



Central America and Caribbean :: Montserrat (overseas territory of the UK)

Introduction :: Montserrat

Background:

English and Irish colonists from St. Kitts first settled on Montserrat in 1632; the first African slaves arrived three decades later. The British and French fought for possession of the island for most of the 18th century, but it finally was confirmed as a British possession in 1783. The island's sugar plantation economy was converted to small farm landholdings in the mid 19th century. Much of this island was devastated and two-thirds of the population fled abroad because of the eruption of the Soufriere Hills Volcano that began on 18 July 1995. Montserrat has endured volcanic activity since, with the last eruption occurring in July 2003.

Geography :: Montserrat

Location:

Caribbean, island in the Caribbean Sea, southeast of Puerto Rico

Geographic coordinates:

16 45 N, 62 12 W

Map references:

Central America and the Caribbean

Area:

total: 102 sq km

country comparison to the world: 226

land: 102 sq km

water: 0 sq km

Area - comparative:

about 0.6 times the size of Washington, DC

Land boundaries:

0 km

Coastline:

40 km

Maritime claims:

territorial sea: 3 nm

exclusive fishing zone: 200 nm

Climate:

tropical; little daily or seasonal temperature variation

Terrain:

volcanic island, mostly mountainous, with small coastal lowland

Elevation extremes:

lowest point: Caribbean Sea 0 m

highest point: lava dome in English's Crater (in the Soufriere Hills volcanic complex) estimated at over 930 m (2006)

Natural resources:

NEGL

Land use:

arable land: 20%

permanent crops: 0%

other: 80% (2011)

Irrigated land:

NA

Natural hazards:

volcanic eruptions; severe hurricanes (June to November)

volcanism: Soufriere Hills volcano (elev. 915 m), has erupted continuously since 1995; a massive eruption in 1997 destroyed most of the capital, Plymouth, and resulted in approximately half of the island becoming uninhabitable

Environment - current issues:

land erosion occurs on slopes that have been cleared for cultivation

Geography - note:

the island is entirely volcanic in origin and comprised of three major volcanic centers of differing ages

People and Society:: Montserrat**Nationality:**

noun: Montserratian(s)

adjective: Montserratian

Ethnic groups:

black, white

Languages:

English

Religions:

Protestant (Anglican, Methodist, Pentecostal, Seventh-Day Adventist, other Christian denominations), Roman Catholic

Population:

5,189 (July 2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 231

note: an estimated 8,000 refugees left the island following the resumption of volcanic activity in July 1995; some have returned

Age structure:

0-14 years: 26.2% (male 708/female 652)

15-24 years: 13.5% (male 357/female 341)

25-54 years: 47.9% (male 1,174/female 1,309)

55-64 years: 6.3% (male 156/female 171)

65 years and over: 6.2% (male 199/female 122) (2013 est.)

Median age:

total: 30.8 years

male: 30.3 years

female: 31.3 years (2013 est.)

Population growth rate:

0.48% (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 152

Birth rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 172

Death rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 149

Net migration rate:

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

country comparison to the world: 96

Urbanization:

urban population: 14% of total population (2010)

rate of urbanization: 2.4% annual rate of change (2010-15 est.)

Sex ratio:

at birth: 1.04 male(s)/female

0-14 years: 1.08 male(s)/female

15-24 years: 1.04 male(s)/female

25-54 years: 0.9 male(s)/female

55-64 years: 1 male(s)/female

65 years and over: 1.55 male(s)/female

total population: 1 male(s)/female (2013 est.)

Infant mortality rate:

total: 14.16 deaths/1,000 live births

country comparison to the world: 117

male: 10.86 deaths/1,000 live births

female: 17.62 deaths/1,000 live births (2013 est.)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 73.65 years

country comparison to the world: 120

male: 75.31 years

female: 71.91 years (2013 est.)

Total fertility rate:

1.28 children born/woman (2013 est.)

country comparison to the world: 216

Drinking water source:**improved:**

urban: 100% of population

rural: 100% of population

total: 100% of population (2010 est.)

Sanitation facility access:

improved:

urban: 96% of population

rural: 96% of population

total: 96% of population

unimproved:

urban: 4% of population

rural: 4% of population

total: 4% of population (2010 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:

NA

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:

NA

HIV/AIDS - deaths:

NA

Education expenditures:

5.8% of GDP (2009)

country comparison to the world: 43

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over has ever attended school

total population: 97%

male: 97%

female: 97% (1970 est.)

