



## Central America and Caribbean :: Dominica

### Introduction :: Dominica

#### Background:

Dominica was the last of the Caribbean islands to be colonized by Europeans due chiefly to the fierce resistance of the native Caribs. France ceded possession to Great Britain in 1763, which made the island a colony in 1805. In 1980, two years after independence, Dominica's fortunes improved when a corrupt and tyrannical administration was replaced by that of Mary Eugenia CHARLES, the first female prime minister in the Caribbean, who remained in office for 15 years. Some 3,000 Carib Indians still living on Dominica are the only pre-Columbian population remaining in the eastern Caribbean.

### Geography :: Dominica

#### Location:

Caribbean, island between the Caribbean Sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, about half way between Puerto Rico and Trinidad and Tobago

#### Geographic coordinates:

15 25 N, 61 20 W

#### Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean

#### Area:

**total:** 751 sq km

**country comparison to the world:** 189

**land:** 751 sq km

**water:** 0 sq km

#### Area - comparative:

slightly more than four times the size of Washington, DC

#### Land boundaries:

0 km

#### Coastline:

148 km

#### Maritime claims:

**territorial sea:** 12 nm

**contiguous zone:** 24 nm

**exclusive economic zone:** 200 nm

#### Climate:

tropical; moderated by northeast trade winds; heavy rainfall

#### Terrain:

rugged mountains of volcanic origin

#### Elevation extremes:

**lowest point:** Caribbean Sea 0 m

**highest point:** Morne Diablotins 1,447 m

#### Natural resources:

timber, hydropower, arable land

#### Land use:

**arable land:** 8%

**permanent crops:** 24%

**other:** 68% (2011)

#### Irrigated land:

NA

#### Total renewable water resources:

NA

#### Freshwater withdrawal (domestic/industrial/agricultural):

**total:** 0.02 cu km/yr  
**per capita:** 244.1 cu m/yr (2004)

**Natural hazards:**

flash floods are a constant threat; destructive hurricanes can be expected during the late summer months

**Environment - current issues:**

NA

**Environment - international agreements:**

**party to:** Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Environmental Modification, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Whaling

**signed, but not ratified:** none of the selected agreements

**Geography - note:**

known as "The Nature Island of the Caribbean" due to its spectacular, lush, and varied flora and fauna, which are protected by an extensive natural park system; the most mountainous of the Lesser Antilles, its volcanic peaks are cones of lava craters and include Boiling Lake, the second-largest, thermally active lake in the world

**People and Society :: Dominica**

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**Nationality:**

**noun:** Dominican(s)  
**adjective:** Dominican

**Ethnic groups:**

black 86.8%, mixed 8.9%, Carib Amerindian 2.9%, white 0.8%, other 0.7% (2001 census)

**Languages:**

English (official), French patois

**Religions:**

Roman Catholic 61.4%, Protestant 20.6% (Seventh-Day Adventist 6%, Pentecostal 5.6%, Baptist 4.1%, Methodist 3.7%, Church of God 1.2%), Jehovah's Witnesses 1.2%, other Christian 7.7%, Rastafarian 1.3%, other or unspecified 1.6%, none 6.1% (2001 census)

**Population:**

73,286 (July 2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 202

**Age structure:**

**0-14 years:** 22.3% (male 8,354/female 7,994)  
**15-24 years:** 17.2% (male 6,475/female 6,100)  
**25-54 years:** 41.2% (male 15,337/female 14,841)  
**55-64 years:** 9% (male 3,487/female 3,074)  
**65 years and over:** 10.4% (male 3,328/female 4,296) (2013 est.)

