In general, information available as of 1 January 2003 was used in the preparation of The World Factbook 2003.

This page was last updated on 18 December, 2003.
**Background:** Bolivia, named after independence fighter Simon BOLIVAR, broke away from Spanish rule in 1825; much of its subsequent history has consisted of a series of nearly 200 coups and counter-coups. Comparatively democratic civilian rule was established in the 1980s, but leaders have faced difficult problems of deep-seated poverty, social unrest, and drug production. Current goals include attracting foreign investment, strengthening the educational system, resolving disputes with coca growers over Bolivia's counterdrug efforts, continuing the privatization program, and waging an anticorruption campaign.

**Geography**

**Location:** Central South America, southwest of Brazil

**Geographic coordinates:** 17 00 S, 65 00 W

**Map references:** South America

**Area:**
- total: 1,098,580 sq km
- water: 14,190 sq km
- land: 1,084,390 sq km

**Area - comparative:** slightly less than three times the size of Montana

**Land boundaries:**
- total: 6,743 km
  - border countries: Argentina 832 km, Brazil 3,400 km, Chile 861 km, Paraguay 750 km, Peru 900 km

**Coastline:** 0 km (landlocked)

**Maritime claims:** none (landlocked)

**Climate:** varies with altitude; humid and tropical to cold and semiarid

**Terrain:** rugged Andes Mountains with a highland plateau (Altiplano), hills, lowland plains of the Amazon Basin

**Elevation extremes:**
- lowest point: Rio Paraguay 90 m
- highest point: Nevado Sajama 6,542 m

**Natural resources:** tin, natural gas, petroleum, zinc, tungsten, antimony, silver, iron, lead, gold, timber, hydropower

**Land use:**
- arable land: 1.73%
- permanent crops: 0.21%
Irrigated land: 1,280 sq km (1998 est.)

Natural hazards: flooding in the northeast (March-April)

Environment - current issues: the clearing of land for agricultural purposes and the international demand for tropical timber are contributing to deforestation; soil erosion from overgrazing and poor cultivation methods (including slash-and-burn agriculture); desertification; loss of biodiversity; industrial pollution of water supplies used for drinking and irrigation


Geography - note: landlocked; shares control of Lago Titicaca, world's highest navigable lake (elevation 3,805 m), with Peru

People Bolivia

Population: 8,586,443 (July 2003 est.)

Age structure:

- 0-14 years: 37.1% (male 1,624,366; female 1,562,501)
- 15-64 years: 58.4% (male 2,452,892; female 2,561,873)
- 65 years and over: 4.5% (male 172,292; female 212,519) (2003 est.)

Median age: total: 20.8 years
- male: 20.1 years
- female: 21.5 years (2002)

Population growth rate: 1.63% (2003 est.)

Birth rate: 25.53 births/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Death rate: 7.91 deaths/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Net migration rate: -1.37 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2003 est.)

Sex ratio:
- at birth: 1.05 male(s)/female
- under 15 years: 1.04 male(s)/female
- 15-64 years: 0.96 male(s)/female
- 65 years and over: 0.81 male(s)/female
- total population: 0.98 male(s)/female (2003 est.)
Infant mortality rate:
- Total: 65.05 deaths/1,000 live births
- Female: 52.16 deaths/1,000 live births (2003 est.)
- Male: 59.75 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth:
- Total population: 64.78 years
- Male: 62.2 years
- Female: 67.48 years (2003 est.)

Total fertility rate:
- 3.23 children born/woman (2003 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:
- 0.1% - note: no country specific models provided (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:
- 4,600 (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths:
- 290 (2001 est.)

Nationality:
- Noun: Bolivian(s)
- Adjective: Bolivian

Ethnic groups:
- Quechua 30%, mestizo (mixed white and Amerindian ancestry) 30%, Aymara 25%, white 15%

Religions:
- Roman Catholic 95%, Protestant (Evangelical Methodist)

Languages:
- Spanish (official), Quechua (official), Aymara (official)

Literacy:
- Definition: age 15 and over can read and write
- Total population: 87.2%
- Male: 93.1%
- Female: 81.6% (2003 est.)