School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education):

total: 15 years

male: 14 years

female: 17 years (2007)

Government:: Montserrat

Country name:

conventional long form: none

conventional short form: Montserrat

Dependency status:

overseas territory of the UK

Government type:

NA

Capital:

name: Plymouth

geographic coordinates: 16 42 N, 62 13 W

time difference: UTC-4 (1 hour ahead of Washington, DC during Standard Time)

note: Plymouth was abandoned in 1997 because of volcanic activity; interim government buildings have been built at Brades Estate in the Carr's Bay/Little Bay vicinity at the northwest end of Montserrat

Administrative divisions:

3 parishes; Saint Anthony, Saint Georges, Saint Peter

Independence:

none (overseas territory of the UK)

National holiday:

Birthday of Queen ELIZABETH II, second Saturday in June (1926)

Constitution:

Montserrat Constitution Order 2010, effective 1 September 2011

Legal system:

English common law

Suffrage:

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:

chief of state: Queen ELIZABETH II (since 6 February 1952); represented by Governor Adrian DAVIS (since 8 April 2011)

head of government: Premier Rueben T. MEADE (since 27 September 2011); note - the office of premier came into effect with the new Constitution Order; he replaces the Chief Minister

cabinet: Executive Council consists of the governor, the premier, 3 other ministers, the attorney general, and the finance secretary
(For more information visit the [World Leaders website](#) )

elections: the monarchy is hereditary; governor appointed by the monarch; following legislative elections, the leader of the majority party usually becomes premier

Legislative branch:

unicameral Legislative Council (11 seats; 9 members popularly elected to serve five-year terms; the attorney general and financial secretary sit as ex-officio members)

elections: last held on 8 September 2009 (next to be held by 2014)

election results: percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - MCAP 6, independents 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 Montserrat; the ECSC - with its headquarters 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; 1 judge of the Supreme Court is a resident of Montserrat and presides over the High Court
note - Montserrat is also a member of the Caribbean Court of Justice

judge selection and term of office: Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court 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: magistrate's court

Political parties and leaders:

Montserrat Democratic Party or MDP [Lowell LEWIS]

Movement for Change and Prosperity or MCAP [Roselyn CASSELL-SEALY]

New People's Liberation Movement or NPLM [John A. OSBORNE]

Political pressure groups and leaders:

NA

International organization participation:

Caricom, CDB, Interpol (subbureau), OECS, UPU

Diplomatic representation in the US:

none (overseas territory of the UK)

Diplomatic representation from the US:

none (overseas territory of the UK)

Flag description:

blue, with the flag of the UK in the upper hoist-side quadrant and the Montserratian coat of arms centered in the outer half of the flag; the arms feature a woman in green dress, Erin, the female personification of Ireland, standing beside a yellow harp and embracing a large dark cross with her right arm; Erin and the harp are symbols of Ireland reflecting the territory's Irish ancestry; blue represents awareness, trustworthiness, determination, and righteousness

National anthem:

note: as a territory of the United Kingdom, "God Save the Queen" is official (see United Kingdom)

[▶ PLAY ANTHEM](#)

Economy:: Montserrat

Economy - overview:

Severe volcanic activity, which began in July 1995, has put a damper on this small, open economy. A catastrophic eruption in June 1997 closed the airport and seaports, causing further economic and social dislocation. Two-thirds of the 12,000 inhabitants fled the island. Some began to return in 1998 but lack of housing limited the number. The agriculture sector continued to be affected by the lack of suitable land for farming and the destruction of crops. Prospects for the economy depend largely on developments in relation to the volcanic activity and on public sector construction activity. Half of the island remains uninhabitable. In January 2013, the EU announced the disbursement of a \$55.2 million aid package to Montserrat in order to boost the country's economic recovery, with a specific focus on public finance management, public sector reform, and prudent economic management.

GDP (purchasing power parity):

\$43.78 million (2006 est.)

country comparison to the world: 225

GDP (official exchange rate):

SNA

GDP - real growth rate:

3.5% (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 98

GDP - per capita (PPP):

\$8,500 (2006 est.)

country comparison to the world: 129

GDP - composition, by end use:

household consumption: 95.7%

government consumption: 53.4%

investment in fixed capital: 35.2%

investment in inventories: 0%

exports of goods and services: 23.6%

imports of goods and services: -107.9%
(2012 est.)

GDP - composition, by sector of origin:

agriculture: 1.6%

industry: 23.2%

services: 75.1% (2012 est.)

Agriculture - products:

cabbages, carrots, cucumbers, tomatoes, onions, peppers; livestock products

Industries:

tourism, rum, textiles, electronic appliances

Industrial production growth rate:

NA%

Labor force:

4,521 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 223

Unemployment rate:

6% (1998 est.)

country comparison to the world: 60

Population below poverty line:

NA%

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

lowest 10%: NA%

highest 10%: NA%

Budget:

revenues: \$31.4 million

expenditures: \$37.04 million (2011 est.)

