fore in February 2008 . At that time, Danish authorities uncovered a plot to assassinate one of the cartoonists whose renderings of the the Islamic Prophet Muhammad raised the ire of Muslims at home and internationally a few years earlier. The situation grew tense when the authorities instituted a random "stop and search policy" -- presumably as a result of the threat posed by the assassination plot. Meanwhile, newspapers in Denmark reprinted one of the cartoons. These two developments were said to have sparked riots and vandalism that ensued for several consecutive days in Copenhagen. It was reported that those to blame were angry young people -- many of Muslim or immigrant backgrounds.

On June 2, 2008, a car bomb exploded just outside the Danish embassy in the Pakistani capital city of Islamabad. Reports noted that several people died in the attack including an embassy employee; more than 30 others were injured as well. Pakistani Foreign Secretary Salman Bashir said, "The president, the prime minister, as well as the foreign minister, have all very strongly condemned this terrorist attack... and our hearts go out to the families of the victims." Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the Danish prime minister, characterized the attack as "cowardly" said that Danish foreign policy would be maintained. He said, "Denmark will not alter its policy because of a terror attack."

There was no immediate confirmation of those responsible. The main Islamic extremist group in Pakistan, led by Baitullah Mehsud, and allied with the Taliban, were in peace negotiations with the government. As such, it was not regarded as the prime suspect. Indeed, several other militant groups were also in ceasefire talks with the government, thus suggesting a dwindling list of

possibilities. There was some feeling that the cartoons depicting the Muslim Prophet Mohammed, which were published in Danish newspapers and led to global protests of angry Muslims, may have been the catalyst for the attack - the actual culprits notwithstanding. To that end, however, al-Qaida leaders had earlier referenced these very cartoons, leading to speculation that they may have been behind the attack on the Danish embassy.

Attention was on the domestic scene in late 2008 when a referendum was held in Greenland on increased autonomy from Copenhagen. Voters who cast ballots in that referendum approved an initiative to seek more self determination from and a greater share of oil revenues off the Greenland's coast.

On April 3, 2009 at the NATO summit in Strasbourg in France, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, was chosen to take over as NATO chief when Jaap de Hoop Scheffer of the Netherlands completes his tenure in July 2009.

Rasmussen, who was strongly backed by the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, has been regarded as having strong credentials that qualify him for his impending role. When Denmark held the rotating presidency of the European Union in 2002, Rasmussen was credited with leading the complicated negotiations that ultimately concluded with the accession of ten countries to the European bloc. More recently, he has led the effort to get countries such as the United States, China and India to support a new international accord on climate change.

Rasmussen's decision to support to the United States-led "war on terror," which included a commitment of troops to both Afghanistan and Iraq, drew him into a closer relationship with then-United States President George W. Bush. But he has raised the ire of some Muslim countries because of his refusal to apologize for the cartoons published in a Danish newspaper mocking the Prophet Mohammed. For his part, Rasmussen has maintained the view that freedom of the press is paramount in democracy.

Meanwhile, with Anders Fogh Rasmussen resigning as Denmark's prime minister to become the new NATO Secretary-General, attention was on his replacement. To that end, on April 5, 2009, Finance Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen became Denmark's new prime minister and head of government.

The new Rasmussen -- no relation of the outgoing prime minister -- has served as the deputy leader of the ruling Liberals and won the backing of his party, the party's coalition partner, the Conservatives, as well as the coalition's ally, the Danish People's Party, in parliament. Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen also met with Queen Margrethe at the royal palace where his appointment was confirmed.

Speaking outside the palace, the new head of government said, "It's a big responsibility that I'm

taking on, and I know some think it's too big for me. To those people I want to say that I'm going to work hard ... to lead Denmark through the current financial crisis." To that end, the new Prime Minister Rasmussen was expected to continue his predecessor's pro-growth, tax-cutting policies as well as the lead role in forging a new treaty to deal with global climate change.

Special Entry:

Greenland moves toward further toward self-determination and self-rule

Greater self-determination and self-rule were introduced in Greenland in June 2009, and came after a referendum on the matter some months earlier. At issue were new provisions allowing for Greenland to take charge of a larger share of natural resource revenue, as well as control over its police force and justice system. As well, Greenlandic (or Kalaallisut) was set to become the official language. Accordingly, the Arctic island was moving on the path towards increased independence from Denmark, although defense decisions and foreign policy would continue to be set in Copenhagen.

Note: Greenland has been part of Denmark's jurisdiction for three centuries. In 1979, Greenland was granted the status of a semi-autonomous territory in 1979. In November 2008, a referendum resulted in even greater powers of self-determination for the Arctic island. Under international law, the indigenous Inuit are treated as a distinct people. While Greenland is believed to have untapped rich mineral resources, it is also beset by social challenges including a high rates of suicide, alcoholism, and domestic abuse, and it reliant on Copenhagen for subsidies.

Special Entry:

Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen

In November 2009, leaders at the summit of the 21-country Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in Singapore discussed a compromise agreement on climate change ahead of the global gathering set to take place in December 2009 in Copenhagen. At stake was an international accord to function as the successor treaty to Kyoto, which would also be aimed at reducing carbon emissions. At that time, there was some suggestion that while a "politically binding" document could be forged to serve as the interim climate change agreement, there was not enough global consensus to form a legally binding agreement. Instead, such an objective might have to wait until the next climate talks in 2010 in Mexico City.

In December 2009, the United Nations summit on climate change opened in the Danish capital of Copenhagen. Delegates from more than 190 countries were in attendance, and approximately 100 world leaders including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and United States President Barack

Obama were expected to attend. Accordingly, such high level participation was expected to raise the stakes for a successful summit.

Despite earlier fears that little concurrence would come from the conference, effectively pushing significant actions forward to a 2010 conference in Mexico City, negotiators were now reporting that the talks were productive and several key countries, such as South Africa, were now pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The two main issues that could yet lead to cleavages were questions of agreement between the developed and the developing world on targets, as well as the overall effectiveness of proposals in seriously addressing the perils of climate change. That being said, there was enormous concurrence on the significance of the stakes with an editorial on the matter of climate change being published in 56 newspapers in 45 countries. That editorial warned that without global action, climate change would "ravage our planet." Meanwhile, a global survey taken by Globescan showed that concern over global warming had exponentially increased from 1998 -- when only 20 percent of respondents believed it to be a serious problem -- to 64 percent in 2009.

On Dec. 9, 2009, four countries -- the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico and Norway -- presented a document outlining ideas for raising and managing billions of dollars, which would be intended to help vulnerable countries dealing with the perils of climate change. The "green fund" would fall under the rubric of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, for which developed countries have been committed to quantifying their emission reduction targets, and also to providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

The United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico and Norway also called for the creation of a new legal treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol. This new treaty, which could go into force in 2012, would focus largely on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Such a move would be a departure from the structure of the Kyoto Protocol, which contained emissions targets for industrialized countries due to the prevailing view that developed countries had a particular historic responsibility to be accountable for climate change. More recently, it has become apparent that substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions demanded by scientists would only come to pass with the participation also of significant developing nation states, such as China and India. However, China -- as the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter -- was demanding that developed and wealthy countries in Copenhagen deliver a real agreement on climate change by delivering on their promises to reduce carbon emissions and provide financial support for developing countries to adapt to global warming.

China aside, attention was also on India -- another major player in the developing world and a country with an industrializing economy that was impacting the environment. At issue was the Indian government's decision to set a carbon intensity target, which would slow emissions growth by up to 25 percent by the 2020 deadline. This strong position was resisted by some elements in India, even compelling that country's top environmental negotiator's refusal to travel to

Copenhagen in protest of the government's newly-announced stance.

China and India were joined by Brazil and South Africa in the crafting of a draft document calling for a new global climate treaty to be completed by June 2010. Likewise, Tuvalu demanded that legally binding agreements emerge from Copenhagen. Its proposal was supported by many of the vulnerable countries, from small island states and sub-Saharan Africa, all of whom warned of the catastrophic impact of climate change on their citizens. But despite such impassioned pleas and irrespective of warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that the rise in sea level from melting polar ice caps would deleteriously affect low-lying atolls such as Tuvalu and Kiribati in the Pacific, and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean, the oil-giant Saudi Arabia was able to block this move. Of concern has been the realization that there was insufficient time to find concurrence on a full legal treaty, which would leave countries only with a politically-binding text by the time the summit at Copenhagen closed.

Meanwhile, within the developed countries, yet another power struggle was brewing. The European Union warned it would only agree to raise its target of 20 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions to 30 percent if the United States demonstrated that it would do more to reduce its own emissions.

The division between developed and developing countries in Copenhagen reached new heights on Dec. 14, 2009, when some of the poor and less developed countries launched a boycott at the summit. The move, which was spurred by African countries but backed by China and India, appeared to be geared toward redirecting attention and primary responsibility to the wealthier and more industrialized countries. The impasse was resolved after the wealthier and more industrialized countries offered assurances that they did not intend on shirking from their commitments to reducing greenhouse gases. As a result, the participating countries ceased the boycott.

Outside the actual summit, thousands of protestors had gathered to demand crucial global warming, leading to clashes between police and demonstrators elsewhere in the Danish capital city. There were reports of scattered violence across Copenhagen and more than 1,000 people were arrested.

Nevertheless, by the second week of the climate change summit, hopes of forging a strong deal were eroding as developed and developing nations remained deadlocked on sharing cuts in greenhouse gases, and particularly on the matters of financing and temperature goals.

By the close of the summit, the difficult process eventually resulted in some consensus being cultivated. A draft text called for \$100 billion a year by 2020 to assist poor nations cope with climate change, while aiming to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The deal also included specific targets for developed countries to reduce

greenhouse gas emissions, and called for reductions by developing countries as a share of their economies. Also included in the agreement was a mechanism to verify compliance. This draft would stand as an interim agreement, with a legally-binding international pact unlikely to materialize until 2010. In this way, the summit in Copenhagen failed to achieve its central objective, which was to negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions.

Further Recent Developments:

In January, 2010, a Somali man was charged with trying to murder, Kurt Westergaarde, the Danish artist whose cartoons depicting the Muslim prophet, Muhammad, sparked riots across the globe in 2005. Mohamed Gelee was accused of breaking into Westergaarde's home on January 1, 2010, and wielding an axe while screaming, "You must die! You are going to Hell!"

More than a year later in February 2011, Gelee was found guilty of attempted murder and terrorism for the 2010 New Year's Day aze attack against Westergaarde. A day after the guilty verdict was rendered, a Danish court in Aarhus ruled that Gelee should be jailed for nine years. The court also dismissed Gelee's request that he not be expelled and sent back to Somalia following his time served in prison. Instead, Ingrid Thorsboe, the head of the three-person judicial team, said: "Mohamed Gelee is sentenced to nine years in prison and expulsion from Denmark for life," said Ingrid Thorsboe, head of the three-judge team.

Meanwhile, in a related development, three men were charged with planning to attack the offices of the newspaper that printed the aforementioned cartoons of the Muslim prophet, Muhammad, at the close of 2010.

Elections of 2011

On Aug. 26, 2011, Danish Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen called for an early parliamentary election in the country. The new date was scheduled for Sept. 15, 2011 -- two months ahead of the Nov. 13, 2011 deadline as set forth by the national constitution.

With an eye on setting the policy agenda for the impending vote, Rasmussen, the Danish head of government said, "In a worldwide debt crisis, the Danes are headed for a clear choice -- uncontrollable debt or lasting welfare." In an effort to challenge the incumbent government, Denmark's opposition parties decided to close ranks. Willy Soevndal, chairman of the Socialist People's Party, said that the next Danish government should not ignore the need for economic growth and job creation in the zeal to control debt. Issuing a criticism of the ruling Liberal-Conservative government, he said, "We do not believe welfare cuts and austerity measures are the right response." Meanwhile, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, the head of the Social Democratic Party,

advocated a change agenda, marked by short-term stimulus spending, investment in the future via education, higher taxes on the ultra-rich, and spurring increased productivity by calling on Danes to work an extra hour per week. She had also promised to reverse strict immigration regulations advanced by a junior partner of the ruling coalition.

Ahead of the elections, opinion polls indicated that the opposition Social Democratic Party (or Socialdemokraterne, as they are known in Danish), the Socialist People's Party, and their allies, the centrist/swing Social Liberals and Red-Green Alliance (known as Enhedslisten). This group of parties -- collectively known as the left-leaning Red Bloc -- could well be positioned to upset the ruling Liberal-Conservative coalition. That ruling coalition was composed of the prime minister's Liberal Party (known as Venstre in Danish), the Conservatives (or Det Konservative Folkeparti), and has been backed in parliament by the anti-immigration Danish People's Party, the Liberal Alliance, and Christian Democrats (or Kristendemokraterne). Together, this group is known as the right-leaning Blue Bloc.

The previous 2007 elections ended in a slim victory for the Blue Bloc and so a reversal of fortune in 2011 was not beyond the realm of possibility. To that end, the left-leaning parties of the Red Bloc were apparently prepared to join forces in a united front against the Blue Bloc. Meanwhile, the Blue Bloc was having to contend with the fact that one of its members -- the Conservatives -- was no longer being regarded as a strong partner due to internal power struggles and a perception that it represents only elite constituents. Should the Red Bloc prevail, the Social Democrats, which won only one short less than Prime Minister Rasmussen's Liberals in the 2007 election, would be the likely winner with the most seats in parliament.

On election day -- Sept. 15, 2011 -- the Red Bloc, led by Social Democratic leader Helle Thorning-Schmidt, was headed for a narrow victory. Unofficial results indicated that the center-left Red Bloc was on track to secure 89 seats in the 179-seat parliament. The center-right Blue Bloc had come up short with 86 seats. Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen acknowledged his party's defeat. This development marked a significant shift on the political scene in Denmark, effectively ending a decade in opposition for the Social Democrats, while simultaneously ending the center-right's dominance on the political field. At the same time, it also set the stage for Thorning-Schmidt to make history as Denmark's first female head of government. In her victory address, Thorning-Schmidt said, "We did it... today we've written history."

Note that by the start of October 2011, Denmark's new Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt had formed a government and presented her cabinet to Queen Margrethe II at Amalienborg Castle in Copenhagen. The closed-door meeting was historic in its symbolism since, for the first time, the two main participants were a female head of government and a female head of state. The new government was to be composed of Thorning-Schmidt's Social Democratic Party (SDP), which would hold 11 ministerial portfolios, in coalition with the Social Liberal Party (SLP) and the Socialist People's Party (SPP), which would respectively hold six seats. SPP Chairman Villy

Soevndal was set to become the new Minister for Foreign Affairs while SLP Chairman Margrethe Vestager was to become Minister for Economy and Internal Affairs.

Note on relations with U.S.

Danish-United States relations were likely to be strengthened by the 2012 rescue of a Danish aid worker in Somalia by United States Navy Seals. President Obama ordered a bold operation aimed at rescuing the Danish national along with an American citizen, both of whom had been kidnapped and taken hostage by Somali pirates. The Danish government profoundly thanked the Obama administration in the United States for its decisive action.

On June 4, 2012, four individuals were found guilty of planning a terrorist attack on Danish newspaper offices and sentenced to 12 years in prison. At issue was the plot to carry out a revenge attack against the Jyllands-Posten for publishing satirical cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad in 2005. Those cartoons included an illustration of Muhammad carrying a bomb on his head, which was decorated with the Muslim declaration of faith instead of a turban. The cartoons sparked protests across the world, and Danish interests were particularly targeted in a campaign of outrage and anger by extremist Muslims.

In 2012, the men -- all of whom were Muslim residents of Sweden -- were apprehended thanks to the efforts by joint Swedish and Danish intelligence operatives. Weapons, including a machine-gun with a silencer, a pistol, bullets, and rolls of duct tape, were discovered among the men's possession when they were arrested. According to Danish prosecutors, the men intended to kill an "unknown" number of victims in a terror attack that was to take place at an awards ceremony attended by Crown Prince Frederik.

Note: Since 2005 when Jyllands-Posten published about a dozen cartoons showing the Prophet Muhammad in a variety of satirical situations, Denmark has been a north European target of terrorism by Islamic Jihadists and extremists. The cartoons were regarded as deliberately offensive by many Muslims globally; however, most advocates of democracy have argued that the right to be offensive has been part of the freedom of the press in mature democratic nation states.

Editor's Note on Economy:

The stability of the euro zone and the European Union has become a major concern in recent years, largely emanating from the Greek debt crisis, but extending regionally. It should be noted that although Denmark is a member state of the European Union, it is not in the euro zone, effectively minimizing the negative effects for this country.

In late 2011, there were calls for serious changes to Europe's governing treaties, aimed at ameliorated economic governance for the 17 countries that make up the euro currency bloc. Included in their proposal were: (1) the creation of a monetary fund for Europe, (2) automatic penalties for countries that exceed European deficit limits, and (3) monthly meetings of European leaders. Meanwhile, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which was intended to replace the European Financial Stability Facility in 2013 (an entity intended as a rescue mechanism for struggling European economies), would be advanced earlier in 2012. Ideally, the new treaty would be ratified by all 27 member states of the European Union. However, if concurrence at that level proved impossible, then the 17 states of the euro zone would have to approve it.

Please see the "Economic Conditions" for information about the debt crisis plaguing Europe and the euro zone countries.

Special National Security Entry

On Feb. 15, 2015, a free speech and blasphemy debate at a cafe in Denmark's capital city of Copenhagen, which featured a controversial Swedish cartoonist, was transposed into a scene of chaos when a gunmen opened fire on participants. That assault left film director Finn Norgaard dead. Three other persons were injured in the attack. The Swedish cartoonist, Lars Vilks, who faced death threats over his caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, escaped unhurt. French Ambassador Francois Zimeray, who attended the debate -- presumably to show solidarity and respect for free speech following the Paris "Charlie Hebdo" attacks a month earlier -- also was unhurt. A separate attack followed at a Jewish synagogue during a bar mitzvah for a young girl, that left security guard Dan Uzan dead.

A manhunt in search of the suspect followed the two violent attacks. Ultimately, Omar El-Hussein -- a Danish-born man of Palestinian ethnicity -- was shot and killed. Meanwhile, two individuals were arrested and charged with providing material assistance to El-Hussein.

It should be noted that the gunman -- El-Hussein -- was involved in criminal gangs and had a history of convictions for violent crimes. That being said, there remained suggestions that the attacks in Copenhagen were "copy cat" killings, reminiscent of the Paris attacks in January 2015 that targeted the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine and a Jewish kosher supermarket and left 17 people dead.

Danish intelligence was investigating whether the assailant was sympathetic to Islamist Jihadist notions, and had traveled to the Middle East, particularly Syria or Iraq, where the terror group Islamic State holds sway. However, the Danish foreign minister, Martin Lidegaard, dismissed the notion of a foreign connection, insisting instead that El-Hussein was likely radicalized in prison. He said, "We are not talking about a foreign fighter who has been abroad fighting in Syria or Iraq. We

are talking about a man who was known by the police due to his gang activities, his criminal activities inside Denmark. Whether he has been radicalized inside jail where he was just released from or he has been moving around in these environments before is as yet rather unclear."

Following the attacks, Denmark was placed on high alert. Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt described the horrific events as "politically motivated" acts of terrorism. She later cast the shootings as "a cynical act of terror against Denmark" and said her government would not compromise on Denmark's defense of free expression. To this end, Thorning-Schmidt declared, "When you mercilessly fire deadly bullets at innocent people taking part in a debate, when you attack the Jewish community, you attack our democracy."

Thorning-Schmidt also vowed to protect Denmark's Jewish community. Of note was the fact that the Jewish legacy in Denmark has been strong, with Denmark taking pride in the fact that it saved most of its Jewish population from the 1940s Nazi Holocaust. Making it clear that Denmark decades later would continue to stand strong with the Jewish population, the prime minister said, "We will do everything possible to protect our Jewish community."

But the safety of Denmark's Jewish population became something of a diplomatic imbroglio when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Danish Jews to emigrate to Israel. Denmark's Chief Rabbi Jair Melchior expressed disappointment over the Israeli leader's untimely intervention into the Danish tragedy, saying in an interview with the Associated Press, "If the way we deal with terror is to run somewhere else, we should all run to a deserted island."

Note on Elections 2015

Parliamentary elections were set to be held in Denmark on June 18, 2015. At stake was control over the unicameral "Folketing" (People's Diet or Parliament), which is composed of 179 members, including two from Greenland and two from the Faroe Islands. Members are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional representation to serve four-year terms. Normally, the leader of the ruling party -- the party with the most seats in parliament -- is the prime minister and head of government.

Since the elections of 2011, Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt has served as the head of government due to the victory of her left-leaning Social Democratic Party at the polls that year. In 2015, it was to be seen if Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt and the Social Democratic Party (or Socialdemokraterne, as they are known in Danish) would again see similar success.

The parties expected to contest the 2015 elections included the following:

Social Democratic Party (also known as Socialdemokraterne)

Socialist People's Party or SF
Social Liberal Party or SLP
Red-Green Alliance (Unity List or Enhedslisten)
Liberal Party (Venestre or V)
Conservative People's Party (also known as (or Det Konservative Folkeparti)
Christian Democrats (or Kristendemokraterne)
Danish People's Party or DF
Liberal Alliance or LA

This list of parties could roughly be divided into two blocs. On one hand, there was the center-left "red" bloc consisting of the Social Democratic Party, Socialist People's Party, the centrist/swing Social Liberals, and the Red-Green Alliance. On the other hand was the right-leaning "blue" bloc consisting of Liberal Party and the Conservatives, which has been backed in parliament by the anti-immigration Danish People's Party, the Liberal Alliance, and Christian Democrats.

Polling data ahead two weeks ahead of the elections gave a small lead to the center-left "red" bloc, led by Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt, ahead of the right-leaning "blue" bloc, led by Lars Lokke Rasmussen (the leader of the Liberal Party). This advantage suggested a shift since previous polls had given the advantage to the blue bloc. All suggestions were that Thorning-Schmidt's move to advocate increased spending on health care, child care, the environment, and security was seeing some degree of a positive effect, along with a healthier growth forecast for the country. Regardless, all expectations were that the election would be a close and competitive race.

But with only days to go until election day, Denmark's center-right bloc of opposition parties was making a comeback of sorts, with polling data showing it had taken the lead. Analysts attributed the late stage surge to the strong debate performance of the leader of the Liberals, Rasmussen. That being said, with a full 20 percent of the electorate apparently undecided, the election could conceivably go either way.

On election day, Danes went to the polls to cast their ballots on one of the country's closest elections in recent memory. After the votes were counted, it was the center-right coalition of Rasmussen that had secured a narrow victory over Prime Minister center-left bloc.

While the prime minister's Social Democrats won the plurality of the seats in parliament and 26 percent of the total vote share, in conjunction with allied parties, she was denied a majority. The hard-right anti-immigration Danish People's Party became the second-largest in parliament, having won an impressive 21 percent of the vote share. Rasmussen's Denmark Liberal Party secured a third place finish with 19.5 percent.

For her part, outgoing Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt lauded her party for being the most popular single party in Denmark, but conceded defeat and resigned as the party leader. She said,

"We did not win the election and we were beaten at the finish line. Leadership is to step down at the right time. And that time is now."

Meanwhile, Rasmussen, who served as prime minister from 2009-2011, declared victory despite the fact that his Liberal Party had not actually won the most votes, and in fact, seen one of its worst election performances in recent times. Still, the cumulative center-right bloc had the advantage, which meant that Rasmussen was well-positioned to try to form a coalition government, led by his Liberal Party. To that end, he said, "Tonight we have been given an opportunity, but only an opportunity, to take leadership in Denmark. We take that upon ourselves and I take that upon myself ... What I offer today is to put myself at the head of a government."

That effort was complicated by the fact that the Danish People's Party actually won more votes than the Liberal Party, and the DPP leader, Kristian Thulesen Dahl, expressed no interest in entering government. Instead, Dahl said the party preferred to be a "little free bird" capable of staying true to its principles and goals. Nevertheless, Dahl could yet forge an agreement to support Rasmussen's government from the outside.

Another problem for Rasmussen and the Liberals was the fact that another center-right party, the Conservative Party, foreclosed participating in a coalition government.

As June 2015 was drawing to a close, coalition talks were deadlocked. The Danish People's Party continued to indicate its reluctance to enter a coalition, and highlight differences on spending. Of note was the anti-immigration party's demand for more public spending while the Liberals has advocated a spending freeze. With the Conservatives out of the equation, the only other member of the center-right bloc of parties that might be interested in joining the Liberals in government was the small Liberal Alliance.

Given this landscape, it came as no surprise when Rasmussen finally announced he would form a minority government. In an interview with the media, Rasmussen said, "It's my judgment that it will be possible to form a Liberal government under my guidance which will enjoy support in parliament."

Special Entry: Migrant crisis rocks Europe

In September 2015, a humanitarian crisis was rocking Europe as displaced Syrians desperate to escape the destructive civil war at home, along with the threat of brutal terrorism at the hands of Islamic State, sought refuge in Europe. Most of the migrants were attempting to reach Western Europe by traveling either by boat across the Mediterranean to Cyprus, and then traveling north through Greece, the Balkan countries, and Hungary. The migrants were not eager to remain in those countries as their goal was to reach a destination in Western Europe. But because of

prevailing laws and Hungary's hardline stance, many of the migrants were essentially trapped in Hungarian asylum-seekers' processing centers due to restrictions on movement. At issue were European Union regulations requiring refugees to seek asylum in the first country where they land. Many of the migrants in Hungary were soon insisting that they would walk by foot to Germany and Austria if the Hungarian government continued to impede their travel.

Pope Francis -- the leader of the Roman Catholic Church and the head of the Holy See -- entered the fray and called on Catholic parishes, churches, and monasteries across Europe to provide sanctuary to migrants seeking refuge. Meanwhile, private groups (i.e. with no governmental ties) have sprouted up in Europe to assist in transporting migrants from Hungary to more hospitable ground in Austria and Germany.

While the Hungarian government has received criticism for its hardline stance regarding migrants, in contrast to Austria and Germany, which have eased European Union restrictions and allowed migrants to bypass the normal asylum seeking process, the legal landscape was set to change. Of note were signals from Austria and Germany indicating that they would soon phase out the special measures in place allowing migrants to get to western Europe. Acknowledging that they had made exceptions due to the dire nature of the crisis, the governments of Austria and Germany noted that they would soon be returning to normal conditions whereby asylum seekers would have to be registered and processed in the first European Union country where they arrive.

The migrant crisis had been ongoing for some time; however, it captured global attention when the body of a young Kurdish boy washed onto the shores of a Turkish resort. The boy along with his brother and mother perished in the sea when the person paid to help them escape Syria abandoned their boat before it landed at the Greek island of Kos. The visual image of a young child being the innocent casualty of the war and bloodshed wrought by those in power was reminiscent of another notorious image decades earlier in Vietnam. In 1972, the photograph Kim Phuc who had been burned by napalm and was running naked in the streets to escape the bombing was seared in the minds of people across the world, and is credited with helping bring the war to an end. It is to be determined if the heartbreaking image of the body of young Alan Kurdi would have the same impact in 2015. It was nevertheless drawing attention on the humanitarian crisis sweeping across Europe as Syrians sought refuge from the horrendous conditions of a country destroyed by war and terrorism.

Note that by mid-September 2015, Hungary was militarizing its southern border to prevent the infiltration by Syrians seeking asylum. In Germany, there were plans to impose controls on the border with Austria, with an eye on adhering to international law, which dictates that refugees must seek asylum in their initial European Union "landing" countries. As noted by German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere, refugees cannot "choose" their host countries. He added that the imposition of new controls was intended to return to a regime consistent with international law, as he said, "The aim of these measures is to limit the current inflows to Germany and to return to

orderly procedures when people enter the country." In Denmark, rail links with Germany were temporarily suspended to stem the tide of Syrian migrants for the same reason.

Meanwhile, given the crisis sweeping across the region, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said that plans were afoot for a "swift, determined and comprehensive" response that would adhere to principles of "humanity and human dignity" via a quota system.

Across the Atlantic in the United States, the Obama administration announced that it would accept 10,000 Syrian refugees over the course of the next year.

Denmark introduces controversial legislation to seize refugees' valuables

In the latter part of 2015, a humanitarian crisis was rocking Europe as displaced Syrians desperate to escape the destructive civil war at home, along with the threat of brutal terrorism at the hands of Islamic State, sought refuge in Europe. Most of the migrants were attempting to reach Western Europe by traveling either by boat across the Mediterranean to Cyprus, and then traveling north through Greece, the Balkan countries, and Hungary. The migrants were not eager to remain in those countries as their goal was to reach a destination in Western Europe. But because of prevailing laws and Hungary's hardline stance, many of the migrants were essentially trapped in Hungarian asylum-seekers' processing centers due to restrictions on movement. At issue were European Union regulations requiring refugees to seek asylum in the first country where they land. Many of the migrants in Hungary were soon insisting that they would walk by foot to Germany and Austria if the Hungarian government continued to impede their travel.

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By the start of 2016, with asylum seekers dominating the public discourse in Denmark, members of parliament in that country voted to pass controversial legislation that would allow the government to seize cash, jewelry, and other valuables from asylum seekers, in order to pay for their expenses. The vote tally in parliament was overwhelming with 81 affirmative votes by legislators and would enable the government to seize items and cash valued at more than 10,000 Danish kroner belonging to asylum seekers, which would then be used to pay for their care. Items such as wedding rings or commemorative medals deemed to be of "special sentimental value" would not be subject to confiscation.

Justifying the law, a spokesperson for Denmark's conservative ruling Liberal Party, Jakob Ellemann-Jensen, said in an interview with CNN, "All Danish citizens and refugees coming here receive universal health care; you receive education from preschool to university, and you receive elderly care; you receive language training and integration training free of charge, paid for by the

government. The only demand that we set to measure this is if you have the means to pay for your housing and for your food -- regardless of whether you are a Dane or whether you are a refugee -- then you should."

The far right and nationalist Danish People's Party, however, cast the bill as a deterrent against refugees arriving in Denmark, with that party's spokesperson, Martin Henriksen, saying, "We hope this will start a chain reaction through Europe where other European countries can see there's the need to tighten the rules on immigration in order to keep European culture."

An additional element to the legislation would ensure that asylum seekers would have to wait for an extended period of time in Denmark before being eligible to apply for family members to join them. This particular provision was highlighted by People's Party spokesperson, Henriksen, as a useful deterrent to people seeking asylum in Denmark. He said, "The aim is to make sure that fewer people come to Denmark -- if it's hard to bring your family." Anders Ladekarl, the secretary general of the Danish Red Cross, had a very different view of this element of the law. He said, "Imagine leaving your family back home in a war zone, and you will have to sit in a Danish village or refugee center waiting for your family without being able to see them for three to four years."

In a Scandinavian country known for its social justice reputation and generosity of spirit, the legislation has been regarded as rather shocking and reflective of the "Orbanization" of the European public sphere. The term "Orbanization" was a reference to Prime Minister Victor Orban of Hungary, who gained notoriety for the particularly harsh and punitive measures undertaken by his government with regard to refugees. In Denmark, the so-called "jewelry and valuables" bill was being condemned by human rights groups, with John Dalhuisen of Amnesty International noting that it was another sign of the "dismal race to the bottom" by European countries with regard to the migrant crisis. He said, "To prolong the suffering of vulnerable people who have been ripped apart from their families by conflict or persecution is plain wrong. Today's mean spirited vote in Danish parliament seeks not only to pilfer the possessions refugees cling to, but also to needlessly lengthen their separation from their loved ones."

--February 2016

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch.com or www.countrywatch.com; see Bibliography in the Appendix for a list of research references.

Political Risk Index

Political Risk Index

The **Political Risk Index** is a proprietary index measuring the level of risk posed to governments, corporations, and investors, based on a myriad of political and economic factors. The [Political Risk Index](#) is calculated using an established methodology by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on varied criteria* including the following consideration: political stability, political representation, democratic accountability, freedom of expression, security and crime, risk of conflict, human development, jurisprudence and regulatory transparency, economic risk, foreign investment considerations, possibility of sovereign default, and corruption. Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the highest political risk, while a score of 10 marks the lowest political risk. Stated differently, countries with the lowest scores pose the greatest political risk. A score of 0 marks the most dire level of political risk and an ultimate nadir, while a score of 10 marks the lowest possible level of political risk, according to this proprietary index. Rarely will there be scores of 0 or 10 due to the reality that countries contain complex landscapes; as such, the index offers a range of possibilities ranging from lesser to greater risk.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4
Algeria	6
Andorra	9
Angola	4
Antigua	8

Argentina	4
Armenia	4-5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9.5
Azerbaijan	4
Bahamas	8.5
Bahrain	6
Bangladesh	3.5
Barbados	8.5-9
Belarus	3
Belgium	9
Belize	8
Benin	5
Bhutan	5
Bolivia	5
Bosnia-Herzegovina	4
Botswana	7
Brazil	7

Brunei	7
Bulgaria	6
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	3
Cambodia	4
Cameroon	5
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4
Chile	9
China	7
China: Hong Kong	8
China: Taiwan	8
Colombia	7
Comoros	5
Congo DRC	3

Congo RC	4
Costa Rica	8
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5
Croatia	7
Cuba	4-4.5
Cyprus	5
Czech Republic	8
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	4.5
Dominica	7
Dominican Republic	6
East Timor	5
Ecuador	6
Egypt	5
El Salvador	7
Equatorial Guinea	4
Eritrea	3
Estonia	8

Ethiopia	4
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Fr. Yugoslav Rep. Macedonia	5
France	9
Gabon	5
Gambia	4
Georgia	5
Germany	9.5
Ghana	6
Greece	4.5-5
Grenada	8
Guatemala	6
Guinea	3.5
Guinea-Bissau	3.5
Guyana	4.5
Haiti	3.5
Holy See (Vatican)	9

Honduras	4.5-5
Hungary	7
Iceland	8.5-9
India	7.5-8
Indonesia	6
Iran	3.5-4
Iraq	2.5-3
Ireland	8-8.5
Israel	8
Italy	7.5
Jamaica	6.5-7
Japan	9
Jordan	6.5
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	7
Korea, North	1
Korea, South	8

Kosovo	4
Kuwait	7
Kyrgyzstan	4.5
Laos	4.5
Latvia	7
Lebanon	5.5
Lesotho	6
Liberia	3.5
Libya	2
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	7.5
Luxembourg	9
Madagascar	4
Malawi	4
Malaysia	8
Maldives	4.5
Mali	4
Malta	8

Marshall Islands	6
Mauritania	4.5-5
Mauritius	7
Mexico	6.5
Micronesia	7
Moldova	5
Monaco	9
Mongolia	5
Montenegro	6
Morocco	6.5
Mozambique	4.5-5
Namibia	6.5-7
Nauru	6
Nepal	4
Netherlands	9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	5
Niger	4

Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9.5
Oman	7
Pakistan	3.5
Palau	7
Panama	7.5
Papua New Guinea	5
Paraguay	6.5-7
Peru	7
Philippines	6
Poland	8
Portugal	7.5
Qatar	7.5
Romania	5.5
Russia	5.5
Rwanda	5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	8
Saint Lucia	8

Saint Vincent and Grenadines	8
Samoa	7
San Marino	9
Sao Tome and Principe	5.5
Saudi Arabia	6
Senegal	6
Serbia	5
Seychelles	7
Sierra Leone	4.5
Singapore	9
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8
Slovenia	8
Solomon Islands	6
Somalia	2
South Africa	7
Spain	7.5
Sri Lanka	5
Sudan	3.5

Suriname	5
Swaziland	5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2
Tajikistan	4.5
Tanzania	6
Thailand	6.5
Togo	4.5
Tonga	7
Trinidad and Tobago	8
Tunisia	6
Turkey	7
Turkmenistan	4.5
Tuvalu	7
Uganda	6
Ukraine	3.5-4
United Arab Emirates	7

United Kingdom	9
United States	9.5
Uruguay	8
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	7
Venezuela	4
Vietnam	5
Yemen	3
Zambia	4.5
Zimbabwe	3

*Methodology

The [Political Risk Index](#) is calculated by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on the combined scoring of varied criteria as follows --

1. political stability (record of peaceful transitions of power, ability of government to stay in office and carry out policies as a result of productive executive-legislative relationship, perhaps with popular support vis a vis risk of government collapse)
2. political representation (right of suffrage, free and fair elections, multi-party participation, and influence of foreign powers)
3. democratic accountability (record of respect for political rights, human rights, and civil liberties, backed by constitutional protections)
4. freedom of expression (media freedom and freedom of expression, right to dissent or express political opposition, backed by constitutional protections)

5. security and crime (the degree to which a country has security mechanisms that ensures safety of citizens and ensures law and order, without resorting to extra-judicial measures)
6. risk of conflict (the presence of conflict; record of coups or civil disturbances; threat of war; threats posed by internal or external tensions; threat or record of terrorism or insurgencies)
7. human development (quality of life; access to education; socio-economic conditions; systemic concern for the status of women and children)
8. jurisprudence and regulatory transparency (the impartiality of the legal system, the degree of transparency within the regulatory system of a country and the durability of that structure)
9. economic conditions (economic stability, investment climate, degree of nationalization of industries, property rights, labor force development)
10. corruption (the degree of corruption in a country and/or efforts by the government to address graft and other irregularities)

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the current climate of upheaval internationally -- both politically and economically -- has affected the ratings for several countries across the world.

North Korea, [Afghanistan](#), [Somalia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#) -- retain their low rankings.

Several Middle Eastern and North African countries, such as [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), [Libya](#), [Syria](#), [Iraq](#) and [Yemen](#) were downgraded in recent years due to political instability occurring in the "season of unrest" sweeping the region since 2011 and continuing today. The worst downgrades affected [Syria](#) where civil war is at play, along with the rampage of terror being carried out by Islamist terrorists who have also seized control over part of Syrian territory. [Iraq](#) has been further downgraded due to the rampage of Islamist terrorists and their takeover of wide swaths of Iraqi territory. [Libya](#) has also been downgraded further due to its slippage into failed state status; at issue in [Libya](#) have been an ongoing power struggle between rival militias. [Yemen](#) continues to hold steady with a poor ranking due to continued unrest at the hands of Houthi rebels, secessionists, al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, and Islamic State. Its landscape has been further complicated by the fact that it is now the site of a proxy war between [Iran](#) and [Saudi Arabia](#). Conversely, [Tunisia](#) and [Egypt](#) have seen slight upgrades as these countries stabilize.

In Africa, [Zimbabwe](#) continues to be one of the bleak spots of the world with the Mugabe regime

effectively destroying the country's once vibrant economy, and mirroring [Zimbabwe](#) with an exceedingly high rate of inflation, debilitating unemployment, devolving public services, and critical food shortages; rampant crime and political oppression round out the landscape. [Somalia](#) also sports a poor ranking due to the continuing influence of the terror group, al-Shabab, which was not operating across the border in [Kenya](#). On the upside, [Nigeria](#), which was ineffectively dealing with the threat posed by the terror group, Boko Haram, was making some strides on the national security front with its new president at the helm. [Mali](#) was slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. But the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded due to the takeover of the government by Muslim Seleka rebels and a continued state of lawlessness in that country. [South Sudan](#) -- the world's newest nation state -- has not been officially included in this assessment; however, it can be unofficially assessed to be in the vicinity of "3" due to its manifold political and economic challenges. [Burkina Faso](#), [Burundi](#) and [Guinea](#) have been downgraded due to political unrest, with [Guinea](#) also having to deal with the burgeoning Ebola crisis.

In Europe, [Ukraine](#) was downgraded due to the unrest facing that country following its Maidan revolution that triggered a pro-Russian uprising in the eastern part of the country. [Russia](#) was also implicated in the Ukrainian crisis due to its intervention on behalf of pro-Russian separatists, as well as its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. Strains on the infrastructure of southern and eastern European countries, such as [Serbia](#), [Croatia](#), and [Hungary](#), due to an influx of refugees was expected to pose social and economic challenges, and slight downgrades were made accordingly. So too, a corruption crisis for the Romanian prime minister has affected the ranking of that country. Meanwhile, the rankings for [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#) were maintained due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. [Greece](#), another euro zone nation, was earlier downgraded due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, no further downgrade was added since the country was able to successfully forge a bailout rescue deal with creditor institutions. Cyprus' exposure to Greek banks yielded a downgrade in its case.

In Asia, [Nepal](#) was downgraded in response to continuous political instability and a constitutional crisis that prevails well after landmark elections were held. Both [India](#) and [China](#) retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability. Increasing violence and political instability in [Pakistan](#) resulted in a downgrade for this country's already low rating. Meanwhile, [Singapore](#) retained its strong rankings due to its continued effective stewardship of the economy and political stability.

In the Americas, ongoing political and economic woes, as well as crime and corruption have affected the rankings for [Mexico](#), [Guatemala](#), and [Brazil](#). [Argentina](#) was downgraded due to its default on debt following the failure of talks with bond holders. [Venezuela](#) was downgraded due to its mix of market unfriendly policies and political oppression. For the moment, the [United States](#) maintains a strong ranking along with [Canada](#), and most of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean; however, a renewed debt ceiling crisis could cause the [United States](#) to be downgraded

in a future edition. Finally, a small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States.

Source:

Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Political Stability

Political Stability

The **Political Stability Index** is a proprietary index measuring a country's level of stability, standard of good governance, record of constitutional order, respect for human rights, and overall strength of democracy. The [Political Stability Index](#) is calculated using an established methodology* by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on a given country's record of peaceful transitions of power, ability of a government to stay in office and carry out its policies vis a vis risk credible risks of government collapse. Threats include coups, domestic violence and instability, terrorism, etc. This index measures the dynamic between the quality of a country's government and the threats that can compromise and undermine stability. Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the lowest level of political stability and an ultimate nadir, while a score of 10 marks the highest level of political stability possible, according to this proprietary index. Rarely will there be scores of 0 or 10 due to the reality that countries contain complex landscapes; as such, the index offers a range of possibilities ranging from lesser to greater stability.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2

Albania	4.5-5
Algeria	5
Andorra	9.5
Angola	4.5-5
Antigua	8.5-9
Argentina	7
Armenia	5.5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9.5
Azerbaijan	5
Bahamas	9
Bahrain	6
Bangladesh	4.5
Barbados	9
Belarus	4
Belgium	9
Belize	8
Benin	5

Bhutan	5
Bolivia	6
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5
Botswana	8.5
Brazil	7
Brunei	8
Bulgaria	7.5
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	4
Cambodia	4.5-5
Cameroon	6
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4.5
Chile	9
China	7

China: Hong Kong	8
China: Taiwan	8
Colombia	7.5
Comoros	5
Congo DRC	3
Congo RC	5
Costa Rica	9.5
Cote d'Ivoire	3.5
Croatia	7.5
Cuba	4.5
Cyprus	8
Czech Republic	8.5
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	5
Dominica	8.5
Dominican Republic	7
East Timor	5
Ecuador	7

Egypt	4.5-5
El Salvador	7.5-8
Equatorial Guinea	4.5
Eritrea	4
Estonia	9
Ethiopia	4.5
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Fr.YugoslavRep.Macedonia	6.5
France	9
Gabon	5
Gambia	4.5
Georgia	5
Germany	9.5
Ghana	7
Greece	6
Grenada	8.5
Guatemala	7

Guinea	3.5-4
Guinea-Bissau	4
Guyana	6
Haiti	3.5-4
Holy See (Vatican)	9.5
Honduras	6
Hungary	7.5
Iceland	9
India	8
Indonesia	7
Iran	3.5
Iraq	2.5
Ireland	9.5
Israel	8
Italy	8.5-9
Jamaica	8
Japan	9
Jordan	6

Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5
Kiribati	8
Korea, North	2
Korea, South	8.5
Kosovo	5.5
Kuwait	7
Kyrgyzstan	5
Laos	5
Latvia	8.5
Lebanon	5.5
Lesotho	5
Liberia	3.5-4
Libya	2
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	9
Luxembourg	9.5
Madagascar	4

Malawi	5
Malaysia	8
Maldives	4.5-5
Mali	4.5-5
Malta	9
Marshall Islands	8
Mauritania	6
Mauritius	8
Mexico	6.5-7
Micronesia	8
Moldova	5.5
Monaco	9.5
Mongolia	6.5-7
Montenegro	8
Morocco	7
Mozambique	5
Namibia	8.5
Nauru	8

Nepal	4.5
Netherlands	9.5
New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	6
Niger	4.5
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9.5
Oman	7
Pakistan	3
Palau	8
Panama	8.5
Papua New Guinea	6
Paraguay	8
Peru	7.5
Philippines	6
Poland	9
Portugal	9
Qatar	7

Romania	7
Russia	6
Rwanda	5
Saint Kitts and Nevis	9
Saint Lucia	9
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	9
Samoa	8
San Marino	9.5
Sao Tome and Principe	7
Saudi Arabia	6
Senegal	7.5
Serbia	6.5
Seychelles	8
Sierra Leone	4.5
Singapore	9.5
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8.5
Slovenia	9
Solomon Islands	6.5-7

Somalia	2
South Africa	7.5
Spain	9
Sri Lanka	5
Sudan	3
Suriname	5
Swaziland	5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2
Tajikistan	4.5
Tanzania	6
Thailand	6
Togo	5
Tonga	7
Trinidad and Tobago	8
Tunisia	5
Turkey	7.5

Turkmenistan	5
Tuvalu	8.5
Uganda	6
Ukraine	3.5-4
United Arab Emirates	7
United Kingdom	9
United States	9
Uruguay	8.5
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	8.5
Venezuela	4.5-5
Vietnam	4.5
Yemen	2.5
Zambia	5
Zimbabwe	3

***Methodology**

The Political Stability Index is calculated by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on the combined scoring of varied criteria as follows --

1. record of peaceful transitions of power (free and fair elections; adherence to political accords)
2. record of democratic representation, presence of instruments of democracy; systemic accountability
3. respect for human rights; respect for civil rights
4. strength of the system of jurisprudence, adherence to constitutional order, and good governance
5. ability of a government to stay in office and carry out its policies vis a vis risk credible risks of government collapse (i.e. government stability versus a country being deemed "ungovernable")
6. threat of coups, insurgencies, and insurrection
7. level of unchecked crime and corruption
8. risk of terrorism and other threats to national security
9. relationship with regional powers and international community; record of bilateral or multilateral cooperation
10. degree of economic strife (i.e. economic and financial challenges)

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the current climate of upheaval internationally -- both politically and economically -- has affected the ratings for several countries across the world. The usual suspects -- North Korea, [Afghanistan](#), and [Somalia](#) -- retain their low rankings. The reclusive and ultra-dictatorial North Korean regime, which has terrified the world with its nuclear threats, has exhibited internal instability. Of note was a cut-throat purge of hundreds of high ranking officials deemed to be a threat to Kim Jung-un. Despite their attempts to recover from years of lawlessness, war, and warlordism, both [Afghanistan](#) and [Somalia](#) continue to be beset by terrorism and turmoil. In [Afghanistan](#), while international forces have seen success in the effort against the terror group, al-Qaida, the other Islamist extremist group, the Taliban, continues to carry out a vicious insurgency using terrorism. In [Somalia](#), while the government attempts to do the nation's business, the terror group, al-Shabab continues to make its presence known not only in [Somalia](#), but across the border into [Kenya](#) with devastating results/ Also in this category is [Iraq](#), which continues to be rocked by horrific violence and terrorism at the hands of Islamic State, which has taken over wide swaths of Iraqi territory.

