

Martinique

Overview:

Martinique is the second territory of all the French overseas departments, and it has one of the highest population densities in the Antilles. Martinique's economy is typically Caribbean in that it depends largely on tourism. As one of the most popular areas in the Caribbean, Martinique has a flourishing cruise ship business that brings tourists from Canada, France, and the United States. Martinique also relies heavily on subsidies provided by France for economic stability. Politically, Martinique has considerable power to govern itself at a local level, and as a result of demanding independence from France (although independence has not been granted), the island people were given greater autonomy over their own affairs. Similar to Guadeloupe, Martinique does not have any legislative power, nor can they issue regulations.

Territory:

Total area: 1100 km² (687.5 mi²); land 1060 km² (662.5 mi²); water 40 km² (25 mi²); coastline 350 km (219 mi). Lowest point: Caribbean Sea - 0 m; highest point: Montagne Pelee 1377 m.

Location:

Caribbean island between the Caribbean sea and the North Atlantic Ocean, north of Trinidad and Tobago;

Latitude and Longitude:

Martinique does not observe daylight savings time. 14° 40 N, 61° 00 W

Time Zone:

GMT -4

Total Land Area:

1100

EEZ:

200

Climate:

Tropical, moderated by trade winds; rainy season (June to October); vulnerable to devastating cyclones (hurricanes) every 8 years on average; average temperatures 17.30 C (63.140 F); humid.

Natural Resources:

coastal scenery and beaches, cultivable land.

ECONOMY:

Total GDP:	
2003	6,117,000,000.00 USD

Per Capita GDP:	
2003	14,241.00 USD

% of GDP per Sector:			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1997	6%	11%	83%

% of Population Employed by Sector			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
1999	7.6%	17.5%	74.9%

External Aid/Remittances:

Western (non-US) countries, ODA and OOF bilateral commitments (1970 - 88): \$9.9 billion.

Growth:

not available

Labour Force:	
1998	165,900
1997	170,000
1992	160,000

Unemployment	
Year:	Unemployment Rate (% of pop.)
1998	27.2%

Industry:

The economy is based on sugarcane, bananas, tourism, and light industry. Agriculture accounts for about 6% of GDP and the small industrial sector for 11%. Sugar production has declined, with most of the sugarcane now used for the production of rum. Banana exports are increasing, going mostly to France. The bulk of meat, vegetable, and grain requirements must be imported, contributing to a chronic trade deficit that requires large annual transfers of aid from France.(2006)

Niche Industry:

unique cuisine (blend of French and Creole); towns and villages offer certain specialties like Saint-Pierre and its museum of artifacts from the 1902 eruption of Mont Pelee which killed 30 000 residents; carnivals take place throughout the year to celebrate various holidays like Easter; water sports including sailing, yachting, scuba-diving; hiking around Mont Pelee; and mountain biking around the island.

Tourism:

Tourism, which employs more than 11,000 people, has become more important than agricultural exports as a source of foreign exchange.(2006)

Imports and Exports:	
Tot. Value of Imports	250,000,000.00 USD (1997)
From Eu:	
Import Partners (EU:)	
Partners Outside EU:	Venezuela 6%, US 3% (1997)
Import Partners:	Total value of imports.\$2 billion c.i.f. (1997) France 62%, Germany 4%, Italy 4%,(1997)
Tot. Value of Exports	()
To Eu:	
Export Partners:	
Partners Outside EU::	
Export Partners:	France 45%, Guadeloupe 28% (1997)
Main Imports:	Imports - commodities: petroleum products, crude oil, foodstuffs, construction materials, vehicles, clothing and other consumer goods
Main Exports:	commodities: refined petroleum products, bananas, rum, pineapples

**TRANSPORTATION/ACCESS****External:****Number of Airports:**

An international airport is located just east of Fort-de-France at Lamentin. The airport receives regular flights from Air Canada, Air France, and American Airlines.

Number of Main Ports:

Small coastal steamers connect various points around the island with two main ports: Fort-de-France and La Trinite. Martinique maintains regular air and sea links with France and North America. The main port, Fort-de-France, receives ships with cargo, as well as cruise ships with passengers on a regular basis.

Internal:**Air****Road:**

The road system in Martinique is excellent. Many coastal towns are connected to Fort-de-France by an expressway. There is a local bus service on the island and agencies are available to rent cars, scooters, bikes, etc.

Sea:**Other Forms of Transportation:****Economic Zones:****Energy Policy:**

Martinique is conscious of its use of petroleum products to generate electricity. In an effort to reduce the use of non-renewable energy sources, Martinique is working toward developing sustainable energy programs that use resources such as bagasse, wind energy, and geothermal energy. By using renewable resources such as these, Martinique believes this will be beneficial in the following ways: first, there will be a reduction in pollution, thus protecting the environment; second, using natural renewable sources to produce energy will reduce generation and consumption costs, thus reducing the overall cost to residents to use electricity; third, using renewable energies instead of imported oil provides more jobs locally in Departments with high unemployment rates like Martinique. Furthermore, residents living far away from the electricity grid can have more access to electricity because of solar power, wind energy, geothermal energy, etc.