Fiscal year:

1 April - 31 March

Inflation rate (consumer prices):

3.3% (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 102

3.7% (2011 est.)

Central bank discount rate:

10.99% (31 December 2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 53

6.5% (31 December 2009 est.)

Commercial bank prime lending rate:

8.3% (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 109

8.56% (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of narrow money:

\$16.07 million (31 December 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 189

\$15.25 million (31 December 2011 est.)

Stock of broad money:

\$71.33 million (31 December 2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 191

\$63.19 million (31 December 2010 est.)

Stock of domestic credit:

\$5.185 million (31 December 2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 190

\$12.59 million (31 December 2010 est.)

Exports:

\$3.6 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 217

\$1.26 million (2011 est.)

Exports - commodities:

electronic components, plastic bags, apparel; hot peppers, limes, live plants; cattle

Imports:

\$30 million (2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 218

\$26.32 million (2011 est.)

Imports - commodities:

machinery and transportation equipment, foodstuffs, manufactured goods, fuels, lubricants, and related materials

Reserves of foreign exchange and gold:

\$24.81 million (31 December 2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 168

Debt - external:

\$8.9 million (1997)

country comparison to the world: 197

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 :: Montserrat

Electricity - production:

22 million kWh (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 211

Electricity - consumption:

20.46 million kWh (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 211

Electricity - exports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 97

Electricity - imports:

0 kWh (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 209

Electricity - installed generating capacity:

10,000 kW (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 202

Electricity - from fossil fuels:

100% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 24

Electricity - from nuclear fuels:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 133

Electricity - from hydroelectric plants:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 182

Electricity - from other renewable sources:

0% of total installed capacity (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 154

Crude oil - production:

0 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 161

Crude oil - exports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 147

Crude oil - imports:

0 bbl/day (2009 est.)

country comparison to the world: 92

Crude oil - proved reserves:

0 bbl (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 160

Refined petroleum products - production:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 202

Refined petroleum products - consumption:

1,000 bbl/day (2011 est.)

country comparison to the world: 201

Refined petroleum products - exports:

0 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 197

Refined petroleum products - imports:

572.6 bbl/day (2008 est.)

country comparison to the world: 201

Natural gas - production:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 161

Natural gas - consumption:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 168

Natural gas - exports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 140

Natural gas - imports:

0 cu m (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 93

Natural gas - proved reserves:

0 cu m (1 January 2012 est.)

country comparison to the world: 165

Carbon dioxide emissions from consumption of energy:

147,100 Mt (2010 est.)

country comparison to the world: 202

Communications :: Montserrat

Telephones - main lines in use:

2,600 (2010)

country comparison to the world: 216

Telephones - mobile cellular:

4,200 (2010)

country comparison to the world: 213

Telephone system:

general assessment: modern and fully digitalized

domestic: combined fixed-line and mobile-cellular teledensity exceeds 100 per 100 persons

international: country code - 1-664; landing point for the East Caribbean Fiber System (ECFS) optic submarine cable with links to 13 other islands in the eastern Caribbean extending from the British Virgin Islands to Trinidad (2011)

Broadcast media:

Radio Montserrat, a public radio broadcaster, transmits on 1 station and has a repeater transmission to a second station; repeater transmissions from the GEM Radio Network of Trinidad and Tobago provide another 2 radio stations; cable and satellite TV available (2007)

Internet country code:

.ms

Internet hosts:

2,431 (2012)

country comparison to the world: 160

Internet users:

1,200 (2009)

country comparison to the world: 213

Transportation :: Montserrat

Airports:

1 (2013)

country comparison to the world: 225

Airports - with paved runways:

total: 1

under 914 m: 1 (2013)

Roadways:

note: volcanic eruptions that began in 1995 destroyed most of the 227 km road system; a new road infrastructure has been built on the north end of the island (2008)

Ports and terminals:

Little Bay, Plymouth

Military :: Montserrat

Military branches:

no regular military forces; Royal Montserrat Police Force (2011)

Manpower available for military service:

males age 16-49: 1,353 (2010 est.)

Manpower fit for military service:

males age 16-49: 1,135

females age 16-49: 1,223 (2010 est.)

Manpower reaching militarily significant age annually:

male: 35

female: 34 (2010 est.)

Military - note:

defense is the responsibility of the UK

Transnational Issues :: Montserrat

Disputes - international:

none

Illicit drugs:

transshipment point for South American narcotics destined for the US and Europe