Government:

Country name:
- Conventional long form: Republic of Bolivia
- Conventional short form: Bolivia
- Local short form: Bolivia
- Local long form: Republica de Bolivia

Government type:
- Republic

Capital:
- La Paz (seat of government); Sucre (legal capital and seat of judiciary)

Administrative divisions:
- 9 departments (departamentos, singular - departamento); Chuquisaca, Cochabamba, Beni, La Paz, Oruro, Pando, Potosí, Santa Cruz, Tarija
Independence: 6 August 1825 (from Spain)

National holiday: Independence Day, 6 August (1825)

Constitution: 2 February 1967; revised in August 1994

Legal system: based on Spanish law and Napoleonic Code; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction

Suffrage: 18 years of age, universal and compulsory (married); 21 years of age, universal and compulsory (single)

Executive branch: 

*chief of state:* President Carlos Diego MESA Gisbert (since 17 October 2003); Vice President (vacant); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government 

*head of government:* President Carlos Diego MESA Gisbert (since 17 October 2003); Vice President (vacant); note - the president is both the chief of state and head of government 

*cabinet:* Cabinet appointed by the president 

*elections:* president and vice president elected on the same ticket by popular vote for five-year terms; election last held 30 June 2002 (next to be held NA June 2007) 

*election results:* as a result of no candidate winning a majority in the 30 June 2002 election, Gonzalo SANCHEZ DE LOZADA Bustamante was chosen president by Congress; Congressional votes - Gonzalo SANCHEZ DE LOZADA Bustamante 84, Evo MORALES 43; note - following the resignation of the elected president on 17 October 2003, Vice President Carlos Diego MESA Gisbert assumed the presidency

Legislative branch: bicameral National Congress or Congreso Nacional consists of Chamber of Senators or Camara de Senadores (27 seats; members are directly elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms) and Chamber of Deputies or Camara de Diputados (130 seats; members are directly elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms; note - some members are drawn from party lists, thus not directly elected) 

*elections:* Chamber of Senators and Chamber of Deputies - last held 30 June 2002 (next to be held NA June 2007) 

*election results:* Chamber of Senators - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - MNR 11, MAS 8, MIR 5, NFR 2, other 1; Chamber of Deputies - percent of vote by party - NA%; seats by party - MNR 36, MAS 27, MIR 26, NFR 25, others 16

Judicial branch: Supreme Court or Corte Suprema (judges appointed for 10-year terms by National Congress); District Courts (one in each department); provincial and local courts (to try minor cases)

Political parties and leaders: Bolivian Socialist Falange or FSB [Romel PANTOJA]; Civic Solidarity Union or UCS [Johnny FERNANDEZ]; Free Bolivia Movement or MBL [Franz BARRIOS]; Marshal of Ayacucho Institutional Vanguard or VIMA [Freddy ZABALA]; Movement of the Revolutionary Left or MIR [Jaime PAZ Zamora]; Movement Toward Socialism or MAS [Evo MORALES]; Movement Without Fear or MSM [Juan DEL
GRANADO]; Nationalist Democratic Action or ADN [Jorge Fernando QUIROGA Ramirez]; Nationalist Revolutionary Movement or MNR [Gonzalo SANCHEZ DE LOZADA]; New Republican Force or NFR [Manfred REYES-VILLA]; Pachakuti Indigenous Movement or MIP [Felipe QUISPE]; Socialist Party or PS [Jeres JUSTINIANO]

note: the MNR, MIR, and UCS comprise the ruling coalition

Political pressure groups and leaders:
- Cocalero Groups; indigenous organizations; labor unions; Sole Confederation of Campesino Workers of Bolivia or CSUTCB [Felipe QUISPE]

International organization participation:
- ECLAC, FAO, G-77, IADB, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICCt, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ISO (correspondent), ITU, LAES, LAIA, Mercosur (associate), MONUC, NAM, OAS, OPAANAL, OPCW, PCA, RG, UN, UNAMSIL, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNMIL, UNMSET, UPU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO, WTrO

Diplomatic representation in the US:
- chief of mission: Ambassador Jaime APARICIO Otero
- chancery: 3014 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008
- consulate(s) general: Miami, New York, and San Francisco
- consulate(s): Washington, DC
- FAX: [1] (202) 328-3712
- telephone: [1] (202) 483-4410