**Median age:**

**total:** 31.7 years  
**male:** 31.2 years  
**female:** 32.1 years (2013 est.)

**Population growth rate:**

0.22% (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 176

**Birth rate:**

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

**country comparison to the world:** 130

**Death rate:**

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

**country comparison to the world:** 103

**Net migration rate:**

-5.4 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2013 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 193

**Urbanization:**

**urban population:** 67% of total population (2010)  
**rate of urbanization:** 0.3% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

**Major urban areas - population:**

ROSEAU (capital) 14,000 (2011)

**Sex ratio:**

**at birth:** 1.05 male(s)/female  
**0-14 years:** 1.04 male(s)/female  
**15-24 years:** 1.06 male(s)/female  
**25-54 years:** 1.04 male(s)/female  
**55-64 years:** 1.12 male(s)/female  
**65 years and over:** 0.77 male(s)/female  
**total population:** 1.02 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

**Infant mortality rate:**

**total:** 11.99 deaths/1,000 live births  
**country comparison to the world:** 131  
**male:** 15.99 deaths/1,000 live births  
**female:** 7.79 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

**Life expectancy at birth:**

**total population:** 76.39 years  
**country comparison to the world:** 78  
**male:** 73.43 years  
**female:** 79.49 years (2013 est.)

**Total fertility rate:**

2.06 children born/woman (2013 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 119

**Health expenditures:**

7.4% of GDP (2010)  
**country comparison to the world:** 74

**Physicians density:**

0.5 physicians/1,000 population (1997)

**Hospital bed density:**

3.8 beds/1,000 population (2010)

**Drinking water source:**

**improved:**  
urban: 96% of population  
rural: 92% of population  
total: 95% of population  
**unimproved:**  
urban: 4% of population  
rural: 8% of population  
total: 5% of population (2000 est.)

**Sanitation facility access:**

**improved:**  
urban: 80% of population  
rural: 84% of population  
total: 81% of population  
**unimproved:**  
urban: 20% of population  
rural: 16% of population  
total: 19% of population (2000 est.)

**HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:**

NA

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

NA

**HIV/AIDS - deaths:**

NA

**Obesity - adult prevalence rate:**

24.9% (2008)  
**country comparison to the world:** 61

**Education expenditures:**

3.5% of GDP (2010)  
**country comparison to the world:** 126

**Literacy:**

**definition:** age 15 and over has ever attended school  
**total population:** 94%  
**male:** 94%  
**female:** 94% (2003 est.)

**School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):**

**total:** 13 years  
**male:** 13 years  
**female:** 13 years (2008)

**Unemployment, youth ages 15-24:**

**total:** 26%  
**country comparison to the world:** 37  
**male:** 26.2%  
**female:** 25.4% (2001)

**Government:: Dominica**

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**Country name:**

**conventional long form:** Commonwealth of Dominica  
**conventional short form:** Dominica

**Government type:**

parliamentary democracy

**Capital:**

**name:** Roseau  
**geographic coordinates:** 15 18 N, 61 24 W  
**time difference:** UTC-4 (1 hour ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

**Administrative divisions:**

10 parishes; Saint Andrew, Saint David, Saint George, Saint John, Saint Joseph, Saint Luke, Saint Mark, Saint Patrick, Saint Paul, Saint Peter

**Independence:**

3 November 1978 (from the UK)

**National holiday:**

Independence Day, 3 November (1978)

**Constitution:**

3 November 1978

**Legal system:**

common law based on the English model

**International law organization participation:**

accepts compulsory ICJ jurisdiction; accepts ICtJ jurisdiction

**Suffrage:**

18 years of age; universal

**Executive branch:**

**chief of state:** President Eliud WILLIAMS (since 17 September 2012)

**head of government:** Prime Minister Roosevelt SKERRIT (since 8 January 2004)

**cabinet:** Cabinet appointed by the president on the advice of the prime minister

(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#).)

**elections:** president elected by the House of Assembly for a five-year term; election last held on 1 October 2003 (next to be held in October 2013); prime minister appointed by the president

**election results:** Eliud WILLIAMS was elected president following the resignation of Nicholas LIVERPOOL

**Legislative branch:**

unicameral House of Assembly (32 seats; 9 members appointed, 21 elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms, 1 speaker elected from among persons who are not members of the House, responsible for the management and general administration of the House, and one ex-officio Clerk of the House)

**elections:** last held on 18 December 2009 (next to be held in 2015); note - tradition dictates that the election will be held within five years of the last election, but technically it is five years from the first seating of parliament (12 May 2005) plus a 90-day grace period