Syria, [Libya](#), and [Yemen](#) have been added to this unfortunate echelon of the world's most politically unstable countries. [Syria](#) has been mired by the twin hazards of 1. a civil war as rebels oppose the Assad regime; and 2. the rampage of terror being carried out by Islamic State, which also seized control over vast portions of Syrian territory. Meanwhile, the post-Qaddafi landscape of [Libya](#) has devolved into chaos as rival militias battle for control -- the elected government of the country notwithstanding. Rounding out this grim triad is [Yemen](#), which was dealing with a Houthi rebellion, secessionists in the south, as well as the threat of terrorism from al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula as well as Islamic State, while also being the site of a proxy war between Shi'a [Iran](#) and Sunni [Saudi Arabia](#).

Meanwhile, several Middle Eastern and North African countries, such as [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), and [Bahrain](#) were downgraded in recent years due to political instability occurring in the "season of unrest" sweeping the region since 2011 and continuing today. All three of these countries have stabilized in recent years and have been upgraded accordingly. In [Bahrain](#), the landscape had calmed. In [Egypt](#), the secular military-backed government has generated criticism for its crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood; however, the country had ratified the presidency via democratic elections and were on track to hold parliamentary elections as the country moved along the path of democratization. Perhaps the most impressive story was coming out of [Tunisia](#) -- the country whose Jasmine Revolution sparked the entire Arab Spring -- and where after a few years of strife, a new progressive constitution was passed into law and a secular government had been elected to power. [Tunisia](#), [Egypt](#), and [Bahrain](#) have seen slight upgrades as these countries stabilize.

In Africa, the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded the previous year due to the takeover of the government by Muslim Seleka rebels. Although the country has been trying to emerge from this crisis, the fact of the matter was that it was difficult to halt the precipitous decline into lawlessness in that country. [Zimbabwe](#) has maintained its consistently poor ranking due to the dictatorial regime of Mugabe, who continues to hold a tight grip on power, intimidates the opposition, squashes dissent, and oppresses the white farmer population of the country. Moving in a slightly improved direction is [Nigeria](#), which has sported abysmal ratings due to the government's fecklessness in dealing with the threat posed by the Islamist terror group, Boko Haram. Under its newly-elected government, there appears to be more of a concerted effort to make national security a priority action item. [Mali](#) was also slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. Political instability has visited [Burkina Faso](#) and [Burundi](#) as the leaders of those countries attempted to side-step constitutional limits to hold onto power. In [Burundi](#), an attempted coup ensued but quelled, and the president won a (questionable) new term in office; unrest has since punctuated the landscape. In [Burkina Faso](#), the political climate has turned stormy as a result of a successful coup that ended the rule of the president, and then a putsch against the transitional government. These two African countries have been downgraded as a result.

It should be noted that the African country of South [Sudan](#) -- the world's newest nation state -- has not been officially included in this assessment; however, it can be unofficially assessed to be in the vicinity of "3" due to its manifold political and economic challenges. [Guinea](#) has endured poor rankings throughout, but was slightly downgraded further over fears of social unrest and the Ebola health crisis.

In Europe, [Ukraine](#) was downgraded due to the unrest facing that country following its Maidan revolution that triggered a pro-Russian uprising in the eastern part of the country. [Russia](#) was also implicated in the Ukrainian crisis due to its intervention on behalf of pro-Russian separatists, as well as its annexation of the Ukrainian territory of Crimea. [Serbia](#) and [Albania](#) were slightly downgraded due to eruptions of unrest, while [Romania](#) was slightly downgraded on the basis of corruption charges against the prime minister. [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#) were downgraded due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. [Greece](#), another euro zone nation, was downgraded the previous year due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, the country successfully forged a rescue deal with international creditors and stayed within the Euro zone. Greek voters rewarded the hitherto unknown upstart party at the polls for these efforts. As a result, [Greece](#) was actually upgraded slightly as it proved to the world that it could endure the political and economic storms. Meanwhile, [Germany](#), [France](#), [Switzerland](#), the [United Kingdom](#), the [Netherlands](#), and the Scandinavian countries continue to post impressive ranking consistent with these countries' strong records of democracy, freedom, and peaceful transfers of power.

In Asia, [Nepal](#) was downgraded in response to continuous political instability well after landmark elections that prevails today. [Cambodia](#) was very slightly downgraded due to post-election instability that has resulted in occasional flares of violence. Despite the "trifecta of tragedy" in [Japan](#) in 2011 -- the earthquake, the ensuing tsunami, and the resulting nuclear crisis -- and the appreciable destabilization of the economic and political terrain therein, this country has only slightly been downgraded. Japan's challenges have been assessed to be transient, the government remains accountable, and there is little risk of default. Both [India](#) and China retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability. Increasing violence and political instability in [Pakistan](#) resulted in a downgrade for this country's already low rating.

In the Americas, [Haiti](#) retained its downgraded status due to ongoing political and economic woes. [Mexico](#) was downgraded due to its alarming rate of crime. [Guatemala](#) was downgraded due to charges of corruption, the arrest of the president, and uncertainty over the outcome of elections. [Brazil](#) was downgraded due to the corruption charges erupting on the political landscape, the stalling of the economy, and the increasingly loud calls for the impeachment of President Rousseff. [Argentina](#) was downgraded due to its default on debt following the failure of talks with bond holders. [Venezuela](#) was downgraded due to the fact that the country's post-Chavez government is every bit as autocratic and nationalistic, but even more inclined to oppress its political opponents. [Colombia](#) was upgraded slightly due to efforts aimed at securing a peace deal

with the FARC insurgents. A small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the United States. Meanwhile, the [United States](#), [Canada](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Panama](#), and most of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean retain their strong rankings due to their records of stability and peaceful transfers of power.

In the Pacific, [Fiji](#) was upgraded due to its return to constitutional order and democracy with the holding of the first elections in eight years.

In Oceania, [Maldives](#) has been slightly downgraded due to the government's continued and rather relentless persecution of the country's former pro-democracy leader - former President Nasheed.

Source:

Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Freedom Rankings

Freedom Rankings

Freedom in the World

Editor's Note: This ranking by Freedom House quantifies political freedom and civil liberties into a single combined index on each sovereign country's level of freedom and liberty. The initials "PR" and "CL" stand for Political Rights and Civil Liberties, respectively. The number 1 represents the most free countries and the number 7 represents the least free. Several countries fall in the continuum in between. The freedom ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

Country	PR	CL	Freedom Status	Trend Arrow
Afghanistan	6 ?	6	Not Free	
Albania*	3	3	Partly Free	
Algeria	6	5	Not Free	
Andorra*	1	1	Free	
Angola	6	5	Not Free	
Antigua and Barbuda*	3 ?	2	Free	
Argentina*	2	2	Free	
Armenia	6	4	Partly Free	
Australia*	1	1	Free	
Austria*	1	1	Free	
Azerbaijan	6	5	Not Free	
Bahamas*	1	1	Free	
Bahrain	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Bangladesh*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Barbados*	1	1	Free	
Belarus	7	6	Not Free	
Belgium*	1	1	Free	

Belize*	1	2	Free	
Benin*	2	2	Free	
Bhutan	4	5	Partly Free	
Bolivia*	3	3	Partly Free	
Bosnia-Herzegovina*	4	3	Partly Free	
Botswana*	3 ?	2	Free	
Brazil*	2	2	Free	
Brunei	6	5	Not Free	
Bulgaria*	2	2	Free	
Burkina Faso	5	3	Partly Free	
Burma	7	7	Not Free	
Burundi*	4	5	Partly Free	↑
Cambodia	6	5	Not Free	↓
Cameroon	6	6	Not Free	
Canada*	1	1	Free	
Cape Verde*	1	1	Free	
Central African Republic	5	5	Partly Free	
Chad	7	6	Not Free	

Chile*	1	1	Free	
China	7	6	Not Free	
Colombia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Comoros*	3	4	Partly Free	
Congo (Brazzaville)	6	5	Not Free	↓
Congo (Kinshasa)	6	6	Not Free	↓
Costa Rica*	1	1	Free	
Cote d'Ivoire	6	5	Not Free	
Croatia*	1 ?	2	Free	
Cuba	7	6	Not Free	
Cyprus*	1	1	Free	
Czech Republic*	1	1	Free	
Denmark*	1	1	Free	
Djibouti	5	5	Partly Free	
Dominica*	1	1	Free	
Dominican Republic*	2	2	Free	↓
East Timor*	3	4	Partly Free	
Ecuador*	3	3	Partly Free	

Egypt	6	5	Not Free	
El Salvador*	2	3	Free	
Equatorial Guinea	7	7	Not Free	
Eritrea	7	7 ?	Not Free	
Estonia*	1	1	Free	
Ethiopia	5	5	Partly Free	↓
Fiji	6	4	Partly Free	
Finland*	1	1	Free	
France*	1	1	Free	
Gabon	6	5 ?	Not Free ?	
The Gambia	5	5 ?	Partly Free	
Georgia	4	4	Partly Free	
Germany*	1	1	Free	
Ghana*	1	2	Free	
Greece*	1	2	Free	
Grenada*	1	2	Free	
Guatemala*	4 ?	4	Partly Free	
Guinea	7	6 ?	Not Free	

Guinea-Bissau*	4	4	Partly Free	
Guyana*	2	3	Free	
Haiti*	4	5	Partly Free	
Honduras	4 ?	4 ?	Partly Free	
Hungary*	1	1	Free	
Iceland*	1	1	Free	
India*	2	3	Free	
Indonesia*	2	3	Free	
Iran	6	6	Not Free	↓
Iraq	5 ?	6	Not Free	
Ireland*	1	1	Free	
Israel*	1	2	Free	
Italy*	1	2	Free	
Jamaica*	2	3	Free	
Japan*	1	2	Free	
Jordan	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Kazakhstan	6	5	Not Free	↓
Kenya	4	4 ?	Partly Free	

Kiribati*	1	1	Free	
Kosovo	5 ?	4 ?	Partly Free ?	
Kuwait	4	4	Partly Free	
Kyrgyzstan	6 ?	5 ?	Not Free ?	
Laos	7	6	Not Free	
Latvia*	2	1	Free	
Lebanon	5	3 ?	Partly Free	
Lesotho*	3 ?	3	Partly Free ?	
Liberia*	3	4	Partly Free	
Libya	7	7	Not Free	
Liechtenstein*	1	1	Free	
Lithuania*	1	1	Free	
Luxembourg*	1	1	Free	
Macedonia*	3	3	Partly Free	↑
Madagascar	6 ?	4 ?	Partly Free	
Malawi*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Malaysia	4	4	Partly Free	
Maldives*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	

Mali*	2	3	Free	
Malta*	1	1	Free	↓
Marshall Islands*	1	1	Free	
Mauritania	6	5	Not Free	
Mauritius*	1	2	Free	
Mexico*	2	3	Free	
Micronesia*	1	1	Free	
Moldova*	3 ?	4	Partly Free	
Monaco*	2	1	Free	
Mongolia*	2	2	Free	↑
Montenegro*	3	2 ?	Free ?	
Morocco	5	4	Partly Free	↓
Mozambique	4 ?	3	Partly Free	
Namibia*	2	2	Free	
Nauru*	1	1	Free	
Nepal	4	4	Partly Free	
Netherlands*	1	1	Free	
New Zealand*	1	1	Free	

Nicaragua*	4	4 ?	Partly Free	
Niger	5 ?	4	Partly Free	
Nigeria	5	4	Partly Free	↓
North Korea	7	7	Not Free	↓
Norway*	1	1	Free	
Oman	6	5	Not Free	
Pakistan	4	5	Partly Free	
Palau*	1	1	Free	
Panama*	1	2	Free	
Papua New Guinea*	4	3	Partly Free	
Paraguay*	3	3	Partly Free	
Peru*	2	3	Free	
Philippines	4	3	Partly Free	↓
Poland*	1	1	Free	
Portugal*	1	1	Free	
Qatar	6	5	Not Free	
Romania*	2	2	Free	
Russia	6	5	Not Free	↓

Rwanda	6	5	Not Free	
Saint Kitts and Nevis*	1	1	Free	
Saint Lucia*	1	1	Free	
Saint Vincent and Grenadines*	2	1	Free	
Samoa*	2	2	Free	
San Marino*	1	1	Free	
Sao Tome and Principe*	2	2	Free	
Saudi Arabia	7	6	Not Free	
Senegal*	3	3	Partly Free	
Serbia*	2 ?	2	Free	
Seychelles*	3	3	Partly Free	
Sierra Leone*	3	3	Partly Free	
Singapore	5	4	Partly Free	
Slovakia*	1	1	Free	↓
Slovenia*	1	1	Free	
Solomon Islands	4	3	Partly Free	
Somalia	7	7	Not Free	
South Africa*	2	2	Free	

South Korea*	1	2	Free	
Spain*	1	1	Free	
Sri Lanka*	4	4	Partly Free	
Sudan	7	7	Not Free	
Suriname*	2	2	Free	
Swaziland	7	5	Not Free	
Sweden*	1	1	Free	
Switzerland*	1	1	Free	↓
Syria	7	6	Not Free	
Taiwan*	1 ?	2 ?	Free	
Tajikistan	6	5	Not Free	
Tanzania	4	3	Partly Free	
Thailand	5	4	Partly Free	
Togo	5	4 ?	Partly Free	
Tonga	5	3	Partly Free	
Trinidad and Tobago*	2	2	Free	
Tunisia	7	5	Not Free	
Turkey*	3	3	Partly Free	↓

Turkmenistan	7	7	Not Free	
Tuvalu*	1	1	Free	
Uganda	5	4	Partly Free	
Ukraine*	3	2	Free	
United Arab Emirates	6	5	Not Free	
United Kingdom*	1	1	Free	
United States*	1	1	Free	
Uruguay*	1	1	Free	
Uzbekistan	7	7	Not Free	
Vanuatu*	2	2	Free	
Venezuela	5 ?	4	Partly Free	
Vietnam	7	5	Not Free	↓
Yemen	6 ?	5	Not Free ?	
Zambia*	3	4 ?	Partly Free	
Zimbabwe	6 ?	6	Not Free	

Methodology:

PR and CL stand for political rights and civil liberties, respectively; 1 represents the most free and 7 the least free rating. The ratings reflect an overall judgment based on survey results.

? ? up or down indicates a change in political rights, civil liberties, or status since the last survey.

↑ ↓ up or down indicates a trend of positive or negative changes that took place but that were not sufficient to result in a change in political rights or civil liberties ratings of 1-7.

* indicates a country's status as an electoral democracy.

Source:

This data is derived from the latest edition of Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2010 edition.

Available at URL: <http://www.freedomhouse.org>

Updated:

Reviewed in 2015

Human Rights

Overview of Human Rights in Denmark

Denmark is a constitutional monarch that also has democratic parliamentary rule system of government. The government works diligently to respect the human rights of its citizens and provides outlets for dealing with individual instances of abuse, which occasionally occur. The lack of independent investigation of police brutality incidences is one of the more serious concerns by the international community. An independent mechanism for the investigation of human rights violations committed by the authorities would be a solution to this problem. Trafficking of children is also a concern to both the Danish authorities and the rest of the international arena. Overall, Denmark enjoys one of the best records of human rights in the world.

Human Development Index (HDI) Rank:

See most recent ranking and full listing in the "Social Overview" of this Country Review

Human Poverty Index Rank:

5th out of 17

Note-Denmark is ranked on the HPI-2 scale with is only for the OECD countries, Eastern Europe

and the CIS

Gini Index:

24.7

Life Expectancy at Birth (years):

77 years

Unemployment Rate:

5.5%

Population living on \$1 a day (%):

N/A

Population living on \$2 a day (%):

N/A

Population living beneath the Poverty Line (%):

N/A

Internally Displaced People:

N/A

Note-70,000 refugees

Total Crime Rate (%):

23%

Health Expenditure (% of GDP):

Public: 7.3%

% of GDP Spent on Education:

8.5%

Human Rights Conventions Party to:

- International Convention on the Prevention and Punishment and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide
- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
- Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

*Human Development Index (HDI) is a composite index that measures the level of well-being in 177 nations in the world. It uses factors such as poverty, literacy, life-expectancy, education, gross domestic product, and purchasing power parity to assess the average achievements in each nation. It has been used in the United Nation's Human Development Report since 1993.

*Human Poverty Index Ranking is based on certain indicators used to calculate the Human Poverty Index. Probability at birth of not surviving to age 40, adult literacy rate, population without sustainable access to an improved water source, and population below income poverty line are the indicators assessed in this measure.

*The Gini Index measures inequality based on the distribution of family income or consumption. A value of 0 represents perfect equality (income being distributed equally), and a value of 100 perfect inequality (income all going to one individual).

*The calculation of the total crime rate is the % of the total population which has been effected by property crime, robbery, sexual assault, assault, or bribery (corruption) related occurrences.

Government Functions

Constitution

Denmark's constitution, adopted on June 5, 1953, established Denmark as a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary system of government. The constitution recognizes the Evangelical Lutheran Church as the state church, though freedom of religion is also guaranteed. Two notable features of Denmark's political system are the very high proportion of women in parliament and government as well as the unusually strong referendum tradition. Major political changes and amendments to the constitution must be approved in national referenda.

Royal Authority

The reigning monarch of Denmark is the head of state, and as such, represents Denmark in its international relations. Nominally, the monarch must give assent to legislation passed by parliament, though in practice the monarch does not veto parliamentary legislation. Formally, the monarch appoints the prime minister and other ministers. In practice, the appointments reflect the partisan balance in the parliament. The monarch, acting on behalf of the government, can also dissolve the parliament and call early elections.

Executive Authority

Executive authority is vested in the Council of Ministers (government or cabinet) composed of a prime minister and other ministers. When the monarch presides, this body is known as the Council of State. The government is responsible for developing and implementing the domestic and foreign policies of Denmark. The monarch formally appoints the prime minister and other ministers. The parliament can, however, pass motions of no-confidence against individual ministers or the government as a whole, in which case the censured ministers must resign. The government, nominally on behalf of the monarch, shares the authority to introduce legislation with parliament.

Legislative Authority

Legislative authority is vested in the unicameral "Folketing" (parliament) made up of members, most of which are elected for maximum four-year terms according to a proportional representation formula. Both the Faroe Islands and Greenland elect two representatives each to the "Folketing." The "Folketing" can dismiss individual ministers or the government as a whole through votes of no-confidence and can propose referenda. Members of the "Folketing" share the authority to initiate legislation with the government. The "Folketing" can be dissolved and early elections called by the monarch, acting on behalf of the government.

Judicial Authority

Judicial authority is vested in lower courts, high courts, and the High Court of the Realm. The High Court of the Realm (also known as Supreme Court in some circles) has up to 15 members, with half of the membership appointed according to seniority from the high courts and half elected by the "Folketing" for six-year terms.

Administration

In terms of regional and local administration, Denmark has five five regions. In 2007, extensive reform to local government merged 271 municipalities into 98, and 13 counties were merged into five regions. The regions and municipalities are both led by councils elected every four years, but only the municipal councils have the power to levy taxes. Regional councils are responsible for health services and regional development, while the municipal councils are responsible for day care, elementary schools, care for the elderly, culture, environment and roads.

Government Structure

Names:

conventional long form:

Kingdom of Denmark

conventional short form:

Denmark

Type:

Constitutional monarchy; parliamentary system

Executive Branch:

Head of state:

Queen MARGRETHE II (since Jan. 14, 1972); constitutional monarch

Heir Apparent:

Crown Prince FREDERIK, elder son of the queen (born May 26, 1968)

Note:

The monarchy is hereditary

Head of government:

Lars Lokke Rasmussen formed a minority government after the 2015 polls, effectively becoming the prime minister of Denmark. See "2015 Elections Primer" below.

Note:

The leader of the majority party or the leader of the majority coalition is usually the prime minister. The prime minister is formally appointed by the monarch in consultation with political party leaders in the "Folketing" (parliament).

Cabinet:

Council of Ministers (government or cabinet); composed of a prime minister and other ministers; formally appointed by the monarch in consultation with political party leaders in the "Folketing"; known as the Council of State when the monarch presides; responsible to the "Folketing;" can be removed in a parliamentary vote of no-confidence

Legislative Branch:

Unicameral "Folketing" (People's Diet or Parliament):

179 members including 2 from Greenland and 2 from the Faroe Islands; members are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional representation to serve four-year terms

Note:

For those members elected by proportional representation, there is a two-percent threshold. Parties must receive at least two percent of the vote in order to obtain seats in the "Folketing."

Primer on 2015 parliamentary elections in Denmark

Parliamentary elections were set to be held in Denmark on June 18, 2015. At stake was control over the unicameral "Folketing" (People's Diet or Parliament), which is composed of 179 members, including two from Greenland and two from the Faroe Islands. Members are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional representation to serve four-year terms. Normally, the leader of the ruling party -- the party with the most seats in parliament -- is the prime minister and head of government.

Since the elections of 2011, Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt has served as the head of government due to the victory of her left-leaning Social Democratic Party at the polls that year. In 2015, it was to be seen if Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt and the Social Democratic Party (or Socialdemokraterne, as they are known in Danish) would again see similar success.

The parties expected to contest the 2015 elections included the following:

Social Democratic Party (also known as Socialdemokraterne)
Socialist People's Party or SF
Social Liberal Party or SLP
Red-Green Alliance (Unity List or Enhedslisten)
Liberal Party (Venestre or V)
Conservative People's Party (also known as (or Det Konservative Folkeparti)
Christian Democrats (or Kristendemokraterne)
Danish People's Party or DF
Liberal Alliance or LA

This list of parties could roughly be divided into two blocs. On one hand, there was the center-left "red" bloc consisting of the Social Democratic Party, Socialist People's Party, the centrist/swing Social Liberals, and the Red-Green Alliance. On the other hand was the right-leaning "blue" bloc consisting of Liberal Party and the Conservatives, which has been backed in parliament by the anti-immigration Danish People's Party, the Liberal Alliance, and Christian Democrats.

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security was seeing some degree of a positive effect, along with a healthier growth forecast for the country. Regardless, all expectations were that the election would be a close and competitive race.

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For her part, outgoing Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt lauded her party for being the most popular single party in Denmark, but conceded defeat and resigned as the party leader. She said, "We did not win the election and we were beaten at the finish line. Leadership is to step down at the right time. And that time is now."

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That effort was complicated by the fact that the Danish People's Party actually won more votes than the Liberal Party, and the DPP leader, Kristian Thulesen Dahl, expressed no interest in entering government. Instead, Dahl said the party preferred to be a "little free bird" capable of staying true to its principles and goals. Nevertheless, Dahl could yet forge an agreement to support Rasmussen's government from the outside.

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Given this landscape, it came as no surprise when Rasmussen finally announced he would form a minority government. In an interview with the media, Rasmussen said, "It's my judgment that it will be possible to form a Liberal government under my guidance which will enjoy support in parliament."

Judicial Branch:

Lower courts; High courts; High Court of the Realm

Constitution:

Original constitution 1849; major reforms on June 5, 1953, provided for a unicameral legislature and allowed a female chief of state

Legal System:

Civil law system with judicial review of legislative acts; accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction, with reservations

Administrative Divisions:

5 regions (regioner, singular - region); Hovedstaden, Midtjylland, Nordjylland, Sjælland, Syddanmark; extensive reform to local government reform merged 271 municipalities into 98 and 13 counties into five regions, in 2007

Political Parties:

Political parties include the following:

Alternative Party or AP [Uffe ELBAEK]
Conservative People's Party or C [Soren PAPE POULSEN]
Danish People's Party or DF [Kristian THULESEN DAHL]
Liberal Alliance or LA [Anders SAMUELSEN]
Liberal Party or V [Lars LOKKE RAMUSSEN]
Red-Green Alliance (Unity List) or EL [collective leadership, spokesperson Johanne SCHMIDT-NIELSEN]
Social Democratic Party or SDP [Mette FREDERIKSEN]
Social Liberal Party or SLP [Morten OSTERGAARD]
Socialist People's Party or SF [Pia OLSEN DYHR]

Note:

Political parties, their leaders, as well as cabinet lists, are subject to sudden changes. The listings offered come from published government sources and reflect the published government data available at the time of writing.

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Principal Government Officials

Leadership and Cabinet of Denmark

Queen

MARGRETHE II

Prime Min.

Lars Lokke RASMUSSEN

Min. for Business Affairs & Growth

Troels Lund POULSEN

Min. for Children, Education, & Gender Equality

Ellen Trane NORBY

Min. for Culture & Ecclesiastical Affairs

Bertel HAARDER
Min. of Defense
Peter CHRISTENSEN
Min. for Employment
Jorn Neergaard LARSEN
Min. for Energy, Utilities, & Climate
Lars Christian LILLEHOLT
Min. for Environment & Food
Eva Kjer HANSEN
Min. for Finance
Claus Hjort FREDERIKSEN
Min. for Foreign Affairs
Kristian JENSEN
Min. for Health
Sophie LOHDE
Min. for Higher Education & Science
Esben Lunde LARSEN
Min. for Immigration, Integration, & Housing
Inger STOJBERG
Min. for Justice
Soren PIND
Min. for Nordic Cooperation
Carl HOLST
Min. for Social Affairs & the Interior
Karen ELLEMAN
Min. for Taxation
Karsten LAURITZEN
Min. for Transport & Building
Hans Christian SCHMIDT
Chmn., Board of Governors, Danish National Bank
Lars ROHDE
Ambassador to the US
Peter TAKSOE-JENSEN
Permanent Representative to the UN, New York
Ib PETERSEN

-- as of 2016

Leader Biography

Leader Biography

Leadership of Denmark

Executive Branch:

Head of state:

Queen MARGRETHE II (since Jan. 14, 1972); constitutional monarch

Heir Apparent:

Crown Prince FREDERIK, elder son of the queen (born May 26, 1968)

Note:

The monarchy is hereditary

Head of government:

Lars Lokke Rasmussen was set to form a minority government after the 2015 polls. See "2015 Elections Primer" below.

Note:

The leader of the majority party or the leader of the majority coalition is usually the prime

minister. The prime minister is formally appointed by the monarch in consultation with political party leaders in the "Folketing" (parliament).

Cabinet:

Council of Ministers (government or cabinet); composed of a prime minister and other ministers; formally appointed by the monarch in consultation with political party leaders in the "Folketing"; known as the Council of State when the monarch presides; responsible to the "Folketing;" can be removed in a parliamentary vote of no-confidence

Legislative Branch:

Unicameral "Folketing" (People's Diet or Parliament):

179 members including 2 from Greenland and 2 from the Faroe Islands; members are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional representation to serve four-year terms

Note:

For those members elected by proportional representation, there is a two-percent threshold. Parties must receive at least two percent of the vote in order to obtain seats in the "Folketing."

Primer on 2015 parliamentary elections in Denmark

Parliamentary elections were set to be held in Denmark on June 18, 2015. At stake was control over the unicameral "Folketing" (People's Diet or Parliament), which is composed of 179 members, including two from Greenland and two from the Faroe Islands. Members are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional representation to serve four-year terms. Normally, the leader of the ruling party -- the party with the most seats in parliament -- is the prime minister and head of government.

Since the elections of 2011, Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt has served as the head of government due to the victory of her left-leaning Social Democratic Party at the polls that year. In 2015, it was to be seen if Prime Minister Thorning-Schmidt and the Social Democratic Party (or Socialdemokraterne, as they are known in Danish) would again see similar success.

The parties expected to contest the 2015 elections included the following:

Social Democratic Party (also known as Socialdemokraterne)

Socialist People's Party or SF

Social Liberal Party or SLP

Red-Green Alliance (Unity List or Enhedslisten)

Liberal Party (Venestre or V)

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Foreign Relations

General Relations

Denmark is a member of numerous international organizations including the United Nations and many of its specialized and regional agencies, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD),

the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); the Council of Europe; the Nordic Council; the Baltic Council; and the Barents Council.

Denmark is also a member of the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Council of Europe. In addition, Denmark has observer status with the Western European Union (WEU).

Editor's Note:

In October 2004, Argentina, Japan, Denmark, Greece and Tanzania were elected by the United Nations General Assembly as the new members of the Security Council with two- year terms beginning in January 2005.

In April 2009, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was chosen to be the new NATO Secretary-General.

Regional Relations

Relations with the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers

Denmark is a member of the Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers, intergovernmental institutions that facilitate cooperation on matters of mutual concern among Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Although the EU has largely subsumed the Nordic Council and Nordic Council of Ministers, Denmark and the other members do occasionally develop distinct positions on certain issues. Currently, Denmark and the other members are the primary advocates for admitting the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the EU.

Editor's Summary of the European Union:

The European Community's original member states were Belgium, Netherlands, Luxembourg, France, Italy and West Germany. Then, in 1973, United Kingdom, Denmark and Ireland joined the grouping. In the 1980s, Greece, Spain and Portugal joined in the 1980s. The European Union was officially established in 1993 under the Maastricht Treaty. Two years later, Austria, Sweden and Finland joined the European bloc. In 2002, the euro was introduced in 12 member states; since then, the euro zone expanded to include 16 countries. In 2004, the new entrants to the EU were the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia. Bulgaria and Romania joined in 2007. To date, entry talks have been ongoing for

Croatia, accession talks have been ongoing for Turkey, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has submitted a request to join.

Meanwhile, in 2005, the EU moved in the direction of official endorsement of the body's constitution. Ratification votes against that draft document in various countries (France and Netherlands) placed it in doubt. A new Reform Treaty emerged in 2007, which was later known as the Lisbon Treaty because it was signed in the Portuguese capital. It was intended to be the new operational foundation of European Union. Indeed, the Lisbon Treaty contains provisions for dealing with the European body's expansion into the eastern part of the continent and was intended to replace the European constitution. It also created two new posts -- a permanent European Union President and a foreign policy chief -- for the purpose of augmenting the influence of the regional bloc on the international stage.

Supporters see the Lisbon Treaty as fundamental to the European Union's success, explaining that without it, the body's processes would remain cumbersome. For example, contained within it is a provision for more decisions to be made by majority vote instead of unanimity. But detractors have argued that the Lisbon Treaty is part of a federalist agenda and that it is threatening to the sovereignty of nation states.

The Lisbon Treaty was originally scheduled to become effective at the start of 2009; however, its fate was placed in doubt in 2008 when Irish voters decisively rejected the accord. Irish ratification in 2009 finally took place and revitalized the process. Problems with the ratification process in Poland, and legal challenges in the Czech Republic, led to the renewed risk of collapse. Ultimately, the Lisbon Treaty could not be have been implemented unless it was approved by all 27 EU states. With that prerequisite fulfilled, the stage was set for the treaty to go into force before Jan. 1, 2010. To that end, a signing ceremony took place in the city of Lisbon on Dec. 1, 2009.

Denmark successfully joined the European Communities (EC) in 1973 along with the United Kingdom after France, under Charles de Gaulle, had blocked two previous attempts by Denmark and the U.K. Danish voters approved EC membership in a 1972 referendum with 63 percent in favor of joining.

The most important of the three communities in the EC was the European Economic Community (EEC), which created a common market that abolished tariffs between the member-states. The EC has experienced several episodes of major institutional development since Denmark joined in 1973 including:

- the introduction of direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979
- the Single Europe Act of 1986-which sought to create a single market in goods and services

- the Maastricht Treaty of 1992-which renamed the EC to the European Union (EU), altered relations between the EU's legislative institutions, set a timeline for the adoption of a single EU-wide currency, and established the criteria that the member-states had to meet in order to join the single currency
- the Amsterdam Treaty of 1997-which further altered relations between the EU's institutions
- the launch of the single currency, the euro, in 1999
- proposals for the development of common foreign and security policies (CFSP) within the EU

Denmark has been a somewhat reluctant member of, as it was originally known, the European Community (EC), and now, the European Union. In particular, the Danish public voted against ratifying the Maastricht Treaty in a June 1992 referendum. It was only after Denmark was allowed to "opt out" of EU citizenship, the common currency, common defense, and other cooperation issues (for example, law enforcement) that the treaty was ratified (in May 1993). More recently, in September 2000, the Danes voted against joining the euro. (See discussion below).

The Treaty of Amsterdam was signed on Oct. 2, 1997; it entered into force on May 1, 1999. (The Danes acceded to the Amsterdam Treaty in May 1998). The treaty makes significant changes to the way in which the "three pillars" of the European Union will be dealt with in the future. These "three pillars" are first, the single common market; second, common foreign and security policy; and third, justice and home affairs.

The treaty extends the co-decision procedure (in which the European Parliament wields significant amendment and veto powers) to 38 policy areas, that is, most of the policy areas concerning the promotion of the European common market, and therefore, most areas of European Union legislation. It also grants the European Parliament the power to approve or disapprove the choice (made by member governments) of Commission president. (The president, Romano Prodi, was approved under this procedure).

For the Council of Ministers, the treaty extends the areas in which qualified majority voting (QMV) applies. This makes it less likely for single countries to veto policy proposals. The treaty also moves certain policy areas of the 'third pillar' of justice and home affairs, which previously have been decided by intergovernmental bargaining without influence from the Commission or the European Parliament, to the 'first pillar' of single market issues. This change should increase the policy-making influence of the Commission and the Parliament. The Schengen accord falls into this category.

Finally, the treaty calls for the creation of a "High Representative" for common foreign and security policy. Javier Solana, former secretary-general of NATO, has been appointed as the first high representative. To date, this 'second pillar' has been a matter of intergovernmental bargaining, though with QMV. The belief is that the EU will have greater international influence if it is able to speak with one voice on matters of foreign policy.

Denmark has signed the Schengen Agreement of 1990, concerning the free movement of people across the borders of the European Union (EU) member states, but is not a 'full' member. From 1990 to May 1999, Schengen was an intergovernmental agreement among signatories and was not European Union law. When the Treaty of Amsterdam entered into force on May 1, 1999, the agreement was supposed to become part of EU law; however, various implementation problems are currently being addressed. Not all EU members are signatories to the Schengen Agreement. The United Kingdom and Ireland are not participants in any part of the accord. Like Denmark, Greece, Sweden, and Finland have signed but are not full members. Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain are full members. This is supposed to mean the complete removal of internal air, land, and sea border controls between the members and cooperation among their respective police forces in criminal matters.

With regard to a "European Security and Defense Identity" (ESDI), in December 1998, British Prime Minister Tony Blair and French President Jacques Chirac issued what became known as the "St. Malo Declaration," stating that the European Union should have the capability to act autonomously in security matters. This has long been a stated objective by various European leaders and has given rise to various failed attempts at security/defense cooperation. Examples include the European Defense Community (done away with at the draft stage) and the less ambitious Western European Union (which includes some NATO and non-NATO members and some EU and non-EU members).

The problems have been the lack of a common foreign policy (without which a common security policy is not possible); the so-called "special relationship" between the U.S. and the U.K.; and the lack of consolidation in the European defense industry. That Prime Minister Blair advocated a common security arrangement within the EU was seen as a major breakthrough. Other NATO members subsequently supported this at the April 1999 50th anniversary summit (including, most importantly, the U.S. and hesitantly, Turkey).

At the June 1999 EU Summit in Cologne, Germany, EU leaders agreed on a common defense/security program. In brief, the WEU will be incorporated into the EU by the end of 2000. It has been suggested that the new institution will be able to use NATO equipment without necessarily having other NATO members involved. Other NATO members would be consulted, however. Problems could arise because of non-overlapping memberships (see listing below). For example, while Denmark is a member of the EU and of NATO, it is not a full member of the Western European Union, but does hold observer status.

Joint Members in the EU, WEU, and NATO:

Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, UK

EU and NATO Member and WEU Observer:

Denmark

EU Members and WEU Observers:

Austria, Finland, Ireland, Sweden

NATO Members and WEU Associate Members:

Czech Republic, Hungary, Iceland, Norway, Poland, Turkey

WEU Associate Partners:

Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia

In late 2000, the EU agreed to create a "rapid reaction force" consisting of approximately 60,000 troops to be deployed on humanitarian missions, peacekeeping missions, and in crisis situations, more generally. Serious concerns remain on the part of EU member states and non-EU members of NATO (particularly, the United States and Turkey) about the nature and command of this force - and its compatibility with NATO. At the December 2001 Laeken Summit, the EU governments declared the proposed rapid reaction force, which eventually will number 60,000 troops, to be operational.

Throughout 2000, the member states of the EU were engaged in an intergovernmental conference (IGC) tasked with designing a new treaty that prepares the EU for eventual enlargement that will nearly double the number of member countries in the EU. Enlargement will initially include Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. Six more countries are expected to follow; they are: Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Romania, and Slovakia. Turkey has also been asked to begin negotiations for future accession to the EU. The larger membership necessarily requires changes in the EU institutions, which were designed for a far smaller number of member states.

In particular, the IGC was focused on three primary institutional decisions. The first issue was how to limit the size of the European Commission, the EU's executive branch, and how to distribute the commission's positions among the member states. Currently, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom obtain two commission positions each while the other 10 countries each receive one commission position. The second institutional issue concerned reformulating the voting procedure in the Council of Ministers, the EU legislature responsible for representing the member states' governments, to better reflect the population size of the member states.

Currently, the smaller states are favored in the Council of Ministers' system of weighted votes. The third issue was altering the treaties to allow for more majority voting, based on weighted votes, in the Council of Ministers. Enlargement will make it more difficult to pass legislation in those issue areas that currently require unanimity in the Council of Ministers by granting even more countries the ability to single-handedly stop changes in EU policy. Treaty changes, which would allow for

majority voting in some of these areas, would significantly facilitate the EU's legislative process.

The IGC concluded at a summit in Nice, France with France holding the six-month rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union. While French president Chirac claimed success, many analysts noted that the IGC was the longest and one of the most contentious summits in the EU's history with much of the controversy surrounding the re-weighting of votes in the Council of Ministers.

The so-called Franco-German axis was threatened by the French refusal to give up voting power parity with Germany, even though Germany has a substantially larger population and economy. Additionally, large states were pitted against small states as the larger states sought to have the weight of votes more accurately reflect the population size of the member-states. In the end, an even more complicated weighting of votes was devised which increased the voting power of the larger states relative to that of the smaller states. In addition to re-weighting, the new rules for calculating a qualified majority, which will go into effect after enlargement, contain two new elements: a qualified majority in the Council of Ministers, according to vote weights, must also represent at least one-half of the member-states and 62 percent of the EU total population.

The other two institutional questions addressed at the Nice summit concerned the size of the European Commission and increasing the number of policy areas where qualified majority voting in the Council is applied.

On the first question, the large states, which currently have two members in the Commission, agreed to give up their second member by 2005. Also, agreement was reached to limit the total size of the Commission to 27 members after enlargement. On the second question, qualified majority was extended to 39 new policy areas, which means that the vast majority of policy made at the European level is now covered by the qualified majority rule in the Council of Ministers, though countries retain vetoes over certain sensitive issue areas.

In addition to agreeing to some institutional reforms, the participants at Nice signed a Charter of Fundamental Rights, which codifies a number of civil, political, and social rights for EU citizens. However, the leaders of the 15 member-states did not include the charter in the Nice Treaty, thereby weakening the charter's legal force.

Another pivotal summit was held in Laeken, Belgium in December 2001 during the Belgian EU presidency. The principal outcome of the "Laeken declaration" was an agreement to establish a 105-member convention with the responsibility to assess problems with the EU's political structure and to propose possible changes. Many have likened the proposed convention to a constitutional convention with a responsibility to consolidate the existing treaties that form the basis of the EU into a single document with constitutional force.

Denmark held the six-month rotating presidency of the EU from July 2002 through the end of the year.

In May 2004, formal enlargement of the European body went into effect.

In mid-2004, just after EU enlargement was formalized, Danes went to the polls for European Parliament elections. Results in Denmark reflected a trend throughout Europe whereby opposition parties triumphed over incumbents. Indeed, based on partial results issued by the Danish Ministry of the Interior, the Social Democrats claimed victory with 32.8 percent of the vote.

As noted above in the "Editor's Note" above, further EU enlargement has ensued in recent years. But since 2005, movement toward official endorsement of the body's constitution has been an issue. Ratification votes against that draft document in various countries (France and Netherlands) have since placed it in doubt.

A new Reform Treaty emerged in 2007, as discussed above, which was later known as the Lisbon Treaty because it was signed in the Portuguese capital. It was aimed at operating as the operational foundation of European Union. The Lisbon Treaty's fate was placed in doubt in 2008 when Irish voters decisively rejected the accord. Irish ratification in 2009 finally took place and revitalized the process. Problems with the ratification process in Poland, and legal challenges in the Czech Republic, led to the renewed risk of collapse.

That being said, once support from all member states was finalized, the Lisbon Treaty -- the foundation of the new decision-making process of the European Union -- went into force on Dec. 1, 2009. The signing ceremony took place in the city of Lisbon where the treaty was originally signed two years earlier. Jose Manuel Barroso, the president of the European Commission, said: "The Treaty of Lisbon puts citizens at the center of the European project." He continued, "I'm delighted that we now have the right institutions to act and a period of stability, so that we can focus all our energy on delivering what matters to our citizens." Earlier, Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy and British Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton were chosen for the newly-established positions of permanent European Union president and foreign policy chief respectively.

Denmark and the EMU (Economic and Monetary Union)

In May 1998, the European Council defined the list of countries participating in the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU): Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. Greece became a participating member in 2001. As noted above, Denmark - along with Sweden and the United Kingdom - opted out of the EMU.

Also as noted above, after months of intense campaigning, Denmark voted in a national referendum on Sept. 28, 2000, against joining the euro, with 53 percent opposed to joining and 47 percent in favor. Proponents of joining the EMU and adopting the euro included then Prime Minister Rasmussen, the government, 80 percent of the members of parliament, the mainstream political parties, the business leadership, and much of the trade union membership. In short, almost all of Denmark's political elites favored joining the euro club. Supporters campaigned primarily on economic reasons for joining the euro, pointing out that the Danish krone was already pegged to the euro. Additionally, it was argued that a very large percentage of Danish trade is conducted with other euro members; joining would decrease the costs of trade.