	Type	Sector

Year	Total Energy Production (Mwh)	Thermic (Mwh)	Geothermic (Mwh)	Other (Mwh)	Total Energy Consumption (Mwh)	Domestic (Mwh)	Commercial (Mwh)	Public Service (Mwh)	Industry (Mwh)	Public Lighting (Mwh)
2000	1,125,000,000	0	0	0	1,046,000,000	0	0	0	418,400,000	0



Official Currency:
Euro (EUR)

Banking and Insurance:

Number of Banks and Credit Unions:
Number of Agricultural Credit Unions:
Number of Insurance Companies:

Most major French banks available in Martinique, including Credit Martiniquais, Banque des Antilles Francaises, Banque Nationale de Paris, Credit Agricole, and the Societe Generale. Also available are locally established insurance companies that are representatives of larger international insurance companies.

Financial Services:

Communications/E-Commerce:

Instant internet connection is not yet widely available in Martinique, but it is growing quite quickly. Economic and tourism websites widely available in English and/or French.

Public Ownership:

Land Use:

Arable land: 10.38%; permanent crops 9.43%; other 80.19% (2001)

Agriculture/Forestry:

pineapples, avocados, bananas, flowers, vegetables, sugarcane. Irrigated land: 70 sq km (2003)

Marine Activity:

Fishing:

Territorial Sea: 12 nautical miles; exclusive economic zone: 200 nautical miles

Marine Life:

Critical Issues:

Illicit Drugs (Transnational Issue) Transshipment point for cocaine and marijuana bound for U.S. and Europe. Debrouillardism Many residents in Martinique are employed in regular public sector jobs. However, many residents also engage in an activity known as debrouillardism. This is where residents supplement their income by working at another job, but they are not on the formal payroll. They are working "under the table," usually for cash. In some cases, residents may be employed in an illegal or immoral activity, or they may be working at another entrepreneurial occupation such as making and selling clothing garments. Debrouillardism is necessary according to Martiniquais because they are a consumerist society; citizens must have the best cars, cell phones, the latest fashions, etc. To afford such luxuries, supplemental income is necessary. Debrouillardism has historical roots, but it is also prominent in Martinique today because France has created a false economy for the island. This false and very dependent economy has allowed the island to maintain high standards of living – some of the highest in the Caribbean – as well as record high levels of personal debt, and remarkably high levels of unemployment. France's subsidies and transfer payments are not used productively to increase growth in business; rather, they are tied to the welfare-styled developments to support the high standard consumerist lifestyle enjoyed by the Martiniquais.

JURISDICTIONAL RESOURCES

Capital:

Fort-de-France

Political System:

France has an original political system because the country has an executive headed by two officials: the President and the Prime Minister. The French Constitution establishes a semi-presidential system where the President has a significant influence, but the decision-making power lies mainly in the French National Assembly. The Chief of State is the President of the Republic of France. The French President is elected by popular vote for a five-year term. The President appoints a Prefect to govern each overseas department, and this appointment is made on the advice of the French Ministry of the Interior. The Prefect is assisted by two secretary generals and two under-prefects: one for Pointe-a-Pitre and one for the Northern Islands. The Heads of the Government are the President of the General Council and the President of the Regional Council. The Presidents of the General and Regional Councils are elected by their respective members. The Legislative Branch consists of the General Council and the Regional Council; members of both councils are elected by popular vote., and they serve six-year terms. Martinique elects two representatives to the French Senate, and they elect four representatives to the French National Assembly. France is a unitary state, meaning that its subdivisions do not have constitutional status. As such, various legal subdivisions (regions, departments, and communes) have various attributions, and the national government is prohibited from intruding into their legal normal operations.

Political Parties:

Martinique Communist Party (PCM); Martinique Independence Movement (MIM); Martinique Progressive Party (PPM); Martinique Socialist Part (PMS); Movement of Democrats and Ecologists for a Sovereign Martinique or Modemas; Rally for the Republic (RPR); Socialist Revolution Group (GRS); Union for French Democracy (UDF).

Important Legislation:

The French Constitution of 1958 As per the Constitution, territorial units include communes, regions, and departments, and Martinique is considered to be a department. Therefore, Martinique (and all territorial units) may make decisions in matters within their own power. Territorial units shall be self-governing through elected councils and have power to make regulations at a municipal level. Matters of national interest, administrative supervision, and the observance of the law are handled by the State Representative (representing the national government).

Principal Taxes:

Industry pays no taxes.(1999)

Associated Power:

France

Citizenship:

Martinique is a part of France, and is known as a Departement d'outre mer (DOM). It is an overseas territory of France and is a member of the European Union (EU). Residents of Martinique are citizens of France. France allows, and will often subsidize Martinique residents to attend post-secondary education in France if they choose. As well, French residents can buy property in Martinique and benefit from special tax reductions for a number of years.

Paradiplomacy:

Universal Postal Union (UPU); World Confederation of Labour (WCL); World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

HUMAN RESOURCES

Population: 436,131 (July 2006 est.) 0 - 14 years: 96,513; 15 - 64 years: 293,552; 65 years and older: 46,066; Population growth rate: 0.72% (2006 est.) Median age: total: 34.1 years male: 33.4 years female: 34.8 years (2006 est.)