Diplomatic representation from the US:
- chief of mission: Ambassador David N. GREENLEE
- embassy: Avenida Arce 2780, San Jorge, La Paz
- mailing address: P. O. Box 425, La Paz; APO AA 34032
- telephone: [591] (2) 2430120, 2430251
- FAX: [591] (2) 2433900

Flag description:
- three equal horizontal bands of red (top), yellow, and green with the coat of arms centered on the yellow band; similar to the flag of Ghana, which has a large black five-pointed star centered in the yellow band

Economy - Bolivia

Economy overview:
- Bolivia, long one of the poorest and least developed Latin American countries, made considerable progress in the 1990s toward the development of a market-oriented economy. Successes under President SANCHEZ DE LOZADA (1993-97) included the signing of a free trade agreement with Mexico and becoming an associate member of the Southern Cone Common Market (Mercosur), as well as the privatization of the state airline, telephone company, railroad, electric power company, and oil company. Growth slowed in 1999, in part due to tight government budget policies, which limited needed appropriations for anti-poverty programs, and the fallout from the Asian financial crisis. In 2000, major civil disturbances held down growth to 2.5%. Bolivia's GDP failed to grow in 2001 due to the global slowdown and laggard domestic activity. Growth picked up slightly in 2002, but the first quarter of 2003 saw extensive civil riots and looting and loss of confidence in the government. Bolivia will remain highly dependent on foreign aid unless and until it can develop its substantial natural resources.

GDP:
purchasing power parity - $21.15 billion (2002 est.)

**GDP - real growth rate:** 2.8% (2002 est.)

**GDP - per capita:**
- purchasing power parity - $2,500 (2002 est.)

**GDP - composition by sector:**
- agriculture: 20%
- industry: 20%
- services: 60% (2002 est.)

**Population below poverty line:** 70% (1999 est.)

**Household income or consumption by percentage share:**
- lowest 10%: 1.3%
- highest 10%: 32% (1999)

**Distribution of family income - Gini index:** 58.9 (1997)

**Inflation rate (consumer prices):** 2% (2001 est.)

**Labor force:** 2.5 million

**Labor force - by occupation:** agriculture NA%, industry NA%, services NA%

**Unemployment rate:** 7.6%
  - note: widespread underemployment (2000)

**Budget:**
- revenues: $4 billion
- expenditures: $4 billion, including capital expenditures of $NA (2002 est.)

**Industries:** mining, smelting, petroleum, food and beverages, tobacco, handicrafts, clothing

**Industrial production growth rate:** 3.9% (1998)

**Electricity - production:** 3.901 billion kWh (2001)

**Electricity - production by source:**
- fossil fuel: 44.4%
- hydro: 54%
- other: 1.5% (2001)
- nuclear: 0%

**Electricity - consumption:** 3.634 billion kWh (2001)
Electricity - exports: 3 million kWh (2001)
Electricity - imports: 9 million kWh (2001)

Oil - production: 44,340 bbl/day (2001 est.)
Oil - consumption: 49,000 bbl/day (2001 est.)
Oil - exports: NA (2001)
Oil - imports: NA (2001)
Oil - proved reserves: 458.8 million bbl (37257)

Natural gas - production: 4.05 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - consumption: 1.15 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - exports: 2.9 billion cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - imports: 0 cu m (2001 est.)
Natural gas - proved reserves: 727.2 billion cu m (37257)

Agriculture - products: soybeans, coffee, coca, cotton, corn, sugarcane, rice, potatoes; timber
Exports: $1.3 billion f.o.b. (2002 est.)
Exports - partners: Brazil 24.3%, Switzerland 15.7%, US 14.1%, Venezuela 12.8%, Colombia 10.2%, Peru 5.4% (2002)

Imports: $1.6 billion f.o.b. (2002 est.)
Imports - commodities: capital goods, raw materials and semi-manufactures, chemicals, petroleum, food
Imports - partners: Brazil 22%, Argentina 17.4%, US 15.6%, Chile 7%, Japan 5.5%, Peru 5.4%, China 4.8% (2002)

Debt - external: $5.9 billion (2002 est.)