Opponents of the euro included the anti-EU political parties, the growing nationalist Danish People's Party, the far-left political parties, as well as public sector workers and pensioners. The opponents' campaign was based more on political than economic issues. Opponents stressed the loss of sovereignty and argued that adopting the euro would endanger Denmark's substantial welfare programs by leading to greater harmonization of taxation and spending among euro-members. The victorious opponents of joining the EMU were assisted in their effort by the weakness of the euro in the days and weeks preceding the referendum.

The euro was launched on Jan. 1, 1999; conversion rates of all 12 EMU member states' currencies to the euro were irrevocably fixed. As of Jan. 1, 2002, euro banknotes and coins became legal tender in the 12 EMU countries. Within the next two months, these states' former currencies will be phased out.

In 2003, the issue of EMU membership emerged once again. Prime Minister Rasmussen announced that Denmark would hold a new referendum on euro membership, despite the fact that the proposal was rejected in 2000 (as aforementioned). The Danish Prime Minister noted that Denmark has less influence in significant matters of cooperation within the European Union because of its decision to opt-out of euro usage. Indeed, both the Danish leader, parliamentarians and political analysts have said there may be a need to remove the "opt out" provisions that affect Danish membership in the European body. Still, Prime Minister Rasmussen did not express urgency on the matter, preferring instead to hold the referendum after the provisions of the EU's revised basic treaty had been revealed.

Again in 2007, after winning re-election, Rasmussen said that Denmark would hold a new referendum on the adoption of the euro as the country's currency. Rasmussen said that it was time to make a new decision about the matter, given the changing landscape. A vote was expected within the ensuing four years, however, 2011 came and went and Rasmussen himself was voted out of office.

Note:

The stability of the euro zone and the European Union has become a major concern in recent years, largely emanating from the Greek debt crisis, but extending regionally. It should be noted that although Denmark is a member state of the European Union, it is not in the euro zone, effectively minimizing the negative effects for this country.

In late 2011, there were calls for serious changes to Europe's governing treaties, aimed at ameliorated economic governance for the 17 countries that make up the euro currency bloc. Included in their proposal were: (1) the creation of a monetary fund for Europe, (2) automatic penalties for countries that exceed European deficit limits, and (3) monthly meetings of European leaders. Meanwhile, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which was intended to replace the European Financial Stability Facility in 2013 (an entity intended as a rescue mechanism for struggling European economies), would be advanced earlier in 2012. Ideally, the new treaty would be ratified by all 27 member states of the European Union. However, if concurrence at that level proved impossible, then the 17 states of the euro zone would have to approve it.

Please see the "Economic Conditions" for information about the debt crisis plaguing Europe and the euro zone countries.

Note on NATO

On April 3, 2009 at the NATO summit in Strasbourg in France, Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen, was chosen to take over as NATO chief when Jaap de Hoop Scheffer of the Netherlands completes his tenure in July 2009.

Rasmussen, who was strongly backed by the United States, the United Kingdom, France and Germany, has been regarded as having strong credentials that qualify him for his impending role. When Denmark held the rotating presidency of the European Union in 2002, Rasmussen was credited with leading the complicated negotiations that ultimately concluded with the accession of ten countries to the European bloc. More recently, he has led the effort to get countries such as the United States, China and India to support a new international accord on climate change.

Rasmussen's decision to support to the United States-led "war on terror," which included a commitment of troops to both Afghanistan and Iraq, drew him into a closer relationship with then-United States President George W. Bush. But he has raised the ire of some Muslim countries because of his refusal to apologize for the cartoons published in a Danish newspaper mocking the Prophet Mohammed. For his part, Rasmussen has maintained the view that freedom of the press is paramount in democracy.

Other Significant Relations

Denmark emphasizes its relations with developing nations. Although the government has moved to tighten foreign assistance expenditures, it remains a significant donor and one of the few countries to exceed the United Nations goal of contributing 0.7% of GNP to development assistance.

In the wake of the Cold War, Denmark has been active in international efforts to integrate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the West. It has played a leadership role in coordinating Western assistance to the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania).

The country is a strong supporter of international peacekeeping. Danish forces were heavily engaged in the former Yugoslavia in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), as well as in NATO's Operation Joint Endeavor/Stabilization Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (IFOR/SFOR), and currently in the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

Relations with the United States

Denmark is a close NATO ally, and overall United States (U.S.)-Danish relations are excellent. That said, there were several serious confrontations between the U.S. and Denmark on security policy in the so-called "footnote era" (1982-88), when a hostile parliamentary majority forced the government to adopt specific national positions on nuclear and arms control issues. With the end of the Cold War, however, Denmark has been supportive of U.S. policy objectives in the Alliance.

Denmark is active in Afghanistan and Kosovo, as well as a leader in the Baltic region. Denmark and the United States consult closely on European political and security matters.

Denmark shares U.S. views on the positive ramifications of NATO enlargement. Denmark is an active coalition partner in the War on Terrorism, and Danish troops are supporting U.S.-led stabilization efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Denmark joined the United States-led "war on terror," and contributed troops to the invasion and occupation of Iraq. In early 2007, however, Denmark announced that it would withdraw its troops from Iraq by the close of August 2007.

The U.S. also engages Denmark in a broad cooperative agenda through the Enhanced Partnership in Northern Europe (EPINE)--the U.S. policy structure to strengthen U.S.-Nordic-Baltic policy and program coordination.

Denmark's active liberal trade policy in the EU, OECD, and WTO largely coincides with U.S.

interests. The U.S. is Denmark's largest non-European trade partner. Denmark's role in European environmental and agricultural issues and its strategic location at the entrance to the Baltic Sea have made Copenhagen a center for U.S. agencies and the private sector dealing with the Nordic/Baltic region.

The U.S. Air Force (USAF) base and early warning radar at Thule, Greenland--a Danish self-governing territory--serve as a vital link in Western defenses. In August 2004, the Danish and Greenland Home Rule governments gave permission for the early warning radar to be updated in connection with a role in the U.S. ballistic missile defense system. At the same time, agreements were signed to enhance economic, technical, and environmental cooperation between the United States and Greenland.

President Bush made an official working visit to Copenhagen in July 2005, and Prime Minister Rasmussen met with the President at Camp David in June 2006 and in Crawford, Texas in March 2008. Positive bilateral relations were anticipated as of 2009 with the inauguration of the United States President Barack Obama.

Danish-United States relations were likely to be strengthened by the 2012 rescue of a Danish aid worker in Somalia by United States Navy Seals. President Obama ordered a bold operation aimed at rescuing the Danish national along with an American citizen, both of whom had been kidnapped and taken hostage by Somali pirates. The Danish government profoundly thanked the Obama administration in the United States for its decisive action.

American culture--and particularly popular culture, from jazz, rock, and rap to television shows and literature--is very popular in Denmark.

UPDATE:

On June 4, 2012, four individuals were found guilty of planning a terrorist attack on Danish newspaper offices and sentenced to 12 years in prison. At issue was the plot to carry out a revenge attack against the Jyllands-Posten for publishing satirical cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad in 2005. Those cartoons included an illustration of Muhammad carrying a bomb on his head, which was decorated with the Muslim declaration of faith instead of a turban. The cartoons sparked protests across the world, and Danish interests were particularly targeted in a campaign of outrage and anger by extremist Muslims.

Now in 2012, the men -- all of whom were Muslim residents of Sweden -- were apprehended thanks to the efforts by joint Swedish and Danish intelligence operatives. Weapons, including a machine-gun with a silencer, a pistol, bullets, and rolls of duct tape, were discovered among the men's possession when they were arrested. According to Danish prosecutors, the men intended to

kill an "unknown" number of victims in a terror attack that was to take place at an awards ceremony attended by Crown Prince Frederik.

Note: Since 2005 when Jyllands-Posten published about a dozen cartoons showing the Prophet Muhammad in a variety of satirical situations, Denmark has been a north European target of terrorism by Islamic Jihadists and extremists. The cartoons were regarded as deliberately offensive by many Muslims globally; however, most advocates of democracy have argued that the right to be offensive has been part of the freedom of the press in mature democratic nation states.

Special Entry: Migrant crisis rocks Europe

In September 2015, a humanitarian crisis was rocking Europe as displaced Syrians desperate to escape the destructive civil at home, along with the threat of brutal terrorism at the hands of Islamic State, sought refuge in Europe. Most of the migrants were attempting to reach Western Europe by traveling either by boat across the Mediterranean to Cyprus, and then traveling north through Greece, the Balkan countries, and Hungary. The migrants were not eager to remain in those countries as their goal was to reach a destination in Western Europe. But because of prevailing laws and Hungary's hardline stance, many of the migrants were essentially trapped in Hungarian asylum-seekers' processing centers due to restrictions on movement. At issue were European Union regulations requiring refugees to seek asylum in the first country where they land. Many of the migrants in Hungary were soon insisting that they would walk by foot to Germany and Austria if the Hungarian government continued to impede their travel.

Pope Francis -- the leader of the Roman Catholic Church and the head of the Holy See -- entered the fray and called on Catholic parishes, churches, and monasteries across Europe to provide sanctuary to migrants seeking refuge. Meanwhile, private groups (i.e. with no governmental ties) have sprouted up in Europe to assist in transporting migrants from Hungary to more hospitable ground in Austria and Germany.

While the Hungarian government has received criticism for its hardline stance regarding migrants, in contrast to Austria and Germany, which have eased European Union restrictions and allowed migrants to bypass the normal asylum seeking process, the legal landscape was set to change. Of note were signals from Austria and Germany indicating that they would soon phase out the special measures in place allowing migrants to get to western Europe. Acknowledging that they had made exceptions due to the dire nature of the crisis, the governments of Austria and Germany noted that they would soon be returning to normal conditions whereby asylum seekers would have to be registered and processed in the first European Union country where they arrive.

The migrant crisis had been ongoing for some time; however, it captured global attention when the

body of a young Kurdish boy washed onto the shores of a Turkish resort. The boy along with his brother and mother perished in the sea when the person paid to help them escape Syria abandoned their boat before it landed at the Greek island of Kos. The visual image of a young child being the innocent casualty of the war and bloodshed wrought by those in power was reminiscent of another notorious image decades earlier in Vietnam. In 1972, the photograph Kim Phuc who had been burned by napalm and was running naked in the streets to escape the bombing was seared in the minds of people across the world, and is credited with helping bring the war to an end. It is to be determined if the heartbreaking image of the body of young Alan Kurdi would have the same impact in 2015. It was nevertheless drawing attention on the humanitarian crisis sweeping across Europe as Syrians sought refuge from the horrendous conditions of a country destroyed by war and terrorism.

Note that by mid-September 2015, Hungary was militarizing its southern border to prevent the infiltration by Syrians seeking asylum. In Germany, there were plans to impose controls on the border with Austria, with an eye on adhering to international law, which dictates that refugees must seek asylum in their initial European Union "landing" countries. As noted by German Interior Minister Thomas de Maiziere, refugees cannot "choose" their host countries. He added that the imposition of new controls was intended to return to a regime consistent with international law, as he said, "The aim of these measures is to limit the current inflows to Germany and to return to orderly procedures when people enter the country." In Denmark, rail links with Germany were temporarily suspended to stem the tide of Syrian migrants for the same reason.

Meanwhile, given the crisis sweeping across the region, European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker said that plans were afoot for a "swift, determined and comprehensive" response that would adhere to principles of "humanity and human dignity" via a quota system.

Across the Atlantic in the United States, the Obama administration announced that it would accept 10,000 Syrian refugees over the course of the next year.

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, www.countrywatch.com; see Bibliography for research sources.

Background

Although Denmark remained neutral during the First World War, its rapid occupation by Nazi Germany in 1940 persuaded most Danes that neutrality was no longer a reliable guarantee of Danish security. Danish security policy is founded on its membership in NATO. Since 1988, Danish budgets and security policy have been set by multi-year agreements supported by a wide parliamentary majority, including government and opposition parties.

External Threats

Denmark does not face any immediate threats from foreign nations. It is involved in minor territorial disputes with Canada, Iceland, Ireland and the United Kingdom.

Crime

The United States (U.S.) Department of State reports an overall low rate of crime in Denmark and its self-governing, overseas territories, Greenland and the Faeroe Islands. However, the incidences of non-violent crimes (muggings, robberies, theft) are increasing yearly.

Insurgencies

The government of Denmark is not facing any insurgent movements that seek to undermine its authority. Residents of the Faeroe Islands are considering a proposal for their independence while Greenland is considering greater autonomy.

Terrorism

Since September 11, 2001, Denmark has been highly proactive in endorsing and implementing United States, United Nations, and European Union-initiated counter-terrorism measures, just as Denmark has contributed substantially to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan and the neighboring countries.

In 2003, Denmark was among the first countries to join the "Coalition of the Willing" and supplied a submarine, Corvette-class ship, and military personnel to the coalition's effort in Iraq to enforce UN Security Council Resolution 1441. Since that time it has provided 500 troops to assist with stabilization efforts in Iraq. Prime Minister Rasmussen announced in February 2007 that most

Danish troops would be withdrawn from Iraq by August 2007, as Iraqi forces had become capable of taking over security responsibilities in the Basra area, where the Danish troops had been concentrated.

Denmark's involvement in Iraq, a degree of unrest among Islamic extremists in Denmark, the arrest of individuals suspected of raising money for terrorist activities, and Denmark's right-wing immigration policy have increased the chances of a terrorist attack on Denmark's soil. In the past year, it has moved from being at "low" risk to being "watchful" of a terrorist attack.

Since 2005 to the present, the controversial cartoons, which were published in a Danish journal and regarded negatively by Muslims (discussed in "Political Conditions"), have not helped the situation. That year also saw the arrest of several individuals accused of attempting to plot terror attacks (discussed in "Political Conditions"). In 2008, a plot was uncovered to assassinate one of the cartoonists who depicted the controversial cartoons. The attempted murder by of an artist who depicted the Muslim prophet, Mohammed (see "Political Conditions") by an extremist Islamist Somali in 2010 only served to highlight the fact that Denmark is a target for Muslim terrorists.

NOTE: At present, Denmark's risk of attack is greater than any other Scandinavian country.

National Security Update

On June 4, 2012, four individuals were found guilty of planning a terrorist attack on Danish newspaper offices and sentenced to 12 years in prison. At issue was the plot to carry out a revenge attack against the Jyllands-Posten for publishing satirical cartoons depicting the Islamic Prophet Muhammad in 2005. Those cartoons included an illustration of Muhammad carrying a bomb on his head, which was decorated with the Muslim declaration of faith instead of a turban. The cartoons sparked protests across the world, and Danish interests were particularly targeted in a campaign of outrage and anger by extremist Muslims.

Now in 2012, the men -- all of whom were Muslim residents of Sweden -- were apprehended thanks to the efforts by joint Swedish and Danish intelligence operatives. Weapons, including a machine-gun with a silencer, a pistol, bullets, and rolls of duct tape, were discovered among the men's possession when they were arrested. According to Danish prosecutors, the men intended to kill an "unknown" number of victims in a terror attack that was to take place at an awards ceremony attended by Crown Prince Frederik.

NOTE: Since 2005 when Jyllands-Posten published about a dozen cartoons showing the Prophet Muhammad in a variety of satirical situations, Denmark has been a north European target of terrorism by Islamic Jihadists and extremists. The cartoons were regarded as deliberately offensive by many Muslims globally; however, most advocates of democracy have argued that the right to be offensive has been part of the freedom of the press in mature democratic nation states.

Special National Security Entry

On Feb. 15, 2015, a free speech and blasphemy debate at a cafe in Denmark's capital city of Copenhagen, which featured a controversial Swedish cartoonist, was transposed into a scene of chaos when a gunman opened fire on participants. That assault left film director Finn Norgaard dead. Three other persons were injured in the attack. The Swedish cartoonist, Lars Vilks, who faced death threats over his caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, escaped unhurt. French Ambassador Francois Zimeray, who attended the debate -- presumably to show solidarity and respect for free speech following the Paris "Charlie Hebdo" attacks a month earlier -- also was unhurt. A separate attack followed at a Jewish synagogue during a bar mitzvah for a young girl, that left security guard Dan Uzan dead.

A manhunt in search of the suspect followed the two violent attacks. Ultimately, Omar El-Hussein -- a Danish-born man of Palestinian ethnicity -- was shot and killed. Meanwhile, two individuals were arrested and charged with providing material assistance to El-Hussein.

It should be noted that the gunman -- El-Hussein -- was involved in criminal gangs and had a history of convictions for violent crimes. That being said, there remained suggestions that the attacks in Copenhagen were "copy cat" killings, reminiscent of the Paris attacks in January 2015 that targeted the Charlie Hebdo satirical magazine and a Jewish kosher supermarket and left 17 people dead.

Danish intelligence was investigating whether the assailant was sympathetic to Islamist Jihadist notions, and had traveled to the Middle East, particularly Syria or Iraq, where the terror group Islamic State holds sway. However, the Danish foreign minister, Martin Lidegaard, dismissed the notion of a foreign connection, insisting instead that El-Hussein was likely radicalized in prison. He said, "We are not talking about a foreign fighter who has been abroad fighting in Syria or Iraq. We are talking about a man who was known by the police due to his gang activities, his criminal activities inside Denmark. Whether he has been radicalized inside jail where he was just released from or he has been moving around in these environments before is as yet rather unclear."

Following the attacks, Denmark was placed on high alert. Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt described the horrific events as "politically motivated" acts of terrorism. She later cast the shootings as "a cynical act of terror against Denmark" and said her government would not compromise on Denmark's defense of free expression. To this end, Thorning-Schmidt declared, "When you mercilessly fire deadly bullets at innocent people taking part in a debate, when you attack the Jewish community, you attack our democracy."

Thorning-Schmidt also vowed to protect Denmark's Jewish community. Of note was the fact that

the Jewish legacy in Denmark has been strong, with Denmark taking pride in the fact that it saved most of its Jewish population from the 1940s Nazi Holocaust. Making it clear that Denmark decades later would continue to stand strong with the Jewish population, the prime minister said, "We will do everything possible to protect our Jewish community."

But the safety of Denmark's Jewish population became something of a diplomatic imbroglio when Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu urged Danish Jews to emigrate to Israel. Denmark's Chief Rabbi Jair Melchior expressed disappointment over the Israeli leader's untimely intervention into the Danish tragedy, saying in an interview with the Associated Press, "If the way we deal with terror is to run somewhere else, we should all run to a deserted island."

Defense Forces

Military Data

Military Branches:

Defense Command: Army Operational Command, Admiral Danish Fleet, Arctic Command, Tactical Air Command, Home Guard

Eligible age to enter service:

18 for compulsory and voluntary military service

Mandatory Service Terms:

Conscripts serve an initial training period that varies from 4 to 12 months according to specialization

Manpower in general population-fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 1,014,560

females age 16-49: 1,003,921

Manpower reaching eligible age annually:

male: 37,913

female: 35,865

Military Expenditures-Percent of GDP:

1.37%

Appendix: Greenland

Territories of Denmark

Greenland

Geography

Location:

Northern North America, island between the Arctic Ocean and the North Atlantic Ocean, northeast of Canada

Region:

Arctic Region

Area:

total: 2,166,086 sq km

land: 2,166,086 sq km (410,449 sq km ice-free, 1,755,637 sq km ice-covered) (2000 est.)

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

44,087 km

Climate:

arctic to subarctic; cool summers, cold winters

Terrain:

flat to gradually sloping icecap covers all but a narrow, mountainous, barren, rocky coast

Geography notes:

dominates North Atlantic Ocean between North America and Europe; sparse population confined to small settlements along coast, but close to one-quarter of the population lives in the capital, Nuuk; world's second largest ice cap

Environment

Environment - current issues:

protection of the arctic environment; preservation of the Inuit traditional way of life, including whaling and seal hunting

Natural hazards:

continuous permafrost over northern two-thirds of the island

Natural resources:

coal, iron ore, lead, zinc, molybdenum, gold, platinum, uranium, fish, seals, whales, hydropower, possible oil and gas

Land use:

arable land: 0%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 100%

Key Data

National holiday:

June 21 (longest day)

Flag description:

two equal horizontal bands of white (top) and red with a large disk slightly to the hoist side of center - the top half of the disk is red, the bottom half is white

Capital:

Nuuk (Godthab)

Administrative divisions:

3 districts (landsdele); Avannaq (Nordgrønland), Tunu (Østgrønland), Kitaa (Vestgrønland)

note: there are 18 municipalities in Greenland

Currency (code):

Danish krone (DKK)

Exchange rates:

Danish kroner per US dollar - 5.9969 (2005), 5.9911 (2004), 6.5877 (2003), 7.8947 (2002), 8.3228 (2001)

Location and Relationship to Sovereign Power

At 2.1 square kilometers in area, Greenland is the world's largest island (non-continental landmass), taking up much of the North Atlantic Ocean between North America and Europe. Nearly all of the country is covered by an ice cap (the world's second-largest, after Antarctica).

Currently a semi-autonomous nation in the Kingdom of [Denmark](#), Greenland has a long history of Scandinavian occupation, beginning with the Viking settlers who first arrived in the 10th century. Although most of the early settlements died off, [Denmark](#) laid claim to the territory in the 18th century. After a brief period of US occupation during World War II, the Kingdom of [Denmark](#) officially integrated Greenland in 1953, with the ultimate goal being to grant the country increasing autonomy as it became more self-sufficient. In 1979 the Danish Parliament granted a modicum of home rule capabilities; in 2008 Greenlanders voted to increase autonomy effective in 2009, although [Denmark](#) still controls foreign policy, defense, and financial policy, as well as providing living subsidies to residents. Greenland has two seats in the Danish parliament in Copenhagen.

Government

Greenland is a parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislative assembly called the Inatsisartut. Its 31 members are elected by popular vote on the basis of proportional party representation and serve four-year terms. The parliament selects a leader, usually the majority party leader, as Prime Minister. He or she is the chief of the Home Rule Government.

Queen Margrethe II of [Denmark](#) is the head of state and appoints a high commissioner to serve as her local representative.

There is a local High Court called the Landsret. Appeals can be made to higher courts and the Supreme Court in Copenhagen.

Greenlanders also have a voice in the affairs of their sovereign nation—they recently received two representatives in the Danish parliament, both of whom are popularly elected.

Politics

Candidates from separatist and social democratic parties that favor more independence from [Denmark](#) and a stronger Greenlandic identity currently constitute a large majority of elected representatives, with 23 out of 31 total seats in Parliament. Their popularity increased in the most recent 2009 elections over the previous 2005 elections, while support has waned for the conservative Atassut party that favors continuing close relations with [Denmark](#), who now hold only 3 seats in the assembly.

Economy

Danish subsidies contribute approximately 60% of the government revenues, or \$650 million (~\$11,000 per resident). The public sector plays the most important role in Greenland's economy, with additional revenue coming in from the sale of fishing permits and EU compensation.

At present, the major export is fish, which comprises 82% of all exports. Mining olivine sand and gold also contributes about 10% of exports. However, in the interest of growing the private sector and becoming economically self-sufficient, there are a number of potential industries being considered. Studies have indicated possible stores of offshore oil and gas reserves along the northeast coast, and exploration of those areas is currently underway. A US aluminum manufacturer has signed preliminary agreements to establish a smelter and power generation facility there, encouraged by the vast potential for hydropower—a development that could encourage other foreign companies to locate factories in the country. Tourism is growing, notably with summer cruises along the western and southern coasts.

Denmark is the chief trading partner, accounting for three quarters of all imports and nearly two thirds of exports. [Japan](#), [China](#), and [Sweden](#) are also significant export partners, and [Sweden](#) is the second-largest importer to the country.

Demographics

The population stands at about 58,000, and its growth rate is 0.05% per year, one of the lowest in the world. Many Greenlanders leave the country, with [Denmark](#) being the most popular destination—there is a net migration rate of -6 people per 1,000, one of the highest emigration rates in the world. The birthrate is 2.1 children per woman, almost exactly the population replacement rate.

Other population markers include the following --

Death rate:

7.84 deaths/1,000 population

Infant mortality rate:

total: 15.4 deaths/1,000 live births

male: 16.73 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 14.03 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 69.94 years

male: 66.36 years

female: 73.6 years

Total fertility rate:

2.4 children born/woman

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

NA

89% percent of the population is ethnically Inuit or mixed Danish and Inuit, with the remaining 11% being mostly Danish and other European or European-descended people.

Literacy is 100% for people 15 and over.

More than a quarter of the population lives in Nuuk, the capital city. 80% of the population is urbanized.

Religions:

Evangelical Lutheran

Languages:

Greenlandic (East Inuit), Danish, English

Culture

The Inuit culture of Greenland reflects the ancestral traditions of its population, particularly the culture surrounding hunting and fishing. Hunting, particularly reindeer hunting, is fundamentally integral to the cultural identity of native Greenlanders, with a spiritual and meaningful sensibility imbued in the elements of nature—ecology, animals, plants, and seasons. Hunting rituals and their

corollary elements form the core of Greenlandic culture, so much so that cultural heritage groups are seeking protected status for their rituals—exemptions from international anti-hunting laws designed to protect endangered species.

Greenlandic, an Eskimo-Aleut language, is the most widely spoken tongue, and is one of the official languages of Greenland. However, the second official language, Danish, continues to be commonly used and understood; for some, especially in the capital city of Nuuk, it is the primary language of communication. Like the vast majority of Danes, Greenlander children learn English in school from a very young age and most achieve a significant level of proficiency. As a result, many Greenlanders are functionally trilingual.

Greenland is overwhelmingly Lutheran Christian, and is much more religious than other Scandinavian countries, including its sovereign. About 97% affiliate themselves as Christians.

Sources

CIA World Factbook

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<http://www.greenland.com/en/about-greenland/kultur-sjael.aspx>

Chapter 3

Economic Overview

Economic Overview

Overview

Denmark has an open and modern market economy featuring high-tech agriculture, up-to-date small-scale and corporate industry, extensive government welfare measures, and high living standards. The economy is highly dependent on exports, which account for about 50 percent of GDP. Major exports include machinery and equipment, chemical products, and food products.

Denmark enjoyed strong economic performance from 2004 to 2006 on the back of robust private consumption and a favorable external environment. But growth began slowing in 2007 with the end of the housing boom. This cyclical slowdown was exacerbated by the global financial crisis which led to increased borrowing costs and depressed export growth, and ultimately a decline in consumer confidence and investment. As a result, real GDP turned negative in 2008, followed by a large contraction in 2009. On the fiscal front, after many years of budget surpluses, the fiscal balance swung into deficit in 2009 and 2010 as revenue dropped but expenditure increased to support the economy. The economy was expected to make a slow and modest recovery in 2010 and that proved to be the case, partly due to increased spending on the part of the government. Overall, the country's economic rebound was viewed as sluggish and disappointing. In September 2011, the country elected its first female prime minister, ending nearly a decade of opposition rule. Social Democrat leader Helle Thorning-Schmidt campaigned on a platform of tax rises and increased public spending. While the economy grew in 2011, the outlook for 2012 was weak with both consumption and business investment remaining well below historical norms. In April 2012, Fitch Ratings affirmed Denmark's long-term foreign and local currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDR) at 'AAA' and said its outlook on long-term ratings was 'stable.' The agency cited in part the country's diversified economy, high income per capita, and a robust institutional framework. "Despite the change in government, the economic policies Denmark has pursued have remained consistent, prudent and credible," said Chris Pryce, a director in Fitch's Sovereign Group."

While the population of the country enjoys an extensive welfare safety net, there is a need to reform the government policy to preserve and strengthen the welfare system in the long run, including reforms of unemployment and retirement benefits. The impending decline in the ratio of workers to retirees will be a major problem in the future. Still, Denmark's fiscal position remains among the strongest of the European Union countries. The country's unemployment rate stood at about 6 percent from 2010 to 2012 – one-half to two-thirds less than average EU employment. Although Denmark previously met the criteria to join the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), the country has so far decided not to join, although the Danish krone remains pegged to the euro.

Although it previously met the criteria to join the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), so far Denmark has decided not to join, although the Danish krone remains pegged to the euro. Modest growth was expected to resume in 2013, buoyed mainly by private consumption and moderate business investment growth.

Denmark's consumer confidence turned positive in June 2013 for the first time in a nearly a year, helped by very low interest rates, an expectation that unemployment will decline and an improvement in disposable income. Realkredit Danmark chief economist Christian Heinig said that while the news was positive that it would be too much to expect a large consumer upswing considering that house prices remained in decline in some parts of the country. "We need to see the new optimism take a stronghold in the coming months before we firmly highlight a shift in consumer confidence," Danske Bank economist Jens Pedersen was quoted as saying in a Reuters article.

Historically low levels of unemployment rose sharply with the recession and remained at about 6 percent from 2010 to 2013, based on the national measure, about two-thirds average EU unemployment. Nonetheless, Denmark's fiscal position remained among the strongest in the EU with public debt at about 44 to 46 percent of GDP in 2013. Despite previously meeting the criteria to join the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), so far Denmark has decided not to join, although the Danish krone remains pegged to the euro. Also in 2013, property prices dropped by about 20 percent.

In February 2014, Fitch Ratings affirmed Denmark's long-term foreign and local currency Issuer Default Ratings at 'AAA' with stable outlooks. Net external debt has been falling since 2008 and was estimated to be 0.4 percent of GDP in 2013. In May 2014, Denmark's government unveiled a second growth package in two years aimed at getting the country out of its economic crisis.

In a statement, Denmark's finance ministry said the plan would raise Denmark's structural output by \$1.1 billion and significantly reduce costs – including energy taxes - for companies in 2020 through nearly 90 measures. One of the main goals was to make it more appealing to companies to keep production in Denmark. Looking ahead, the Danish economy was expected to grow 1.5 percent in 2014.

In early January 2015, Danske Bank, one of the largest financial enterprises in the region, released a Nordic outlook report indicating that the Danish economy was performing better than that of its Scandinavian neighbors. The outlook reported that the Danish economy was "slowly moving in the right direction."

"GDP growth was positive in Denmark in 2014 – the first year of positive growth rates since 2011. Danish house prices are increasing and consumption seems to be picking up and in the forecast period should continue to be supported by the significant drop in oil prices," the report read.

Ironically, Danske Bank noted that lower oil prices had the potential to help the Danish economy while wreaking havoc on the government's budget, which is built upon Denmark's ability to sell North Sea oil at \$110 dollars per barrel in 2015. In early January 2015, oil prices had fallen below \$50 per barrel.

By early January 2015, Denmark had notched positive GDP growth for five straight quarters, putting it just one quarter away from an official recovery. Danes' private consumption was expected to be the main driver of economic growth in coming years. GDP growth was projected to be about 1.6 percent in 2015 and 2 percent in 2016.

Economic Performance

After expanding at an annual average rate of 2.7 percent from 2004 to 2006, real GDP growth slowed in 2007 with the end of the housing boom. The global financial turmoil further exacerbated the cyclical slowdown, leading to a sharp decline of GDP growth to a negative rate in 2008. With the deepening of the global economic crisis, real GDP recorded a large contraction in 2009 before rebounding in 2010-2012.

According to CountryWatch estimated calculations for 2014:

Real GDP growth rate was: 0.6 percent

The fiscal deficit/surplus as percent of GDP (%) was: -3.7 percent

Inflation was measured at: 2.9 percent

Updated in 2015

**Please note that the figures in our Economic Performance section are estimates or forecasts based on IMF-based data that are formulated using CountryWatch models of analysis.*

Supplementary sources: International Monetary Fund, Reuters, The Local, Bloomberg and BBC

Special Entry

Summary of 2008 credit crisis

A financial farrago, rooted in the credit crisis, became a global phenomenon by the start of October 2008. In the United States, after failure of the passage of a controversial bailout plan in the lower chamber of Congress, an amended piece of legislation finally passed through both houses of Congress. There were hopes that its passage would calm jitters on Wall Street and restore

confidence in the country's financial regime. With the situation requiring rapid and radical action, a new proposal for the government to bank stakes was gaining steam. Meanwhile, across the Atlantic in Europe, a spate of banking crises resulted in nationalization measures for the United Kingdom bank, Bradford and Bingley, joint efforts by the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg to shore up Fortis, joint efforts by France, Belgium, and Luxembourg to shore up Dexia, a rescue plan for Hypo Real Estate, and the quasi-bankruptcy of Iceland's economy. Indeed, Iceland's liabilities were in gross excess of the country's GDP. With further banks also in jeopardy of failing, and with no coordinated efforts to stem the tide by varying countries of the European Union, there were rising anxieties not only about the resolving the financial crisis, but also about the viability of the European bloc.

On Sept. 4, 2008, the leaders of key European states -- United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy -- met in the French capital city of Paris to discuss the financial farrago and to consider possible action. The talks, which were hosted by French President Nicolas Sarkozy, ended without consensus on what should be done to deal with the credit crisis, which was rapidly becoming a global phenomenon. The only thing that the four European countries agreed upon was that there would not be a grand rescue plan, akin to the type that was initiated in the United States. As well, they jointly called for greater regulation and a coordinated response. To that latter end, President Nicolas Sarkozy said, "Each government will operate with its own methods and means, but in a coordinated manner."

This call came after Ireland took independent action to deal with the burgeoning financial crisis. Notably, the Irish government decided days earlier to fully guarantee all deposits in the country's major banks for a period of two years. The Greek government soon followed suit with a similar action. These actions by Ireland and Greece raised the ire of other European countries, and evoked questions of whether Ireland and Greece had violated any European Union charters.

Nevertheless, as anxieties about the safety of bank deposits rose across Europe, Ireland and Greece saw an influx of new banking customers from across the continent, presumably seeking the security of knowing their money would be safe amidst a financial meltdown. And even with questions rising about the decisions of the Irish and Greek government, the government of Germany decided to go down a similar path by guaranteeing all private bank accounts. For his part, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown said that his government would increase the limit on guaranteed bank deposits from £35,000 to £50,000.

In these various ways, it was clear that there was no concurrence among some of Europe's most important economies. In fact, despite the meeting in France, which called for coordination among the countries of the European bloc, there was no unified response to the global financial crisis. Instead, that meeting laid bare the divisions within the countries of the European Union, and called into question the very viability of the European bloc. Perhaps that question of viability would be answered at a forthcoming G8 summit, as recommended by those participating in the Paris talks.

A week later, another meeting of European leaders in Paris ended with concurrence that no large institution would be allowed to fail. The meeting, which was attended by leaders of euro zone countries, resulted in an agreement to guarantee loans between banks until the end of 2009, with an eye on easing the credit crunch. The proposal, which would apply in 15 countries, also included a plan for capital infusions by means of purchasing preference shares from banks. The United Kingdom, which is outside the euro zone, had already announced a similar strategy.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy argued that these unprecedented measures were of vital importance. The French leader said, "The crisis has over the past few days entered into a phase that makes it intolerable to opt for procrastination and a go-it-alone approach."

Europe facing financial crisis as banking bail-out looms large

In early 2009, according to the European Commission, European banks may be in need of as much as several trillion in bailout funding. Impaired or toxic assets factor highly on the European Union bank balance sheets. Economist Nouriel Roubini warned that the economies of Ukraine, Belarus, Hungary, Latvia and Lithuania appeared to be on the brink of disaster. Overall, Eastern European countries borrowed heavily from Western European banks. Thus, even if the currencies on the eastern part of the continent collapse, effects will be felt in the western part of Europe as well. For example, Swiss banks that gave billions of credit to Eastern Europe cannot look forward to repayment anytime soon. As well, Austrian banks have had extensive exposure to Eastern Europe, and can anticipate a highly increased cost of insuring its debt. German Finance Minister Peer Steinbrueck has warned that as many as 16 European Union countries would require assistance. Indeed, his statements suggested the need for a regional rescue effort.

European Union backs financial regulation overhaul

With the global financial crisis intensifying, leaders of European Union countries backed sweeping financial regulations. Included in the package of market reforms were sanctions on tax havens, caps on bonus payments to management, greater hedge fund regulation, and increased influence by the International Monetary Fund. European leaders also backed a charter of sustainable economic activity, that would subject all global financial activities to both regulation and accountability by credit rating agencies.

These moves were made ahead of the Group of 20 summit scheduled for April 2, 2009, in London. It was not known whether other countries outside Europe, such as the United States, Japan, India and China, would support the new and aggressive regime of market regulation. That said, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Berlin that Europe had a responsibility to chart this track. She said, "Europe will own up to its responsibility in the world."

Leaders forge \$1 trillion deal at G-20 summit in London

Leaders of the world's largest economies, known as the "G-20," met in London to explore possible responses to the global financial crisis. To that end, they forged a deal valued at more than US\$1 trillion.

Central to the agreement was an infusion of \$750 billion to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which was aimed at helping troubled economies. Up to \$100 billion of that amount was earmarked to assist the world's very poorest countries -- an amount far greater than had been expected. In many senses, the infusion of funding to the IMF marked a strengthening of that body unseen since the 1980s.

In addition, the G-20 leaders settled on a \$250 billion increase in global trade. The world's poorest countries would also benefit from the availability of \$250 billion of trade credit.

After some debate, the G-20 leaders decided to levy sanctions against clandestine tax havens and to institute strict financial regulations. Such regulations included tougher controls on banking professionals' salaries and bonuses, and increased oversight of hedge funds and credit rating agencies. A Financial Stability Board was to be established that would work in concert with the IMF to facilitate cross-border cooperation, and also to provide early warnings regarding the financial system.

Aside from these measures, the G-20 countries were already implementing their own economic stimulus measures at home, aimed at reversing the global recession. Together, these economic stimulus packages would inject approximately \$5 trillion by the end of 2010.

United Kingdom Prime Minister Gordon Brown played host at the meeting, which most concurred went off successfully, despite the presence of anti-globalization and anarchist protestors. Prime Minister Brown warned that there was "no quick fix" for the economic woes facing the international community, but he drew attention to the consensus that had been forged in the interest of the common good. He said, "This is the day that the world came together to fight back against the global recession, not with words, but with a plan for global recovery and for reform and with a clear timetable for its delivery."

All eyes were on United States President Barack Obama, who characterized the G-20 summit as "a turning point" in the effort towards global economic recovery. He also hailed the advances agreed upon to reform the failed regulatory regime that contributed to the financial crisis that has gripped many of the economies across the globe. Thusly, President Obama declared the London summit to be historic saying, "It was historic because of the size and the scope of the challenges that we face and because of the timeliness and the magnitude of our response."

Ahead of the summit, there were reports of a growing rift between the respective duos of France

and Germany and the United States and the United Kingdom. While France and Germany were emphasizing stricter financial regulations, the United States and the United Kingdom were advocating public spending to deal with the economic crisis. Indeed, French President Nicolas Sarkozy had threatened to bolt the meeting if his priority issues were not addressed. But such an end did not occur, although tensions were existent.

To that end, President Obama was hailed for his diplomatic skills after he brokered an agreement between France and China on tax havens. The American president played the role of peacemaker between French President Sarkozy and Chinese Premier Hu Jintao, paving the way for a meeting of the minds on the matter of tax havens.

French President Nicolas Sarkozy said the concurrence reached at the G-20 summit were "more than we could have hoped for." President Sarkozy also credited President Obama for the American president's leadership at the summit, effusively stating: "President Obama really found the consensus. He didn't focus exclusively on stimulus ... In fact it was he who managed to help me persuade [Chinese] President Hu Jintao to agree to the reference to the ... publication of a list of tax havens, and I wish to thank him for that."

Meanwhile, German Chancellor Angela Merkel also expressed positive feedback about the success of the summit noting that the new measures would give the international arena a "clearer financial market architecture." She noted the agreement reached was "a very, very good, almost historic compromise." Finally, Chancellor Merkel had warm words of praise for President Obama. "The American president also put his hand into this," said Merkel.

Note: The G-20 leaders agreed to meet again in September 2009 in New York to assess the progress of their agenda.

Special Entry

Summary of Greek Debt Crisis and Effects in Europe

The stability of the euro zone and the European Union has become a major concern in recent years, largely emanating from the Greek debt crisis, but extending regionally. It should be noted that although Denmark is a member state of the European Union, it is not in the euro zone, effectively minimizing the negative effects for this country.

By the start of December 2011, the leaders of the two biggest players in the euro zone -- French President Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel -- issued a joint call for serious changes to Europe's governing treaties, aimed at ameliorated economic governance for the 17 countries that make up the euro currency bloc. French President Sarkozy and German Chancellor Merkel met for talks on the matter in Paris as the euro zone countries continue to grapple with the

regional debt crisis, emanating from Greece but extending across the euro bloc.

Included in their proposal were: (1) the creation of a monetary fund for Europe, (2) automatic penalties for countries that exceed European deficit limits, and (3) monthly meetings of European leaders. The proposal entailed compromises by both European leaders. President Sarkozy had to accept the notion of automatic sanctions for countries in violation of debt limit rules, while Chancellor Merkel had to accept that the European Court of Justice will not be empowered with the power of veto over budgets. Meanwhile, the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which was intended to replace the European Financial Stability Facility in 2013, would be advanced earlier in 2012.

President Sarkozy said that they were looking to March 2012 to complete negotiations on the new treaty. Ideally, the new treaty would be ratified by all 27 member states of the European Union. However, if concurrence at that level proved impossible, then the 17 states of the euro zone would have to approve it. It should also be noted that European Council President Herman Van Rompuy has said that tougher budget rules for the euro zone may not require changing any existing European Union treaties.

President Sarkozy emphasized the imperative that such a crisis not re-emerge in the future. He said, "We are conscious of the gravity of the situation and of the responsibility that rests on our shoulders." For her part, Chancellor Merkel said her country, working in concert with France, was "absolutely determined" to maintain a stable euro. She also advocated for "structural changes which go beyond agreements."

While the new measures would certainly go a long way to addressing the issue of improved economic governance in the euro zone, they did not deal with the question of how many euro zone countries would deal with their debt challenges in a climate of low growth. Nevertheless, in the short run, the steadfast and unified message of intent by the two European leaders was, at least, expected to calm markets and facilitate lower borrowing costs for debt-ridden economies such as Italy, Spain, and Portugal.