2006			
Island	Area (km sq.)	Population	% of Total Population

Population:	
Year	Resident Population

Age of Population:	0-14	15-24	25-49	50-64	65 and up
2006	96513	0	0	293,552	46,066

Migration:

Net migration rate: -0.03 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2006 est.)

Crude Birth Rate:	
2006	13.75%

Life Expedctancy:

total population: 79.18 years male: 79.5 years female: 78.85 years (2006 est.)

Crude Death Rate:	
2006	6.48%

Ethnicity:

African and African-White-Indian mixture 90%; white 5%; East Indian, Chinese less than 5%.

Class Division:

There are currently no known class divisions among the citizens of Martinique, but there is a distinct division between citizens of Martinique and France. Although Martiniquais have French citizenship, the French do not consider them to be truly French. As a result, racism is a current issue, particularly for Martiniquais who reside in France. This class division between the French and Martiniquais has had, and continues to have, effects on the migration of Martiniquais to France, on the type of employment Martiniquais obtain because they are seen as low-skilled workers with less education than their French counterparts, on the type of housing Martiniquais obtain because they are viewed as a type of "foreigner" and as such are treated with in the same regard as foreigners seeking housing. As a result, Martiniquais use this division to their advantage in that they promote their "difference" from the French so that they can have a say in local and national policy-making of concern to their community existence; they exert cultural or racial pressure on the French government to gain potential political or economic benefits.

Languages:

French (official); creole patois

Religion:

Roman Catholic 85%; Protestant 10.5%; Muslim 0.5%; Hindu 0.5%; Other 3.5% (1997).

Literacy:

97.7% of population over age 15 can read and write.

Education System:

Free and compulsory education is provided to children ages 6 - 16. Martinique has primary schools, secondary schools (lycees), and vocational schools, and French is the language of instruction. Higher education is pursued both in metropolitan France – for which scholarships are often available – as well as in universities within the Caribbean.

Total Pre-schools:()	
Total Primary Schools	
First Level:	
Second Level:	
Third Level:	



Total Secondary Schools:	
Total Professional Schools	
Universities:	

Number of Schools per Island:											
		Pre-school		Elementary			High-school		Prof.	University	
		Pub	Priv	1	2	3	Pub	Priv		Pub	Priv

Students Enrolled:					
Year:	Pre-School	Elementary	High-school	Prof.	University

Teachers							
Year	Pre-School	Elementary			High-School	Prof.	University
		1	2	3			

Medical Services:

Health services and medical facilities on Martinique are both modern and comprehensive. There are 20 hospitals and clinics with specialists in most areas of medicine. Tourist operators can assist English-speaking individuals in finding an English-speaking doctor if necessary.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History:

Martinique was originally inhabited by Arawak Indians. The Arawaks were killed by the Caribs. When Columbus discovered the island, the Carib Indians were the primary inhabitants. In the mid 17th century, French settlers landed on Martinique and began to clear the forests to grow sugar cane; this caused increased tension between the French and the Carib Indians. Resulting from the tension, the French and Caribs fought, and those who survived the fighting were forcibly removed from Martinique. To harvest the sugar cane that the French had now planted, King Louis XIII authorized the use of slaves. Slaves were then brought over from Africa to work on the sugar plantations. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the British became interested in Martinique. Their interest resulted in the ownership of Martinique changing several times from French control to British control. At the same time, the issue of slavery was also under debate. It was abolished and reinstated several times while the ownership was fluctuating. In 1848, slavery was officially abolished and all slaves became French citizens. In 1902, Saint-Pierre (Martinique's capital city at the time) was destroyed by the eruption of Mont Pelee. The eruption killed 30 000; there was only one survivor who was incarcerated in a dungeon prison. In 1946, Martinique became an overseas department of France, with a status similar to those of metropolitan departments. In 1958, Martinique was given the choice between integrating with mainland France or becoming independent. Martinique chose the integration option so they could maintain stability and security. Finally, in 1974, Martinique was declared a region of France. In recent years, separatist groups have been pressuring the French government for greater autonomy of its own affairs. On several occasions, violence has occurred as residents of the island pushed for independence from France. As a result of the violence and separatist movements, Martinique received greater overseas department status and powers in the early 1980s. By taking the power and distributing it equally among local councils and leaders, then the prefects do not solely hold all the regional power.

Referenda:

Recent Significant Events:

National holiday: Bastille Day, 14 July (1789)

Music, Dance, Handicraft and Patrimony:

The Martinique government website states that Carnival celebrations in Mardi Gras capitals such as Rio, New Orleans and Trinidad are sizzling hot right through Shrove Tuesday but fizzle out with the arrival of Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. Not so in Martinique! While revelers elsewhere in the world are nursing hangovers and having their aching foreheads rubbed with ashes, the people of Martinique are just beginning the final, most exciting day of their celebration. Here Carnival runs at full tilt an extra 24 hours and, with more than 40 marching bands. Handmade drums are a major part of any cultural event. Drums are made and played here.

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