Economic aid -
recipient: $588 million (1997)

Currency: boliviano (BOB)

Currency code: BOB


Fiscal year: calendar year

Communications

Bolivia

Telephones - main lines in use: 327,600 (1996)

Telephones - mobile cellular: 116,000 (1997)

Telephone system: general assessment: new subscribers face bureaucratic difficulties; most telephones are concentrated in La Paz and other cities; mobile cellular telephone use expanding rapidly
domestic: primary trunk system, which is being expanded, employs digital microwave radio relay; some areas are served by fiber-optic cable; mobile cellular systems are being expanded
international: satellite earth station - 1 Intelsat (Atlantic Ocean)

Radio broadcast stations: AM 171, FM 73, shortwave 77 (1999)

Television broadcast stations: 48 (1997)

Internet country code: .bo

Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 9 (2000)

Internet users: 78,000 (2000)

Transportation

Bolivia

Railways: total: 3,519 km
narrow gauge: 3,519 km 1.000-m gauge (2002)

Highways: total: 53,790 km
paved: 3,496 km (including 13 km of expressways)
unpaved: 50,294 km (2000 est.)

Waterways:
10,000 km (commercially navigable)

**Pipelines:**
- Gas: 4,860 km
- Liquid petroleum gas: 47 km
- Oil: 2,460 km
- Refined products: 1,589 km
- Unknown (oil/water): 247 km (2003)

**Ports and harbors:**
- Puerto Aguirre (on the Paraguay/Parana waterway, at the Bolivia/Brazil border)
- Bolivia has free port privileges in maritime ports in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Paraguay

**Merchant marine:**
- Total: 53 ships (1,000 GRT or over)
  - 347,535 GRT/591,113 DWT
- **Ships by type:**
  - Bulk: 2
  - Cargo: 25
  - Chemical tanker: 4
  - Container: 4
  - Livestock carrier: 1
  - Petroleum tanker: 12
  - Roll on/roll off: 1
  - Short-sea passenger: 3
  - Specialized tanker: 1
- **Note:** Includes some foreign-owned ships registered here as a flag of:
  - Belize 2
  - China 2
  - Cuba 1
  - Cyprus 1
  - Egypt 1
  - Honduras 1
  - Latvia 2
  - Liberia 2
  - Panama 1
  - Saint Vincent and the Grenadines 1
  - Saudi Arabia 1
  - Singapore 1
  - South Korea 3
  - Switzerland 1
  - Ukraine 1
  - UAE 5
  - US 1 (2002 est.)

**Airports:**
- Total: 1,081 (2002)
- **Airports - with paved runways:**
  - Total: 12
  - Over 3,047 m: 4
  - 2,438 to 3,047 m: 2
  - 1,524 to 2,437 m: 5
  - 914 to 1,523 m: 1 (2002)
- **Airports - with unpaved runways:**
  - Total: 1,069
  - Over 3,047 m: 1
  - 2,438 to 3,047 m: 3
  - 1,524 to 2,437 m: 64
  - 914 to 1,523 m: 225
  - Under 914 m: 776 (2002)

**Military - Bolivia**

**Military branches:**
- Army (Ejercito Boliviano)
- Navy (Fuerza Naval, includes Marines)
- Air Force (Fuerza Aerea Boliviana)
- National Police Force (Policia Nacional de Bolivia)

**Military manpower - military age:**
- 19 years of age (2003 est.)

**Military manpower - availability:**
- **Males age 15-49:** 2,118,908 (2003 est.)

**Military manpower - fit for military service:**
- **Males age 15-49:** 1,380,883 (2003 est.)

**Military manpower - reaching military:**
- **Males:** 96,003 (2003 est.)
Military expenditures - dollar figure:
$147 million (FY99)

Military expenditures - percent of GDP:
1.8% (FY99)

Transnational Issues

Disputes - international:
continues to press Chile and Peru to restore the Atacama corridor ceded to Chile in 1884; Chile demands water rights to Bolivia's Rio Lauca and Silala Spring

Illicit drugs:
world's third-largest cultivator of coca (after Colombia and Peru) with an estimated 24,400 hectares under cultivation in June 2002, a 23% increase from June 2001; intermediate coca products and cocaine exported to or through Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, and Chile to the US and other international drug markets; eradication and alternative crop programs under the SANCHEZ DE LOZADA administration have been unable to keep pace with farmers' attempts to increase cultivation after significant reductions in 1998 and 1999; money-laundering activity related to narcotics trade, especially along the borders with Brazil and Paraguay

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