Nominal GDP and Components



Nominal GDP and Components					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nominal GDP (LCU billions)	1,833.40	1,866.78	1,886.39	1,919.19	1,960.82
Nominal GDP Growth Rate (%)	1.932	1.820	1.051	1.739	2.169
Consumption (LCU billions)	884.302	911.278	920.347	931.709	948.532
Government Expenditure (LCU billions)	490.610	502.010	503.966	513.441	522.712
Gross Capital Formation (LCU billions)	356.756	353.506	353.793	372.761	390.126
Exports of Goods & Services (LCU billions)	970.675	1,007.48	1,023.81	1,030.23	1,075.53
Imports of Goods & Services (LCU billions)	868.938	907.497	915.523	928.949	976.076

Population and GDP Per Capita

Population and GDP Per Capita					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Population, total (million)	5.561	5.581	5.603	5.617	5.660
Population growth (%)	0.4697	0.3596	0.3942	0.2499	0.7655
Nominal GDP per Capita (LCU 1000s)	329,689.62	334,488.26	336,675.53	341,675.63	346,435.51

Real GDP and Inflation

Real GDP and Inflation					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Real Gross Domestic Product (LCU billions 2005 base)	1,819.39	1,807.49	1,798.71	1,816.02	1,847.01
Real GDP Growth Rate (%)	1.156	-0.6541	-0.4862	0.9628	1.706
GDP Deflator (2005=100.0)	100.770	103.280	104.875	105.681	106.162
Inflation, GDP Deflator (%)	0.7670	2.491	1.544	0.7685	0.4551

Government Spending and Taxation

Government Spending and Taxation					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Government Fiscal Budget (billions)	1,042.17	1,097.84	1,076.71	1,093.20	1,066.83
Fiscal Budget Growth Rate (percentage)	1.545	5.342	-1.9253	1.532	-2.4117
National Tax Rate Net of Transfers (%)	54.772	55.143	56.016	58.762	51.679
Government Revenues Net of Transfers (LCU billions)	1,004.20	1,029.40	1,056.68	1,127.76	1,013.32
Government Surplus(-) Deficit(+) (LCU billions)	-37.9670	-68.4420	-20.0240	34.563	-53.5060
Government Surplus(+) Deficit(-) (%GDP)	-2.0708	-3.6663	-1.0615	1.801	-2.7287

Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment

Money Supply, Interest Rates and Unemployment					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Money and Quasi-Money (M2) (LCU billions)	1,186.74	1,211.05	1,097.53	1,252.32	1,279.48
Money Supply Growth Rate (%)	-5.9362	2.048	-9.3735	14.103	2.169
Lending Interest Rate (%)	5.124	5.350	5.226	5.124	5.515
Unemployment Rate (%)	7.567	7.533	7.000	6.525	6.200

Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate

Foreign Trade and the Exchange Rate					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Official Exchange Rate (LCU/\$US)	5.369	5.792	5.616	5.606	6.737
Trade Balance NIPA (\$US billions)	18.950	17.261	19.281	18.067	14.762
Trade Balance % of GDP	5.549	5.356	5.740	5.277	5.072
Total Foreign Exchange Reserves (\$US billions)	84.955	89.698	88.677	75.392	66.453

Data in US Dollars

Data in US Dollars					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Nominal GDP (\$US billions)	341.498	322.277	335.878	342.362	291.043
Exports (\$US billions)	180.802	173.930	182.292	183.781	159.640
Imports (\$US billions)	161.852	156.668	163.012	165.714	144.878

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units

Energy Consumption and Production Standard Units					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Consumption (TBPD)	166.188	158.689	158.054	156.971	158.837
Petroleum Production (TBPD)	226.200	205.731	180.139	166.754	164.355
Petroleum Net Exports (TBPD)	60.012	47.042	22.085	9.783	5.518
Natural Gas Consumption (bcf)	147.687	137.481	131.407	111.595	117.534
Natural Gas Production (bcf)	249.744	205.600	171.453	160.571	166.144
Natural Gas Net Exports (bcf)	102.056	68.119	40.046	48.975	48.610
Coal Consumption (1000s st)	6,112.32	4,625.30	5,811.10	4,624.58	4,701.86
Coal Production	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
(1000s st)					
Coal Net Exports (1000s st)	-6112.3165	-4625.2985	-5811.0957	-4624.5831	-4701.8627
Nuclear Production (bil kwh)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Hydroelectric Production (bil kwh)	0.0170	0.0170	0.0130	0.0146	0.0139
Renewables Production (bil kwh)	14.665	14.657	15.804	17.869	19.086

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS

Energy Consumption and Production QUADS					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Consumption (Quads)	0.3549	0.3388	0.3375	0.3352	0.3392
Petroleum Production (Quads)	0.4829	0.4423	0.3859	0.3642	0.2805
Petroleum Net Exports (Quads)	0.1281	0.1034	0.0484	0.0290	-0.0587
Natural Gas Consumption (Quads)	0.1506	0.1402	0.1340	0.1138	0.1199
Natural Gas Production (Quads)	0.2545	0.2090	0.1745	0.1661	0.1450
Natural Gas Net Exports (Quads)	0.1038	0.0688	0.0405	0.0523	0.0252
Coal Consumption (Quads)	0.1222	0.0925	0.1162	0.0925	0.0940
Coal Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coal Net Exports (Quads)	-0.1222	-0.0925	-0.1162	-0.0925	-0.0940
Nuclear Production (Quads)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Hydroelectric Production (Quads)	0.0002	0.0002	0.0001	0.0001	0.0001
Renewables Production (Quads)	0.1466	0.1466	0.1580	0.1787	0.1909

World Energy Price Summary

World Energy Price Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum-WTI (\$/bbl)	95.054	94.159	97.943	93.112	48.709
Natural Gas-Henry Hub (\$/mmbtu)	3.999	2.752	3.729	4.369	2.614
Coal Thermal-Australian (\$/mt)	121.448	96.364	84.562	70.130	57.511

CO2 Emissions

CO2 Emissions					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Petroleum Based (mm mt C)	7.928	7.570	7.540	7.488	7.577
Natural Gas Based (mm mt C)	2.396	2.231	2.132	1.811	1.907
Coal Based (mm mt C)	3.503	2.651	3.330	2.650	2.695
Total CO2 Emissions (mm mt C)	13.827	12.451	13.002	11.949	12.179

Agriculture Consumption and Production

Agriculture Consumption and Production					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corn Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	82.819	184.499	299.569	445.529	399.071
Corn Production (1000 metric tons)	55.197	74.872	75.392	74.015	68.983
Corn Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-27.6215	-109.6274	-224.1774	-371.5141	-330.0886
Soybeans Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	81.172	88.325	12.567	5.832	5.092
Soybeans Production (1000 metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Soybeans Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-81.1720	-88.3250	-12.5670	-5.8321	-5.0923

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Rice Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	3.673	3.673	3.673	3.924	3.422
Rice Production (1000 metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Rice Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	-3.6728	-3.6728	-3.6728	-3.9236	-3.4220
Coffee Total Consumption (metric tons)	22,869.00	18,868.00	17,174.00	13,050.93	11,991.52
Coffee Production (metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Coffee Net Exports (metric tons)	-22869.0000	-18868.0000	-17174.0000	-13050.9332	-11991.5165
Cocoa Beans Total Consumption (metric tons)	3,548.00	3,169.00	3,418.00	3,335.18	3,389.78
Cocoa Beans Production (metric tons)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
Cocoa Beans Net Exports	-3548.0000	-3169.0000	-3418.0000	-3335.1770	-3389.7774

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
(metric tons)					
Wheat Total Consumption (1000 metric tons)	4,298.62	4,242.73	3,649.97	4,567.28	3,757.31
Wheat Production (1000 metric tons)	4,820.27	4,549.05	4,138.71	4,956.29	4,269.91
Wheat Net Exports (1000 metric tons)	521.647	306.320	488.741	389.011	512.601

World Agriculture Pricing Summary

World Agriculture Pricing Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Corn Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	291.684	298.417	259.389	192.881	169.750
Soybeans Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	540.667	591.417	538.417	491.771	390.417
Rice Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	458.558	525.071	473.989	425.148	386.033
Coffee Pricing Summary (\$/kilogram)	5.976	4.111	3.076	4.424	3.526
Cocoa Beans Pricing Summary (\$/kilogram)	2.980	2.392	2.439	3.062	3.135
Wheat Pricing Summary (\$/metric ton)	316.264	313.242	312.248	284.895	203.177

Metals Consumption and Production

Metals Consumption and Production					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Copper Consumption (1000 mt)	1,789.88	2,160.59	1,677.75	1,692.68	1,442.1
Copper Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
Copper Net Exports (1000 mt)	-1789.8790	-2160.5900	-1677.7460	-1692.6790	-1442.3
Zinc Consumption (1000 mt)	5,993.40	6,833.53	7,208.13	6,988.59	6,145.1
Zinc Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
Zinc Exports (1000 mt)	-5993.4020	-6833.5340	-7208.1260	-6988.5860	-6145.6
Lead Consumption (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
Lead Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.000

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Lead Exports (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
Tin Consumption (1000 mt)	105.825	157.899	115.256	78.676	71.46
Tin Production (1000 mt)	59.538	49.529	49.725	45.651	43.11
Tin Exports (1000 mt)	-46.2873	-108.3704	-65.5311	-33.0250	-28.35
Nickel Consumption (1000 mt)	55.831	71.817	40.284	42.194	33.22
Nickel Production (1000 mt)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
Nickel Exports (1000 mt)	-55.8310	-71.8170	-40.2840	-42.1940	-33.22
Gold Consumption (kg)	103,522.98	3,385.39	46,277.59	46,779.41	40,260
Gold Production (kg)	3,299.34	3,443.46	3,371.89	3,584.05	3,458.1
Gold Exports (kg)	-100223.6442	58.073	-42905.6977	-43195.3534	-36801.3

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Silver Consumption (mt)	102,760.00	99,502.00	349,730.00	133,597.00	107,896
Silver Production (mt)	15,518.30	16,282.83	16,546.08	17,123.07	15,736
Silver Exports (mt)	-87241.6956	-83219.1684	-333183.9235	-116473.9285	-92159.7

World Metals Pricing Summary

World Metals Pricing Summary					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Copper (\$/mt)	8,828.19	7,962.35	7,332.10	6,863.40	5,510.46
Zinc (\$/mt)	2,193.90	1,950.41	1,910.26	2,160.97	1,931.68
Tin (\$/mt)	26,053.68	21,125.99	22,282.80	21,898.87	16,066.63
Lead (\$/mt)	2,400.81	2,064.64	2,139.79	2,095.46	1,787.82
Nickel (\$/mt)	22,910.36	17,547.55	15,031.80	16,893.38	11,862.64
Gold (\$/oz)	1,569.21	1,669.52	1,411.46	1,265.58	1,160.66
Silver (\$/oz)	35.224	31.137	23.850	19.071	15.721

Economic Performance Index

Economic Performance Index

The Economic Performance rankings are calculated by CountryWatch's editorial team, and are based on criteria including sustained economic growth, monetary stability, current account deficits, budget surplus, unemployment and structural imbalances. Scores are assessed from 0 to 100 using this aforementioned criteria as well as CountryWatch's proprietary economic research data and models.

	Bank stability risk	Monetary/ Currency stability	Government Finances	Empl./ Unempl.	Econ.GNP growth or decline/ forecast
	0 - 100	0 - 100	0 - 100	0 - 100	%
North Americas					
Canada	92	69	35	38	3.14%
United States	94	76	4	29	3.01%
Western Europe					
Austria	90	27	30	63	1.33%
Belgium	88	27	19	23	1.15%
Cyprus	81	91	16	80	-0.69%
Denmark	97	70	45	78	1.20%
Finland	89	27	41	33	1.25%

France	87	27	18	27	1.52%
Germany	86	27	22	21	1.25%
Greece	79	27	5	24	-2.00%
Iceland	90	17	2	34	-3.04%
Italy	85	27	37	24	0.84%
Ireland	92	27	11	10	-1.55%
Luxembourg	99	27	28	66	2.08%
Malta	77	27	41	51	0.54%
Netherlands	91	27	26	74	1.30%
Norway	98	44	10	76	1.08%
Portugal	77	27	13	20	0.29%
Spain	83	27	9	3	-0.41%
Sweden	94	72	54	32	1.23%
Switzerland	97	86	55	77	1.53%
United Kingdom	85	12	9	37	1.34%
Central and Eastern Europe					
Albania	44	60	33	6	2.30%
Armenia	45	59	49	30	1.80%

Azerbaijan	56	4	84	99	2.68%
Belarus	59	21	83	98	2.41%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	34	68	69	N/A	0.50%
Bulgaria	58	75	88	49	0.20%
Croatia	69	68	94	9	0.18%
Czech Republic	80	89	29	70	1.67%
Estonia	72	90	66	92	0.80%
Georgia	36	60	53	56	2.00%
Hungary	70	66	26	54	-0.16%
Latvia	67	100	65	44	-3.97%
Lithuania	65	91	87	79	-1.65%
Macedonia (FYR)	53	69	56	2	2.03%
Moldova	23	36	81	67	2.50%
Poland	74	74	38	12	2.72%
Romania	62	56	70	62	0.75%
Russia	73	18	90	8	4.00%
Serbia	48	49	52	5	1.97%

Montenegro	39	27	73	1	-1.70%
Slovak Republic	80	62	30	14	4.06%
Slovenia	81	27	36	65	1.12%
Ukraine	41	11	57	N/A	3.68%
Africa					
Algeria	57	18	96	7	4.55%
Angola	49	1	97	N/A	7.05%
Benin	19	91	20	N/A	3.22%
Botswana	68	58	76	N/A	6.33%
Burkina Faso	16	91	13	N/A	4.41%
Burundi	2	91	6	N/A	3.85%
Cameroon	26	91	91	N/A	2.58%
Cape Verde	52	87	4	N/A	4.96%
Central African Republic	9	91	32	N/A	3.18%
Chad	22	91	89	N/A	4.42%
Congo	52	87	87	N/A	12.13%
Côte d'Ivoire	25	91	82	28	2.98%
Dem. Republic					

Congo	4	91	47	N/A	5.44%
Djibouti	31	76	50	N/A	4.47%
Egypt	37	20	24	69	5.01%
Equatorial Guinea	82	91	85	N/A	0.94%
Eritrea	1	3	1	18	1.81%
Ethiopia	6	45	8	N/A	6.96%
Gabon	64	91	96	N/A	5.36%
Gambia	8	48	86	N/A	4.82%
Ghana	9	11	69	N/A	4.50%
Guinea	10	7	91	N/A	3.03%
Guinea-Bissau	5	91	46	N/A	3.47%
Kenya	20	41	59	N/A	4.11%
Lesotho	13	40	12	N/A	2.98%
Liberia	12	73	74	N/A	5.92%
Libya	73	2	94	N/A	5.22%
Madagascar	4	22	24	N/A	-1.02%
Malawi	7	25	55	N/A	5.96%
Mali	20	91	82	N/A	5.12%

Mauritania	15	13	93	N/A	4.58%
Mauritius	65	52	56	55	4.10%
Morocco	37	72	48	26	3.23%
Mozambique	12	23	71	N/A	6.45%
Namibia	40	39	62	N/A	1.70%
Niger	10	91	21	N/A	4.41%
Nigeria	30	6	61	N/A	6.98%
Rwanda	21	40	68	N/A	5.39%
Sao Tome & Principe	1	61	100	N/A	3.40%
Senegal	24	91	63	N/A	3.44%
Seychelles	60	67	97	N/A	4.01%
Sierra Leone	5	10	39	N/A	4.77%
Somalia	2	38	59	N/A	3.19%
South Africa	61	37	70	N/A	2.59%
Sudan	16	5	73	N/A	5.52%
Swaziland	32	44	79	N/A	1.09%
Tanzania	15	45	32	N/A	6.17%
Togo	8	91	92	N/A	2.56%

Tunisia	50	61	44	39	4.00%
Uganda	11	17	54	N/A	5.59%
Zambia	29	20	49	N/A	5.84%
Zimbabwe	0	8	16	N/A	2.24%
South and Central America					
Argentina	66	3	80	36	3.50%
Belize	47	76	80	N/A	1.00%
Bolivia	32	51	61	81	3.99%
Brazil	71	47	78	11	5.50%
Chile	78	25	92	73	4.72%
Columbia	47	52	34	47	2.25%
Costa Rica	60	42	39	57	3.45%
Ecuador	43	76	75	64	2.51%
El Salvador	35	76	67	N/A	1.04%
Guatemala	46	59	58	N/A	2.52%
Honduras	27	47	58	N/A	2.00%
Mexico	69	42	52	61	4.07%
Nicaragua	23	49	42	N/A	1.75%

Panama	66	76	72	45	5.00%
Paraguay	35	46	66	16	5.27%
Peru	59	66	75	22	6.33%
Suriname	58	26	81	59	4.02%
Uruguay	70	26	27	N/A	5.71%
Venezuela	55	1	28	13	-2.63%
Caribbean					
Antigua & Barbuda	72	76	15	N/A	-2.01%
Bahamas	74	76	45	87	-0.50%
Barbados	67	76	33	15	-0.50%
Bermuda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cuba	45	76	18	95	0.25%
Dominica	53	76	65	N/A	1.40%
Dominican Republic	54	39	43	4	3.50%
Grenada	63	76	48	N/A	0.80%
Guyana	28	56	17	N/A	4.36%
Haiti	11	27	89	N/A	-8.50%
Jamaica	42	9	85	19	-0.28%

St Lucia	55	76	67	N/A	1.14%
St Vincent & Grenadines	49	76	95	N/A	0.50%
Trinidad & Tobago	82	37	77	72	2.13%
Middle East					
Bahrain	84	76	62	91	3.48%
Iran	51	19	40	58	3.01%
Iraq	48	9	8	N/A	7.27%
Israel	87	62	12	48	3.20%
Jordan	41	51	3	N/A	4.10%
Kuwait	96	4	99	N/A	3.10%
Lebanon	63	54	2	N/A	6.00%
Oman	76	16	88	N/A	4.71%
Qatar	99	16	83	N/A	18.54%
Saudi Arabia	76	8	98	N/A	3.70%
Syria	61	24	40	N/A	5.00%
Turkey	75	23	27	60	5.20%
United Arab Emirates	96	24	98	94	1.29%

Yemen	28	2	78	N/A	7.78%
Asia					
Afghanistan	17	70	74	N/A	8.64%
Bangladesh	13	43	25	N/A	5.38%
Bhutan	24	55	5	N/A	6.85%
Brunei	78	19	99	75	0.48%
Cambodia	18	67	42	N/A	4.77%
China	54	90	19	68	11.03%
Hong Kong	89	76	14	82	5.02%
India	31	38	34	35	8.78%
Indonesia	42	46	37	31	6.00%
Japan	88	89	6	71	1.90%
Kazakhstan	62	13	76	42	2.40%
Korea North	18	65	23	N/A	1.50%
Korea South	83	63	22	85	4.44%
Kyrgyz Republic	24	15	84	88	4.61%
Laos	17	54	7	N/A	7.22%
Macao	91	76	14	82	3.00%

Malaysia	68	65	44	90	4.72%
Maldives	44	55	17	N/A	3.45%
Mongolia	33	5	77	93	7.22%
Myanmar	3	41	72	N/A	5.26%
Nepal	3	14	25	N/A	2.97%
Pakistan	19	15	31	41	3.00%
Papua New Guinea	75	50	11	N/A	7.96%
Philippines	30	48	53	43	3.63%
Singapore	93	75	63	40	5.68%
Sri Lanka	38	22	10	N/A	5.50%
Taiwan	84	88	35	89	6.50%
Tajikistan	6	6	60	97	4.00%
Thailand	56	64	90	96	5.46%
Turkmenistan	51	53	68	N/A	12.00%
Uzbekistan	40	10	60	100	8.00%
Vietnam	25	12	20	N/A	6.04%
Pacific					
Australia	96	63	31	46	2.96%

Fiji	46	53	3	N/A	2.06%
Marshall Islands	27	76	46	N/A	1.08%
Micronesia (Fed. States)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Caledonia	96	73	51	52	2.00%
New Zealand	98	73	51	52	2.00%
Samoa	34	88	64	N/A	-2.77%
Solomon Islands	14	71	1	N/A	3.36%
Tonga	26	57	38	N/A	0.60%
Vanuatu	33	58	47	N/A	3.80%

Source:

CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

This material was produced in 2010; it is subject to updating in 2012.

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Chapter 4

Investment Overview

Foreign Investment Climate

Background

Denmark's market economy features high-tech agriculture, up-to-date small-scale and corporate industry, extensive government welfare measures, comfortable living standards, and a stable currency. It is also highly dependent on foreign trade. Denmark is a net exporter of both food and energy. The government also enjoys a comfortable balance of payments surplus. Government objectives include streamlining the bureaucracy and further privatization of state assets. The government has been successful in meeting, and even exceeding, the economic convergence criteria for participating in the third phase (a common European currency) of the European Economic and Monetary Union (EMU). However, Denmark has decided not to join 12 other EU members in the euro; even so, the Danish Krone remains pegged to the euro. Because of high GDP per capita, welfare benefits, a low Gini index, and political stability, the Danish people enjoy living standards topped by few other countries. A major long-term issue will be the sharp decline in the ratio of workers to retirees.

Foreign Investment Assessment

Openness to Foreign Investment

Denmark is heavily dependent on foreign trade and international cooperation. It follows liberal trade and investment policies and encourages increased foreign investment. The Danish government and quasi-official organizations are running campaigns to attract foreign investment, describing Denmark as a gateway to the large EU Single Market, to Scandinavia, and to the new democracies in Eastern Europe. With the opening on July 1, 2000, of the Oeresund bridge connecting Denmark and Sweden, the Danish government hopes that the Oeresund region will become a center and a gateway which will attract significant foreign investment in hi-tech industries, including biotechnology, pharmaceutical research, and information technology.

Denmark treats foreign investors on a non-discriminatory, national basis. Foreign firms may participate in government financed and/or subsidized research and development programs on a national treatment basis. As a general rule foreign direct investment in Denmark may take place without restrictions and screening. Ownership restrictions apply to only a few sectors, including those for national security reasons. Contributing to an attractive investment climate is the stable,

highly skilled and efficient labor force, and the corporate tax rate of 32 percent is among the lower in the EU. Work permits are easy to obtain for foreign managerial staff, but permits for white or blue-collar workers from countries outside the EU and the Nordic countries, who compete with Danish workers, are difficult to obtain. Investment in regional development areas may take advantage of certain grants and access to preferential financing.

While Denmark meets the criteria for joining the EU's common currency, the Euro, it has opted out from participating. However, the Danish Krone is linked closely to the Euro in order to ensure continuance of the firm exchange rate policy pursued since the early 1980s.

Transparency of Regulatory System

The Danish economic policies and laws foster competition. The Danish Competition Law was revised in 1997 (Act No. 384, June 10, 1997) in order to reflect the "prohibition" principle used in most other EU and OECD countries. As Denmark would like to see increasing foreign direct investments, its laws and policies, which grant "national treatment" to foreign investment, support that goal. Denmark applies high standards with regard to environment, health and safety, and labor. Bureaucratic procedures appear streamlined and transparent.

Labor Force

Total: 2.87 million estimated

By occupation: agriculture 4%, industry 17%, services 79%

Agriculture and Industry

Agriculture products: barley, wheat, potatoes, sugar beets, pork, dairy products; fish

Industries: iron, steel, nonferrous metals, chemicals, food processing, machinery and transportation equipment, textiles and clothing, electronics, construction, furniture and other wood products, shipbuilding and refurbishment, windmills

Import Commodities and Partners

Commodities: machinery and equipment, raw materials and semi-manufactures for industry, chemicals, grain and foodstuffs, consumer goods

Partners: Germany 23.1%, Sweden 13%, UK 7%, Netherlands 6.9%, France 4.9%, Norway 4.5%, Italy 4.1%

Export Commodities and Partners

Commodities: machinery and instruments, meat and meat products, dairy products, fish, chemicals, furniture, ships, windmills

Partners: Germany 18.7%, Sweden 12.6%, UK 8.5%, US 6.2%, Norway 5.7%, France 5.1%, Netherlands 4.7%

Telephone System

Telephones- main lines in use: 3,610,100

Telephones- mobile cellular: 4,785,300

General Assessment: excellent telephone and telegraphic services

Domestic: buried and submarine cables and microwave radio relay form trunk network, four cellular mobile communications systems

International: country code - 45; 18 submarine fiber-optic cables linking Denmark with Canada, Faroe Islands, Germany, Iceland, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Sweden, and UK; satellite earth stations - 6 Intelsat, 10 Eutelsat, 1 Orion, 1 Inmarsat (Blaavand-Atlantic-East)

Internet

Internet Hosts: 1,219,925

Internet users: 2.756 million

Roads, Airports, Ports and Harbors

Railways: 3,002 km

Highways: 71,847 km

Ports and harbors: Aabenraa, Aalborg, Aarhus, Copenhagen, Esbjerg, Fredericia, Frederikshavn, Hirtshals, Kolding, Odense, Roenne (Bornholm), Vejle

Airports: 97; w/paved runways: 28

Legal System and Considerations

Denmark's legal system is a civil law system which includes judicial review of legislative acts. The Danish government accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction with certain reservations.

Dispute Settlement

The Danish legal system belongs to the "Nordic family" which is based on continuity through centuries in contrast with the Anglo Saxon Common Law. The Danish legal system includes written laws covering practically all commercial issues. Denmark has a written and consistently applied bankruptcy law (Consolidated Act No. 118 of Feb. 4, 1997, as amended). Monetary judgments under the bankruptcy law are made in freely convertible Danish Kroner (DKK). Creditors' claims against a bankruptcy are met in the following order:

- Costs and debt accrued during the treatment of the bankruptcy;
- Other costs, including the court tax, relating to attempts to find a solution other than bankruptcy;
- wage claims and holiday pay;
- excise taxes owed to the government;
- all other claims.

Financing of real estate, both private and business, is for the most part done through the well established Danish mortgage bond credit system, the security of which compares to that of government bonds. All mortgage credits in real estate are recorded in local public registers of mortgages. Except for collateral interests in cars and commercial ships, which are also publicly recorded, other chattel interests generally are unrecorded.

Denmark is party to the 1965 Convention on the Settlement of Investment Disputes between States and Nationals of other States, and to the 1958 Convention of the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards. Subsequent Danish legislation makes international arbitration of investment disputes binding in Denmark. In addition, Denmark is a party to the 1961 European Convention in International Commercial Arbitration and to the 1962 agreement relating to the application of this convention.

Corruption Perception Ranking

See the Corruption Index by Transparency International in this Country Review, which ranks as one of the least corrupt nations in the world.

Cultural Considerations

When in Denmark, it is important to remember that punctuality is the norm. It is impolite to be late, so be sure to be punctual for both social and business occasions.

For more information see:

United States' State Department Commercial Guide

Foreign Investment Index

Foreign Investment Index

The Foreign Investment Index is a proprietary index measuring attractiveness to international investment flows. The Foreign Investment Index is calculated using an established methodology by CountryWatch's Editor-in-Chief and is based on a given country's economic stability (sustained economic growth, monetary stability, current account deficits, budget surplus), economic risk (risk of non-servicing of payments for goods or services, loans and trade-related finance, risk of sovereign default), business and investment climate (property rights, labor force and laws, regulatory transparency, openness to foreign investment, market conditions, and stability of government). Scores are assigned from 0-10 using the aforementioned criteria. A score of 0 marks the lowest level of foreign investment viability, while a score of 10 marks the highest level of foreign investment viability, according to this proprietary index.

Country	Assessment
Afghanistan	2
Albania	4.5
Algeria	6
Andorra	9

Angola	4.5-5
Antigua	8.5
Argentina	5
Armenia	5
Australia	9.5
Austria	9-9.5
Azerbaijan	5
Bahamas	9
Bahrain	7.5
Bangladesh	4.5
Barbados	9
Belarus	4
Belgium	9
Belize	7.5
Benin	5.5
Bhutan	4.5
Bolivia	4.5
Bosnia-Herzegovina	5

Botswana	7.5-8
Brazil	8
Brunei	7
Bulgaria	5.5
Burkina Faso	4
Burma (Myanmar)	4.5
Burundi	4
Cambodia	4.5
Cameroon	5
Canada	9.5
Cape Verde	6
Central African Republic	3
Chad	4
Chile	9
China	7.5
China: Hong Kong	8.5
China: Taiwan	8.5
Colombia	7

Comoros	4
Congo DRC	4
Congo RC	5
Costa Rica	8
Cote d'Ivoire	4.5
Croatia	7
Cuba	4.5
Cyprus	7
Czech Republic	8.5
Denmark	9.5
Djibouti	4.5
Dominica	6
Dominican Republic	6.5
East Timor	4.5
Ecuador	5.5
Egypt	4.5-5
El Salvador	6
Equatorial Guinea	4.5

Eritrea	3.5
Estonia	8
Ethiopia	4.5
Fiji	5
Finland	9
Former Yugoslav Rep. of Macedonia	5
France	9-9.5
Gabon	5.5
Gambia	5
Georgia	5
Germany	9-9.5
Ghana	5.5
Greece	5
Grenada	7.5
Guatemala	5.5
Guinea	3.5
Guinea-Bissau	3.5
Guyana	4.5

Haiti	4
Holy See (Vatican)	n/a
Hong Kong (China)	8.5
Honduras	5.5
Hungary	8
Iceland	8-8.5
India	8
Indonesia	5.5
Iran	4
Iraq	3
Ireland	8
Israel	8.5
Italy	8
Jamaica	5.5
Japan	9.5
Jordan	6
Kazakhstan	6
Kenya	5

Kiribati	5.5
Korea, North	1
Korea, South	9
Kosovo	4.5
Kuwait	8.5
Kyrgyzstan	4.5
Laos	4
Latvia	7
Lebanon	5
Lesotho	5.5
Liberia	3.5
Libya	3
Liechtenstein	9
Lithuania	7.5
Luxembourg	9-9.5
Madagascar	4.5
Malawi	4.5
Malaysia	8.5

Maldives	6.5
Mali	5
Malta	9
Marshall Islands	5
Mauritania	4.5
Mauritius	7.5-8
Mexico	6.5-7
Micronesia	5
Moldova	4.5-5
Monaco	9
Mongolia	5
Montenegro	5.5
Morocco	7.5
Mozambique	5
Namibia	7.5
Nauru	4.5
Nepal	4
Netherlands	9-9.5

New Zealand	9.5
Nicaragua	5
Niger	4.5
Nigeria	4.5
Norway	9-9.5
Oman	8
Pakistan	4
Palau	4.5-5
Panama	7
Papua New Guinea	5
Paraguay	6
Peru	6
Philippines	6
Poland	8
Portugal	7.5-8
Qatar	9
Romania	6-6.5
Russia	6

Rwanda	4
Saint Kitts and Nevis	8
Saint Lucia	8
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	7
Samoa	7
San Marino	8.5
Sao Tome and Principe	4.5-5
Saudi Arabia	7
Senegal	6
Serbia	6
Seychelles	5
Sierra Leone	4
Singapore	9.5
Slovak Republic (Slovakia)	8.5
Slovenia	8.5-9
Solomon Islands	5
Somalia	2
South Africa	8

Spain	7.5-8
Sri Lanka	5.5
Sudan	4
Suriname	5
Swaziland	4.5
Sweden	9.5
Switzerland	9.5
Syria	2.5
Tajikistan	4
Taiwan (China)	8.5
Tanzania	5
Thailand	7.5-8
Togo	4.5-5
Tonga	5.5-6
Trinidad and Tobago	8-8.5
Tunisia	6
Turkey	6.5-7
Turkmenistan	4

Tuvalu	7
Uganda	5
Ukraine	4.5-5
United Arab Emirates	8.5
United Kingdom	9
United States	9
Uruguay	6.5-7
Uzbekistan	4
Vanuatu	6
Venezuela	5
Vietnam	5.5
Yemen	3
Zambia	4.5-5
Zimbabwe	3.5

Editor's Note:

As of 2015, the global economic crisis (emerging in 2008) had affected many countries across the world, resulting in changes to their rankings. Among those countries affected were top tier economies, such as the [United Kingdom](#), [Iceland](#), [Switzerland](#) and [Austria](#). However, in all these cases, their rankings have moved back upward in the last couple of years as anxieties have eased. Other top tier countries, such as [Spain](#), [Portugal](#), [Ireland](#), and [Italy](#), suffered some

effects due to debt woes and the concomitant effect on the euro zone. Greece, another euro zone nation, was also downgraded due to its sovereign debt crisis; however, Greece's position on the precipice of default incurred a sharper downgrade than the other four euro zone countries mentioned above. Cyprus' exposure to Greek bank yielded a downgrade in its case. Slovenia and [Latvia](#) have been slightly downgraded due to a mix of economic and political concerns but could easily be upgraded in a future assessment, should these concerns abate. Meanwhile, the crisis in eastern [Ukraine](#) fueled downgrades in that country and neighboring [Russia](#).

Despite the "trifecta of tragedy" in [Japan](#) in 2011 -- the earthquake, the ensuing tsunami, and the resulting nuclear crisis -- and the appreciable destabilization of the economic and political terrain therein, this country has only slightly been downgraded. Japan's challenges have been assessed to be transient, the government remains accountable, and there is little risk of default. Both [India](#) and China retain their rankings; [India](#) holds a slightly higher ranking than [China](#) due to its record of democratic representation and accountability.

There were shifts in opposite directions for [Mali](#) and [Nigeria](#) versus the [Central African Republic](#), [Burkina Faso](#), and [Burundi](#). [Mali](#) was slightly upgraded due to its efforts to return to constitutional order following the 2012 coup and to neutralize the threat of separatists and Islamists. Likewise, a new government in [Nigeria](#) generated a slight upgrade as the country attempts to confront corruption, crime, and terrorism. But the [Central African Republic](#) was downgraded due to the takeover of the government by Seleka rebels and the continued decline into lawlessness in that country. Likewise, the attempts by the leaders of [Burundi](#) and [Burkina Faso](#) to hold onto power by by-passing the constitution raised eyebrows and resulted in downgrades.

Political unrest in [Libya](#) and [Algeria](#) have contributed to a decision to marginally downgrade these countries as well. [Syria](#) incurred a sharper downgrade due to the devolution into de facto civil war and the dire security threat posed by Islamist terrorists. [Iraq](#) saw a similar downgrade as a result of the takeover of wide swaths of territory and the threat of genocide at the hands of Islamist terrorists. [Yemen](#), likewise, has been downgraded due to political instability at the hands of secessionists, terrorists, Houthi rebels, and the intervention of external parties. Conversely, [Egypt](#) and [Tunisia](#) saw slight upgrades as their political environments stabilize.

At the low end of the spectrum, devolving security conditions and/or economic crisis have resulted in countries like [Pakistan](#), [Afghanistan](#), [Somalia](#), and [Zimbabwe](#) maintaining their low ratings.

The [United States](#) continues to retain its previous slight downgrade due to the enduring threat of default surrounding the debt ceiling in that country, matched by a conflict-ridden political climate. In the case of [Mexico](#), there is limited concern about default, but increasing alarm over the security situation in that country and the government's ability to contain it. In [Argentina](#), a default to bond holders resulted in a downgrade to that country. Finally, a small but significant upgrade was attributed to [Cuba](#) due to its recent pro-business reforms and its normalization of ties with the

United States.

Source:

CountryWatch Inc. www.countrywatch.com

Updated:

2015

Corruption Perceptions Index

Corruption Perceptions Index

Transparency International: [Corruption Perceptions Index](#)

Editor's Note:

Transparency International's [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) is a composite index which ranks countries in terms of the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials. This index indicates the views of national and international business people and analysts about the levels of corruption in each country. The highest (and best) level of transparency is indicated by the number, 10. The lower (and worse) levels of transparency are indicated by lower numbers.

Rank	Country/Territory	CPI 2009 Score	Surveys Used	Confidence Range
1	New Zealand	9.4	6	9.1 - 9.5
2	Denmark	9.3	6	9.1 - 9.5
3	Singapore	9.2	9	9.0 - 9.4
3	Sweden	9.2	6	9.0 - 9.3

5	Switzerland	9.0	6	8.9 - 9.1
6	Finland	8.9	6	8.4 - 9.4
6	Netherlands	8.9	6	8.7 - 9.0
8	Australia	8.7	8	8.3 - 9.0
8	Canada	8.7	6	8.5 - 9.0
8	Iceland	8.7	4	7.5 - 9.4
11	Norway	8.6	6	8.2 - 9.1
12	Hong Kong	8.2	8	7.9 - 8.5
12	Luxembourg	8.2	6	7.6 - 8.8
14	Germany	8.0	6	7.7 - 8.3
14	Ireland	8.0	6	7.8 - 8.4
16	Austria	7.9	6	7.4 - 8.3
17	Japan	7.7	8	7.4 - 8.0
17	United Kingdom	7.7	6	7.3 - 8.2
19	United States	7.5	8	6.9 - 8.0
20	Barbados	7.4	4	6.6 - 8.2
21	Belgium	7.1	6	6.9 - 7.3
22	Qatar	7.0	6	5.8 - 8.1

22	Saint Lucia	7.0	3	6.7 - 7.5
24	France	6.9	6	6.5 - 7.3
25	Chile	6.7	7	6.5 - 6.9
25	Uruguay	6.7	5	6.4 - 7.1
27	Cyprus	6.6	4	6.1 - 7.1
27	Estonia	6.6	8	6.1 - 6.9
27	Slovenia	6.6	8	6.3 - 6.9
30	United Arab Emirates	6.5	5	5.5 - 7.5
31	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	6.4	3	4.9 - 7.5
32	Israel	6.1	6	5.4 - 6.7
32	Spain	6.1	6	5.5 - 6.6
34	Dominica	5.9	3	4.9 - 6.7
35	Portugal	5.8	6	5.5 - 6.2
35	Puerto Rico	5.8	4	5.2 - 6.3
37	Botswana	5.6	6	5.1 - 6.3
37	Taiwan	5.6	9	5.4 - 5.9
39	Brunei Darussalam	5.5	4	4.7 - 6.4
39	Oman	5.5	5	4.4 - 6.5

39	Korea (South)	5.5	9	5.3 - 5.7
42	Mauritius	5.4	6	5.0 - 5.9
43	Costa Rica	5.3	5	4.7 - 5.9
43	Macau	5.3	3	3.3 - 6.9
45	Malta	5.2	4	4.0 - 6.2
46	Bahrain	5.1	5	4.2 - 5.8
46	Cape Verde	5.1	3	3.3 - 7.0
46	Hungary	5.1	8	4.6 - 5.7
49	Bhutan	5.0	4	4.3 - 5.6
49	Jordan	5.0	7	3.9 - 6.1
49	Poland	5.0	8	4.5 - 5.5
52	Czech Republic	4.9	8	4.3 - 5.6
52	Lithuania	4.9	8	4.4 - 5.4
54	Seychelles	4.8	3	3.0 - 6.7
55	South Africa	4.7	8	4.3 - 4.9
56	Latvia	4.5	6	4.1 - 4.9
56	Malaysia	4.5	9	4.0 - 5.1
56	Namibia	4.5	6	3.9 - 5.1

56	Samoa	4.5	3	3.3 - 5.3
56	Slovakia	4.5	8	4.1 - 4.9
61	Cuba	4.4	3	3.5 - 5.1
61	Turkey	4.4	7	3.9 - 4.9
63	Italy	4.3	6	3.8 - 4.9
63	Saudi Arabia	4.3	5	3.1 - 5.3
65	Tunisia	4.2	6	3.0 - 5.5
66	Croatia	4.1	8	3.7 - 4.5
66	Georgia	4.1	7	3.4 - 4.7
66	Kuwait	4.1	5	3.2 - 5.1
69	Ghana	3.9	7	3.2 - 4.6
69	Montenegro	3.9	5	3.5 - 4.4
71	Bulgaria	3.8	8	3.2 - 4.5
71	FYR Macedonia	3.8	6	3.4 - 4.2
71	Greece	3.8	6	3.2 - 4.3
71	Romania	3.8	8	3.2 - 4.3
75	Brazil	3.7	7	3.3 - 4.3
75	Colombia	3.7	7	3.1 - 4.3

75	Peru	3.7	7	3.4 - 4.1
75	Suriname	3.7	3	3.0 - 4.7
79	Burkina Faso	3.6	7	2.8 - 4.4
79	China	3.6	9	3.0 - 4.2
79	Swaziland	3.6	3	3.0 - 4.7
79	Trinidad and Tobago	3.6	4	3.0 - 4.3
83	Serbia	3.5	6	3.3 - 3.9
84	El Salvador	3.4	5	3.0 - 3.8
84	Guatemala	3.4	5	3.0 - 3.9
84	India	3.4	10	3.2 - 3.6
84	Panama	3.4	5	3.1 - 3.7
84	Thailand	3.4	9	3.0 - 3.8
89	Lesotho	3.3	6	2.8 - 3.8
89	Malawi	3.3	7	2.7 - 3.9
89	Mexico	3.3	7	3.2 - 3.5
89	Moldova	3.3	6	2.7 - 4.0
89	Morocco	3.3	6	2.8 - 3.9
89	Rwanda	3.3	4	2.9 - 3.7

95	Albania	3.2	6	3.0 - 3.3
95	Vanuatu	3.2	3	2.3 - 4.7
97	Liberia	3.1	3	1.9 - 3.8
97	Sri Lanka	3.1	7	2.8 - 3.4
99	Bosnia and Herzegovina	3.0	7	2.6 - 3.4
99	Dominican Republic	3.0	5	2.9 - 3.2
99	Jamaica	3.0	5	2.8 - 3.3
99	Madagascar	3.0	7	2.8 - 3.2
99	Senegal	3.0	7	2.5 - 3.6
99	Tonga	3.0	3	2.6 - 3.3
99	Zambia	3.0	7	2.8 - 3.2
106	Argentina	2.9	7	2.6 - 3.1
106	Benin	2.9	6	2.3 - 3.4
106	Gabon	2.9	3	2.6 - 3.1
106	Gambia	2.9	5	1.6 - 4.0
106	Niger	2.9	5	2.7 - 3.0
111	Algeria	2.8	6	2.5 - 3.1
111	Djibouti	2.8	4	2.3 - 3.2

111	Egypt	2.8	6	2.6 - 3.1
111	Indonesia	2.8	9	2.4 - 3.2
111	Kiribati	2.8	3	2.3 - 3.3
111	Mali	2.8	6	2.4 - 3.2
111	Sao Tome and Principe	2.8	3	2.4 - 3.3
111	Solomon Islands	2.8	3	2.3 - 3.3
111	Togo	2.8	5	1.9 - 3.9
120	Armenia	2.7	7	2.6 - 2.8
120	Bolivia	2.7	6	2.4 - 3.1
120	Ethiopia	2.7	7	2.4 - 2.9
120	Kazakhstan	2.7	7	2.1 - 3.3
120	Mongolia	2.7	7	2.4 - 3.0
120	Vietnam	2.7	9	2.4 - 3.1
126	Eritrea	2.6	4	1.6 - 3.8
126	Guyana	2.6	4	2.5 - 2.7
126	Syria	2.6	5	2.2 - 2.9
126	Tanzania	2.6	7	2.4 - 2.9
130	Honduras	2.5	6	2.2 - 2.8

130	Lebanon	2.5	3	1.9 - 3.1
130	Libya	2.5	6	2.2 - 2.8
130	Maldives	2.5	4	1.8 - 3.2
130	Mauritania	2.5	7	2.0 - 3.3
130	Mozambique	2.5	7	2.3 - 2.8
130	Nicaragua	2.5	6	2.3 - 2.7
130	Nigeria	2.5	7	2.2 - 2.7
130	Uganda	2.5	7	2.1 - 2.8
139	Bangladesh	2.4	7	2.0 - 2.8
139	Belarus	2.4	4	2.0 - 2.8
139	Pakistan	2.4	7	2.1 - 2.7
139	Philippines	2.4	9	2.1 - 2.7
143	Azerbaijan	2.3	7	2.0 - 2.6
143	Comoros	2.3	3	1.6 - 3.3
143	Nepal	2.3	6	2.0 - 2.6
146	Cameroon	2.2	7	1.9 - 2.6
146	Ecuador	2.2	5	2.0 - 2.5
146	Kenya	2.2	7	1.9 - 2.5

146	Russia	2.2	8	1.9 - 2.4
146	Sierra Leone	2.2	5	1.9 - 2.4
146	Timor-Leste	2.2	5	1.8 - 2.6
146	Ukraine	2.2	8	2.0 - 2.6
146	Zimbabwe	2.2	7	1.7 - 2.8
154	Côte d'Ivoire	2.1	7	1.8 - 2.4
154	Papua New Guinea	2.1	5	1.7 - 2.5
154	Paraguay	2.1	5	1.7 - 2.5
154	Yemen	2.1	4	1.6 - 2.5
158	Cambodia	2.0	8	1.8 - 2.2
158	Central African Republic	2.0	4	1.9 - 2.2
158	Laos	2.0	4	1.6 - 2.6
158	Tajikistan	2.0	8	1.6 - 2.5
162	Angola	1.9	5	1.8 - 1.9
162	Congo Brazzaville	1.9	5	1.6 - 2.1
162	Democratic Republic of Congo	1.9	5	1.7 - 2.1
162	Guinea-Bissau	1.9	3	1.8 - 2.0
162	Kyrgyzstan	1.9	7	1.8 - 2.1

162	Venezuela	1.9	7	1.8 - 2.0
168	Burundi	1.8	6	1.6 - 2.0
168	Equatorial Guinea	1.8	3	1.6 - 1.9
168	Guinea	1.8	5	1.7 - 1.8
168	Haiti	1.8	3	1.4 - 2.3
168	Iran	1.8	3	1.7 - 1.9
168	Turkmenistan	1.8	4	1.7 - 1.9
174	Uzbekistan	1.7	6	1.5 - 1.8
175	Chad	1.6	6	1.5 - 1.7
176	Iraq	1.5	3	1.2 - 1.8
176	Sudan	1.5	5	1.4 - 1.7
178	Myanmar	1.4	3	0.9 - 1.8
179	Afghanistan	1.3	4	1.0 - 1.5
180	Somalia	1.1	3	0.9 - 1.4

Methodology:

As noted above, the highest (and best) level of transparency with the least perceived corruption is indicated by the number, 10. The lower (and worse) levels of transparency are indicated by lower numbers.

According to Transparency International, the [Corruption Perceptions Index](#) (CPI) table shows a

country's ranking and score, the number of surveys used to determine the score, and the confidence range of the scoring.

The rank shows how one country compares to others included in the index. The CPI score indicates the perceived level of public-sector corruption in a country/territory.

The CPI is based on 13 independent surveys. However, not all surveys include all countries. The surveys used column indicates how many surveys were relied upon to determine the score for that country.

The confidence range indicates the reliability of the CPI scores and tells us that allowing for a margin of error, we can be 90% confident that the true score for this country lies within this range.

Note:

Kosovo, which separated from the Yugoslav successor state of [Serbia](#), is not listed above. No calculation is available for [Kosovo](#) at this time, however, a future corruption index by Transparency International may include the world's newest country in its tally. Taiwan has been listed above despite its contested status; while Taiwan claims sovereign status, [China](#) claims ultimate jurisdiction over Taiwan. Hong Kong, which is also under the rubric of Chinese sovereignty, is listed above. Note as well that Puerto Rico, which is a [United States](#) domain, is also included in the list above. These inclusions likely have to do with the size and fairly autonomous status of their economies.