**election results:** percent of vote by party - DLP 61.2%, UWP 34.9%, other 3.9%; seats by party - DLP 18, UWP 3

**Judicial branch:**

**highest court(s):** The Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (ECSC) is the itinerant superior court of record for the 9-member Organization of Eastern Caribbean States to include Dominica; the ECSC - based on St. Lucia - is headed by the chief justice and is comprised of the Court of Appeal with 3 justices and the High Court with 16 judges; sittings of the Court of Appeal and High Court rotate among the 9 member states; 2 High Court judges reside in Dominica

note - Dominica is a member of the Caribbean Court of Justice

**judge selection and term of office:** ECSC chief justice appointed by Her Majesty, Queen ELIZABETH II; other justices and judges appointed by the Judicial and Legal Services Commission; Court of Appeal justices appointed for life with mandatory retirement at age 65; High Court judges appointed for life with mandatory retirement at age 62

**subordinate courts:** Court of Summary Jurisdiction; magistrates' courts

**Political parties and leaders:**

Dominica Freedom Party or DFP [Judith PESTAINA]

Dominica Labor Party or DLP [Roosevelt SKERRIT]

Dominica United Workers Party or UWP [Hector JOHN]

**Political pressure groups and leaders:**

Dominica Liberation Movement or DLM (a small leftist party)

**International organization participation:**

ACP, AOSIS, C, Caricom, CD, CDB, CELAC, Commonwealth of Nations, ECCU, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, ISO (subscriber), ITU, ITUC (NGOs), MIGA, NAM, OAS, OECS, OIF, OPANAL, OPCW, Petrocaribe, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WCL, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

**Diplomatic representation in the US:**

**chief of mission:** Ambassador Hubert J. CHARLES

**chancery:** 3216 New Mexico Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20016

**telephone:** [1] (202) 364-6781

**FAX:** [1] (202) 364-6791

**consulate(s) general:** New York

**Diplomatic representation from the US:**

the US does not have an embassy in Dominica; the US Ambassador to Barbados is accredited to Dominica

**Flag description:**

green, with a centered cross of three equal bands - the vertical part is yellow (hoist side), black, and white and the horizontal part is yellow (top), black, and white; superimposed in the center of the cross is a red disk bearing a Sisserou parrot, unique to Dominica, encircled by 10 green, five-pointed stars edged in yellow; the 10 stars represent the 10 administrative divisions (parishes); green symbolizes the island's lush vegetation; the triple-colored cross represents the Christian Trinity; the yellow color denotes sunshine, the main agricultural products (citrus and bananas), and the native Carib Indians; black is for the rich soil and the African heritage of most citizens; white signifies rivers, waterfalls, and the purity of aspirations; the red disc stands for social justice

**National symbol(s):**

Sisserou parrot

**National anthem:**

**name:** "Isle of Beauty"

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**lyrics/music:** Wilfred Oscar Morgan POND/Lemuel McPherson CHRISTIAN

**note:** adopted 1967

## Economy :: Dominica

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### Economy - overview:

The Dominican economy has been dependent on agriculture - primarily bananas - in years past, but increasingly has been driven by tourism as the government seeks to promote Dominica as an "ecotourism" destination. Moreover, Dominica has successfully developed an offshore medical education sector. In order to diversify the island's economy, the government is also attempting to develop an offshore financial sector and plans to sign agreements with the private sector to develop geothermal energy resources. In 2003, the government began a comprehensive restructuring of the economy - including elimination of price controls, privatization of the state banana company, and tax increases - to address an economic and financial crisis and to meet IMF requirements. Hurricane Dean struck the island in August 2007 causing damages equivalent to 20% of GDP. In 2009, the economy contracted as a result of the global recession and growth remains anemic. Economic growth in 2010-11 was about 1%. Although debt levels in 2012 continued to exceed pre-recession levels, the debt burden notably declined from 80% to approximately 70% of GDP.

### GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$1.018 billion (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 204

\$1.014 billion (2011 est.)

\$995.4 million (2010 est.)

**note:** data are in 2012 US dollars

### GDP (official exchange rate):

\$497 million (2012 est.)