Source:

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index; available at URL: <http://www.transparency.org>

Updated:

Uploaded in 2011 using most recent ranking available; reviewed in 2015.

Competitiveness Ranking

Competitiveness Ranking

Editor's Note:

The Global Competitiveness Report's competitiveness ranking is based on the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI), which was developed for the World Economic Forum. The GCI is based on a number of competitiveness considerations, and provides a comprehensive picture of the competitiveness landscape in countries around the world. The competitiveness considerations are: institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic environment, health and primary education, higher education and training, goods market efficiency, labour market efficiency, financial market development, technological readiness, market size, business sophistication, and innovation. The rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey.

Country/Economy	GCI 2010 Rank	GCI 2010 Score	GCI 2009 Rank	Change 2009-2010
Switzerland	1	5.63	1	0
Sweden	2	5.56	4	2
Singapore	3	5.48	3	0
United States	4	5.43	2	-2
Germany	5	5.39	7	2
Japan	6	5.37	8	2
Finland	7	5.37	6	-1
Netherlands	8	5.33	10	2
Denmark	9	5.32	5	-4
Canada	10	5.30	9	-1
Hong Kong SAR	11	5.30	11	0
United Kingdom	12	5.25	13	1

Taiwan, China	13	5.21	12	-1
Norway	14	5.14	14	0
France	15	5.13	16	1
Australia	16	5.11	15	-1
Qatar	17	5.10	22	5
Austria	18	5.09	17	-1
Belgium	19	5.07	18	-1
Luxembourg	20	5.05	21	1
Saudi Arabia	21	4.95	28	7
Korea, Rep.	22	4.93	19	-3
New Zealand	23	4.92	20	-3
Israel	24	4.91	27	3
United Arab Emirates	25	4.89	23	-2
Malaysia	26	4.88	24	-2
China	27	4.84	29	2
Brunei Darussalam	28	4.75	32	4
Ireland	29	4.74	25	-4
Chile	30	4.69	30	0

Iceland	31	4.68	26	-5
Tunisia	32	4.65	40	8
Estonia	33	4.61	35	2
Oman	34	4.61	41	7
Kuwait	35	4.59	39	4
Czech Republic	36	4.57	31	-5
Bahrain	37	4.54	38	1
Thailand	38	4.51	36	-2
Poland	39	4.51	46	7
Cyprus	40	4.50	34	-6
Puerto Rico	41	4.49	42	1
Spain	42	4.49	33	-9
Barbados	43	4.45	44	1
Indonesia	44	4.43	54	10
Slovenia	45	4.42	37	-8
Portugal	46	4.38	43	-3
Lithuania	47	4.38	53	6
Italy	48	4.37	48	0

Montenegro	49	4.36	62	13
Malta	50	4.34	52	2
India	51	4.33	49	-2
Hungary	52	4.33	58	6
Panama	53	4.33	59	6
South Africa	54	4.32	45	-9
Mauritius	55	4.32	57	2
Costa Rica	56	4.31	55	-1
Azerbaijan	57	4.29	51	-6
Brazil	58	4.28	56	-2
Vietnam	59	4.27	75	16
Slovak Republic	60	4.25	47	-13
Turkey	61	4.25	61	0
Sri Lanka	62	4.25	79	17
Russian Federation	63	4.24	63	0
Uruguay	64	4.23	65	1
Jordan	65	4.21	50	-15
Mexico	66	4.19	60	-6

Romania	67	4.16	64	-3
Colombia	68	4.14	69	1
Iran	69	4.14	n/a	n/a
Latvia	70	4.14	68	-2
Bulgaria	71	4.13	76	5
Kazakhstan	72	4.12	67	-5
Peru	73	4.11	78	5
Namibia	74	4.09	74	0
Morocco	75	4.08	73	-2
Botswana	76	4.05	66	-10
Croatia	77	4.04	72	-5
Guatemala	78	4.04	80	2
Macedonia, FYR	79	4.02	84	5
Rwanda	80	4.00	n/a	n/a
Egypt	81	4.00	70	-11
El Salvador	82	3.99	77	-5
Greece	83	3.99	71	-12
Trinidad and Tobago	84	3.97	86	2

Philippines	85	3.96	87	2
Algeria	86	3.96	83	-3
Argentina	87	3.95	85	-2
Albania	88	3.94	96	8
Ukraine	89	3.90	82	-7
Gambia, The	90	3.90	81	-9
Honduras	91	3.89	89	-2
Lebanon	92	3.89	n/a	n/a
Georgia	93	3.86	90	-3
Moldova	94	3.86	n/a	n/a
Jamaica	95	3.85	91	-4
Serbia	96	3.84	93	-3
Syria	97	3.79	94	-3
Armenia	98	3.76	97	-1
Mongolia	99	3.75	117	18
Libya	100	3.74	88	-12
Dominican Republic	101	3.72	95	-6
Bosnia and Herzegovina	102	3.70	109	7

Benin	103	3.69	103	0
Senegal	104	3.67	92	-12
Ecuador	105	3.65	105	0
Kenya	106	3.65	98	-8
Bangladesh	107	3.64	106	-1
Bolivia	108	3.64	120	12
Cambodia	109	3.63	110	1
Guyana	110	3.62	104	-6
Cameroon	111	3.58	111	0
Nicaragua	112	3.57	115	3
Tanzania	113	3.56	100	-13
Ghana	114	3.56	114	0
Zambia	115	3.55	112	-3
Tajikistan	116	3.53	122	6
Cape Verde	117	3.51	n/a	n/a
Uganda	118	3.51	108	-10
Ethiopia	119	3.51	118	-1
Paraguay	120	3.49	124	4

Kyrgyz Republic	121	3.49	123	2
Venezuela	122	3.48	113	-9
Pakistan	123	3.48	101	-22
Madagascar	124	3.46	121	-3
Malawi	125	3.45	119	-6
Swaziland	126	3.40	n/a	n/a
Nigeria	127	3.38	99	-28
Lesotho	128	3.36	107	-21
Côte d'Ivoire	129	3.35	116	-13
Nepal	130	3.34	125	-5
Mozambique	131	3.32	129	-2
Mali	132	3.28	130	-2
Timor-Leste	133	3.23	126	-7
Burkina Faso	134	3.20	128	-6
Mauritania	135	3.14	127	-8
Zimbabwe	136	3.03	132	-4
Burundi	137	2.96	133	-4
Angola	138	2.93	n/a	n/a

Chad	139	2.73	131	-8
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Methodology:

The competitiveness rankings are calculated from both publicly available data and the Executive Opinion Survey, a comprehensive annual survey conducted by the World Economic Forum together with its network of Partner Institutes (leading research institutes and business organizations) in the countries covered by the Report.

Highlights according to WEF --

- The [United States](#) falls two places to fourth position, overtaken by [Sweden](#) and [Singapore](#) in the rankings of the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report 2010-2011
- The People's Republic of [China](#) continues to move up the rankings, with marked improvements in several other Asian countries
- [Germany](#) moves up two places to fifth place, leading the Eurozone countries
- [Switzerland](#) tops the rankings

Source:

World Economic Forum; available at URL: <http://www.weforum.org>

Updated:

2011 using most recent ranking available; reviewed in 2015.

Taxation

Corporate tax

The standard rate for resident companies is 28 percent.

Individual tax

Residents are subject to progressive rates from 26.5 percent up to 59 percent.

Capital gains

Company gains are generally taxed as income, although long-term gains on shares are typically tax-free. Capital gains for individuals are subject to taxes between 28 percent and 43 percent.

Indirect tax

A Value-Added-Tax (VAT) of 25 percent is applied on a non-discriminatory basis to all goods (and most services) sold in Denmark, whether imported or locally produced. A zero rate applies to newspapers, the sale and leasing of certain crafts and vessels, as well as exports. There are exemptions for certain financial services, insurance, education, medical supplies, and the sale and leasing of certain types of property.

Other Taxes

Other taxes include luxury taxes, import duties, excise taxes, stamp duties, national and municipal real estate taxes and energy and environmental taxes.

Note: A large number of environmental and energy taxes are imposed and fall mostly on households. Denmark was the first of the European Union countries, in 1993, to introduce a carbon dioxide (CO₂) tax on business and industry covering all sorts of energy uses. Offsetting part of the CO₂ tax on industry are a number of subsidy measures to promote renewable energy and natural gas use, and other measures reducing costs to business to avoid jeopardizing Danish competitiveness.

Additional tax information

- Employment income of individuals is taxed through withholding
- Dividends are taxable, with some exemptions

Tax treaties

Denmark has concluded more than 80 tax treaties.

Note: A new United States/Danish double taxation agreement entered into force March 31, 2000. For taxes withheld at source, the treaty applies to amounts paid or credited on or after May 1, 2000; for all other taxes, the treaty applies to tax years beginning on or after Jan. 1, 2001.

Stock Market

By the end of the 1990s, Denmark's Copenhagen Stock Exchange had 233 listed companies.

For more information on the Copenhagen Stock Exchange, see URL: <http://www.xcse.dk/uk/index.asp>.

Partner Links

Partner Links

Chapter 5

Social Overview

People

Introduction

The Kingdom of Denmark is composed of Denmark proper, the Faroe Islands, and Greenland. The Faroe Islands have been a self-governing overseas administrative division of Denmark since 1948. Greenland has been a self-governing overseas administrative division of Denmark since 1979. Denmark itself consists of the Jutland peninsula and approximately 400 islands. The capital, Copenhagen, is located on Zealand, the largest island.

Demography

Denmark is a largely urban country with almost 85 percent of the population living in urban centers. Of these urban dwellers, close to 40 percent reside in Denmark's four largest cities, Copenhagen (the capital city), Alborg, Odense and Arhus. In recent years, Denmark has had a very low population growth rate, at .29 percent. Today, Denmark has an estimated population of approximately 5.5 million. The Faroe Islands had approximately 45,000 inhabitants; Greenland had about 56,000.

Ethnicity

Since prehistoric times, the Danes have inhabited Denmark. For the most part, Danes are an ethnically homogenous people, consisting of Nordic Scandinavians. There are, however, several other important resident ethnic groups. First, in southern Jutland, there are German-speaking communities. Second, the Faroe Islands have a distinctive ethnic population with an interesting and complicated history. Third, Inuit are the predominant indigenous ethnic group in Greenland, very likely to be genealogically related to the Inuit of North America.

Languages

While Danish is the principal and official language, Faroese (derived from Old Norse) and

Greenlandic (an Inuit dialect) are also spoken in the Faroe Islands and Greenland, respectively. In these areas, these two indigenous languages have equal status with Danish. School students, however, must also study Danish.

Religion

An estimated 95 percent of the Danish population is affiliated with the state-supported Evangelical Lutheran Church, which is the official church of Denmark and was established in 1536. Freedom of religion, speech, and assembly are protected in Denmark, however, and other religious groups are active. Thousands of Muslims, Roman Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, Danish Baptists, members of Pentecostal churches, Mormons, and Jews reside in Denmark. Roman Catholicism tends to be the largest minority religion. There are also numerous smaller religious groups including, but not limited to, Anglicans, Bahais, Buddhists, Catholic Apostolics, Methodists, Seventh-Day Adventists and Russian Orthodox. Faroese and Greenlanders are predominantly Evangelical Lutheran.

Education

In terms of education, the state of Denmark mandates compulsory primary education. As such, Denmark has one of the highest literacy rates in the world with almost 100 percent of its population being literate. A comprehensive pre-university education is provided to the population, followed by three years of what is called "gymnasium education" to prepare for university entrance examinations. There are also alternative secondary education schools called "folk high schools," which offer coursework in Danish history and culture. At the post-secondary school level, there are five universities and a number of technical schools.

Social Welfare

Denmark is home to a sophisticated social welfare infrastructure, which includes free medical care to workers temporarily unable to work due to illness, disabilities or pregnancy. Indeed, pregnant women and children also receive additional special benefits. These sorts of benefits have helped to maintain a very low childhood mortality rate in Denmark (noted below). The cost of this social welfare infrastructure on the national budget was very high, but a system of assessment was established to control costs and ensure that benefits were made available to those most in need.

Life Expectancy and Mortality Rates

According to estimates in the last few years, Danes have an average life expectancy at birth of 77 years of age (79.6 for women and 74.3 for men) and an infant mortality rate of 4.9 deaths per 1,000 live births. Estimates suggest that these statistics have remained almost constant over the course of the last few years.

Compared to the Danes, the Faroese, with an estimated total population of slightly more than 45,000, have a higher average life expectancy at birth of 78.43 years (74.96 years for males, 81.92 years for females). They also have a higher infant mortality rate of 6.94 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Greenlanders, with an estimated total population of slightly more than 56,000, have a lower average life expectancy at birth than both the Danes and the Faroese - 68.07 years (64.52 years for males, 71.69 years for females), and an even higher infant mortality rate of 18.26 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Quality of Life and Human Development

About seven percent of GDP is spent on health expenditures in this country; about 7.8 percent of GDP is spent on educational expenditures. Access to education, sanitation, water, and health is regarded to be excellent.

One notable measure used to determine a country's quality of life is the Human Development Index (HDI), which has been compiled annually since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main arenas of human development: longevity, knowledge and education, as well as economic standard of living. In recent rankings of 169 countries, the HDI placed Denmark in the very high human development category, at 19th place.

Editor's Note: Although the concept of human development is complicated and cannot be properly captured by values and indices, the HDI, which is calculated and updated annually, offers a wide-ranging assessment of human development in certain countries, not based solely upon traditional economic and financial indicators.

Cultural Legacy

Denmark's rich intellectual heritage includes a number of scientific achievements and cultural contributions and to the modern world. In the realm of science, this intellectual heritage is exemplified by the astronomical discoveries of Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) and the contributions to atomic physics of Niels Bohr (1885-1962). The fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75),

the philosophical essays of Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55), and the short stories of Karen Blixen (penname Isak Dinesen, 1885-1962) have earned international recognition, as have the symphonies of Carl Nielsen (1865-1931). Georg Jensen (1866-1935) is known worldwide for outstanding modern design in silver, and "Royal Copenhagen" is among the finest porcelains. The Royal Danish Porcelain Factory as well as Bing and Grondahl, renowned for their quality ceramics and porcelain, export their creations internationally. Denmark is also home to a number of cultural arts institutions, such as the Royal Danish ballet, the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, the North Jutland Art Museum, the State Museum of Art, the Glyptotek, and the Museum of Applied art and Industrial Design.

Written by Dr. Denise Youngblood Coleman, Editor in Chief, www.countrywatch.com; see Bibliography for research sources. Supplementary sources include: The Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Human Development Index

Human Development Index

Human Development Index (Ranked Numerically)

The [Human Development Index](#) (HDI) is used to measure quality of life in countries across the world. The HDI has been compiled since 1990 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on a regular basis. The HDI is a composite of several indicators, which measure a country's achievements in three main arenas of human development: longevity, education, and economic standard of living. Although the concept of human development is complicated and cannot be properly captured by values and indices, the HDI offers a wide-ranging assessment of human development in certain countries, not based solely upon traditional economic and financial indicators. For more information about the methodology used to calculate the HDI, please see the "Source Materials" in the appendices of this review.

Very High Human Development	High Human Development	Medium Human Development	Low Human Development
1. Norway	43. Bahamas	86. Fiji	128. Kenya

2. Australia	44. Lithuania	87. Turkmenistan	129. Bangladesh
3. New Zealand	45. Chile	88. Dominican Republic	130. Ghana
4. United States	46. Argentina	89. China	131. Cameroon
5. Ireland	47. Kuwait	90. El Salvador	132. Myanmar (Burma)
6. Liechtenstein	48. Latvia	91. Sri Lanka	133. Yemen
7. Netherlands	49. Montenegro	92. Thailand	134. Benin
8. Canada	50. Romania	93. Gabon	135. Madagascar
9. Sweden	51. Croatia	94. Suriname	136. Mauritania
10. Germany	52. Uruguay	95. Bolivia	137. Papua New Guinea
11. Japan	53. Libya	96. Paraguay	138. Nepal
12. South Korea	54. Panama	97. Philippines	139. Togo
13. Switzerland	55. Saudi Arabia	98. Botswana	140. Comoros
14. France	56. Mexico	99. Moldova	141. Lesotho
15. Israel	57. Malaysia	100. Mongolia	142. Nigeria
16. Finland	58. Bulgaria	101. Egypt	143. Uganda
17. Iceland	59. Trinidad and Tobago	102. Uzbekistan	144. Senegal
18. Belgium	60. Serbia	103. Micronesia	145. Haiti

19. Denmark	61. Belarus	104. Guyana	146. Angola
20. Spain	62. Costa Rica	105. Namibia	147. Djibouti
21. Hong King	63. Peru	106. Honduras	148. Tanzania
22. Greece	64. Albania	107. Maldives	149. Cote d'Ivoire
23. Italy	65. Russian Federation	108. Indonesia	150. Zambia
24. Luxembourg	66. Kazakhstan	109. Kyrgyzstan	151. Gambia
25. Austria	67. Azerbaijan	110. South Africa	152. Rwanda
26. United Kingdom	68. Bosnia and Herzegovina	111. Syria	153. Malawi
27. Singapore	69. Ukraine	112. Tajikistan	154. Sudan
28. Czech Republic	70. Iran	113. Vietnam	155. Afghanistan
29. Slovenia	71. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	114. Morocco	156. Guinea
30. Andorra	72. Mauritius	115. Nicaragua	157. Ethiopia
31. Slovakia	73. Brazil	116. Guatemala	158. Sierra Leone
32. United Arab Emirates	74. Georgia	117. Equatorial Guinea	159. Central African Republic
33. Malta	75. Venezuela	118. Cape Verde	160. Mali

34. Estonia	76. Armenia	119. India	161. Burkina Faso
35. Cyprus	77. Ecuador	120. East Timor	162. Liberia
36. Hungary	78. Belize	121. Swaziland	163. Chad
37. Brunei	79. Colombia	122. Laos	164. Guinea-Bissau
38. Qatar	80. Jamaica	123. Solomon Islands	165. Mozambique
39. Bahrain	81. Tunisia	124. Cambodia	166. Burundi
40. Portugal	82. Jordan	125. Pakistan	167. Niger
41. Poland	83. Turkey	126. Congo RC	168. Congo DRC
42. Barbados	84. Algeria	127. Sao Tome and Principe	169. Zimbabwe
	85. Tonga		

Methodology:

For more information about the methodology used to calculate the HDI, please see the "Source Materials" in the appendices of this Country Review.

Reference:

As published in United Nations Development Programme's Human Development Report 2010.

Source:

United Nations Development Programme's [Human Development Index](http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/) available at URL: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/>

Updated:

Uploaded in 2011 using ranking available; reviewed in 2015

Life Satisfaction Index

Life Satisfaction Index

Life Satisfaction Index

Created by Adrian G. White, an Analytic Social Psychologist at the University of Leicester, the "Satisfaction with Life Index" measures subjective life satisfaction across various countries. The data was taken from a metastudy (see below for source) and associates the notion of subjective happiness or life satisfaction with qualitative parameters such as health, wealth, and access to basic education. This assessment serves as an alternative to other measures of happiness that tend to rely on traditional and quantitative measures of policy on quality of life, such as GNP and GDP. The methodology involved the responses of 80,000 people across the globe.

Rank	Country	Score
1	Denmark	273.4
2	Switzerland	273.33
3	Austria	260
4	Iceland	260
5	The Bahamas	256.67
6	Finland	256.67

7	Sweden	256.67
8	Iran	253.33
9	Brunei	253.33
10	Canada	253.33
11	Ireland	253.33
12	Luxembourg	253.33
13	Costa Rica	250
14	Malta	250
15	Netherlands	250
16	Antiguaand Barbuda	246.67
17	Malaysia	246.67
18	New Zealand	246.67
19	Norway	246.67
20	Seychelles	246.67
21	Saint Kitts and Nevis	246.67
22	United Arab Emirates	246.67
23	United States	246.67
24	Vanuatu	246.67

25	Venezuela	246.67
26	Australia	243.33
27	Barbados	243.33
28	Belgium	243.33
29	Dominica	243.33
30	Oman	243.33
31	Saudi Arabia	243.33
32	Suriname	243.33
33	Bahrain	240
34	Colombia	240
35	Germany	240
36	Guyana	240
37	Honduras	240
38	Kuwait	240
39	Panama	240
40	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	240
41	United Kingdom	236.67
42	Dominican Republic	233.33

43	Guatemala	233.33
44	Jamaica	233.33
45	Qatar	233.33
46	Spain	233.33
47	Saint Lucia	233.33
48	Belize	230
49	Cyprus	230
50	Italy	230
51	Mexico	230
52	Samoa	230
53	Singapore	230
54	Solomon Islands	230
55	Trinidad and Tobago	230
56	Argentina	226.67
57	Fiji	223.33
58	Israel	223.33
59	Mongolia	223.33
60	São Tomé and Príncipe	223.33

61	El Salvador	220
62	France	220
63	Hong Kong	220
64	Indonesia	220
65	Kyrgyzstan	220
66	Maldives	220
67	Slovenia	220
68	Taiwan	220
69	East Timor	220
70	Tonga	220
71	Chile	216.67
72	Grenada	216.67
73	Mauritius	216.67
74	Namibia	216.67
75	Paraguay	216.67
76	Thailand	216.67
77	Czech Republic	213.33
78	Philippines	213.33

79	Tunisia	213.33
80	Uzbekistan	213.33
81	Brazil	210
82	China	210
83	Cuba	210
84	Greece	210
85	Nicaragua	210
86	Papua New Guinea	210
87	Uruguay	210
88	Gabon	206.67
89	Ghana	206.67
90	Japan	206.67
91	Yemen	206.67
92	Portugal	203.33
93	Sri Lanka	203.33
94	Tajikistan	203.33
95	Vietnam	203.33
96	Bhutan	200

97	Comoros	196.67
98	Croatia	196.67
99	Poland	196.67
100	Cape Verde	193.33
101	Kazakhstan	193.33
102	South Korea	193.33
103	Madagascar	193.33
104	Bangladesh	190
105	Republic of the Congo	190
106	The Gambia	190
107	Hungary	190
108	Libya	190
109	South Africa	190
110	Cambodia	186.67
111	Ecuador	186.67
112	Kenya	186.67
113	Lebanon	186.67
114	Morocco	186.67

115	Peru	186.67
116	Senegal	186.67
117	Bolivia	183.33
118	Haiti	183.33
119	Nepal	183.33
120	Nigeria	183.33
121	Tanzania	183.33
122	Benin	180
123	Botswana	180
124	Guinea-Bissau	180
125	India	180
126	Laos	180
127	Mozambique	180
128	Palestinian Authority	180
129	Slovakia	180
130	Myanmar	176.67
131	Mali	176.67
132	Mauritania	176.67

133	Turkey	176.67
134	Algeria	173.33
135	Equatorial Guinea	173.33
136	Romania	173.33
137	Bosnia and Herzegovina	170
138	Cameroon	170
139	Estonia	170
140	Guinea	170
141	Jordan	170
142	Syria	170
143	Sierra Leone	166.67
144	Azerbaijan	163.33
145	Central African Republic	163.33
146	Republic of Macedonia	163.33
147	Togo	163.33
148	Zambia	163.33
149	Angola	160
150	Djibouti	160

151	Egypt	160
152	Burkina Faso	156.67
153	Ethiopia	156.67
154	Latvia	156.67
155	Lithuania	156.67
156	Uganda	156.67
157	Albania	153.33
158	Malawi	153.33
159	Chad	150
160	Côte d'Ivoire	150
161	Niger	150
162	Eritrea	146.67
163	Rwanda	146.67
164	Bulgaria	143.33
165	Lesotho	143.33
166	Pakistan	143.33
167	Russia	143.33
168	Swaziland	140

169	Georgia	136.67
170	Belarus	133.33
171	Turkmenistan	133.33
172	Armenia	123.33
173	Sudan	120
174	Ukraine	120
175	Moldova	116.67
176	Democratic Republic of the Congo	110
177	Zimbabwe	110
178	Burundi	100

Commentary:

European countries, such as [Denmark](#), [Iceland](#), [Finland](#), [Sweden](#), [Switzerland](#), [Austria](#) resided at the top of the ranking with highest levels of self-reported life satisfaction. Conversely, European countries such as [Latvia](#), [Lithuania](#), [Moldova](#), [Belarus](#) and [Ukraine](#) ranked low on the index. African countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, [Zimbabwe](#) and [Burundi](#) found themselves at the very bottom of the ranking, and indeed, very few African countries could be found in the top 100. [Japan](#) was at the mid-way point in the ranking, however, other Asian countries such as [Brunei](#) and [Malaysia](#) were in the top tier, while [Pakistan](#) was close to the bottom with a low level of self-identified life satisfaction. As a region, the Middle East presented a mixed bag with Saudi Arabians reporting healthy levels of life satisfaction and Egyptians near the bottom of the ranking. As a region, Caribbean countries were ranked highly, consistently demonstrating high levels of life satisfaction. The findings showed that health was the most crucial determining factor in life satisfaction, followed by prosperity and education.

Source:

White, A. (2007). A Global Projection of Subjective Well-being: A Challenge To Positive Psychology? *Psychtalk* 56, 17-20. The data was extracted from a meta-analysis by Marks, Abdallah, Simms & Thompson (2006).

Uploaded:

Based on study noted above in "Source" ; reviewed in 2015

Happy Planet Index

Happy Planet Index

The Happy Planet Index (HPI) is used to measure human well-being in conjunction with environmental impact. The HPI has been compiled since 2006 by the New Economics Foundation. The index is a composite of several indicators including subjective life satisfaction, life expectancy at birth, and ecological footprint per capita.

As noted by NEFA, the HPI "reveals the ecological efficiency with which human well-being is delivered." Indeed, the index combines environmental impact with human well-being to measure the environmental efficiency with which, country by country, people live long and happy lives. The countries ranked highest by the HPI are not necessarily the ones with the happiest people overall, but the ones that allow their citizens to live long and fulfilling lives, without negatively impacting this opportunity for either future generations or citizens of other countries. Accordingly, a country like the [United States](#) will rank low on this list due to its large per capital ecological footprint, which uses more than its fair share of resources, and will likely cause planetary damage.

It should be noted that the HPI was designed to be a counterpoint to other well-established indices of countries' development, such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which measures overall national wealth and economic development, but often obfuscates the realities of countries with stark variances between the rich and the poor. Moreover, the objective of most of the world's people is not to be wealthy but to be happy. The HPI also differs from the [Human Development Index](#) (HDI), which measures quality of life but not ecology, since it [HPI] also includes sustainability as a key indicator.

Rank	Country	HPI
1	Costa Rica	76.1
2	Dominican Republic	71.8
3	Jamaica	70.1
4	Guatemala	68.4
5	Vietnam	66.5
6	Colombia	66.1
7	Cuba	65.7
8	El Salvador	61.5
9	Brazil	61.0
10	Honduras	61.0
11	Nicaragua	60.5
12	Egypt	60.3
13	Saudi Arabia	59.7
14	Philippines	59.0
15	Argentina	59.0
16	Indonesia	58.9

17	Bhutan	58.5
18	Panama	57.4
19	Laos	57.3
20	China	57.1
21	Morocco	56.8
22	Sri Lanka	56.5
23	Mexico	55.6
24	Pakistan	55.6
25	Ecuador	55.5
26	Jordan	54.6
27	Belize	54.5
28	Peru	54.4
29	Tunisia	54.3
30	Trinidad and Tobago	54.2
31	Bangladesh	54.1
32	Moldova	54.1
33	Malaysia	54.0
34	Tajikistan	53.5

35	India	53.0
36	Venezuela	52.5
37	Nepal	51.9
38	Syria	51.3
39	Burma	51.2
40	Algeria	51.2
41	Thailand	50.9
42	Haiti	50.8
43	Netherlands	50.6
44	Malta	50.4
45	Uzbekistan	50.1
46	Chile	49.7
47	Bolivia	49.3
48	Armenia	48.3
49	Singapore	48.2
50	Yemen	48.1
51	Germany	48.1
52	Switzerland	48.1

53	Sweden	48.0
54	Albania	47.9
55	Paraguay	47.8
56	Palestinian Authority	47.7
57	Austria	47.7
58	Serbia	47.6
59	Finland	47.2
60	Croatia	47.2
61	Kyrgyzstan	47.1
62	Cyprus	46.2
63	Guyana	45.6
64	Belgium	45.4
65	Bosnia and Herzegovina	45.0
66	Slovenia	44.5
67	Israel	44.5
68	South Korea	44.4
69	Italy	44.0
70	Romania	43.9

71	France	43.9
72	Georgia	43.6
73	Slovakia	43.5
74	United Kingdom	43.3
75	Japan	43.3
76	Spain	43.2
77	Poland	42.8
78	Ireland	42.6
79	Iraq	42.6
80	Cambodia	42.3
81	Iran	42.1
82	Bulgaria	42.0
83	Turkey	41.7
84	Hong Kong	41.6
85	Azerbaijan	41.2
86	Lithuania	40.9
87	Djibouti	40.4
88	Norway	40.4

89	Canada	39.4
90	Hungary	38.9
91	Kazakhstan	38.5
92	Czech Republic	38.3
93	Mauritania	38.2
94	Iceland	38.1
95	Ukraine	38.1
96	Senegal	38.0
97	Greece	37.6
98	Portugal	37.5
99	Uruguay	37.2
100	Ghana	37.1
101	Latvia	36.7
102	Australia	36.6
103	New Zealand	36.2
104	Belarus	35.7
105	Denmark	35.5
106	Mongolia	35.0

107	Malawi	34.5
108	Russia	34.5
109	Chad	34.3
110	Lebanon	33.6
111	Macedonia	32.7
112	Republic of the Congo	32.4
113	Madagascar	31.5
114	United States	30.7
115	Nigeria	30.3
116	Guinea	30.3
117	Uganda	30.2
118	South Africa	29.7
119	Rwanda	29.6
120	Democratic Republic of the Congo	29.0
121	Sudan	28.5
122	Luxembourg	28.5
123	United Arab Emirates	28.2
124	Ethiopia	28.1

125	Kenya	27.8
126	Cameroon	27.2
127	Zambia	27.2
128	Kuwait	27.0
129	Niger	26.9
130	Angola	26.8
131	Estonia	26.4
132	Mali	25.8
133	Mozambique	24.6
134	Benin	24.6
135	Togo	23.3
136	Sierra Leone	23.1
137	Central African Republic	22.9
138	Burkina Faso	22.4
139	Burundi	21.8
140	Namibia	21.1
141	Botswana	20.9
142	Tanzania	17.8

143	Zimbabwe	16.6
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***Source:** This material is derived from the Happy Planet Index issued by the New Economics Foundation (NEF).*

***Methodology:** The methodology for the calculations can be found at URL: <http://www.happyplanetindex.org/>*

Status of Women

Status of Women in Denmark

Gender Related Development Index (GDI) Rank:

13th out of 140

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) Rank:

2nd out of 80

Female Population:

2.7 million

Female Life Expectancy at birth:

79.6 years

Total Fertility Rate:

1.8

Maternal Mortality Ratio (2000):

5

Total Number of Women Living with HIV/AIDS:

670-2,300

Ever Married Women, Ages 15-19 (%):

1%

Mean Age at Time of Marriage:

30

Contraceptive Use Among Married Women, Any Method (%):

N/A

Female Adult Literacy Rate:

Almost universal

Combined Female Gross enrollment ratio for Primary, Secondary and Tertiary schools:

106%

Female-Headed Households (%):

42%

Economically Active Females (%):

61.8%

Female Contributing Family Workers (%):

N/A

Female Estimated Earned Income:

\$26,587

Seats in Parliament held by women (%):

Lower or Single House: 36.9%

Upper House or Senate: N/A

Year Women Received the Right to Vote:

1915

Year Women Received the Right to Stand for Election:

1915

*The Gender Development Index (GDI) is a composite index which measures the average achievement in a country. While very similar to the Human Development Index in its use of the same variables, the GDI adjusts the average achievement of each country in terms of life expectancy, enrollment in schools, income, and literacy in accordance to the disparities between males and females.

*The Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is a composite index measuring gender inequality in three of the basic dimensions of empowerment; economic participation and decision-making, political participation and decision-making, and power over economic resources.

*Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is defined as the average number of babies born to women during their reproductive years. A TFR of 2.1 is considered the replacement rate; once a TFR of a population reaches 2.1 the population will remain stable assuming no immigration or emigration takes place. When the TFR is greater than 2.1 a population will increase and when it is less than 2.1 a population will eventually decrease, although due to the age structure of a population it will take years before a low TFR is translated into lower population.

*Maternal Mortality Rate is the number of deaths to women per 100,000 live births that resulted from conditions related to pregnancy and or delivery related complications.

*Economically Active Females are the share of the female population, ages 15 and above, whom supply, or are able to supply, labor for the production of goods and services.

*Female Contributing Family Workers are those females who work without pay in an economic enterprise operated by a relative living in the same household.

*Estimated Earned Income is measured according to Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) in US dollars.

Global Gender Gap Index

Global Gender Gap Index

Editor's Note:

The Global Gender Gap Index by the World Economic Forum ranks most of the world's countries in terms of the division of resources and opportunities among males and females. Specifically, the ranking assesses the gender inequality gap in these four arenas:

1. Economic participation and opportunity (salaries and high skilled employment participation levels)
2. Educational attainment (access to basic and higher level education)
3. Political empowerment (representation in decision-making structures)
4. Health and survival (life expectancy and sex ratio)

	2010 rank	2010 score	2010 rank among 2009 countries	2009 rank	2009 score	2008 rank	2008 score	2007 rank
Country								
Iceland	1	0.8496	1	1	0.8276	4	0.7999	4
Norway	2	0.8404	2	3	0.8227	1	0.8239	2
Finland	3	0.8260	3	2	0.8252	2	0.8195	3
Sweden	4	0.8024	4	4	0.8139	3	0.8139	1

New Zealand	5	0.7808	5	5	0.7880	5	0.7859	5
Ireland	6	0.7773	6	8	0.7597	8	0.7518	9
Denmark	7	0.7719	7	7	0.7628	7	0.7538	8
Lesotho	8	0.7678	8	10	0.7495	16	0.7320	26
Philippines	9	0.7654	9	9	0.7579	6	0.7568	6
Switzerland	10	0.7562	10	13	0.7426	14	0.7360	40
Spain	11	0.7554	11	17	0.7345	17	0.7281	10
South Africa	12	0.7535	12	6	0.7709	22	0.7232	20
Germany	13	0.7530	13	12	0.7449	11	0.7394	7
Belgium	14	0.7509	14	33	0.7165	28	0.7163	19
United Kingdom	15	0.7460	15	15	0.7402	13	0.7366	11
Sri Lanka	16	0.7458	16	16	0.7402	12	0.7371	15
Netherlands	17	0.7444	17	11	0.7490	9	0.7399	12
Latvia	18	0.7429	18	14	0.7416	10	0.7397	13
United States	19	0.7411	19	31	0.7173	27	0.7179	31
Canada	20	0.7372	20	25	0.7196	31	0.7136	18
Trinidad and Tobago	21	0.7353	21	19	0.7298	19	0.7245	46

Mozambique	22	0.7329	22	26	0.7195	18	0.7266	43
Australia	23	0.7271	23	20	0.7282	21	0.7241	17
Cuba	24	0.7253	24	29	0.7176	25	0.7195	22
Namibia	25	0.7238	25	32	0.7167	30	0.7141	29
Luxembourg	26	0.7231	26	63	0.6889	66	0.6802	58
Mongolia	27	0.7194	27	22	0.7221	40	0.7049	62
Costa Rica	28	0.7194	28	27	0.7180	32	0.7111	28
Argentina	29	0.7187	29	24	0.7211	24	0.7209	33
Nicaragua	30	0.7176	30	49	0.7002	71	0.6747	90
Barbados	31	0.7176	31	21	0.7236	26	0.7188	n/a
Portugal	32	0.7171	32	46	0.7013	39	0.7051	37
Uganda	33	0.7169	33	40	0.7067	43	0.6981	50
Moldova	34	0.7160	34	36	0.7104	20	0.7244	21
Lithuania	35	0.7132	35	30	0.7175	23	0.7222	14
Bahamas	36	0.7128	36	28	0.7179	n/a	n/a	n/a
Austria	37	0.7091	37	42	0.7031	29	0.7153	27
Guyana	38	0.7090	38	35	0.7108	n/a	n/a	n/a
Panama	39	0.7072	39	43	0.7024	34	0.7095	38

Ecuador	40	0.7072	40	23	0.7220	35	0.7091	44
Kazakhstan	41	0.7055	41	47	0.7013	45	0.6976	32
Slovenia	42	0.7047	42	52	0.6982	51	0.6937	49
Poland	43	0.7037	43	50	0.6998	49	0.6951	60
Jamaica	44	0.7037	44	48	0.7013	44	0.6980	39
Russian Federation	45	0.7036	45	51	0.6987	42	0.6994	45
France	46	0.7025	46	18	0.7331	15	0.7341	51
Estonia	47	0.7018	47	37	0.7094	37	0.7076	30
Chile	48	0.7013	48	64	0.6884	65	0.6818	86
Macedonia, FYR	49	0.6996	49	53	0.6950	53	0.6914	35
Bulgaria	50	0.6983	50	38	0.7072	36	0.7077	25
Kyrgyz Republic	51	0.6973	51	41	0.7058	41	0.7045	70
Israel	52	0.6957	52	45	0.7019	56	0.6900	36
Croatia	53	0.6939	53	54	0.6944	46	0.6967	16
Honduras	54	0.6927	54	62	0.6893	47	0.6960	68
Colombia	55	0.6927	55	56	0.6939	50	0.6944	24
Singapore	56	0.6914	56	84	0.6664	84	0.6625	77

Thailand	57	0.6910	57	59	0.6907	52	0.6917	52
Greece	58	0.6908	58	85	0.6662	75	0.6727	72
Uruguay	59	0.6897	59	57	0.6936	54	0.6907	78
Peru	60	0.6895	60	44	0.7024	48	0.6959	75
China	61	0.6881	61	60	0.6907	57	0.6878	73
Botswana	62	0.6876	62	39	0.7071	63	0.6839	53
Ukraine	63	0.6869	63	61	0.6896	62	0.6856	57
Venezuela	64	0.6863	64	69	0.6839	59	0.6875	55
Czech Republic	65	0.6850	65	74	0.6789	69	0.6770	64
Tanzania	66	0.6829	66	73	0.6797	38	0.7068	34
Romania	67	0.6826	67	70	0.6805	70	0.6763	47
Malawi	68	0.6824	68	76	0.6738	81	0.6664	87
Paraguay	69	0.6804	69	66	0.6868	100	0.6379	69
Ghana	70	0.6782	70	80	0.6704	77	0.6679	63
Slovak Republic	71	0.6778	71	68	0.6845	64	0.6824	54
Vietnam	72	0.6776	72	71	0.6802	68	0.6778	42
Dominican Republic	73	0.6774	73	67	0.6859	72	0.6744	65

Italy	74	0.6765	74	72	0.6798	67	0.6788	84
Gambia, The	75	0.6762	75	75	0.6752	85	0.6622	95
Bolivia	76	0.6751	76	82	0.6693	80	0.6667	80
Brueni Darussalem	77	0.6748	77	94	0.6524	99	0.6392	n/a
Albania	78	0.6726	78	91	0.6601	87	0.6591	66
Hungary	79	0.6720	79	65	0.6879	60	0.6867	61
Madagascar	80	0.6713	80	77	0.6732	74	0.6736	89
Angola	81	0.6712	81	106	0.6353	114	0.6032	110
Bangladesh	82	0.6702	82	93	0.6526	90	0.6531	100
Malta	83	0.6695	83	88	0.6635	83	0.6634	76
Armenia	84	0.6669	84	90	0.6619	78	0.6677	71
Brazil	85	0.6655	85	81	0.6695	73	0.6737	74
Cyprus	86	0.6642	86	79	0.6706	76	0.6694	82
Indonesia	87	0.6615	87	92	0.6580	93	0.6473	81
Georgia	88	0.6598	88	83	0.6680	82	0.6654	67
Tajikistan	89	0.6598	89	86	0.6661	89	0.6541	79
El Salvador	90	0.6596	90	55	0.6939	58	0.6875	48

Mexico	91	0.6577	91	98	0.6503	97	0.6441	93
Zimbabwe	92	0.6574	92	95	0.6518	92	0.6485	88
Belize	93	0.6536	93	87	0.6636	86	0.6610	94
Japan	94	0.6524	94	101	0.6447	98	0.6434	91
Mauritius	95	0.6520	95	96	0.6513	95	0.6466	85
Kenya	96	0.6499	96	97	0.6512	88	0.6547	83
Cambodia	97	0.6482	97	104	0.6410	94	0.6469	98
Malaysia	98	0.6479	98	100	0.6467	96	0.6442	92
Maldives	99	0.6452	99	99	0.6482	91	0.6501	99
Azerbaijan	100	0.6446	100	89	0.6626	61	0.6856	59
Senegal	101	0.6414	101	102	0.6427	n/a	n/a	n/a
Suriname	102	0.6407	102	78	0.6726	79	0.6674	56
United Arab Emirates	103	0.6397	103	112	0.6198	105	0.6220	105
Korea, Rep.	104	0.6342	104	115	0.6146	108	0.6154	97
Kuwait	105	0.6318	105	105	0.6356	101	0.6358	96
Zambia	106	0.6293	106	107	0.6310	106	0.6205	101
Tunisia	107	0.6266	107	109	0.6233	103	0.6295	102
Fiji	108	0.6256	108	103	0.6414	n/a	n/a	n/a

Guatemala	109	0.6238	109	111	0.6209	112	0.6072	106
Bahrain	110	0.6217	110	116	0.6136	121	0.5927	115
Burkina Faso	111	0.6162	111	120	0.6081	115	0.6029	117
India	112	0.6155	112	114	0.6151	113	0.6060	114
Mauritania	113	0.6152	113	119	0.6103	110	0.6117	111
Cameroon	114	0.6110	114	118	0.6108	117	0.6017	116
Nepal	115	0.6084	115	110	0.6213	120	0.5942	125
Lebanon*	116	0.6084	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Qatar	117	0.6059	116	125	0.5907	119	0.5948	109
Nigeria	118	0.6055	117	108	0.6280	102	0.6339	107
Algeria	119	0.6052	118	117	0.6119	111	0.6111	108
Jordan	120	0.6048	119	113	0.6182	104	0.6275	104
Ethiopia	121	0.6019	120	122	0.5948	122	0.5867	113
Oman	122	0.5950	121	123	0.5938	118	0.5960	119
Iran	123	0.5933	122	128	0.5839	116	0.6021	118
Syria	124	0.5926	123	121	0.6072	107	0.6181	103
Egypt	125	0.5899	124	126	0.5862	124	0.5832	120
Turkey	126	0.5876	125	129	0.5828	123	0.5853	121

Morocco	127	0.5767	126	124	0.5926	125	0.5757	122
Benin	128	0.5719	127	131	0.5643	126	0.5582	123
Saudi Arabia	129	0.5713	128	130	0.5651	128	0.5537	124
Côte d'Ivoire*	130	0.5691	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Mali	131	0.5680	129	127	0.5860	109	0.6117	112
Pakistan	132	0.5465	130	132	0.5458	127	0.5549	126
Chad	133	0.5330	131	133	0.5417	129	0.5290	127
Yemen	134	0.4603	132	134	0.4609	130	0.4664	128
Belarus	n/a	n/a	n/a	34	0.7141	33	0.7099	23
Uzbekistan	n/a	n/a	n/a	58	0.6913	55	0.6906	41

*new country 2010

Commentary:

According to the report's index, Nordic countries, such as [Iceland](#), [Norway](#), [Finland](#), and [Sweden](#) have continued to dominate at the top of the ranking for gender equality. Meanwhile, [France](#) has seen a notable decline in the ranking, largely as a result of decreased number of women holding ministerial portfolios in that country. In the Americas, the [United States](#) has risen in the ranking to top the region, predominantly as a result of a decreasing wage gap, as well as higher number of women holding key positions in the current Obama administration. [Canada](#) has continued to remain as one of the top ranking countries of the Americas, followed by the small Caribbean island

nation of Trinidad and Tobago, which has the distinction of being among the top three countries of the Americas in the realm of gender equality. [Lesotho](#) and South African ranked highly in the index, leading not only among African countries but also in global context. Despite [Lesotho](#) still lagging in the area of life expectancy, its high ranking was attributed to high levels of female participation in the labor force and female literacy. The [Philippines](#) and [Sri Lanka](#) were the top ranking countries for gender equality for Asia, ranking highly also in global context. The [Philippines](#) has continued to show strong performance in all strong performance on all four dimensions (detailed above) of the index. Finally, in the Arab world, the [United Arab Emirates](#) held the highest-rank within that region of the world; however, its placement near the bottom of the global list highlights the fact that Arab countries are generally poor performers when it comes to the matter of gender equality in global scope.