### GDP - real growth rate:

0.4% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 173

1.9% (2011 est.)

0.7% (2010 est.)

### GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$14,400 (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 94

\$14,300 (2011 est.)

\$14,100 (2010 est.)

**note:** data are in 2012 US dollars

### Gross national saving:

9.2% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 128

8.5% of GDP (2011 est.)

7.8% of GDP (2010 est.)

### GDP - composition, by end use:

**household consumption:** 77.7%

**government consumption:** 18%

**investment in fixed capital:** 25.2%

**investment in inventories:** 0%

**exports of goods and services:** 38.1%

**imports of goods and services:** -59%  
(2012 est.)

### GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

**agriculture:** 13.6%

**industry:** 15%

**services:** 71.4% (2012 est.)

### Agriculture - products:

bananas, citrus, mangos, root crops, coconuts, cocoa

**note:** forest and fishery potential not exploited

### Industries:

soap, coconut oil, tourism, copra, furniture, cement blocks, shoes

### Industrial production growth rate:

NA%

### Labor force:

25,000 (2000 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 207

### Labor force - by occupation:

**agriculture:** 40%

**industry:** 32%

**services:** 28% (2002 est.)

### Unemployment rate:

23% (2000 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 170

### Population below poverty line:

29% (2009 est.)

**Household income or consumption by percentage share:**

**lowest 10%:** NA%

**highest 10%:** NA%

**Budget:**

**revenues:** \$148.1 million

**expenditures:** \$185.2 million (2012 est.)

**Taxes and other revenues:**

29.8% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 92

**Budget surplus (+) or deficit (-):**

-7.5% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 188

**Public debt:**

70% of GDP (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 39

78% of GDP (2009 est.)

**Fiscal year:**

1 July - 30 June

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):**

2.3% (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 55

2.4% (2011 est.)

**Central bank discount rate:**

6.5% (31 December 2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 47

6.5% (31 December 2009 est.)

**Commercial bank prime lending rate:**

9% (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 104

8.88% (31 December 2011 est.)

**Stock of narrow money:**

\$70.15 million (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 184

\$70.29 million (31 December 2011 est.)

**Stock of broad money:**

\$413.7 million (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 181

\$383 million (31 December 2011 est.)

**Stock of domestic credit:**

\$296.3 million (31 December 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 182

\$280.4 million (31 December 2011 est.)

**Current account balance:**

-\$117.4 million (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 69

-\$84.71 million (2011 est.)

**Exports:**

\$41 million (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 198

\$33.04 million (2011 est.)

**Exports - commodities:**

bananas, soap, bay oil, vegetables, grapefruit, oranges

**Exports - partners:**

Japan 38.2%, Antigua and Barbuda 8.4%, Jamaica 7.4%, Guyana 7.1%, Paraguay 6.1%, Trinidad and Tobago 4.6% (2012)

**Imports:**

\$218.6 million (2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 204

\$192.6 million (2011 est.)

**Imports - commodities:**

manufactured goods, machinery and equipment, food, chemicals

**Imports - partners:**

Japan 37.5%, US 14.9%, Trinidad and Tobago 14.2%, China 4.9%, Colombia 4% (2012)

**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:**

\$85 million (31 December 2012 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 165  
\$81.12 million (31 December 2011 est.)

#### **Debt - external:**

\$276.5 million (31 December 2012 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 183  
\$283.9 million (31 December 2011 est.)

#### **Exchange rates:**

East Caribbean dollars (XCD) per US dollar -  
2.7 (2012 est.)  
2.7 (2011 est.)  
2.7 (2010 est.)  
2.7 (2009)

### **Energy:: Dominica**

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#### **Electricity - production:**

85.5 million kWh (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 199

#### **Electricity - consumption:**

79.52 million kWh (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 199

#### **Electricity - exports:**

0 kWh (2010 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 187

#### **Electricity - imports:**

0 kWh (2010 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 179

#### **Electricity - installed generating capacity:**

22,200 kW (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 193

#### **Electricity - from fossil fuels:**

72.1% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 102

#### **Electricity - from nuclear fuels:**

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 77

#### **Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:**

27% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 82

#### **Electricity - from other renewable sources:**

0.9% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 70

#### **Crude oil - production:**

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 126

#### **Crude oil - exports:**

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 102

#### **Crude oil - imports:**

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 177

#### **Crude oil - proved reserves:**

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 124

#### **Refined petroleum products - production:**

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 171

#### **Refined petroleum products - consumption:**

918 bbl/day (2011 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 206

#### **Refined petroleum products - exports:**

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)  
**country comparison to the world:** 171

#### **Refined petroleum products - imports:**

911.8 bbl/day (2008 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 195

**Natural gas - production:**

0 cu m (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 121

**Natural gas - consumption:**

0 cu m (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 137

**Natural gas - exports:**

0 cu m (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 88

**Natural gas - imports:**

0 cu m (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 185

**Natural gas - proved reserves:**

0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 129

**Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:**

141,200 Mt (2010 est.)

**country comparison to the world:** 204

**Communications:: Dominica**

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**Telephones - main lines in use:**

15,500 (2010)

**country comparison to the world:** 195

**Telephones - mobile cellular:**

111,000 (2011)

**country comparison to the world:** 190

**Telephone system:**

**general assessment:** fully automatic network

**domestic:** fixed-line connections continued to decline slowly with the two active operators providing about 20 fixed-line connections per 100 persons; subscribership among the three mobile-cellular providers continued to increase with teledensity reaching 150 per 100 persons

**international:** country code - 1-767; landing points for the East Caribbean Fiber Optic System (ECFS) and the Global Caribbean Network (GCN) submarine cables providing connectivity to other islands in the eastern Caribbean extending from the British Virgin Islands to Trinidad; microwave radio relay and SHF radiotelephone links to Martinique and Guadeloupe; VHF and UHF radiotelephone links to Saint Lucia (2010)

**Broadcast media:**

no terrestrial TV service available; subscription cable TV provider offers some locally produced programming plus channels from the US, Latin America, and the Caribbean; state-operated radio broadcasts on 6 stations; privately owned radio broadcasts on about 15 stations (2007)

**Internet country code:**

.dm

**Internet hosts:**

723 (2012)

**country comparison to the world:** 175

**Internet users:**

28,000 (2009)

**country comparison to the world:** 183

**Transportation:: Dominica**

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**Airports:**

2 (2013)

**country comparison to the world:** 199

**Airports - with paved runways:**

**total:** 2

**1,524 to 2,437 m:** 1

**914 to 1,523 m:** 1 (2013)

**Roadways:**

**total:** 1,512 km

**country comparison to the world:** 177

**paved:** 762 km

**unpaved:** 750 km (2010)

**Merchant marine:**

**total:** 43

**country comparison to the world:** 73

**by type:** bulk carrier 11, cargo 22, chemical tanker 2, petroleum tanker 4, refrigerated cargo 3, roll on/roll off 1

**foreign-owned:** 32 (Australia 1, Estonia 6, Germany 5, Greece 4, India 2, Latvia 2, Norway 1, Russia 3, Saudi Arabia 2, Syria 4, Turkey 1, Ukraine 1)

**registered in other countries:** 1 (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 1) (2010)

**Ports and terminals:**

major seaport(s): Portsmouth, Roseau

**Military :: Dominica**

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**Military branches:**

no regular military forces; Commonwealth of Dominica Police Force (includes Coast Guard) (2012)

**Manpower available for military service:**

males age 16-49: 19,075 (2010 est.)

**Manpower fit for military service:**

males age 16-49: 16,035

females age 16-49: 15,499 (2010 est.)

**Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:**

male: 675

female: 636 (2010 est.)

**Military expenditures:**

NA

**Transnational Issues :: Dominica**

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**Disputes - international:**

Dominica is the only Caribbean state to challenge Venezuela's sovereignty claim over Aves Island and joins the other island nations in challenging whether the feature sustains human habitation, a criterion under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which permits Venezuela to extend its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and continental shelf claims over a large portion of the eastern Caribbean Sea

**Illicit drugs:**

transshipment point for narcotics bound for the US and Europe; minor cannabis producer (2008)