Source:

This data is derived from the latest edition of The Global Gender Gap Report by the World Economic Forum.

Available at URL:

<http://www.weforum.org/en/Communities/Women%20Leaders%20and%20Gender%20Parity/Gende>

Updated:

Based on latest available data as set forth in chart; reviewed in 2014

Culture and Arts

Culture and Arts of Denmark

Denmark's Cultural Legacy

Denmark's rich intellectual heritage includes a number of scientific achievements and cultural contributions and to the modern world. In the realm of science, this intellectual heritage is

exemplified by the astronomical discoveries of Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) and the contributions to atomic physics of Niels Bohr (1885-1962). The fairy tales of Hans Christian Andersen (1805-75), the philosophical essays of Soren Kierkegaard (1813-55), and the short stories of Karen Blixen (penname Isak Dinesen, 1885-1962) have earned international recognition, as have the symphonies of Carl Nielsen (1865-1931). Georg Jensen (1866-1935) is known worldwide for outstanding modern design in silver, and "Royal Copenhagen" is among the finest porcelains. The Royal Danish Porcelain Factory as well as Bing and Grondahl, renowned for their quality ceramics and porcelain, export their creations internationally. Denmark is also home to a number of cultural arts institutions, such as the Royal Danish ballet, the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, the North Jutland Art Museum, the State Museum of Art, the Glyptotek, and the Museum of Applied art and Industrial Design.

Source: The Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Danish Music

Royal Danish Orchestra was established in 1448 and has the distinction of being one of the oldest orchestras in Western Europe.

Important Danish composers include: Dietrich Buxtehude (1637-1707) the famous Baroque organist and composer of church music. Romantic composer, Niels W. Gade (1817-1890), Gottfred Matthison-Hansen (1832-1909), Carl Nielsen (1865-1931) who is considered by many to be the greatest Danish composer of the 20th century. Rued Langgarg (1893-1952), Vagn Holmhoj (1909 –1996), and Per Norgard (b. 1932).

Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Music:

<http://www.um.dk/english/danmark/danmarksbog/kap4/4-11.asp>

Danish Art

The Danes have a strong tradition of architecture and design. Since the 20th century Danish architects have been well known for designs that are simple and functional. Arne Jacobsen (1902-1971), architect and designer, is well known for his furniture designs, specifically "The Ant", a beautifully designed, stackable chair. Architect, Jorn Utson, designed the Sydney Opera House. His son, Jan Utson, designed the Parliament building in Kuwait. P.V. Jensen-Klint (1853-1930) and son Kaare Klint (1888-1954) created the Grundtvig Church; a project that took nineteen years to complete. Henning Larsen designed the Saudi Arabia's Foreign Ministry Building.

The most important period for Danish visual art was The Golden Age often characterized by artists' use of light and their representations of the natural world. C.W. Eckersberg (1783-1853),

also known as the father of Danish painting, C.A. Jensen (1792-1870), and Christen Kobke (1810-1848) are the best representatives of painters during the Golden age. Sculptor, Bertel Thorvalsen (1770-1844), worked with classical themes and his sculptures are world-renowned.

Following in the footsteps of the Golden Age artists are group of painters who lived in the seaside town of Skagen. Peter Severin Kroyer (1851-1909), Micheal Ancher (1849-1927) and his wife Anna Ancher (1859-1935)

Tigertail Virtual Museum: Gallery of the 20th Century Danish Art before World War 1:
<http://www.tigtail.org/TVM/B/danish.html>

Danish Literature

During the Middle Ages, Saxo Grammaticus wrote Gesta Danorum (History of the Danes), the oldest Danish manuscript. In literature, the Danish Golden Age saw such influential writers such as, Hans Christian Anderson (1805-1875) who wrote fairy tales and children's stories, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) the philosopher known as the father of existentialism, and Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872) a poet, historian, educator, and theologian.

Both Karl Adolph Gjellerup (1857-1919) and novelist, Henrik Pontoppidan (1857-1943), won the 1917 Nobel Prize for Literature. Sophus Classen (1865-1931) has been an influential poet of the Symbolist movement. Martin Andersen Nexø (1869-1954) is a poet in the Romantic vein. He also wrote many novels including his masterpiece Pelle the Conquerer. The most Johannes V. Jensen (1873-1950), winner of the 1944 Nobel Prize for Literature. Popular writer, Karen Blixen, otherwise known as, Isak Dinesen, (1885-1962) wrote novels (My African Farm) as well as many short stories.

William Heinesen (1900-1991) an author and poet, Piet Hein (1905-1996) a poet and scientist and Peter Hoeg have been influential figures of the 20th century.

The Danish Literature Center:
<http://www.litteraturnet.dk/>

Royal Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Denmark: Culture: Literature:
<http://www.um.dk/english/danmark/danmarksbog/kap4/4-7.asp#4-7-2>

Danish Theatre

The Royal Theater was established in 1728. Johan Ludvig Heiberg (1791-1860) wrote the Danish National Play, Elverhøj (The Elf-Hill).

Danish avant-garde theatre has received international acclaim with the theatre troupes Hotel Pr0 Forma and Dr. Dante.

Danish Cuisine

Favorite ingredients in dishes include salmon, herring, roast beef, lamb, red cabbage and potatoes. The Danes have made the open-faced sandwiches or smorrebrod, Danish meatballs or frikadeller, and Danish pastry world famous.

Etiquette

Cultural Dos and Taboos

1. Customarily, men and women rise when being introduced, and the handshake is the standard greeting for men and women. Note that Danish children are taught to greet people formally and will likely greet you with a firm handshake, direct eye contact and a small bow. People generally shake hands upon arrival and departure.
2. One should use the formal form of address such as Mr. or Mrs. followed by a surname, unless invited to move to a first name basis. Among men, it is common for last names alone to be used in forms of address. Outside the personal sphere, however, it is advisable that professional and governmental titles be used. In business, titles are used more rarely in verbal communication although they are customarily used in written communications.
3. Common gestures in North America, such as the okay gesture (thumb and forefinger forming a circle) is considered vulgar, and talking to someone with hands in the pocket is regarded as improper.
4. Punctuality is the norm in this culture, so be sure to be consistently punctual for both business meetings and social occasions.
5. Note that most Scandinavians, including Danes, tend to have fairly quiet dispositions. As such, one should avoid speaking loudly or indulging in any overt and flamboyant behavior. Note also that

Danes are retrained people who are not accustomed to striking up conversation with strangers. One should not be surprised to find that Danes are unresponsive to attempts to make "small talk." (Naturally, this is a generalization and one should expect to find many exceptions.)

6. In conversation, sports, sightseeing, travel and politics are considered to be good topics of conversation. Note, however, especially in regard to matters of political or social import that Danes appreciate tolerance and will rarely be impressed by narrow-minded or fundamental beliefs. In this regard, while many political and social topics are open for discussion, one should avoid criticism of other peoples or systems. Inappropriate topics of conversation include anything remotely personal in nature.

7. Toasting at homes or dinners is considered part of tradition, but there is a protocol involved that should be adhered to. For example, one should never toast one's host or anyone senior in rank or age until he or she has toasted you first. Note also that one should never taste one's drink until the host has said the traditional toasting word, *Skoal*.

8. If you are invited to a Danish home, it has been suggested that you should stand quietly outside the doorway to the entrance of the abode and wait to be asked in; once you are inside the home, wait again until you are asked to sit down; and when you are sitting at the table, wait for the host's invitation to begin eating.

9. Dining is typically continental-style with the fork steadfastly held in the left hand and the knife in the right hand.

10. Initiate your own departure (usually around 10 p.m. during winter and 11 pm in the summer months), as your hosts will rarely do so.

11. In general, if one is invited for dinner, taking a gift is regarded as an appropriate gesture. Generally, most gifts should be wrapped. Suggested gifts include flowers (excluding lilies, carnations, white flowers or wreaths, all of which are associated with funerals), liquors, wine, liquor, or fine chocolates.

12. Dress is generally casual and should conform to the temperate climate. Business wear is more conservative; suits are the norm for both men and women. Women generally to be more restrained in regard to makeup and jewelry, opting for a more natural look than other parts of Europe.

Travel Information

Please Note: This is a generalized travel guide and it is intended to coalesce several

resources, which a traveler might find useful, regardless of a particular destination. As such, it does not include travel warnings for specific "hot spot" destinations.

For travel alerts and warnings, please see the United States Department of State's listings available at URL:

<http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/english/alertswarnings.html>

Please note that travel to the following countries, based on these warnings, is ill-advised, or should be undertaken with the utmost precaution:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Honduras, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan, Palestinian Territories of West Bank and Gaza, Philippines areas of Sulu Archipelago, Mindanao, and southern Sulu Sea, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Venezuela, and Yemen.

International Travel Guide

Checklist for Travelers

- 1. Take out travel insurance to cover hospital treatment or medical evacuation. Overseas medical costs are expensive to most international travelers, where one's domestic, nationalized or even private health insurance plans will not provide coverage outside one's home country. Learn about "reciprocal insurance plans" that some international health care companies might offer.**
- 2. Make sure that one's travel insurance is appropriate. If one intends to indulge in adventurous activities, such as parasailing, one should be sure that one is fully insured in such cases. Many traditional insurance policies do not provide coverage in cases of extreme circumstances.**
- 3. Take time to learn about one's destination country and culture. Read and learn about the place one is traveling. Also check political, economic and socio-cultural developments at the destination by reading country-specific travel reports and fact sheets noted below.**
- 4. Get the necessary visas for the country (or countries) one intends to visit - but be aware that a visa does not guarantee entry. A number of useful sites regarding visa and other entry requirements are noted below.**
- 5. Keep in regular contact with friends and relatives back at home by phone or email, and be sure to leave a travel itinerary.**
- 6. Protect one's personal information by making copies of one's passport details, insurance policy, travelers checks and credit card numbers. Taking copies of such documents with you, while**

leaving another collection copies with someone at home is also good practice for travelers. Taking copies of one's passport photograph is also recommended.

7. Stay healthy by taking all possible precautions against illness. Also, be sure to take extra supplies of prescription drugs along for the trip, while also taking time to pack general pharmaceutical supplies, such as aspirin and other such painkillers, bandages, stomach ailment medication, anti-inflammatory medication and anti-bacterial medication.

8. Do not carry illicit drugs. Understand that the punishment for possession or use of illegal drugs in some countries may be capital punishment. Make sure your prescription drugs are legal in the countries you plan to visit.

9. Know the laws of one's destination country and culture; be sure to understand the repercussions of breaking those laws and regulations. Often the transparency and freedoms of the juridical system at home is not consistent with that of one's destination country. Become aware of these complexities and subtleties before you travel.

10. For longer stays in a country, or where the security situation is volatile, one should register one's self and traveling companions at the local embassy or consulate of one's country of citizenship.

11. Women should take care to be prepared both culturally and practically for traveling in a different country and culture. One should be sure to take sufficient supplies of personal feminine products and prescription drugs. One should also learn about local cultural standards for women, including norms of dressing. Be aware that it is simply inappropriate and unsafe for women to travel alone in some countries, and take the necessary precautions to avoid risk-filled situations.

12. If one is traveling with small children, one should pack extra supplies, make arrangements with the travel carrier for proper seating that would adequately accommodate children, infants or toddlers. Note also that whether one is male or female, traveling with children means that one's hands are thus not free to carry luggage and bags. Be especially aware that this makes one vulnerable to pickpockets, thieves and other sorts of crime.

13. Make proper arrangements for accommodations, well in advance of one's arrival at a destination. Some countries have limited accommodation, while others may have culturally distinctive facilities. Learning about these practicalities before one travels will greatly aid the enjoyment of one's trip.

14. Travel with different forms of currency and money (cash, traveler's checks and credit cards) in anticipation that venues may not accept one or another form of money. Also, ensuring that one's financial resources are not contained in one location, or by one person (if one is traveling with others) can be a useful measure, in the event that one loses a wallet or purse.

15. Find out about transportation in the destination country. In some places, it might be advisable to hire a local driver or taxi guide for safety reasons, while in other countries, enjoying one's travel experience may well be enhanced by renting a vehicle and seeing the local sights and culture independently. Costs may also be prohibitive for either of these choices, so again, prior planning is suggested.

Tips for Travelers

- Get insurance including medical insurance.
- Check with your embassy, consulate, or appropriate government institution related to travel before traveling.
- Bring enough money for the duration of your stay.
- Keep belongings in a safe place.
- Beware of pickpockets and/or bag snatchers.
- Enter next of kin details into the back of your passport.
- Don't carry drugs as this may lead to imprisonment.

Note: This information is directly quoted from the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Sources: *United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office*

Business Culture: Information for Business Travelers

Danish business people can appear somewhat formal at first, but are likely to quickly show a more informal side of themselves, just as the dress code sometimes may seem a little relaxed to an American business person. However, they are likely to get down to business right away and are generally conservative and efficient in their approach to business meetings. Handshakes are the accepted form of greeting. Danes shake hands both for greetings upon arrival and departure from a meeting. Men do not stand when a woman enters or leaves a room. Virtually all Danish business people have a good working knowledge of English and interpreters are rarely required. However, in some cases, casual forms of greeting can be misunderstood. The greeting "How are you?" may, although rarely, be misunderstood. "I'm pleased to meet you" is preferable and conveys a more sincere message. Business gifts are not a normal custom in Denmark. Business entertaining is usually done at lunch, and more rarely at dinner in a restaurant. Even more rarely is it to be invited for dinner at the home of a business acquaintance. Should it occur, bringing flowers for the hostess would be suitable.

Advance appointments are always required and punctuality is a must; it is considered rude to be late. Danes work shorter hours than Americans. The standard workweek is 37 hours. Mandatory

vacation is five weeks plus up to five more days per year (a sixth week is fully phased in all labor contracts by 2003), plus local holidays. At least three weeks are taken during summer. School summer vacation is from about June 20th to about August 8th and generally, business is slow in that period with many executives out and some companies closed. It is not advisable to schedule business meetings or other business activities in Denmark from late June to early August, from December 20 - January 5, or in the week of Easter. Danes treasure their leisure time, most of which is spent with the family. Business persons should not routinely expect to meet with their Danish counterparts after 4.00 p.m. on weekdays. On Fridays, many Danes leave early, generally between 2 - 3 p.m. Do not plan meetings for Saturdays, Sundays, or on national holidays (see below). Not all Danes appreciate breakfast meetings, which should be scheduled only with due consideration to the situation.

Sources: *United States Department of State Commercial Guides*

Online Resources Regarding Entry Requirements and Visas

Foreign Entry Requirements for Americans from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

Visa Services for Non-Americans from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/visa/visa_1750.html

Visa Bulletins from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/visa/frvi/bulletin/bulletin_1360.html

Visa Waivers from the United States Department of State
http://travel.state.gov/visa/temp/without/without_1990.html - new

Passport and Visa Information from the Government of the United Kingdom
<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Visa Information from the Government of Australia
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/visas/index.html>

Passport Information from the Government of Australia
<https://www.passports.gov.au/Web/index.aspx>

Passport Information from the Government of Canada
http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/passport_passeport-eng.asp

Visa Information from the Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/visas-eng.asp

Online Visa Processing by Immigration Experts by VisaPro

<http://www.visapro.com>

Sources: United States Department of State, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Government of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Canada Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Useful Online Resources for Travelers

Country-Specific Travel Information from United States

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1765.html

Travel Advice by Country from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/>

General Travel Advice from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/General>

Travel Bulletins from the Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/TravelBulletins/>

Travel Tips from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/tips/index.html>

Travel Checklist by Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/preparation_information/checklist_sommaire-eng.asp

Travel Checklist from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/staying-safe/checklist>

Your trip abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brochures/brochures_1225.html

A safe trip abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/safety/safety_1747.html

Tips for expatriates abroad from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/residing/residing_1235.html

Tips for students from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/living/studying/studying_1238.html <http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/brocl>

Medical information for travelers from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/tips/health/health_1185.html

US Customs Travel information

<http://www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/>

Sources: United States Department of State; United States Customs Department, United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Government of Australia; Government of Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Other Practical Online Resources for Travelers

Foreign Language Phrases for Travelers

<http://www.travlang.com/languages/>

<http://www.omniglot.com/language/phrases/index.htm>

World Weather Forecasts

<http://www.intellicast.com/>

<http://www.wunderground.com/>

<http://www.worldweather.org/>

Worldwide Time Zones, Map, World Clock

<http://www.timeanddate.com/>

<http://www.worldtimezone.com/>

International Airport Codes

<http://www.world-airport-codes.com/>

International Dialing Codes

<http://www.kropla.com/dialcode.htm>

<http://www.countrycallingcodes.com/>

International Phone Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/phones.htm>

International Mobile Phone Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/mobilephones.htm>

International Internet Café Search Engine

<http://cybercaptive.com/>

Global Internet Roaming

<http://www.kropla.com/roaming.htm>

World Electric Power Guide

<http://www.kropla.com/electric.htm>

<http://www.kropla.com/electric2.htm>

World Television Standards and Codes

<http://www.kropla.com/tv.htm>

International Currency Exchange Rates

<http://www.xe.com/ucc/>

Banking and Financial Institutions Across the World

<http://www.123world.com/banks/index.html>

International Credit Card or Automated Teller Machine (ATM) Locator

<http://visa.via.infonow.net/locator/global/>

<http://www.mastercard.com/us/personal/en/cardholderservices/atmlocations/index.html>

International Chambers of Commerce

<http://www.123world.com/chambers/index.html>

World Tourism Websites

<http://123world.com/tourism/>

Diplomatic and Consular Information

United States Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.usembassy.gov/>

United Kingdom Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/embassies-and-posts/find-an-embassy-overseas/>

Australia's Diplomatic Posts Around the World

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/missions/>
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/embassies.html>

Canada's Embassies and High Commissions

<http://www.international.gc.ca/ciw-cdm/embassies-ambassades.aspx>

Resources for Finding Embassies and other Diplomatic Posts Across the World

<http://www.escapeartist.com/embassy1/embassy1.htm>

Safety and Security

Travel Warnings by Country from Government of Australia

<http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/zw-cgi/view/Advice/>

Travel Warnings and Alerts from United States Department of State

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html

http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/pa/pa_1766.html

Travel Reports and Warnings by Government of Canada

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/menu-eng.asp

http://www.voyage.gc.ca/countries_pays/updates_mise-a-jour-eng.asp

Travel Warnings from Government of United Kingdom

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/>

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country/?action=noTravelAll#noTravelAll>

Sources: United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the United States Department of State, the Government of Canada: Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Government of Australia: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Other Safety and Security Online Resources for Travelers

United States Department of State Information on Terrorism

<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/>

Government of the United Kingdom Resource on the Risk of Terrorism

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1044011304926>

Government of Canada Terrorism Guide

<http://www.international.gc.ca/crime/terrorism-terrorisme.aspx?lang=eng>

Information on Terrorism by Government of Australia

<http://www.dfat.gov.au/icat/index.html>

FAA Resource on Aviation Safety

<http://www.faasafety.gov/>

In-Flight Safety Information for Air Travel (by British Airways crew trainer, Anna Warman)

<http://www.warman.demon.co.uk/anna/inflight.html>

Hot Spots: Travel Safety and Risk Information

<http://www.airsecurity.com/hotspots/HotSpots.asp>

Information on Human Rights

<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/hr/>

Sources: The United States Department of State, the United States Customs Department, the Government of Canada, the Government of United Kingdom, the Government of Australia, the Federal Aviation Authority, Anna Warman's In-flight Website, Hot Spots Travel and Risk Information

Diseases/Health Data

Please Note: Most of the entry below constitutes a generalized health advisory, which a traveler might find useful, regardless of a particular destination.

As a supplement, however, reader will also find below a list of countries flagged with current health notices and alerts issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Please note that travel to the following countries, based on these 3 levels of warnings, is ill-advised, or should be undertaken with the utmost precaution:

Level 3 (highest level of concern; avoid non-essential travel) --

Guinea - Ebola
Liberia - Ebola
Nepal - Earthquake zone
Sierra Leone - Ebola

Level 2 (intermediate level of concern; use utmost caution during travel) --

Cameroon - Polio
Somalia - Polio
Vanuatu - Tropical Cyclone zone
Throughout Middle East and Arabia Peninsula - MERS ((Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)

Level 1 (standard level of concern; use practical caution during travel) -

Australia - Ross River disease
Bosnia-Herzegovina - Measles
Brazil - Dengue Fever
Brazil - Malaria
Brazil - Zika
China - H7N9 Avian flu
Cuba - Cholera
Egypt - H5N1 Bird flu
Ethiopia - Measles
Germany - Measles
Japan - Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD)
Kyrgyzstan - Measles
Malaysia -Dengue Fever
Mexico - Chikungunya
Mexico - Hepatitis A
Nigeria - Meningitis
Philippines - Measles
Scotland - Mumps
Singapore - Hand, foot, and mouth disease (HFMD)

South Korea - MERS ((Middle East Respiratory Syndrome)

Throughout Caribbean - Chikungunya

Throughout Central America - Chikungunya

Throughout South America - Chikungunya

Throughout Pacific Islands - Chikungunya

For specific information related to these health notices and alerts please see the CDC's listing available at URL:

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>

Health Information for Travelers to Denmark

The preventive measures you need to take while traveling in Western Europe depend on the areas you visit and the length of time you stay. For most areas of this region, you should observe health precautions similar to those that would apply while traveling in the United States.

Travelers' diarrhea, the number one illness in travelers, can be caused by viruses, bacteria, or parasites, which can contaminate food or water. Infections may cause diarrhea and vomiting (*E. coli*, *Salmonella*, cholera, and parasites), fever (typhoid fever and toxoplasmosis), or liver damage (hepatitis). Make sure your food and drinking water are safe. (See below.)

A certificate of yellow fever vaccination may be required for entry into certain of these countries if you are coming from countries in tropical South America or sub-Saharan Africa. (There is no risk for yellow fever in Western Europe.) For detailed information, see Comprehensive Yellow Fever Vaccination Requirements (<<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/yelfever.htm>>)

Tickborne encephalitis, a viral infection of the central nervous system, occurs chiefly in Central and Western Europe. Travelers are at risk who visit or work in forested areas during the summer months and who consume unpasteurized dairy products. The vaccine for this disease is not available in the United States at this time. To prevent tickborne encephalitis, as well as Lyme disease, travelers should take precautions to prevent tick bites (see below).

CDC Recommends the Following Vaccines (as Appropriate for Age):

See your doctor at least 4-6 weeks before your trip to allow time for shots to take effect.

- Hepatitis A or immune globulin (IG). You are not at increased risk in Northern, Western, and Southern Europe, including the Mediterranean regions of Italy and Greece.
- Hepatitis B, if you might be exposed to blood (for example, health-care workers), have sexual contact with the local population, stay longer than 6 months in Southern Europe, or be exposed through medical treatment.

- As needed, booster doses for tetanus-diphtheria. Hepatitis B vaccine is now recommended for all infants and for children ages 11-12 years who did not complete the series as infants.

All travelers should take the following precautions, no matter the destination:

- Wash hands often with soap and water.
- Because motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of injury among travelers, walk and drive defensively. Avoid travel at night if possible and always use seat belts.
- Always use latex condoms to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Don't eat or drink dairy products unless you know they have been pasteurized.
- Don't share needles with anyone.
- Never eat undercooked ground beef and poultry, raw eggs, and unpasteurized dairy products. Raw shellfish is particularly dangerous to persons who have liver disease or compromised immune systems. (Travelers to Western Europe should also see the information on Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy ["Mad Cow Disease"] and New Variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease [nvCJD] at URL <http://www.cdc.gov/travel/madcow.htm>.)

Travelers to rural or undeveloped areas should take the following precautions:

To Stay Healthy, Do:

- Drink only bottled or boiled water, or carbonated (bubbly) drinks in cans or bottles. Avoid tap water, fountain drinks, and ice cubes. If this is not possible, make water safer by BOTH filtering through an "absolute 1-micron or less" filter AND adding iodine tablets to the filtered water. "Absolute 1-micron filters" are found in camping/outdoor supply stores.
- Eat only thoroughly cooked food or fruits and vegetables you have peeled yourself. Remember: boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it.
- Protect yourself from insects by remaining in well-screened areas, using repellents (applied sparingly at 4-hour intervals), and wearing long-sleeved shirts and long pants tucked into boots or socks as a deterrent to ticks.
- To prevent fungal and parasitic infections, keep feet clean and dry, and do not go barefoot.

To Avoid Getting Sick:

- Don't eat food purchased from street vendors. Do not drink beverages with ice.
- Don't handle animals (especially monkeys, dogs, and cats), to avoid bites and serious diseases (including rabies and plague).

What You Need To Bring with You:

- Insect repellent containing DEET (diethylmethyltoluamide), in 30%-35% strength for adults and

6%-10% for children. The insecticide permethrin applied to clothing is an effective deterrent to ticks.

- Over-the-counter antidiarrheal medicine to take if you have diarrhea.
- Iodine tablets and water filters to purify water if bottled water is not available. See Food and Water Precautions and Travelers' Diarrhea Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/foodwatr.htm>) and Risks from Food and Drink (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/food-drink-risks.htm>) for more detailed information about water filters.
- Sunblock, sunglasses, hat.
- Prescription medications: make sure you have enough to last during your trip, as well as a copy of the prescription(s).

After You Return Home:

If you become ill after your trip-even as long as a year after you return-tell your doctor where you have traveled.

For More Information:

Ask your doctor or check the CDC web sites for more information about how to protect yourself against diseases that occur in Western Europe, such as:

For information about diseases-

Carried by Insects

Lyme disease

Carried in Food or Water

Bovine spongiform encephalopathy ("mad cow disease"), *Escherichia coli*, diarrhea, Hepatitis A, Typhoid Fever

Person-to-Person Contact

Hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS

For more information about these and other diseases, please check the Diseases (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/diseases.htm>) section and the Health Topics A-Z (<http://www.cdc.gov/health/diseases.htm>).

Note:

Denmark is located in the Western Europe health region.

Sources:

The Center for Disease Control Destinations Website:

<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/destinat.htm>

Chapter 6

Environmental Overview

Environmental Issues

General Overview:

Denmark was the first industrialized country to institute an environment policy, as well as a government ministry to manage and regulate environmental issues. Denmark established a strict program aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide. In addition, the Danish government authorized the development of the original technologies to convert toxic wastes and chemicals to clean energy sources.

Current Issues:

- air pollution, principally from vehicle and power plant emissions
- nitrogen and phosphorus pollution of the North Sea
- pollution of drinking and surface water from animal wastes and pesticides

Total Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Mtc):

18.1

Country Rank (GHG output):

62nd

Natural Hazards:

- Flooding

Special Entry:

Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen

In November 2009, leaders at the summit of the 21-country Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation in Singapore discussed a compromise agreement on climate change ahead of the global gathering set to take place in December 2009 in Copenhagen. At stake was an international accord to function as the successor treaty to Kyoto, which would also be aimed at reducing carbon emissions. At that time, there was some suggestion that while a "politically binding" document could be forged to serve as the interim climate change agreement, there was not enough global consensus to form a legally binding agreement. Instead, such an objective might have to wait until the next climate talks in 2010 in Mexico City.

In December 2009, the United Nations summit on climate change opened in the Danish capital of Copenhagen. Delegates from more than 190 countries were in attendance, and approximately 100 world leaders including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and United States President Barack Obama were expected to attend. Accordingly, such high level participation was expected to raise the stakes for a successful summit.

Despite earlier fears that little concurrence would come from the conference, effectively pushing significant actions forward to a 2010 conference in Mexico City, negotiators were now reporting that the talks were productive and several key countries, such as South Africa, were now pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The two main issues that could yet lead to cleavages were questions of agreement between the developed and the developing world on targets, as well as the overall effectiveness of proposals in seriously addressing the perils of climate change. That being said, there was enormous concurrence on the significance of the stakes with an editorial on the matter of climate change being published in 56 newspapers in 45 countries. That editorial warned that without global action, climate change would "ravage our planet." Meanwhile, a global survey taken by Globescan showed that concern over global warming had exponentially increased from 1998 -- when only 20 percent of respondents believed it to be a serious problem -- to 64 percent in 2009.

On Dec. 9, 2009, four countries -- the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico and Norway -- presented a document outlining ideas for raising and managing billions of dollars, which would be intended to help vulnerable countries dealing with the perils of climate change. The "green fund" would fall under the rubric of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, for which developed countries have been committed to quantifying their emission reduction targets, and also to providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

The United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico and Norway also called for the creation of a new legal treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol. This new treaty, which could go into force in 2012, would focus largely on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. Such a move would be a departure from the structure of the Kyoto Protocol, which contained emissions targets for industrialized countries due to the prevailing view that developed countries had a particular historic responsibility to be accountable for climate change. More recently, it has become apparent that

substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions demanded by scientists would only come to pass with the participation also of significant developing nation states, such as China and India. However, China -- as the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter -- was demanding that developed and wealthy countries in Copenhagen deliver a real agreement on climate change by delivering on their promises to reduce carbon emissions and provide financial support for developing countries to adapt to global warming.

China aside, attention was also on India -- another major player in the developing world and a country with an industrializing economy that was impacting the environment. At issue was the Indian government's decision to set a carbon intensity target, which would slow emissions growth by up to 25 percent by the 2020 deadline. This strong position was resisted by some elements in India, even compelling that country's top environmental negotiator's refusal to travel to Copenhagen in protest of the government's newly-announced stance.

China and India were joined by Brazil and South Africa in the crafting of a draft document calling for a new global climate treaty to be completed by June 2010. Likewise, Tuvalu demanded that legally binding agreements emerge from Copenhagen. Its proposal was supported by many of the vulnerable countries, from small island states and sub-Saharan Africa, all of whom warned of the catastrophic impact of climate change on their citizens. But despite such impassioned pleas and irrespective of warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that the rise in sea level from melting polar ice caps would deleteriously affect low-lying atolls such as Tuvalu and Kiribati in the Pacific, and the Maldives in the Indian Ocean, the oil-giant Saudi Arabia was able to block this move. Of concern has been the realization that there was insufficient time to find concurrence on a full legal treaty, which would leave countries only with a politically-binding text by the time the summit at Copenhagen closed.

Meanwhile, within the developed countries, yet another power struggle was brewing. The European Union warned it would only agree to raise its target of 20 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions to 30 percent if the United States demonstrated that it would do more to reduce its own emissions.

The division between developed and developing countries in Copenhagen reached new heights on Dec. 14, 2009, when some of the poor and less developed countries launched a boycott at the summit. The move, which was spurred by African countries but backed by China and India, appeared to be geared toward redirecting attention and primary responsibility to the wealthier and more industrialized countries. The impasse was resolved after the wealthier and more industrialized countries offered assurances that they did not intend on shirking from their commitments to reducing greenhouse gases. As a result, the participating countries ceased the boycott.

Outside the actual summit, thousands of protestors had gathered to demand crucial global

warming, leading to clashes between police and demonstrators elsewhere in the Danish capital city. There were reports of scattered violence across Copenhagen and more than 1,000 people were arrested.

Nevertheless, by the second week of the climate change summit, hopes of forging a strong deal were eroding as developed and developing nations remained deadlocked on sharing cuts in greenhouse gases, and particularly on the matters of financing and temperature goals.

By the close of the summit, the difficult process eventually resulted in some consensus being cultivated. A draft text called for \$100 billion a year by 2020 to assist poor nations cope with climate change, while aiming to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The deal also included specific targets for developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and called for reductions by developing countries as a share of their economies. Also included in the agreement was a mechanism to verify compliance. This draft would stand as an interim agreement, with a legally-binding international pact unlikely to materialize until 2010. In this way, the summit in Copenhagen failed to achieve its central objective, which was to negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions.

Environmental Policy

Regulation and Jurisdiction:

The regulation and protection of the environment in Denmark is under the jurisdiction of the following:

- Ministry of the Environment and Energy
- Danish Energy Agency
- Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland
- Miljøstyrelsen (National Agency of Environmental Protection)
- Naturbeskyttelsesrådet (Nature Preservation Council)

Major Non-Governmental Organizations:

- Danmarks Naturfredningsforening (Danish Society for the Conservation of Nature)

- International Association of Zoo Educators (IZE) at the Copenhagen Zoo
- ICBP/IWRB Grebe Research Group
- International Solid Wastes and Public Cleansing Association (ISWA)
- International Youth Federation for Environmental Studies and Conservation (IYF)
- World Assembly of Youth (WAY)
- Verdensnaturfonden-Denmark (the Worldwide Fund for Nature)

International Environmental Accords:

Party to:

- Air Pollution
- Air Pollution-Nitrogen Oxides
- Air Pollution-Persistent Organic Pollutants
- Air Pollution-Sulfur 85
- Air Pollution-Sulfur 94
- Air Pollution-Volatile Organic Compounds
- Antarctic Treaty
- Biodiversity
- Climate Change
- Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol
- Desertification
- Endangered Species
- Environmental Modification
- Hazardous Wastes
- Law of the Sea
- Marine Dumping
- Marine Life Conservation
- Nuclear Test Ban
- Ozone Layer Protection
- Ship Pollution
- Tropical Timber 83
- Tropical Timber 94
- Wetlands
- Whaling

Signed but not ratified:

- Antarctic-Environmental Protocol

Kyoto Protocol Status (year ratified):

2002

Greenhouse Gas Ranking

Greenhouse Gas Ranking

GHG Emissions Rankings

Country Rank	Country
1	United States
2	China
4	Russia
5	Japan
6	India
7	Germany

8	United Kingdom
9	Canada
10	Korea, South
11	Italy
12	Mexico
13	France
14	South Africa
15	Iran
16	Indonesia
17	Australia
18	Spain
19	Brazil
20	Saudi Arabia
21	Ukraine
22	Poland
23	Taiwan
24	Turkey
25	Thailand

26	Netherlands
27	Kazakhstan
28	Malaysia
29	Egypt
30	Venezuela
31	Argentina
32	Uzbekistan
33	Czech Republic
34	Belgium
35	Pakistan
36	Romania
37	Greece
38	United Arab Emirates
39	Algeria
40	Nigeria
41	Austria
42	Iraq
43	Finland

44	Philippines
45	Vietnam
46	Korea, North
47	Israel
48	Portugal
49	Colombia
50	Belarus
51	Kuwait
52	Hungary
53	Chile
54	Denmark
55	Serbia & Montenegro
56	Sweden
57	Syria
58	Libya
59	Bulgaria
60	Singapore
61	Switzerland

62	Ireland
63	Turkmenistan
64	Slovakia
65	Bangladesh
66	Morocco
67	New Zealand
68	Oman
69	Qatar
70	Azerbaijan
71	Norway
72	Peru
73	Cuba
74	Ecuador
75	Trinidad & Tobago
76	Croatia
77	Tunisia
78	Dominican Republic
79	Lebanon

80	Estonia
81	Yemen
82	Jordan
83	Slovenia
84	Bahrain
85	Angola
86	Bosnia & Herzegovina
87	Lithuania
88	Sri Lanka
89	Zimbabwe
90	Bolivia
91	Jamaica
92	Guatemala
93	Luxembourg
94	Myanmar
95	Sudan
96	Kenya
97	Macedonia

98	Mongolia
99	Ghana
100	Cyprus
101	Moldova
102	Latvia
103	El Salvador
104	Brunei
105	Honduras
106	Cameroon
107	Panama
108	Costa Rica
109	Cote d'Ivoire
110	Kyrgyzstan
111	Tajikistan
112	Ethiopia
113	Senegal
114	Uruguay
115	Gabon

116	Albania
117	Nicaragua
118	Botswana
119	Paraguay
120	Tanzania
121	Georgia
122	Armenia
123	Congo, RC
124	Mauritius
125	Nepal
126	Mauritius
127	Nepal
128	Mauritania
129	Malta
130	Papua New Guinea
131	Zambia
132	Suriname
133	Iceland

134	Togo
135	Benin
136	Uganda
137	Bahamas
138	Haiti
139	Congo, DRC
140	Guyana
141	Mozambique
142	Guinea
143	Equatorial Guinea
144	Laos
145	Barbados
146	Niger
147	Fiji
148	Burkina Faso
149	Malawi
150	Swaziland
151	Belize

152	Afghanistan
153	Sierra Leone
154	Eritrea
155	Rwanda
156	Mali
157	Seychelles
158	Cambodia
159	Liberia
160	Bhutan
161	Maldives
162	Antigua & Barbuda
163	Djibouti
164	Saint Lucia
165	Gambia
166	Guinea-Bissau
167	Central African Republic
168	Palau
169	Burundi

170	Grenada
171	Lesotho
172	Saint Vincent & the Grenadines
173	Solomon Islands
174	Samoa
175	Cape Verde
176	Nauru
177	Dominica
178	Saint Kitts & Nevis
179	Chad
180	Tonga
181	Sao Tome & Principe
182	Comoros
183	Vanuatu
185	Kiribati
Not Ranked	Andorra
Not Ranked	East Timor
Not Ranked	Holy See

Not Ranked	Hong Kong
Not Ranked	Liechtenstein
Not Ranked	Marshall Islands
Not Ranked	Micronesia
Not Ranked	Monaco
Not Ranked	San Marino
Not Ranked	Somalia
Not Ranked	Tuvalu

* European Union is ranked 3rd

Cook Islands are ranked 184th

Niue is ranked 186th

Global Environmental Snapshot

Introduction

The countries of the world face many environmental challenges in common. Nevertheless, the nature and intensity of problem vary from region to region, as do various countries' respective capacities, in terms of affluence and infrastructure, to remediate threats to environmental quality.

Consciousness of perils affecting the global environment came to the fore in the last third or so of the 20th century has continued to intensify well into the new millennium. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, considerable environmental progress has been made at the level of institutional developments, international cooperation accords, and public participation. Approximately two-dozen international environmental protection accords with global implications have been promulgated since the late 1970s under auspices of the United Nations and other

international organizations, together with many additional regional agreements. Attempts to address and rectify environmental problems take the form of legal frameworks, economic instruments, environmentally sound technologies and cleaner production processes as well as conservation efforts. Environmental impact assessments have increasingly been applied across the globe.

Environmental degradation affects the quality, or aesthetics, of human life, but it also displays potential to undermine conditions necessary for the sustainability of human life. Attitudes toward the importance of environmental protection measures reflect ambivalence derived from this bifurcation. On one hand, steps such as cleaning up pollution, dedicating parkland, and suchlike, are seen as embellishments undertaken by wealthy societies already assured they can successfully perform those functions deemed, ostensibly, more essential-for instance, public health and education, employment and economic development. On the other hand, in poorer countries, activities causing environmental damage-for instance the land degradation effects of unregulated logging, slash-and-burn agriculture, overgrazing, and mining-can seem justified insofar as such activities provide incomes and livelihoods.

Rapid rates of resource depletion are associated with poverty and high population growth, themselves correlated, whereas consumption per capita is much higher in the most developed countries, despite these nations' recent progress in energy efficiency and conservation. It is impossible to sequester the global environmental challenge from related economic, social and political challenges.

First-tier industrialized countries have recently achieved measurable decreases in environmental pollution and the rate of resource depletion, a success not matched in middle income and developing countries. It is believed that the discrepancy is due to the fact that industrialized countries have more developed infrastructures to accommodate changes in environmental policy, to apply environmental technologies, and to invest in public education. The advanced industrialized countries incur relatively lower costs in alleviating environmental problems, in comparison to developing countries, since in the former even extensive environmental programs represent a rather minuscule percentage of total expenditures. Conversely, budget constraints, lagged provision of basic services to the population, and other factors such as debt service and militarization may preclude institution of minimal environmental protection measures in the poorest countries.

A synopsis for the current situation facing each region of the world follows:

Regional Synopsis: Africa

The African continent, the world's second-largest landmass, encompasses many of the world's least developed countries. By global standards, urbanization is comparatively low but rising at a rapid rate. More heavily industrialized areas at the northern and southern ends of the continent

experience the major share of industrial pollution. In other regions the most serious environmental problems typically stem from inefficient subsistence farming methods and other forms of land degradation, which have affected an increasingly extensive area under pressure of a widely impoverished, fast-growing population. Africa's distribution of natural resources is very uneven. It is the continent at greatest risk of desertification, especially in the Sahel region at the edge of the Sahara but also in other dry-range areas. Yet at the same time, Africa also harbors some of the earth's richest and most diverse biological zones.

Key Points:

Up to half a billion hectares of African land are moderately to severely degraded, an occurrence reflecting short-fallow shifting cultivation and overgrazing as well as a climatic pattern of recurrent droughts.

Soil degradation is severe along the expanse directly south of the Sahara, from the west to the east coasts. Parts of southern Africa, central-eastern Africa, and the neighboring island of Madagascar suffer from serious soil degradation as well.

Africa contains about 17 percent of the world's forest cover, concentrated in the tropical belt of the continent. Many of the forests, however, are severely depleted, with an estimated 70 percent showing some degree of degradation.

Population growth has resulted in continuing loss of arable land, as inefficient subsistence farming techniques affect increasingly extensive areas. Efforts to implement settled, sustainable agriculture have met with some recent success, but much further progress in this direction is needed. Especially in previously uninhabited forestlands, concern over deforestation is intensifying.

By contrast, the African savanna remains the richest grassland in the world, supporting a substantial concentration of animal and plant life. Wildlife parks are sub-Saharan Africa's greatest tourist attraction, and with proper management-giving local people a stake in conservation and controlling the pace of development-could greatly enhance African economies.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of northern, southern and eastern Africa are currently threatened, while the biological diversity in Mauritania and Madagascar is even further compromised with over 20 percent of the mammal species in these two countries currently under threat.

With marine catch trends increasing from 500,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 3,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Water resource vulnerability is a major concern in northeastern Africa, and a moderate concern across the rest of the continent. An exception is central Africa, which has plentiful water supplies.

Many Africans lack adequate access to resources, not just (if at all) because the resources are unevenly distributed geographically, but also through institutional failures such as faulty land tenure systems or political upheaval. The quality of Africa's natural resources, despite their spotty distribution, is in fact extraordinarily rich. The infrastructure needed to protect and benefit from this natural legacy, however, is largely lacking.

Regional Synopsis: Asia and the Pacific

Asia-earth's largest landmass-and the many large and nearly innumerable small islands lying off its Pacific shore display extraordinarily contrasting landscapes, levels of development, and degrees of environmental stress. In the classification used here, the world's smallest continent, Australia, is also included in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Asia-Pacific region is home to 9 of the world's 14 largest urban areas, and as energy use for utilities, industry and transport increases in developing economies, urban centers are subject to worsening air quality. Intense population density in places such as Bangladesh or Hong Kong is the quintessential image many people have of Asia, yet vast desert areas such as the Gobi and the world's highest mountain range, the Himalayas, span the continent as well. Forested areas in Southeast Asia and the islands of Indonesia and the Philippines were historically prized for their tropical hardwood, but in many places this resource is now severely depleted. Low-lying small island states are extremely vulnerable to the effects of global warming, both rising sea levels and an anticipated increase in cyclones.

Key Points:

Asian timber reserves are forecast to be depleted in the next 40 years. Loss of natural forest is irreversible in some areas, but plantation programs to restore tree cover may ameliorate a portion of the resulting land degradation.

Increased usage of fossil fuels in China and other parts of southern Asia is projected to result in a marked increase in emissions, especially in regard to carbon dioxide. The increased usage of energy has led to a marked upsurge in air pollution across the region.

Acidification is an emerging problem regionally, with sulfur dioxide emissions expected to triple by 2010 if the current growth rate is sustained. China, Thailand, India, and Korea seem to be suffering from particularly high rates of acid deposition. By contrast, Asia's most highly developed economy, Japan, has effected substantial improvements in its environmental indicators.

Water pollution in the Pacific is an urgent concern since up to 70 percent of the water discharged into the region's waters receives no treatment. Additionally, the disposal of solid wastes, in like manner, poses a major threat in a region with many areas of high population density.

The Asia-Pacific region is the largest expanse of the world's land that is adversely affected by soil degradation.

The region around Australia reportedly suffers the largest degree of ozone depletion.

The microstates of the Pacific suffer land loss due to global warming, and the consequent rise in the levels of ocean waters. A high-emissions scenario and anthropogenic climate impact at the upper end of the currently predicted range would probably force complete evacuation of the lowest-elevation islands sometime in this century.

The species-rich reefs surrounding Southeast Asia are highly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of coastal development, land-based pollution, over-fishing and exploitative fishing methods, as well as marine pollution from oil spills and other activities.

With marine catch trends increasing from 5,000,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 20,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of China and south-east Asia are currently threatened, while the biological diversity in India, Japan, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia and parts of Malaysia is even further compromised with over 20 percent of the mammal species in these countries currently under threat.

Water resource vulnerability is a serious concern in areas surrounding the Indian subcontinent.

Regional Synopsis: Central Asia

The Central Asian republics, formerly in the Soviet Union, experience a range of environmental problems as the result of poorly executed agricultural, industrial, and nuclear programs during the Soviet era. Relatively low population densities are the norm, especially since upon the breakup of the U.S.S.R. many ethnic Russians migrated back to European Russia. In this largely semi-arid region, drought, water shortages, and soil salinization pose major challenges.

Key Points:

The use of agricultural pesticides, such as DDT and other chemicals, has contributed to the contamination of soil and groundwater throughout the region.

Land and soil degradation, and in particular, increased salinization, is mostly attributable to faulty irrigation practices.

Significant desertification is also a problem in the region.

Air pollution is prevalent, mostly due to use of low octane automobile fuel.

Industrial pollution of the Caspian Sea and the Aral Sea, as a result of industrial effluents as well as mining and metal production, presents a challenge to the countries bordering these bodies of water.

One of the most severe environmental problems in the region is attributable to the several billion tons of hazardous materials stored in landfills across Central Asia.

Uzbekistan's particular problem involves the contraction of the Aral Sea, which has decreased in size by a third, as a consequence of river diversions and poor irrigation practices. The effect has been the near-total biological destruction of that body of water.

Kazakhstan, as a consequence of being the heartland of the former Soviet Union's nuclear program, has incurred a high of cancerous malignancies, biogenetic abnormalities and radioactive contamination.

While part of the Soviet Union, the republics in the region experienced very high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, as a consequence of rapid industrialization using cheap but dirty energy sources, especially coal.

By contrast, however, there have recently been substantial reductions in the level of greenhouse gas emissions, especially those attributable to coal burning, with further decreases anticipated over the next decade. These changes are partially due to the use of cleaner energy technologies, such as natural gas, augmented by governmental commitment to improving environmental standards.

Regional Synopsis: Europe

Western Europe underwent dramatic transformation of its landscape, virtually eliminating large-scale natural areas, during an era of rapid industrialization, which intensified upon its recovery from World War II. In Eastern Europe and European Russia, intensive land development has been less prevalent, so that some native forests and other natural areas remain. Air and water pollution from use of dirty fuels and industrial effluents, however, are more serious environmental problems in

Eastern than in Western Europe, though recent trends show improvement in many indicators. Acid rain has inflicted heavy environmental damage across much of Europe, particularly on forests. Europe and North America are the only regions in which water usage for industry exceeds that for agriculture, although in Mediterranean nations agriculture is the largest water consumer.

Key Points:

Europe contributes 36 percent of the world's chlorofluorocarbon emissions, 30 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, and 25 percent of sulfur dioxide emissions.

Sulfur and nitrogen oxide emissions are the cause of 30 to 50 percent of Central and Eastern Europe's deforestation.

Acid rain has been an environmental concern for decades and continues to be a challenge in parts of Western Europe.

Overexploitation of up to 60 percent of Europe's groundwater presents a problem in industrial and urban areas.

With marine catch trends increasing from 5,000,000 metric tons in the 1950s to over 20,000,000 metric tons by 2000, there was increasing concern about the reduction in fisheries and marine life, should this trend continue unabated.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of western Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia are currently threatened, while the biological diversity on the Iberian Peninsula is even further compromised with over 40 percent of the mammal species in this region currently under threat. As a result, there has been a 10 percent increase in protected areas of Europe.

A major environmental issue for Europe involves the depletion of various already endangered or threatened species, and most significantly, the decline of fish stocks. Some estimates suggest that up to 50 percent of the continent's fish species may be considered endangered species. Coastal fisheries have been over-harvested, resulting in catch limits or moratoriums on many commercially important fish species.

Fortunately, in the last few years, these policies have started to yield measurable results with decreasing trends in marine fish catch.

Recently, most European countries have adopted cleaner production technologies, and alternative methods of waste disposal, including recycling.

The countries of Eastern Europe have made air quality a major environmental priority. This is

exemplified by the Russian Federation's addition to the 1995 "Berlin Mandate" (transnational legislation based on resolutions of the Rio Earth Summit) compelling nations to promote "carbon sinks" to absorb greenhouse gases.

On a relative basis, when compared with the degree of industrial emissions emitted by many Eastern European countries until the late 1980s, there has been some marked increase in air quality in the region, as obsolete plants are closed and a transition to cleaner fuels and more efficient energy use takes place.

Regional Synopsis: The Middle and Near East

Quite possibly, the Middle East will exemplify the adage that, as the 20th century was a century fixated on oil, the 21st century will be devoted to critical decisions about water. Many (though far from all) nations in the Middle East rank among those countries with the largest oil and gas reserves, but water resources are relatively scarce throughout this predominantly dry region. Effects of global warming may cause moderately high elevation areas that now typically receive winter "snowpack" to experience mainly rain instead, which would further constrain dry-season water availability. The antiquities and religious shrines of the region render it a great magnet for tourism, which entails considerable economic growth potential but also intensifies stresses on the environment.

Key Points:

Water resource vulnerability is a serious concern across the entire region. The increased usage of, and further demand for water, has exacerbated long-standing water scarcity in the region. For instance, river diversions and industrial salt works have caused the Dead Sea to shrink by one-third from its original surface area, with further declines expected.

The oil industry in the region contributes to water pollution in the Persian Gulf, as a result of oil spills, which have averaged 1.2 million barrels of oil spilt per year (some sources suggest that this figure is understated). The consequences are severe because even after oil spills have been cleaned up, environmental damage to the food webs and ecosystems of marine life will persist for a prolonged period.

The region's coastal zone is considered one of the most fragile and endangered ecosystems of the world. Land reclamation, shoreline construction, discharge of industrial effluents, and tourism (such as diving in the Red Sea) contribute to widespread coastal damage.

Significant numbers of mammal species in parts of the Middle East are currently threatened.

Since the 1980s, 11 percent of the region's natural forest has been depleted.

Regional Synopsis: Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin American and Caribbean region is characterized by exceedingly diverse landforms that have generally seen high rates of population growth and economic development in recent decades. The percentage of inhabitants residing in urban areas is quite high at 73.4 percent; the region includes the megacities of Mexico City, Sao Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro. The region also includes the world's second-highest mountain range, the Andes; significant expanses of desert and grassland; the coral reefs of the Caribbean Sea; and the world's largest contiguous tropical forest in the Amazon basin. Threats to the latter from subsistence and commercial farming, mineral exploitation and timbering are well publicized. Nevertheless, of eight countries worldwide that still retain at least 70 percent of their original forest cover, six are in Latin America. The region accounts for nearly half (48.3 percent) of the world's greenhouse gas emissions derived from land clearing, but as yet a comparatively minuscule share (4.3 percent) of such gases from industrial sources.

Key Points:

Although Latin America is one of the most biologically diverse regions of the world, this biodiversity is highly threatened, as exemplified by the projected extinction of up to 100,000 species in the next few decades. Much of this loss will be concentrated in the Amazon area, although the western coastline of South America will also suffer significant depletion of biological diversity. The inventory of rainforest species with potentially useful commercial or medical applications is incomplete, but presumed to include significant numbers of such species that may become extinct before they are discovered and identified.

Up to 50 percent of the region's grazing land has lost its soil fertility as a result of soil erosion, salinization, alkalinization and overgrazing.

The Caribbean Sea, the Atlantic Ocean, and the Pacific Ocean have all been contaminated by agricultural wastes, which are discharged into streams that flow into these major waters. Water pollution derived from phosphorous, nitrates and pesticides adversely affects fish stocks, contributes to oxygen depletion and fosters overgrowth of aquatic vegetation. Marine life will continue to be severely compromised as a result of these conditions.

Due to industrial development in the region, many beaches of eastern Latin America and the Caribbean suffer from tar deposits.

Most cities in the region lack adequate sewage treatment facilities, and rapid migration of the rural

poor into the cities is widening the gap between current infrastructure capacity and the much greater level needed to provide satisfactory basic services.

The rainforest region of the Amazon Basin suffers from dangerously high levels of deforestation, which may be a significant contributory factor to global warming or "the greenhouse effect." In the late 1990s and into the new millennium, the rate of deforestation was around 20 million acres of rainforest being destroyed annually.

Deforestation on the steep rainforest slopes of Caribbean islands contributes to soil erosion and landslides, both of which then result in heavy sedimentation of nearby river systems. When these sedimented rivers drain into the sea and coral reefs, they poison the coral tissues, which are vital to the maintenance of the reef ecosystem. The result is marine degradation and nutrient depletion. Jamaica's coral reefs have never quite recovered from the effects of marine degradation.

The Southern Cone of Latin America (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay) suffers the effects of greatly increased ultraviolet-B radiation, as a consequence of more intense ozone depletion in the southern hemisphere.

Water resource vulnerability is an increasingly major concern in the northwestern portion of South America.

Regional Synopsis: North America

North American nations, in particular the United States and Canada, rank among the world's most highly developed industrial economies—a fact which has generated significant pollution problems, but also financial resources and skills that have enabled many problems to be corrected. Although efforts to promote energy efficiency, recycling, and suchlike have helped ease strains on the environment in a part of the world where per capita consumption levels are high, sprawling land development patterns and recent preferences many households have demonstrated for larger vehicles have offset these advances.

Meanwhile, a large portion of North America's original forest cover has been lost, though in many cases replaced by productive second-growth woodland. In recent years, attitudes toward best use of the region's remaining natural or scenic areas seem to be shifting toward recreation and preservation and away from resource extraction. With increasing attention on the energy scarcity in the United States, however, there is speculation that this shift may be short-lived. Indeed, the energy shortage on the west coast of the United States and associated calls for energy exploration, indicate a possible retrenchment toward resource extraction. At the same time, however, it has also served to highlight the need for energy conservation as well as alternative energy sources.

Despite generally successful anti-pollution efforts, various parts of the region continue to suffer significant air, water and land degradation from industrial, vehicular, and agricultural emissions and runoff. Mexico, as a middle-income country, displays environmental problems characteristic of a developing economy, including forest depletion, pollution from inefficient industrial processes and dirty fuels, and lack of sufficient waste-treatment infrastructure.

Key Points:

Because of significantly greater motor vehicle usage in the United States (U.S.) than in the rest of the world, the U.S. contribution of urban air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, especially carbon dioxide, is disproportionately high in relation to its population.

Acid rain is an enduring issue of contention in the northeastern part of the United States, on the border with Canada.

Mexico's urban areas suffer extreme air pollution from carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide, and other toxic air pollutants. Emissions controls on vehicles are in their infancy, compared to analogous regulations in the U.S.

The cities of Mexico, including those on the U.S. border, also discharge large quantities of untreated or poorly treated sewage, though officials are currently planning infrastructure upgrades.

Deforestation is noteworthy in various regions of the U.S., especially along the northwest coastline. Old growth forests have been largely removed, but in the northeastern and upper midwestern sections of the United States, evidence suggests that the current extent of tree cover probably surpasses the figure for the beginning of the 20th century.

Extreme weather conditions in the last few years have resulted in a high level of soil erosion along the north coast of California; in addition, the coastline itself has shifted substantially due to soil erosion and concomitant landslides.

Agricultural pollution-including nitrate contamination of well water, nutrient runoff to waterways, and pesticide exposure-is significant in various areas. Noteworthy among affected places are California's Central Valley, extensive stretches of the Midwest, and land in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Inland waterways, especially around the Great Lakes, have substantially improved their water quality, due to concentrated efforts at reducing water pollution by governmental, commercial and community representatives. Strict curbs on industrial effluents and near-universal implementation of sewage treatment are the chief factors responsible for this improvement.

A major environmental issue for Canada and the United States involves the depletion of various already endangered or threatened species, and most significantly, the decline of fish stocks. Coastal fisheries have been over-harvested, resulting in catch limits or moratoriums on many commercially important fish species. In the last few years, these policies have started to yield measurable results with decreasing trends in marine fish catch.

Due to the decay of neighboring ecosystems in Central America and the Caribbean, the sea surrounding Florida has become increasingly sedimented, contributing to marine degradation, nutrient depletion of the ecosystem, depletion of fish stocks, and diseases to coral species in particular.

Polar Regions

Key Points:

The significant rise in sea level, amounting 10 to 25 centimeters in the last 100 years, is due to the melting of the Arctic ice sheets, and is attributed to global warming.

The Antarctic suffers from a significant ozone hole, first detected in 1976. By 1985, a British scientific team reported a 40 percent decrease in usual regeneration rates of the ozone. Because a sustained increase in the amount of ultraviolet-B radiation would have adverse consequences upon all planetary life, recent environmental measures have been put into effect, aimed at reversing ozone depletion. These measures are projected to garner significant results by 2050.

Due to air and ocean currents, the Arctic is a sink for toxic releases originally discharged thousands of miles away. Arctic wildlife and Canada's Inuit population have higher bodily levels of contaminants such as PCB and dioxin than those found in people and animals in much of the rest of the world.

Global Environmental Concepts

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1. Global Warming and Greenhouse Gases

The Greenhouse Effect:

In the early 19th century, the French physicist, Jean Fourier, contended that the earth's atmosphere functions in much the same way as the glass of a greenhouse, thus describing what is now understood as the "greenhouse effect." Put simply, the "greenhouse effect" confines some of the sun's energy to the earth, preserving some of the planet's warmth, rather than allowing it to flow back into space. In so doing, all kinds of life forms can flourish on earth. Thus, the "greenhouse effect" is necessary to sustain and preserve life forms and ecosystems on earth.

In the late 19th century, a Swedish chemist, Svante Arrhenius, noticed that human activities, such as the burning of coal and other fossil fuels for heat, and the removal of forested lands for urban development, led to higher concentrations of greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide and methane, in the atmosphere. This increase in the levels of greenhouse gases was believed to advance the "greenhouse effect" exponentially, and might be related to the trend in global warming.

In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, after industrial development took place on a large scale and the total human population burgeoned simultaneously with industrialization, the resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions could, many scientists believe, be significant enough to have some bearing on climate. Indeed, many studies in recent years support the idea that there is a linkage between human activities and global warming, although there is less consensus on the extent to which this linkage may be relevant to environmental concerns.

That said, some scientists have argued that temperature fluctuations have existed throughout the evolution of the planet. Indeed, Dr. S. Fred Singer, the president of the Science and Environment Policy Project has noted that 3,000-year-old geological records of ocean sediment reveal changes in the surface temperature of the ocean. Hence, it is possible that climate variability is merely a normal fact of the planet's evolution. Yet even skeptics as to anthropogenic factors concur that any substantial changes in global temperatures would likely have an effect upon the earth's ecosystems, as well as the life forms that inhabit them.

The Relationship Between Global Warming and Greenhouse Gases:

A large number of climatologists believe that the increase in atmospheric concentrations of "greenhouse gas emissions," mostly a consequence of human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, are contributing to global warming. The cause notwithstanding, the planet has reportedly warmed 0.3°C to 0.6°C over the last century. Indeed, each year during the 1990s was one of the very warmest in the 20th century, with the mean surface temperature for 1999 being the fifth warmest on record since 1880.

In early 2000, a panel of atmospheric scientists for the National Research Council concluded in a report that global warming was, indeed, a reality. While the panel, headed by Chairman John Wallace, a professor of atmospheric sciences at the University of Washington, stated that it

remained unclear whether human activities have contributed to the earth's increasing temperatures, it was apparent that global warming exists.

In 2001, following a request for further study by the incoming Bush administration in the [United States](#), the National Academy of Sciences again confirmed that global warming had been in existence for the last 20 years. The study also projected an increase in temperature between 2.5 degrees and 10.4 degrees Fahrenheit by the year 2100. Furthermore, the study found the leading cause of global warming to be emissions of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels, and it noted that greenhouse gas accumulations in the earth's atmosphere was a result of human activities.

Within the scientific community, the controversy regarding has centered on the difference between surface air and upper air temperatures. Information collected since 1979 suggests that while the earth's surface temperature has increased by about a degree in the past century, the atmospheric temperature five miles above the earth's surface has indicated very little increase. Nevertheless, the panel stated that this discrepancy in temperature between surface and upper air does not invalidate the conclusion that global warming is taking place. Further, the panel noted that natural events, such as volcanic eruptions, can decrease the temperature in the upper atmosphere.

The major consequences of global warming potentially include the melting of the polar ice caps, which, in turn, contribute to the rise in sea levels. Many islands across the globe have already experienced a measurable loss of land as a result. Because global warming may increase the rate of evaporation, increased precipitation, in the form of stronger and more frequent storm systems, is another potential outcome. Other consequences of global warming may include the introduction and proliferation of new infectious diseases, loss of arable land (referred to as "desertification"), destructive changes to existing ecosystems, loss of biodiversity and the isolation of species, and concomitant adverse changes in the quality of human life.

International Policy Development in Regard to Global Warming:

Regardless of what the precise nature of the relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming may be, it seems that there is some degree of a connection between the phenomena. Any substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends will likely involve systematic changes in industrial operations, the use of advanced energy sources and technologies, as well as global cooperation in implementing and regulating these transformations.

In this regard, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stipulated the following objectives:

1. To stabilize "greenhouse gas" concentrations within the atmosphere, in such a manner that would preclude hazardous anthropogenic intervention into the existing biosphere and ecosystems of the world. This stabilization process would facilitate the natural adaptation of ecosystems to

changes in climate.

2. To ensure and enable sustainable development and food production on a global scale.

*** See section on "International Environmental Agreements and Associations" for information related to international policies related to limiting greenhouse gases and controlling climate change emanating from historic summits at Kyoto, Copenhagen, Doha, and Paris. ***

2. Air Pollution

Long before global warming reared its head as a significant issue, those concerned about the environment and public health noted the deleterious effects of human-initiated combustion upon the atmosphere. Killer smogs from coal burning triggered acute health emergencies in London and other places. At a lower level of intensity motor vehicle, power plant, and industrial emissions impaired long-range visibility and probably had some chronic adverse consequences on the respiratory systems of persons breathing such air.

In time, scientists began associating the sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides released from coal burning with significant acid deposition in the atmosphere, eventually falling as "acid rain." This phenomenon has severely degraded forestlands, especially in Europe and a few parts of the [United States](#). It has also impaired some aquatic ecosystems and eaten away the surface of some human artifacts, such as marble monuments. Scrubber technology and conversion to cleaner fuels have enabled the level of industrial production to remain at least constant while significantly reducing acid deposition. Technologies aimed at cleaning the air and curtailing acid rain, soot, and smog may, nonetheless, boomerang as the perils of global warming become increasingly serious. In brief, these particulates act as sort of a sun shade -- comparable to the effect of volcanic eruptions on the upper atmosphere whereby periods of active volcanism correlate with temporarily cooler weather conditions. Thus, while the carbon dioxide releases that are an inevitable byproduct of combustion continue, by scrubbing the atmosphere of pollutants, an industrial society opens itself to greater insolation (penetration of the sun's rays and consequent heating), and consequently, it is likely to experience a correspondingly greater rise in ambient temperatures.

The health benefits of removing the sources of acid rain and smog are indisputable, and no one would recommend a return to previous conditions. Nevertheless, the problematic climatic effects of continually increasing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases pose a major global environmental challenge, not as yet addressed adequately.

3. Ozone Depletion

The stratospheric ozone layer functions to prevent ultraviolet radiation from reaching the earth. Normally, stratospheric ozone is systematically disintegrated and regenerated through natural photochemical processes. The stratospheric ozone layer, however, has been depleted unnaturally as a result of anthropogenic (man-made) chemicals, most especially chlorine and bromide compounds such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), halons, and various industrial chemicals in the form of solvents, refrigerants, foaming agents, aerosol propellants, fire retardants, and fumigants. Ozone depletion is of concern because it permits a greater degree of ultraviolet-B radiation to reach the earth, which then increases the incidences of cancerous malignancies, cataracts, and human immune deficiencies. In addition, even in small doses, ozone depletion affects the ecosystem by disturbing food chains, agriculture, fisheries and other forms of biological diversity.

Transnational policies enacted to respond to the dangers of ozone depletion include the 1985 Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. The Montreal Protocol was subsequently amended in London in 1990, Copenhagen in 1992 and Vienna in 1995. By 1996, 155 countries had ratified the Montreal Protocol, which sets out a time schedule for the reduction (and eventual elimination) of ozone depleting substances (OPS), and bans exports and imports of ODS from and to non-participant countries.

In general, the Protocol stipulates that developed countries must eliminate halon consumption by 1994 and CFC consumption by 1996, while developing countries must eliminate these substances by 2010. Consumption of methyl bromide, which is used as a fumigant, was to be frozen at the 1995 in developed countries, and fully eliminated in 2010, while developing countries are to freeze consumption by 2002, based on average 1995-1998 consumption levels. Methyl chloroform is to be phased out by 2005. Under the Montreal Protocol, most ODS will be completely eliminated from use by 2010.

4. Land Degradation

In recent decades, land degradation in more arid regions of the world has become a serious concern. The problem, manifest as both "desertification" and "devegetation," is caused primarily by climate variability and human activities, such as "deforestation," excessive cultivation, overgrazing, and other forms of land resource exploitation. It is also exacerbated by inadequate irrigation practices. Although the effects of droughts on drylands have been temporary in the past, today, the productivity and sustainability of these lands have been severely compromised for the long term. Indeed, in every region of the world, land degradation has become an acute issue.

Desertification and Devegetation:

"Desertification" is a process of land degradation causing the soil to deteriorate, thus losing its nutrients and fertility, and eventually resulting in the loss of vegetation, known as "devegetation." As aforementioned, "desertification" and "devegetation" are caused by human activities, yet human beings are also the greatest casualties. Because these forms of land degradation affect the ability of the soil to produce crops, they concomitantly contribute to poverty. As population increases and demographic concentrations shift, the extent of land subject to stresses by those seeking to wrest subsistence from it has inexorably risen.

In response, the United Nations has formed the Convention to Combat Desertification-aimed at implementing programs to address the underlying causes of desertification, as well as measures to prevent and minimize its effects. Of particular significance is the formulation of policies on transboundary resources, such as areas around lakes and rivers. At a broader level, the Convention has established a Conference of Parties (COP), which includes all ratifying governments, for directing and advancing international action.

To ensure more efficacious use of funding, the Convention intends to reconfigure international aid to utilize a consultative and coordinated approach in the disbursement and expenditure of donor funds. In this way, local communities that are affected by desertification will be active participants in the solution-generation process. In-depth community education projects are envisioned as part of this new international aid program, and private donor financing is encouraged. Meanwhile, as new technologies are developed to deal with the problem of desertification, they need to be distributed for application across the world. Hence, the Convention calls for international cooperation in scientific research in this regard.

Desertification is a problem of sustainable development. It is directly connected to human challenges such as poverty, social and economic well-being and environmental protection as well. Broader environmental issues, such as climate change, biological diversity, and freshwater supplies, are indirectly related, so any effort to resolve this environmental challenge must entail coordinated research efforts and joint action.

Deforestation:

Deforestation is not a recent phenomenon. For centuries, human beings have cut down trees to clear space for land cultivation, or in order to use the wood for fuel. Over the last 200 years, and most especially after World War II, deforestation increased because the logging industry became a globally profitable endeavor, and so the clearing of forested areas was accelerated for the purposes of industrial development. In the long term, this intensified level of deforestation is considered problematic because the forest is unable to regenerate itself quickly. The deforestation that has

occurred in tropical rainforests is seen as an especially serious concern, due to the perceived adverse effects of this process upon the entire global ecosystem.

The most immediate consequence of deforestation is soil degradation. Soil, which is necessary for the growth of vegetation, can be a fragile and vital property. Organically, an extensive evolution process must take place before soil can produce vegetation, yet at the same time, the effects of natural elements, such as wind and rain, can easily and quickly degrade this resource. This phenomenon is known as soil erosion. In addition, natural elements like wind and rain reduce the amount of fertile soil on the ground, making soil scarcity a genuine problem. When fertile topsoil that already exists is removed from the landscape in the process of deforestation, soil scarcity is further exacerbated. Equally significant is the fact that once land has been cleared so that the topsoil can be cultivated for crop production, not only are the nutrient reserves in the soil depleted, thus producing crops of inferior quality, but the soil structure itself becomes stressed and deteriorates further.

Another direct result of deforestation is flooding. When forests are cleared, removing the cover of vegetation, and rainfall occurs, the flow of water increases across the surface of land. When extensive water runoff takes place, the frequency and intensity of flooding increases. Other adverse effects of deforestation include the loss of wildlife and biodiversity within the ecosystem that supports such life forms.

At a broader level, tropical rainforests play a vital role in maintaining the global environmental system. Specifically, destruction of tropical rainforests affects the carbon dioxide cycle. When forests are destroyed by burning (or rotting), carbon dioxide is released into the air, thus contributing to an intensified "greenhouse effect." The increase in greenhouse gas emissions like carbon dioxide is a major contributor to global warming, according to many environmental scientists. Indeed, trees themselves absorb carbon dioxide in the process of photosynthesis, so their loss also reduces the absorption of greenhouse gases.

Tropical rainforest destruction also adversely affects the nitrogen cycle. Nitrogen is a key nutrient for both plants and animals. Plants derive nitrogen from soil, while animals obtain it via nitrogen-enriched vegetation. This element is essential for the formation of amino acids, and thereby for proteins and biochemicals that all living things need for metabolism and growth. In the nitrogen cycle, vegetation acquires these essential proteins and biochemicals, and then cyclically returns them to the atmosphere and global ecosystem. Accordingly, when tropical rainforest ecosystems are compromised, not only is vegetation removed; the atmosphere is also affected and climates are altered. At a more immediate level, the biodiversity within tropical rainforests, including wildlife and insect species and a wealth of plant varieties, is depleted. Loss of rare plants is of particular concern because certain species as yet unknown and unused could likely yield many practical benefits, for instance as medicines.

As a result of the many challenges associated with deforestation, many environmental groups and agencies have argued for government policies on the sustainable development of forests by governments across the globe. While many countries have instituted national policies and programs aimed at reducing deforestation, and substantial research has been advanced in regard to sustainable and regenerative forestry development, there has been very little progress on an international level. Generally speaking, most tropical rainforests are located in developing and less developed countries, where economic growth is often dependent upon the exploitation of tropical rainforests. Timber resources as well as wildlife hunting tend to be particularly lucrative arenas.

In places such as the Amazon, where deforestation takes place for the construction of energy plants aimed at industrialization and economic development, there is an exacerbated effect on the environment. After forests are cleared in order to construct such projects, massive flooding usually ensues. The remaining trees then rot and decay in the wake of the flooding. As the trees deteriorate, their biochemical makeup becomes more acidic, producing poisonous substances such as hydrogen sulphide and methane gases. Acidified water subsequently corrodes the mechanical equipment and operations of the plants, which are already clogged by rotting wood after the floodwaters rise.

Deforestation generally arises from an economically plausible short-term motivation, but nonetheless poses a serious global concern because the effects go beyond national boundaries. The United Nations has established the World Commission on Forest and Sustainable Development. This body's task is to determine the optimal means of dealing with the issue of deforestation, without unduly affecting normal economic development, while emphasizing the global significance of protecting tropical forest ecosystems.

5. Water Resources

For all terrestrial fauna, including humans, water is the most immediate necessity to sustain life. As the population has increased and altered an ever-greater portion of the landscape from its natural condition, demand on water resources has intensified, especially with the development of industrialization and large-scale irrigation. The supply of freshwater is inherently limited, and moreover distributed unevenly across the earth's landmasses. Moreover, not just demand for freshwater but activities certain to degrade it are becoming more pervasive. By contrast, the oceans form a sort of "last wilderness," still little explored and in large part not seriously affected by human activity. However, coastal environments - the biologically richest part of the marine ecosystem-are experiencing major depletion due to human encroachment and over-exploitation.

Freshwater:

In various regions, for instance the Colorado River in the western [United States](#), current withdrawals of river water for irrigation, domestic, and industrial use consume the entire streamflow so that almost no water flows into the sea at the river's mouth. Yet development is ongoing in many such places, implying continually rising demand for water. In some areas reliant on groundwater, aquifers are being depleted at a markedly faster rate than they are being replenished. An example is the San Joaquin Valley in California, where decades of high water withdrawals for agriculture have caused land subsidence of ten meters or more in some spots. Naturally, the uncertainty of future water supplies is particularly acute in arid and semi-arid regions. Speculation that the phenomenon of global warming will alter geographic and seasonal rainfall patterns adds further uncertainty.

Water conservation measures have great potential to alleviate supply shortages. Some city water systems are so old and beset with leaking pipes that they lose as much water as they meter. Broad-scale irrigation could be replaced by drip-type irrigation, actually enhancing the sustainability of agriculture. In many areas where heavy irrigation has been used for decades, the result is deposition of salts and other chemicals in the soil such that the land becomes unproductive for farming and must be abandoned.

Farming is a major source of water pollution. Whereas restrictions on industrial effluents and other "point sources" are relatively easy to implement, comparable measures to reform hydraulic practices at farms and other "nonpoint sources" pose a significantly knottier challenge. Farm-caused water pollution takes the following main forms:

- Nitrate pollution found in wells in intensive farming areas as a consequence of heavy fertilizer use is a threat to human health. The most serious danger is to infants, who by ingesting high-nitrate water can contract methemoglobinemia, sometimes called "blue baby syndrome," a potentially fatal condition.
- Fertilizer runoff into rivers and lakes imparts unwanted nutrients that cause algae growth and eventual loss of oxygen in the body of water, degrading its ability to support fish and other desirable aquatic life.
- Toxic agricultural chemicals - insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides - are detectable in some aquifers and waterways.

In general, it is much easier to get a pollutant into water than to retrieve it out. Gasoline additives, dry cleaning chemicals, other industrial toxins, and in a few areas radionuclides have all been found in water sources intended for human use. The complexity and long time scale of subterranean hydrological movements essentially assures that pollutants already deposited in aquifers will continue to turn up for decades to come. Sophisticated water treatment processes are available, albeit expensive, to reclaim degraded water and render it fit for human consumption. Yet

source protection is unquestionably a more desirable alternative.

In much of the developing world, and even some low-income rural enclaves of the developed world, the population lacks ready access to safe water. Surface water and shallow groundwater supplies are susceptible to contamination from untreated wastewater and failing septic tanks, as well as chemical hazards. The occurrence of waterborne disease is almost certainly greatly underreported.

Marine Resources:

Coastal areas have always been desirable places for human habitation, and population pressure on them continues to increase. Many types of water degradation that affect lakes and rivers also affect coastal zones: industrial effluents, untreated or partially treated sewage, nutrient load from agriculture figure prominently in both cases. Prospects for more extreme storms as a result of global warming, as well as the pervasiveness of poorly planned development in many coastal areas, forebode that catastrophic hurricanes and landslides may increase in frequency in the future. Ongoing rise in sea levels will force remedial measures and in some cases abandonment of currently valuable coastal property.

Fisheries over much of the globe have been overharvested, and immediate conservation measures are required to preserve stocks of many species. Many governments subsidized factory-scale fishing fleets in the 1970s and 1980s, and the resultant catch increase evidently surpassed a sustainable level. It is uncertain how much of the current decline in fish stocks stems from overharvesting and how much from environmental pollution. The deep ocean remains relatively unaffected by human activity, but continental shelves near coastlines are frequently seriously polluted, and these close-to-shore areas are the major biological nurseries for food fish and the smaller organisms they feed on.

6. Environmental Toxins

Toxic chemical pollution exploded on the public consciousness with disclosure of spectacularly polluted industrial areas such as Love Canal near Buffalo, New York. There is no question that pollutants such as organophosphates or radionucleides can be highly deleterious to health, but evidence to date suggests that seriously affected areas are a localized rather than universal problem.

While some explore the possibilities for a lifestyle that fully eschews use of modern industrial chemicals, the most prevalent remediative approach is to focus on more judicious use. The most efficient chemical plants are now able to contain nearly all toxic byproducts of their production processes within the premises, minimizing the release of such substances into the environment.

Techniques such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) dictate limited rather than broadcast use of pesticides: application only when needed using the safest available chemical, supplemented as much as possible with nontoxic controls.

While heightened public awareness and growing technical sophistication suggest a hopeful outlook on limiting the damage from manmade environmental toxins, one must grant that previous incidents of their misuse and mishandling have already caused environmental damage that will have to be dealt with for many years to come. In the case of the most hazardous radioactive substances, the time scale for successful remediation actually extends beyond that of the recorded history of civilization. Moreover, in this era of high population density and rapid economic growth, quotidian activities such as the transport of chemicals will occasionally, seemingly inevitably result in accidents with adverse environmental consequences.

7. "Islandization" and Biodiversity

With increased awareness regarding the adverse effects of unregulated hunting and habitat depletion upon wildlife species and other aspects of biodiversity, large-scale efforts across the globe have been initiated to reduce and even reverse this trend.

In every region of the world, many species of wildlife and areas of biodiversity have been saved from extinction. Nationally, many countries have adopted policies aimed at preservation and conservation of species, and one of the most tangible measures has been the proliferation of protected habitats. Such habitats exist in the form of wildlife reserves, marine life reserves, and other such areas where biodiversity can be protected from external encroachment and exploitation.

Despite these advances in wildlife and biodiversity protection, further and perhaps more intractable challenges linger. Designated reserves, while intended to prevent further species decline, exist as closed territories, fragmented from other such enclaves and disconnected from the larger ecosystem. This environmental scenario is referred to as "islandization." Habitat reserves often serve as oversized zoos or game farms, with landscapes and wildlife that have effectively been "tamed" to suit. Meanwhile, the larger surrounding ecosystem continues to be seriously degraded and transformed, while within the islandized habitat, species that are the focus of conservation efforts may not have sufficient range and may not be able to maintain healthy genetic variability.

As a consequence, many conservationists and preservationists have demanded that substantially larger portions of land be withheld as habitat reserves, and a network of biological corridors to connect continental reserves be established. While such efforts to combat islandization have considerable support in the [United States](#), how precisely such a program would be instituted, especially across national boundaries, remains a matter of debate. International conservationists and preservationists say without a network of reserves a massive loss of biodiversity will result.

The concept of islandization illustrates why conservation and preservation of wildlife and biodiversity must consider and adopt new, broader strategies. In the past, conservation and preservation efforts have been aimed at specific species, such as the spotted owl and grizzly bear in North America, the Bengal tiger in Southeast Asia, the panda in [China](#), elephants in Africa. Instead, the new approach is to simultaneously protect many and varied species that inhabit the same ecosystem. This method, referred to as "bio-regional conservation," may more efficaciously generate longer-term and more far-reaching results precisely because it is aimed at preserving entire ecosystems, and all the living things within.

More About Biodiversity Issues:

This section is directly taken from the United Nations Environmental Program: "[Biodiversity Assessment](#)"

The Global Biodiversity Assessment, completed by 1500 scientists under the auspices of United Nations Environmental Program in 1995, updated what is known (or unknown) about global biological diversity at the ecosystem, species and genetic levels. The assessment was uncertain of the total number of species on Earth within an order of magnitude. Of its working figure of 13 million species, only 13 percent are scientifically described. Ecological community diversity is also poorly known, as is its relationship to biological diversity, and genetic diversity has been studied for only a small number of species. The effects of human activities on biodiversity have increased so greatly that the rate of species extinctions is rising to hundreds or thousands of times the background level. These losses are driven by increasing demands on species and their habitats, and by the failure of current market systems to value biodiversity adequately. The Assessment calls for urgent action to reverse these trends.

There has been a new recognition of the importance of protecting marine and aquatic biodiversity. The first quantitative estimates of species losses due to growing coral reef destruction predict that almost 200,000 species, or one in five presently contributing to coral reef biodiversity, could die out in the next 40 years if human pressures on reefs continue to increase.

Since Rio, many countries have improved their understanding of the status and importance of their biodiversity, particularly through biodiversity country studies such as those prepared under the auspices of UNEP/GEF. The [United Kingdom](#) identified 1250 species needing monitoring, of which 400 require action plans to ensure their survival. Protective measures for biodiversity, such as legislation to protect species, can prove effective. In the USA, almost 40 percent of the plants and animals protected under the Endangered Species Act are now stable or improving as a direct result of recovery efforts. Some African countries have joined efforts to protect threatened species through the 1994 Lusaka Agreement, and more highly migratory species are being protected by

specialized cooperative agreements among range states under the Bonn Agreement.

There is an emerging realization that a major part of conservation of biological diversity must take place outside of protected areas and involve local communities. The extensive agricultural areas occupied by small farmers contain much biodiversity that is important for sustainable food production. Indigenous agricultural practices have been and continue to be important elements in the maintenance of biodiversity, but these are being displaced and lost. There is a new focus on the interrelationship between agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use and development practices in smallholder agriculture, with emphasis on use of farmers' knowledge and skills as a source of information for sustainable farming.

Perhaps even more important than the loss of biodiversity is the transformation of global biogeochemical cycles, the reduction in the total world biomass, and the decrease in the biological productivity of the planet. While quantitative measurements are not available, the eventual economic and social consequences may be so significant that the issue requires further attention.

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Online resources used generally in the Environmental Overview:

Environmental Protection Agency Global Warming Site. URL: <http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming>

Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations: Forestry. URL: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/sofo/en/>

Global Warming Information Page. URL: <http://globalwarming.org>

U n i t e d N a t i o n s E n v i r o n m e n t a l P r o g r a m . U R L : http://www.unep.org/GEO/GEO_Products/Assessment_Reports/

United Nations Global Environmental Outlook. URL: <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/>

Note on Edition Dates:

The edition dates for textual resources are noted above because they were used to formulate the original content. We also have used online resources (cited above) to update coverage as needed.

Information Resources

For more information about environmental concepts, CountryWatch recommends the following resources:

The United Nations Environmental Program Network (with country profiles)

[<http://www.unep.net/>](http://www.unep.net/)

The United Nations Environment Program on Climate Change

[<http://climatechange.unep.net/>](http://climatechange.unep.net/)

The United Nations Environmental Program on Waters and Oceans

[<http://www.unep.ch/earthw/Pdepwat.htm>](http://www.unep.ch/earthw/Pdepwat.htm)

The United Nations Environmental Program on Forestry: "Forests in Flux"

[<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/flux/homepage.htm>](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/forest/flux/homepage.htm)

FAO "State of the World's Forests"

[<http://www.fao.org/forestry/FO/SOFO/SOFO99/sofo99-e.stm>](http://www.fao.org/forestry/FO/SOFO/SOFO99/sofo99-e.stm)

World Resources Institute.

[<http://www.wri.org/>](http://www.wri.org/)

Harvard University Center for Health and the Global Environment

[<http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/the-review.html>](http://www.med.harvard.edu/chge/the-review.html)

The University of Wisconsin Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment

<http://sage.aos.wisc.edu/>

International Environmental Agreements and Associations

International Policy Development in Regard to Global Warming:

Introduction

Regardless of what the precise nature of the relationship between greenhouse gas emissions and global warming may be, it seems that there is some degree of a connection between the phenomena. Any substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and global warming trends will likely involve systematic changes in industrial operations, the use of advanced energy sources and technologies, as well as global cooperation in implementing and regulating these transformations.

In this regard, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) stipulated the following objectives:

1. To stabilize "greenhouse gas" concentrations within the atmosphere, in such a manner that would preclude hazardous anthropogenic intervention into the existing biosphere and ecosystems of the world. This stabilization process would facilitate the natural adaptation of ecosystems to changes in climate.
2. To ensure and enable sustainable development and food production on a global scale.

Following are two discussions regarding international policies on the environment, followed by listings of international accords.

Special Entry: The Kyoto Protocol

The UNFCCC was adopted at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, and entered into force in 1994. Over 175 parties were official participants.

Meanwhile, however, many of the larger, more industrialized nations failed to reach the emissions' reduction targets, and many UNFCCC members agreed that the voluntary approach to reducing emissions had not been successful. As such, UNFCCC members reached a consensus that legally binding limits were necessitated, and agreed to discuss such a legal paradigm at a meeting in Kyoto, [Japan](#) in 1997. At that meeting, the UNFCCC forged the Kyoto Protocol. This concord is the first legally binding international agreement that places limits on emissions from industrialized countries. The major greenhouse gas emissions addressed in the Kyoto Protocol include carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide, hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, and methane.

The provisions of the Kyoto Protocol stipulate that economically advanced nations must reduce their combined emissions of greenhouse gases, by approximately five percent from their 1990

levels, before the 2008-2010 deadline. Countries with the highest carbon dioxide emissions, such as the [United States](#) (U.S.), many of the European Union (EU) countries, and [Japan](#), are to reduce emissions by a scale of 6 to 8 percent. All economically advanced nations must show "demonstrable progress" by 2005. In contrast, no binding limits or timetable have been set on developing countries. Presumably, this distinction is due to the fact that most developing countries - - with the obvious exceptions of [India](#) and [China](#) -- simply do not emit as many greenhouse gases as do more industrially advanced countries. Meanwhile, these countries are entrenched in the process of economic development.

Regardless of the aforementioned reasoning, there has been strong opposition against the asymmetrical treatment assigned to emissions limits among developed and developing countries. Although this distinction might be regarded as unfair in principle, associations such as the Alliance of Small Island States have been vocal in expressing how global warming -- a result of greenhouse gas emissions - has contributed to the rise in sea level, and thus deleteriously affected their very existence as island nation states. For this reason, some parties have suggested that economically advanced nations, upon returning to their 1990 levels, should be required to further reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by a deadline of 2005. In response, interested parties have observed that even if such reductions were undertaken by economically advanced nations, they would not be enough to completely control global warming. Indeed, a reduction in the rate of fossil fuel usage by developing nations would also be necessary to have substantial ameliorative effect on global warming. Indeed, a reduction in the rate of fossil fuel usage by developing nations would also be necessary to have substantial ameliorative effect on global warming.

As such, the Protocol established a "Clean Development Mechanism" which permits developed countries to invest in projects aimed at reducing emissions within developing countries in return for credit for the reductions. Ostensibly, the objective of this mechanism is to curtail emissions in developing countries without unduly penalizing them for their economic development. Under this model, the countries with more potential emissions credits could sell them to other signatories of the Kyoto Protocol, whose emissions are forecast to significantly rise in the next few years. Should this trading of emissions credits take place, it is estimated that the Kyoto Protocol's emissions targets could still be met.

In 1999, the International Energy Outlook projected that Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union and Newly Independent States, as well as parts of Asia, are all expected to show a marked decrease in their level of energy-related carbon emissions in 2010. Nations with the highest emissions, specifically, the U.S., the EU and [Japan](#), are anticipated to reduce their emissions by up to 8 percent by 2012. By 2000, however, the emissions targets were not on schedule for achievement. Indeed, the U.S. Department of Energy estimates forecast that by 2010, there will be a 34 percent increase in carbon emissions from the 1990 levels, in the absence of major shifts in policy, economic growth, energy prices, and consumer trends. Despite this assessment in the U.S., international support for the Kyoto Protocol remained strong, especially among European countries

and island states, who view the pact as one step in the direction away from reliance on fossil fuels and other sources of greenhouse gases.

In 2001, U.S. President, George W. Bush, rejected his country's participation in the Kyoto Protocol, saying that the costs imposed on the global economic system, and especially, on the US, overshadowed the benefits of the Protocol. He also cited the unfair burden on developed nations to reduce emissions, as another primary reasons for withdrawal from the international pact, as well as insufficient evidence regarding the science of global warming. Faced with impassioned international disapproval for his position, the U.S. president stated that his administration remained interested in dealing with the matter of global warming, but would endorse alternative measures to combat the problem, such as voluntary initiatives limiting emissions. Critics of Bush's position, however, have noted that it was the failure of voluntary initiatives to reduce emissions following the Rio Summit that led to the establishment of the Kyoto Protocol in the first place.

In the wake of the Bush administration's decision, many participant countries resigned themselves to the reality that the goals of the Kyoto Protocol might not be achieved without U.S. involvement. Nevertheless, in Bonn, [Germany](#), in July 2001, the remaining participant countries struck a political compromise on some of the key issues and sticking points, and planned to move forward with the Protocol, irrespective of the absence of the U.S. The key compromise points included the provision for countries to offset their targets with carbon sinks (these are areas of forest and farmland which can absorb carbon through the process of photosynthesis). Another compromise point within the broader Bonn Agreement was the reduction of emissions cuts of six gases from over 5 percent to a more achievable 2 percent. A third key change was the provision of funding for less wealthy countries to adopt more progressive technologies.

In late October and early November 2001, the UNFCCC's 7th Conference of the Parties met in Marrakesh, [Morocco](#), to finalize the measures needed to make the Kyoto Protocol operational. Although the UNFCCC projected that ratification of the Protocol would make it legally binding within a year, many critics noted that the process had fallen short of implementing significant changes in policy that would be necessary to actually stop or even slow climate change. They also maintained that the absence of U.S. participation effectively rendered the Protocol into being a political exercise without any substance, either in terms of transnational policy or in terms of environmental concerns.

The adoption of the compromises ensconced within the Bonn Agreement had been intended to make the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol more palatable to the U.S. In this regard, it failed to achieve its objective as the Bush administration continued to eschew participation in the international accord. Still, however, the Bonn Agreement did manage to render a number of other positive outcomes. Specifically, in 2002, key countries, such as [Russia](#), [Japan](#) and [Canada](#) agreed to ratify the protocol, bringing the number of signatories to 178. The decision by key countries to

ratify the protocol was regarded as "the kiss of life" by observers.

By 2005, on the eve of a climate change conference in London, British Prime Minister Tony Blair was hoping to deal with the problems of climate change beyond the provisions set forth in the Kyoto Protocol. Acknowledging that the Kyoto Protocol could not work in its current form, Blair wanted to open the discussion for a new climate change plan.

Blair said that although most of the world had signed on to Kyoto, the protocol could not meet any of its practical goals of cutting greenhouse gas emissions without the participation of the United States, the world's largest polluter. He also noted that any new agreement would have to include India and China -- significant producers of greenhouse gas emissions, but exempt from Kyoto because they have been classified as developing countries. Still, he said that progress on dealing with climate change had been stymied by "a reluctance to face up to reality and the practical action needed to tackle problem."

Blair also touted the "huge opportunities" in technology and pointed toward the possibilities offered by wind, solar and nuclear power, along with fuel cell technology, eco-friendly biofuels, and carbon capture and storage which could generate low carbon power. Blair also asserted that his government was committed to achieving its domestic goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 percent by 2010.

In the United States, President George W. Bush has said that global warming remained a debatable issue and despite conclusions reached by his own Environmental Protection Agency, he has not agreed with the conclusion that global warming and climate change are linked with human activities. Bush has also refused to ratify Kyoto on the basis of its economic costs.

Australia, an ally of the United States, has taken a similarly dim view of the Kyoto Protocol. Ahead of the November 2005 climate change meeting in Canada in which new goals for the protocol were to be discussed, Australia's Environment Minister, Ian Campbell, said that negotiating new greenhouse gas emission levels for the Kyoto Protocol would be a waste of time. Campbell said, "There is a consensus that the caps, targets and timetables approach is flawed. If we spend the next five years arguing about that, we'll be fiddling and negotiating while Rome burns." Campbell, like the Bush administration, has also advocated a system of voluntary action in which industry takes up new technologies rather than as a result of compelling the reduction of emissions. But the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) has called on its government to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, to establish a system of emissions trading, and to set binding limits on emissions. Interestingly, although it did not sign on to Kyoto, Australia was expected to meet its emissions target by 2012 (an 8 percent increase in 1990 levels in keeping with the country's reliance on coal). But this success has nothing to do with new technologies and is due to state-based regulations on land clearing.

Note: The Kyoto Protocol calls for developed nations to cut greenhouse emissions by 5.2 percent

of 1990 levels by 2012.

Special Entry: Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen (2009) --

In December 2009, the United Nations Climate Change Summit opened in the Danish capital of Copenhagen. The summit was scheduled to last from Dec. 7-18, 2009. Delegates from more than 190 countries were in attendance, and approximately 100 world leaders, including British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and [United States](#) President Barack Obama, were expected to participate. At issue was the matter of new reductions targets on greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

Despite earlier fears that little concurrence would come from the conference, effectively pushing significant actions forward to a 2010 conference in [Mexico](#) City, negotiators were now reporting that the talks were productive and several key countries, such as [South Africa](#), had pledged to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The two main issues that could still lead to cleavages were questions of agreement between the industrialized countries and the developing countries of the world, as well as the overall effectiveness of proposals in seriously addressing the perils of climate change.

On Dec. 9, 2009, four countries -- the [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [Mexico](#) and [Norway](#) -- presented a document outlining ideas for raising and managing billions of dollars, which would be intended to help vulnerable countries dealing with the perils of climate change. Described as a "green fund," the concept could potentially help small island states at risk because of the rise in sea level. [Bangladesh](#) identified itself as a potential recipient of an assistance fund, noting that as a country plagued by devastating floods, it was particularly hard-hit by climate change. The "green fund" would fall under the rubric of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, for which developed countries have been committed to quantifying their emission reduction targets, and also to providing financial and technical support to developing countries.

The [United Kingdom](#), [Australia](#), [Mexico](#) and [Norway](#) also called for the creation of a new legal treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol. This new treaty, which could go into force in 2012, would focus largely on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020. But [Australia](#) went even further in saying that the successor treaty to the Kyoto Protocol, should be one with provisions covering all countries. Such a move would be a departure from the structure of the Kyoto Protocol, which contained emissions targets for industrialized countries due to the prevailing view that developed countries had a particular historic responsibility to be accountable for climate change. More recently, it has become apparent that substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions demanded by scientists would only come to pass with the participation also of significant developing nation states, such as [China](#) and [India](#). Indeed, one of the most pressing critiques of the Kyoto Protocol was that it was a "paper tiger" that failed to address the impact of the actions of emerging economies like [China](#) and [India](#), with its focus on the developed economies.

Now, in 2009, [China](#) -- as the world's biggest greenhouse gas emitter -- was responding this dubious distinction by vocalizing its criticism of the current scenario and foregrounding its new commitments. Ahead of the Copenhagen summit, [China](#) had announced it would reduce the intensity of its carbon emissions per unit of its GDP in 2020 by 40 to 45 percent against 2005 levels. With that new commitment at hand, [China](#) was now accusing the [United States](#) and the European Union of shirking their own responsibilities by setting weak targets for greenhouse gas emissions cuts. Senior Chinese negotiator, Su Wei, characterized the goals of the world's second largest greenhouse gas emitter -- the [United States](#) -- as "not notable," and the European Union's target as "not enough." Su Wei also took issue with [Japan](#) for setting implausible preconditions.

On Dec. 11, 2009, [China](#) demanded that developed and wealthy countries in Copenhagen should help deliver a real agreement on climate change by delivering on their promises to reduce carbon emissions and provide financial support for developing countries to adapt to global warming. In so doing, China's Vice Foreign Minister He Yafei said his country was hoping that a "balanced outcome" would emerge from the discussions at the summit. Echoing the position of the Australian government, He Yafei spoke of a draft agreement as follows: "The final document we're going to adopt needs to be taking into account the needs and aspirations of all countries, particularly the most vulnerable ones."

China's Vice Foreign Minister emphasized the fact that climate change was "a matter of survival" for developing countries, and accordingly, such countries need wealthier and more developed countries to accentuate not only their pledges of emissions reduction targets, but also their financial commitments under the aforementioned United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. To that end, scientists and leaders of small island states in the Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, have highlighted the existential threat posed by global warming and the concomitant rise in sea level.

China aside, attention was also on [India](#) -- another major player in the developing world and a country with an industrializing economy that was impacting the environment. At issue was the Indian government's decision to set a carbon intensity target, which would slow emissions growth by up to 25 percent by the 2020 deadline. This strong position was resisted by some elements in [India](#), who argued that their country should not be taking such a strong position when developed wealthy countries were yet to show accountability for their previous commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The matter grew so heated that the members of the opposition stormed out of the parliament in protest as Indian Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh defended the policy. But the political pressure at home in [India](#) was leaving the Indian delegation in Copenhagen in a state of chaos as well. In fact, India's top environmental negotiator refused to travel to Copenhagen in protest of the government's newly-announced stance.

China and [India](#) were joined by [Brazil](#) and [South Africa](#) in the crafting of a draft document calling for a new global climate treaty to be completed by June 2010. Of concern has been the realization

that there was insufficient time to find concurrence on a full legal treaty, which would leave countries only with a politically-binding text by the time the summit at Copenhagen closed. But Guyana's leader, President Bharrat Jagdeo, warned that the summit in [Denmark](#) would be classified as a failure unless a binding document was agreed upon instead of just political consensus. He urged his cohorts to act with purpose saying, "Never before have science, economics, geo-strategic self-interest and politics intersected in such a way on an issue that impacts everyone on the planet."

Likewise, [Tuvalu](#) demanded that legally binding agreements emerge from Copenhagen. Its proposal was supported by many of the vulnerable countries, from small island states and sub-Saharan Africa, all of whom warned of the catastrophic impact of climate change on their citizens. [Tuvalu](#) also called for more aggressive action, such as an amendment to the 1992 agreement, which would focus on sharp greenhouse gas emissions and the accepted rise in temperatures, due to the impact the rise in seas. The delegation from [Kiribati](#) joined the call by drawing attention to the fact that one village had to be abandoned due to waist-high water, and more such effects were likely to follow. Kiribati's Foreign Secretary, Tessie Lambourne, warned that the people of [Kiribati](#) could well be faced with no homeland in the future saying, "Nobody in this room would want to leave their homeland." But despite such impassioned pleas and irrespective of warnings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that the rise in sea level from melting polar ice caps would deleteriously affect low-lying atolls such as such as [Tuvalu](#) and [Kiribati](#) in the Pacific, and the [Maldives](#) in the Indian Ocean, the oil-giant [Saudi Arabia](#) was able to block this move.

Meanwhile, within the developed countries, yet another power struggle was brewing. The European Union warned it would only agree to raise its target of 20 percent greenhouse gas emissions reductions to 30 percent if the [United States](#) demonstrated that it would do more to reduce its own emissions. It was unknown if such pressure would yield results. [United States](#) President Barack Obama offered a "provisional" 2020 target of 17 percent reductions, noting that he could not offer greater concessions at Copenhagen due to resistance within the [United States](#) Congress, which was already trying to pass a highly controversial "cap and trade" emissions legislation. However, should that emissions trading bill fail in the Senate, the [United States](#) Environment Protection Agency's declaration that greenhouse gases pose a danger to human health and the environment was expected to facilitate further regulations and limits on power plants and factories at the national level. These moves could potentially strengthen the Obama administration's offering at Copenhagen. As well, President Obama also signaled that he would be willing to consider the inclusion of international forestry credits.

Such moves indicated willingness by the Obama administration to play a more constructive role on the international environmental scene than its predecessor, the Bush administration. Indeed, ahead of his arrival at the Copenhagen summit, President Barack Obama's top environmental advisors promised to work on a substantial climate change agreement. To that end, [United States](#)

Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa Jackson said at a press conference, "We are seeking robust engagement with all of our partners around the world." But would this pro-engagement assertion yield actual results?

By Dec. 12, 2009, details related to a draft document prepared by Michael Zammit Cutajar, the head of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action, were released at the Copenhagen climate conference. Included in the document were calls for countries to make major reductions in carbon emissions over the course of the next decade. According to the Washington Post, industrialized countries were called on to make cuts of between 25 percent and 40 percent below 1990 levels -- reductions that were far more draconian than the [United States](#) was likely to accept. As discussed above, President Obama had offered a provisional reduction target of 17 percent. The wide gap between the released draft and the United States' actual stated position suggested there was much more negotiating in the offing if a binding agreement could be forged, despite the Obama administration's claims that it was seeking greater engagement on this issue.

In other developments, the aforementioned call for financial support of developing countries to deal with the perils of climate change was partly answered by the European Union on Dec. 11, 2009. The European bloc pledged an amount of 2.4 billion euros (US\$3.5 billion) annually from 2010 to 2012. Environment Minister Andreas Carlgren of [Sweden](#) -- the country that holds the rotating presidency of the European Union at the time of the summit -- put his weight behind the notion of a "legally binding deal." Meanwhile, Yvo de Boer, a top United Nations climate change official, focused less on the essence of the agreement and more on tangible action and effects saying, "Copenhagen will only be a success if it delivers significant and immediate action that begins the day the conference ends."

The division between developed and developing countries in Copenhagen reached new heights on Dec. 14, 2009, when some of the poor and less developed countries launched a boycott at the summit. The move, which was spurred by African countries but backed by [China](#) and [India](#), appeared to be geared toward redirecting attention and primary responsibility to the wealthier and more industrialized countries. The impasse was resolved after the wealthier and more industrialized countries offered assurances that they did not intend on shirking from their commitments to reducing greenhouse gases. As a result, the participating countries ceased the boycott.

Outside the actual summit, thousands of protestors had gathered to demand crucial global warming, leading to clashes between police and demonstrators elsewhere in the Danish capital city. There were reports of scattered violence across Copenhagen and more than 1,000 people were arrested.

Nevertheless, by the second week of the climate change summit, hopes of forging a strong deal were eroding as developed and developing nations remained deadlocked on sharing cuts in greenhouse gases, and particularly on the matters of financing and temperature goals. In a bid to

shore up support for a new climate change, [United States](#) President Barack Obama joined other world leaders in Copenhagen. On Dec. 14, 2009, there was a standoff brewing between the [United States](#) and [China](#). At issue was China's refusal to accept international monitoring of its expressed targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The [United States](#) argued that China's opposition to verification could be a deal-breaker.

By the close of the summit, the difficult process eventually resulted in some consensus being cultivated. A draft text called for \$100 billion a year by 2020 to assist poor nations cope with climate change, while aiming to limit global warming to two degrees Celsius compared with pre-industrial levels. The deal also included specific targets for developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and called for reductions by developing countries as a share of their economies. Also included in the agreement was a mechanism to verify compliance. The details of the agreement were supported by President Barack Obama, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

This draft would stand as an interim agreement, with a legally-binding international pact unlikely to materialize until 2010. In this way, the summit in Copenhagen failed to achieve its central objective, which was to negotiate a successor to the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emissions.

Editor's Note

In the background of these developments was the growing global consciousness related to global warming and climate change. Indeed, as the Copenhagen summit was ongoing, it was clear there was enormous concurrence on the significance of the stakes with an editorial on the matter of climate change being published in 56 newspapers in 45 countries. That editorial warned that without global action, climate change would "ravage our planet." Meanwhile, a global survey taken by Globescan showed that concern over global warming had exponentially increased from 1998 -- when only 20 percent of respondents believed it to be a serious problem -- to 64 percent in 2009. Such survey data, however, was generated ahead of the accusations by climate change skeptics that some climate scientists may have overstated the case for global warming, based on emails derived in an illicit manner from a British University.

Special Entry: Climate change talks in Doha in [Qatar](#) extend life of Kyoto Protocol (2012)

December 2012 saw climate talks ensue in the Qatari city of Doha as representatives from countries across the world gathered to discuss the fate of the Kyoto Protocol, which seeks to minimize greenhouse gas emissions. The summit yielded results with decisions made (1) to extend the Kyoto Protocol until 2020, and (2) for wealthier countries to compensate poorer countries for the losses and damage incurred as a result of climate change.

In regards to the second matter, Malia Talakai of [Nauru](#), a leading negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States, explained the necessity of the compensation package as follows: "We are trying to say that if you pollute you must help us."

This measure was being dubbed the "Loss and Damage" mechanism, and was being linked with [United States](#) President Barack Obama's request for \$60 billion from Congress to deal with the devastation caused by Hurricane Sandy months before. The sight of a hurricane bearing down on the northern Atlantic seaboard, along with the reality of the scope of reconstruction, appeared to have illustrated the economic costs of climate change -- not so much as a distant environmental issue -- but as a danger to the quotidian lives of people. Still, there was blame to be placed on the [United States](#) and European countries -- some of world's largest emitters -- for failing to do more to reduce emissions.

To that latter end, there was in fact little progress made on the central issue of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Had those emissions been reduced, there would have been less of a need to financially deal with the devastation caused by climate change. One interpretation was that the global community was accepting the fact that industrialization was contributing to global warming, which had deleterious effects on the polar ice caps and concomitantly on the rise of sea level, with devastating effects for small island nations. Thus, wealthier countries were willing to pay around \$10 billion a year through 2020, effectively in "damages," to the poor countries that could be viewed as the "collateral damage" of industrial progress. But damages today could potentially be destruction tomorrow, leaving in place the existential challenges and burdens to be born by some of the world's smallest and least wealthy island countries.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the representative for the small island nation states at the Doha summit responded with ire, characterizing the lack of progress on reducing emissions as follows: "We see the package before us as deeply deficient in mitigation (carbon cuts) and finance. It's likely to lock us on the trajectory to a 3,4,5C rise in global temperatures, even though we agreed to keep the global average temperature rise of 1.5C to ensure survival of all islands. There is no new finance (for adapting to climate change and getting clean energy) -- only promises that something might materialize in the future. Those who are obstructive need to talk not about how their people will live, but whether our people will live."

Indeed, in most small island countries not just in the Pacific, but also the Caribbean and Indian Ocean, ecological concerns and the climate crisis have been dominant themes with dire life and death consequences looming in the background for their people. Small island nations in these region are already at risk from the rise of sea-level, tropical cyclones, floods. But their very livelihoods of fishing and subsistence farming were also at risk as a result of ecological and environmental changes. Increasingly high storm surges can wipe out entire villages and contaminate water supplies. Accordingly, the very existence of island nations, such as [Kiribati](#) and [Tuvalu](#), are at severe risk of being obliterated from the map. Yet even with the existential threat of being wiped

off the map in the offing, the international community has been either slow or restrictive in its efforts to deal with global warming, climate change, economic and ecological damage, as well as the emerging global challenge of environmental refugees.

A 2012 report from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Pacific Regional Environment Program underlined the concerns of small island nations and their people as it concluded that the livelihoods of approximately 10 million people in Pacific island communities were increasingly vulnerable to climate change. In fact, low-lying islands in that region would likely confront losses of up to 18 percent of gross domestic product due to climate change, according to the report. The report covers 21 countries and territories, including [Fiji](#), [Kiribati](#), [Samoa](#) and [Tonga](#), and recommended environmental legislation intended to deal with the climate crisis facing the small island countries particularly. As noted by David Sheppard, the director general of the Pacific Regional Environment Program that co-sponsored this study: "The findings... emphasize the need more than ever to raise the bar through collective actions that address the region's environmental needs at all levels."

Regardless of the failures of the summit in [Qatar](#) (discussed above), the meeting did facilitate a process starting in 2015, which would bind both wealthy and poor countries together in the mission of forging a new binding treaty that would replace the Kyoto Protocol and tackle the central causes of climate change.

For more information on the threats faced in small island nations by climate change and the measures being undertaken to lobby for international action, please see the Alliance for Small Island States available online at the URL: <http://aosis.org/>

Special Report

COP 21 summit in Paris ends with historic agreement to tackle climate change; rare international consensus formed on environmental crisis facing the planet (2015) --

In mid-December 2015, the highly-anticipated United Nations climate conference of parties (COP) in Paris, [France](#), ended with a historic agreement. In fact, it would very likely be understood as the most significant international agreement signed by all the recognized countries of the world since the Cold War. Accordingly, the Paris Agreement was being distinguished as the first multilateral pact that would compel all countries across the world to cut its carbon emissions -- one of the major causes of increasing greenhouse gas emissions, which contribute to global warming, and its deleterious effects ranging from the dangerous rise in sea level to catastrophic climate change.

The accord, which was dubbed to be the "Paris Agreement," was the work of rigorous diplomacy

and fervent environmental advocacy, and it aimed to address the climate change crisis facing the planet. As many as 195 countries were represented in the negotiations that led to the landmark climate deal. Indeed, it was only after weeks of passionate debate that international concurrence was reached in addressing the environmental challenges confronting the world, with particular attention to moving beyond fossil fuels and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The success of the COP 21 summit in Paris and the emergence of the landmark Paris Agreement was, to some extent, attributed to the efforts of France's Foreign Minister Laurent Fabius who presided over the negotiations. The French foreign minister's experience and credentials as a seasoned diplomat and respected statesman paid dividends. He skillfully guided the delegates from almost 200 countries and interest groups along the negotiations process, with ostensibly productive results and a reasonably robust deal to show for it.

On Dec. 12, 2015, French Foreign Minister Fabius officially adopted the agreement, declaring: "I now invite the COP to adopt the decision entitled Paris Agreement outlined in the document. Looking out to the room I see that the reaction is positive, I see no objections. The Paris agreement is adopted." Once Foreign Minister Fabius' gavel was struck, symbolically inaugurating the Paris Agreement into force, the COP delegate rushed to their feet with loud and bouyant cheers as well as thunderous applause.

In general, the Paris Agreement was being hailed as a victory for enviromental activists and a triumph for international diplomats, while at the same time being understood as simply an initial -- and imperfect -- move in the direction of a sustainable future. China's chief negotiator, Xie Zhenhua, issued this message, saying that while the accord was not ideal, it should "not prevent us from marching historical steps forward."

United States President Barack Obama lauded the deal as both "ambitious" and "historic," and the work of strenuous multilateral negotiations as he declared, "Together, we've shown what's possible when the world stands as one." The [United States](#) leader acknowledged that the accord was not "perfect," but he reminded the critics that it was "the best chance to save the one planet we have."

Former [United States](#) Vice President Al Gore, one of the world's most well known environmental advocates, issued a lengthy statement on the accomplishments ensconced in the Paris Agreement. He highlighted the fact that the Paris Agreement was a first step towards a future with a reduced carbon footprint on Planet Earth as he said, "The components of this agreement -- including a strong review mechanism to enhance existing commitments and a long-term goal to eliminate global-warming pollution this century -- are essential to unlocking the necessary investments in our future. No agreement is perfect, and this one must be strengthened over time, but groups across every sector of society will now begin to reduce dangerous carbon pollution through the framework of this agreement."

The central provisions of the Paris Agreement included the following items:

- Greenhouse gas emissions should peak as quickly as possible, with a move towards balancing energy sources, and ultimately the decrease of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century
- Global temperature increase would be limited to 1.5 degrees Centigrade above pre-industrial levels and would be held "well below" the two degrees Centigrade threshold
- Progress on these goals would be reviewed every five years beginning in 2020 with new greenhouse gas reduction targets issued every five years
- \$100 billion would be expended each year in climate finance for developing countries to move forward with green technologies, with further climate financing to be advanced in the years beyond

It should be noted that there both legally binding and voluntary elements contained within the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the submission of an emissions reduction target and the regular review of that goal would be legally mandatory for all countries. Stated differently, there would be a system in place by which experts would be able to track the carbon-cutting progress of each country. At the same time, the specific targets to be set by countries would be determined at the discretion of the countries, and would not be binding. While there was some criticism over this non-binding element, the fact of the matter was that the imposition of emissions targets was believed to be a major factor in the failure of climate change talks in Copenhagen, [Denmark](#), in 2009.

In 2015, the talks faced challenges as several countries, such as [China](#) and [India](#), objected to conditions that would stymie economic and development. In order to avoid that kind of landmine, a system Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) was developed and formed the basis of the accord. As such, the Paris Agreement would, in fact, facilitate economic growth and development, as well as technological progress, but with the goal of long-term ecological sustainability based on low carbon sources. In fact, the agreement heralded as "the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era." As noted by Nick Mabey, the head of the climate diplomacy organization E3G, said, "Paris means governments will go further and faster to tackle climate change than ever before. The transition to a low carbon economy is now unstoppable, ensuring the end of the fossil fuel age."

A particular sticking point in the agreement was the \$100 billion earmarked for climate financing for developing countries to transition from traditional fossil fuels to green energy technologies and a low carbon future. In 2014, a report by the International Energy Agency indicated that the cost of that transition would actually be around \$44 trillion by the mid-century -- an amount that would render the \$100 billion being promised to be a drop in the proverbial bucket. However, the general expectation was that the Republican-controlled Senate in the [United States](#), which would have to ratify the deal in that country, was not interested in contributing significant funds for the cause of climate change.

A key strength of the Paris Agreement was the ubiquitous application of measures to all countries. Of note was the frequently utilized concept of "flexibility" with regard to the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the varying capacities of the various countries in meeting their obligations would be anticipated and accorded flexibility. This aspect presented something of a departure from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, which drew a sharp distinction between developed and developing countries, and mandated a different set of obligations for those categories of countries. Thus, under Kyoto, [China](#) and [India](#) were not held to the same standards as the [United States](#) and European countries. In the Paris Agreement, there would be commitments from all countries across the globe.

Another notable strength of the Paris Agreement was the fact that the countries of the world were finally able to reach consensus on the vital necessity to limit global temperature increases to 1.5 degrees Centigrade. Ahead of the global consensus on the deal, and as controversy continued to surface over the targeted global temperature limits, the leaders of island countries were sounding the alarm about the melting of the Polar ice caps and the associated rise in sea level. Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of [Tuvalu](#) issued this dismal reminder: "Tuvalu's future ... is already bleak and any further temperature increase will spell the total demise of [Tuvalu](#). No leader in this room carries such a level of worry and responsibility. Just imagine you are in my shoes, what would you do?" It was thus something of a victory for environmental advocates that the countries of the world could find consensus on the lower number -- 1.5 degrees rather than 2 degrees.

A significant weak point with regard to the Paris deal was a "loss and damage" provision, which anticipates that even with all the new undertakings intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move to a low carbon future, there would nonetheless be unavoidable climate change consequences. Those consequences ranged from the loss of arable land for farmers as well as soil erosion and contamination of potable water by sea water, to the decimation of territory in coastal zones and on small islands, due to the rise in sea level, with entire small island countries being rendered entirely uninhabitable. The reality was that peoples' homes across the world would be destroyed along with their way of life.

With that latter catastrophic effect being a clear and present danger for small island countries, the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) demanded that the developed world acknowledge its responsibility for this irreversible damage.. Despite the fact that greenhouse gas emissions and the ensuing plague of global warming was, indeed, the consequence of development in the West (the [United States](#) and Europe) and the large power house countries, such as [Russia](#), [China](#) and [India](#), there was no appetite by those countries to sign on to unlimited liability. Under the Paris Agreement, there was a call for research on insurance mechanisms that would address loss and damage issues, with recommendations to come in the future.

The call for research was being regarded as an evasion of sorts and constituted the weakest aspect of the Paris Agreement. Not surprisingly, a coalition of small island nations demanded a "Marshall

Plan" for the Pacific. Borrowing the term "Marshall Plan" from the post-World War II reconstruction effort, the coalition of Pacific island nation, which included [Kiribati](#), [Tuvalu](#), [Fiji](#), and the [Marshall Islands](#), called for an initiative that would include investment in renewable energy and shoreline protection, cultural preservation, economic assistance for economies in transition, and a plan for migration and resettlement for these countries as they confront the catastrophic effects of the melting of the Polar ice caps and the concomitant rise in sea level. The precise contours of the initiative remained unknown, unspecified, and a mere exercise in theory at the time of writing. Yet such an initiative would, at some point, have to be addressed, given the realities of climate change and the slow motion calamity unfolding each day for low-lying island nations across the world.

As noted by Vice President Greg Stone of Conservation International, who also functions as an adviser to the government of [Kiribati](#), "Imagine living in a place where you know it's going to go away someday, but you don't know what day that wave's going to come over and wash your home away." He added, "It's a disaster we know is going to happen." Meanwhile, the intervening years promised to be filled with hardship for small island nations, such as [Kiribati](#). Stone explained, "For every inch of sea-level rise, these islands lose 10 feet of their freshwater table to saltwater intrusion," Stone explained. "So it's not just about the day the water finally goes over the island; it's also about the day that there's just not enough water left and everyone has to move off the island." Presaging the future for island nations that could face submersion, Stone said, "If you look ahead 50 years, a country like [Kiribati](#) could become the first aqueous nation. possibility of migration. That is, they own this big patch of ocean, and they administer it from elsewhere."

Foreign Minister Minister Tony Debrum of the [Marshall Islands](#) emerged as the champion advocating on behalf of small island nation states and a loose coalition of concerned countries from the Pacific to the Caribbean, but with support from the [United States](#). He addressed the comprehensive concerns of small island nations regarding the weaknesses of the deal, while simultaneously making clear that the Paris Agreement signified hope for the countries most at risk. In a formal statement, Debrum declared: "We have made history today. Emissions targets are still way off track, but this agreement has the tools to ramp up ambition, and brings a spirit of hope that we can rise to this challenge. I can go back home to my people and say we now have a pathway to survival." Debrum highlighted the imperatives of Pacific island nations, saying, "Our High Ambition Coalition was the lightning rod we needed to lift our sights and expectations for a strong agreement here in Paris. We were joined by countries representing more than half the world. We said loud and clear that a bare-bones, minimalist agreement would not fly. We instead demanded an agreement to mark a turning point in history, and the beginning of our journey to the post-carbon era."

Debrum of the [Marshall Islands](#) espoused the quintessential synopsis of the accord and its effects for those most likely to be affected by climate change as he noted, "Climate change won't stop

overnight, and my country is not out of the firing line just yet, but today we all feel a little safer.”

Editor's Entry on [Environmental Policy](#):

The low-lying Pacific island nations of the world, including [Kiribati](#), [Tuvalu](#), the [Marshall Islands](#), [Fiji](#), among others, are vulnerable to the threats posed by global warming and climate change, derived from carbon emissions, and resulting in the rise in sea level. Other island nations in the Caribbean, as well as poor countries with coastal zones, were also at particular risk of suffering the deleterious effects of climate change.

Political policy in these countries are often connected to ecological issues, which have over time morphed into an existential crisis of sorts. Indeed, ecological concerns and the climate crisis have also been dominant themes with life and death consequences for the people of island nations in the Pacific. Indeed, the very livelihoods of fishing and subsistence farming remain at risk as a result of ecological and environmental changes. Yet even so, these countries are threatened by increasingly high storm surges, which could wipe out entire villages and contaminate water supplies. Moreover, because these are low lying island nations, the sustained rise in sea level can potentially lead to the terrain of these countries being uninhabitable at best, and submerged at worst. Stated in plain terms, these countries are at severe risk of being obliterated from the map and their plight illuminates the emerging global challenge of environmental refugees. In these manifold senses, climate change is the existential crisis of the contemporary era.

Since the time of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, there have been efforts aimed at extending the life of that agreement, with an eye on minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, and thus minimizing the effects of climate change. Those endeavors have largely ended in failure, as exemplified by the unsuccessful Copenhagen talks in 2009 and the fruitless Doha talks in 2012 respectively. The success of the COP 21 talks in [France](#), with the adoption of the landmark Paris Agreement in 2015, was regarded as the first glimmer of hope. Not only did the Paris Agreement signify the triumph of international diplomacy and global consensus, but it also marked the start of the end of the fossil fuel era, with the path forward toward a low carbon future reliant on greener technologies. Most crucially, the Paris Agreement stood as the first significant response in recent times to the central challenge of climate change and its quotidian effects on the lives of real human beings across the world.

1. Major International Environmental Accords:

General Environmental Concerns

Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context, Espoo, 1991.

Accords Regarding Atmosphere

Annex 16, vol. II (Environmental Protection: Aircraft Engine Emissions) to the 1044 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, Montreal, 1981

Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution (LRTAP), Geneva, 1979

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), New York, 1992

Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, Vienna, 1985 including the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Depleted the Ozone Layer, Montreal, 1987

Accords Regarding Hazardous Substances

Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movements and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa, Bamako, 1991

Convention on Civil Liability for Damage Caused during Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road, Rail and Inland Navigation Vessels (CRTD), Geneva, 1989

Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Basel Convention), Basel, 1989

Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents, Helsinki, 1992

Convention to Ban the Importation into Forum Island Countries of Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes and to Control the Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within the South Pacific Region (Waigani Convention), Waigani, 1995

European Agreement Concerning the International Carriage of Dangerous Goods by Road (ADR), Geneva 1957

FAO International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, Rome, 1985

2. Major International Marine Accords:

Global Conventions

Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention 1972), London, 1972

International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by Protocol of 1978 relation thereto (MARPOL 73/78), London, 1973 and 1978

International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage 1969 (1969 CLC), Brussels, 1969, 1976, and 1984

International Convention on the Establishment of an International Fund for Compensation for Oil Pollution Damage 1971 (1971 Fund Convention), Brussels, 1971

Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea (HNS), London 1996

International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response, and Co-operation (OPRC), London, 1990

International Convention Relation to Intervention on the High Seas in Cases of Oil Pollution Casualties (Intervention Convention), Brussels, 1969

United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), Montego Bay, 1982

Regional Conventions

Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping from Ships and Aircraft (Oslo Convention), Oslo, 1972

Convention for the Prevention of Marine Pollution from Land-based Sources (Paris Convention), Paris, 1974

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention), Paris, 1992

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (1974 Helsinki Convention), Helsinki 1974

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Conventions within the UNEP Regional Seas Programme

Convention on the Protection of the Black Sea against Pollution, Bucharest, 1992

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region, Cartagena de Indias, 1983

Convention for the Protection, Management, and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region, Nairobi, 1985

Kuwait Regional Convention for Co-operation on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Pollution, [Kuwait](#), 1978

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment and Coastal Region of the Mediterranean Sea (Barcelona Convention), Barcelona, 1976

Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden Environment, Jeddah, 1982

Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region, Noumea, 1986

Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Area of the South-East Pacific, Lima, 1981

Convention for Co-operation in the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the West and Central African Region, Abidjan, 1981

3. Major Conventions Regarding Living Resources:

Marine Living Resources

Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), Canberra, 1980

International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Rio de Janeiro, 1966

International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), Washington, 1946

Nature Conservation and Terrestrial Living Resources

Antarctic Treaty, Washington, D.C., 1959

Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention), Paris, 1972

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Nairobi, 1992

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), Bonn, 1979

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Washington, D.C., 1973

Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), Ramsar, 1971

Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), Paris 1994

FAO International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, Rome, 1983

International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994 (ITTA, 1994), Geneva, 1994

Freshwater Resources

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes, Helsinki, 1992

4. Major Conventions Regarding Nuclear Safety:

Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (Assistance Convention), Vienna, 1986

Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (Notification Convention), Vienna, 1986

Convention on Nuclear Safety, Vienna, 1994

Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, Vienna, 1963

5. Major Intergovernmental Organizations

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD)

European Union (EU): Environment

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

Global Environment Facility (GEF)

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds)

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Environment Policy Committee (EPOC)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

World Bank

World Food Programme (WFP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

World Trade Organization (WTO)

6. Major Non-Governmental Organizations

Atmosphere Action Network East Asia (AANE)

Climate Action Network (CAN)

Consumers International (CI)

Earth Council

Earthwatch Institute

Environmental Liaison Centre International (ELCI)

European Environmental Bureau (EEB)

Forest Stewardship Council (FSC)

Friends of the Earth International (FoEI)

Greenpeace International

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)

International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)

International Solar Energy Society (ISES)

IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Pesticide Action Network (PAN)

Sierra Club

Society for International Development (SID)

Third World Network (TWN)

Water Environment Federation (WEF)

Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

World Federalist Movement (WFM)

World Resources Institute (WRI)

World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF)

7. Other Networking Instruments

Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)

Global Legislators for a Balanced Environment (GLOBE)

Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe (REC)

United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)

Appendices

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The demographic information for language, ethnicity and religion listed in CountryWatch content is

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-- See also list of News Wires services below, which are also used for research purposes. --

Note on Edition Dates:

The earlier edition dates are noted above because they were used to formulate the original Country Reviews and serve as the baseline for some of the information covered. Later editions have been used in some cases, and are cited as such, while other more recent online resources (cited above) contain recent and ever-updated data sets used for research.

Sources: [Economic Overview](#)

BP Statistical Review of World Energy. URL: <http://www.bp.com/genericsection.do?categoryId=92&contentId=7005893>

BP Statistical Review of World Energy, June 1998. 1998 to present. Page 1.C. London: The British Petroleum Company.

International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund Publication Services.

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International Labour Office, World Employment Report, 1998-99. 1998 to present. Geneva: International Labour Office.

United Nations Statistical Division Online. URL: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>

United Nations Statistics Division, Monthly Bulletin of Statistics (MBS On Line), November 1999 Edition. 1999 to present. New York: United Nations.

United Nations, Statistical Yearbook, 43rd Issue. 1999. 1999 to present New York: United Nations.

United Nations, Food & Agricultural Organization, FAOSTAT Database. URL : <http://apps.fao.org/>
United Nations, Comtrade Data Base, <http://comtrade.un.org/>

United States Department of Energy, Country Analysis Briefs.
URL:<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/contents.html>

United States Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics Database

United States Geological Service, Mineral Information

United States Department of State, Country Commercial Guides. Washington, D.C. [United States](#) of America. URL:http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/business/com_guides/index.html

The World Bank, Global Development Finance, Country Tables. 1999 to present. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

The World Bank Group, World Development Indicators. 1999 to present. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

Yearbook of Tourism Statistics, World Tourism Organization. 1998 to present. Madrid: The World Tourism Organization.

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Methodology Notes for Economic Data:

Estimates by CountryWatch.com of GDP in dollars in most countries are made by converting local currency GDP data from the International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook to US dollars by market exchange rates estimated from the International Monetary Fund International Financial Statistics and projected out by the CountryWatch Macroeconomic Forecast. Real GDP was estimated by deflating current dollar values by the US GDP Implicit Price Deflator.

Exceptions to this method were used for:

- Bosnia-Herzegovina
- Nauru
- Cuba
- Palau
- Holy See
- San Marino
- Korea, North
- [Serbia](#) & Montenegro
- Liberia
- Somalia
- Liechtenstein
- Tonga
- Monaco
- Tuvalu

In these cases, other data and/or estimates by CountryWatch.com were utilized.

Investment Overview

C o r r u p t i o n a n d T r a n s p a r e n c y I n d e x . U R L :
<http://www.transparency.org/documents/cpi/2001/cpi2001.html#cpi>
<<http://www.transparency.org/documents/>

Deloitte Tax Guides. URL: <http://www.deloittetaxguides.com>

Trade Policy Reviews by the World Trade Organization . URL: http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/tp_rep_e.htm#bycountry

United States Department of Energy, Country Analysis Briefs. URL: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/contents.html>

United States Department of State, Background Notes. URL: http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/index.html

United States Department of State, Country Commercial Guides. 1996-2006. Washington, D.C. U n i t e d S t a t e s o f A m e r i c a . U R L : http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/business/com_guides/index.html

World Bank: Doing Business. URL: <http://www.doingbusiness.org>

World Bank: Governance Indicators. URL: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance>

Social Overview

Borden, G.A., Conaway, W.A., Morrison, T. 1994. *Kiss, Bow, or Shake Hands: How to do Business in Sixty Countries*. Holbrook, Massachusetts, 1994.

Center for Disease Control. URL: <http://www.cdc.gov>

Eldis Country Profiles. URL: <http://www.eldis.org/country/index.htm>

Ethnologue. URL: <http://www.ethnologue.com/>

Government of Australia Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. URL: <http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo>

Government of Canada Foreign Affairs and International Trade. URL: http://www.voyage.gc.ca/consular_home-e.htm

Library of Congress Country Studies. URL: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/cshome.html>

Lonely Planet. URL: <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/>

Steve Kropla's Online Help For World Travelers. URL: <http://www.kropla.com/>

[United Kingdom](http://www.fco.gov.uk/) Ministry of Foreign and Commonwealth Office. URL: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

United Nations Human Development Report. URL: <http://www.undp.org/hdro>

UNICEF Statistical Database Online. URL: <http://www.unicef.org/statis/atoz.html>

[United States](http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html) Central Intelligence Agency, World Factbook. 2001. Washington, D.C.: Printing and Photography Group. URL: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

United States Department of State, Background Notes. URL: http://www.state.gov/www/background_notes/index.html

United States Department of State, Commercial and Business Affairs: Travel Tips. URL: http://www.state.gov/www/about_state/business/cba_travel.html

United States Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs. URL: <http://travel.state.gov/>

World Health Organization. URL: <http://www.who.int/home-page/>

World News Connection, National Technical Information Service. Springfield, Virginia, USA.

Internet News Service, Xinhua News Agency (U.S.) Inc. Woodside, New York. URL: <http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/>

Note on Edition Dates:

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Methodology Notes for the HDI:

Since 1990, the United Nations Development Programme, in concert with organizations across the globe, has produced the [Human Development Index](#) (or HDI). According to the UNDP, the index measures average achievement in basic human development in one simple composite index, and produces from this index a ranking of countries. The HDI is a composite of three basic components of human development: longevity, knowledge and standard of living. Longevity is measured by life expectancy. Knowledge is measured by combination of adult literacy and mean

years of schooling. Standard of living is measured by purchasing power, based on real GDP per capita (in constant US\$) adjusted for differences in international living costs (or, purchasing power parity, PPP). While the index uses these social indicators to measure national performance with regard to human welfare and development, not all countries provide the same level of information for each component needed to compute the index; therefore, as in any composite indicator, the final index is predicated on projections, predictions and weighting schemes. The index is a static measure, and thus, an incomplete measure of human welfare. In fact, the UNDP says itself the concept of human development focuses on the ends rather than the means of development and progress, examining in this manner, the average condition of all people in a given country.

Specifically, the index is calculated by determining the maximum and minimum for each of the three components (as listed above) and then measuring where each country stands in relation to these scales-expressed as a value between 0 and 1. For example, the minimum adult literary rate is zero percent, the maximum is 100 percent, and the reading skills component of knowledge in the HDI for a country where the literacy rate is 75 percent would be 0.75. The scores of all indicators are then averaged into the overall index.

For a more extensive examination of human development, as well as the ranking tables for each participating country, please visit: <http://www.undp.org>

Note on [History](#) sections

In some CountryWatch Country Reviews, open source content from the State Department Background Notes and Country Guides have been used.

Environmental Overview

Environmental Profiles: A Global Guide to Projects and People. 1993. Linda Sobel Katz, Sarah Orrick, and Robert Honig. New York: Garland Publishing.

The Environment Encyclopedia and Directory, 2nd Edition. 1998. London: Europa.

Environmental Protection Agency Global Warming Site. URL: <http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming>

Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations: Forestry. URL: <http://www.fao.org/forestry/site/sofo/en/>

Global Warming Information Page. URL: <http://globalwarming.org>

Introduction to Global [Environmental Issues](#), 2nd Edition. 1997. Kevin Pickering and Lewis Owen.

London: Routledge.

Trends: Compendium of Data on Global Change. URL: http://cdiac.esd.ornl.gov/trends/emis/em_cont.htm

United Nations Environmental Program. URL: http://www.unep.org/GEO/GEO_Products/Assessment_Reports/

United Nations Global Environmental Outlook. URL: <http://www.unep.org/geo/geo4/media/>

United States Department of Energy, Country Analysis Briefs. URL: <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/contents.html>

World Climate Data Online. URL: <http://www.worldclimate.com>

World Directory of Country Environmental Studies. 1996. The World Resource Institute.

World Factbook. US Central Intelligence Agency. Washington, D.C.: Printing and Photography Group.

1998-1999 World Resources Guide to the Global Environment by the World Resources Institute. May, 1998.

1998/1999 Yearbook of International Cooperation on Environment and Development. 1998. London: Earthscan Publications.

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Other Sources:

General information has also been used in the compilation of this review, with the courtesy of governmental agencies from this country.

News Services:

CANA Daily Bulletin. Caribbean Media Agency Ltd., St. Michael, [Barbados](#).

Central and Eastern Africa Report, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Integrated Regional Information Network for Central and Eastern Africa.

Daily News, Panafrican News Agency. Dakar, [Senegal](#).

PACNEWS, Pacific Islands Broadcasting Association. Suva, [Fiji](#).

Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. Washington D.C. USA.

Reuters News. Thomson Reuters. New York, New York. USA.

Southern Africa Report, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Integrated Regional Information Network for Southern Africa.

Voice of America, English Service. Washington D.C.

West Africa Report, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa. 1998-1999

Note: Some or all these news services have been used to research various sections of this Country Review.

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For items in a "Works Cited" list, CountryWatch.com suggests that users follow recommended patterns for indentation given in the *MLA Handbook*, 4th edition.

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Basic form, using an Internet protocol:

Author/editor. *Title of Print Version of Work*. Edition statement (if given). Publication information (Place of publication: publisher, date), if given. *Title of Electronic Work*. Medium. Available Protocol (if applicable):Site/Path/File. Access date.

Examples:

Youngblood-Coleman, Denise. *Country Review: France*. 2003. Houston, Texas: CountryWatch Publications, 2003. *Country Review:France*. Online. Available URL : http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_country.asp?vCOUNTRY=61 October, 12, 2003.

Note:

This is the citation format used when the print version is not used in the reference.

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Author/editor. "Part title." *Title of Print Version of Work*. Edition statement (if given). Publication information (Place of publication: publisher, date), if given. *Title of Electronic Work*. Medium. AvailableProtocol (if applicable): Site/Path/File. Access date.

Examples:

Youngblood-Coleman, Denise. "People." *CountryWatch.com: France*. 2003. Houston, Texas: CountryWatch Publications, 2003. *CountryWatch.com: France*. Online. Available URL : http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.asp?vCOUNTRY=61&SECTION=SOCIAL&TOPIC=CLPEO&TYPE=TEXT. October 12, 2003.

Note:

This is the citation format used when the print version is not used in the reference.

For further source citation information, please email: editor@countrywatch.com or education@countrywatch.com.

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