

Mozambique



KEY FACTS

Joined Commonwealth:	1995
Population:	22,894,000 (2009)
GDP p.c. growth:	4.3% p.a. 1990–2009
UN HDI 2010:	world ranking 165
Official language:	Portuguese
Time:	GMT plus 2hr
Currency:	Mozambique metical (MT)

Geography

Area:	799,380 sq km
Coastline:	2,470km
Capital:	Maputo

Mozambique is in south-east Africa and borders (anti-clockwise, from north) the United Republic of Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Swaziland, and the Indian Ocean. The country is divided into eleven provinces (from south to north): Maputo, Maputo city, Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Sofala, Zambézia, Tete, Nampula, Niassa, and Cabo Delgado.

Main towns: Maputo (capital, pop. 1,120,200 in 2009), Matola (greater Maputo, 729,500), Nampula (Nampula, 515,300), Beira (Sofala province, 442,000), Chimoio (Manica, 253,300), Nacala (Nampula, 217,500), Quelimane (Zambézia, 200,800), Tete (Tete, 164,200), Lichinga (Niassa, 155,300), Pemba (Cabo Delgado, 153,900), Garue (Zambézia, 127,100), Gurué (Zambézia, 119,600), Xai-Xai (Gaza, 118,700), Maxixe (Inhambane, 107,300), Cuamba (Niassa, 98,700), Angoche (Nampula, 84,400), Dondo (Sofala, 78,600), Montepuez (Cabo Delgado, 77,500) Mocuba (Zambézia, 70,100) and Inhambane (Inhambane, 66,000).

Topography: Mozambique occupies the eastern fringe of the great southern African escarpment. The mountains of the interior fall to a broad plateau, which descends to coastal hills and plain. Rivers generally run west to east. The coastal beaches are fringed by lagoons, coral reefs and strings of islands. The extensive low plateau covers nearly half the land area. The Zambezi is the largest of 25 main rivers.

Climate: Tropical and subtropical. Inland is cooler than the coast and rainfall higher as the land rises. The hottest and wettest season

did you know?

Graça Machel, former Chairperson of the Commonwealth Foundation, was appointed to the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group in 2010; the group will make recommendations for reform in the Commonwealth, to be presented to Commonwealth leaders at CHOGM in Australia in October 2011.

Dr Salomão Manhiça was appointed chair of the Commonwealth Connects steering committee in 2008: the Commonwealth Connects programme helps to bridge the digital divide across the association's 54 member countries.

Maria Lurdes Mutola, born in Maputo, took the Commonwealth Games Women's 800 Metres record at the Manchester Games in 2002.

is October to March. From April to September the coast has warm, mainly dry weather, tempered by sea breezes. The country is vulnerable to cyclones.

Environment: The most significant environmental issues are desertification, pollution of surface and coastal waters, and persistent migration of people from the hinterland to urban and coastal areas.

Vegetation: The plateau is savannah – dry and open bushveld and wide stretches of grassland. There are patches of forest in the western and northern highlands. Dense subtropical bush characterises the coastal plain. Forest covers 24% of the land area, having declined at 0.3% p.a. 2000–07. Arable land comprises 6% and permanent cropland 0.4% of the total land area.

Wildlife: Mozambique has four national parks. Gorongosa, the biggest, extends to 3,770 sq km. There are also many forest and game reserves harbouring zebra, water buffalo, giraffe, lions, elephants and rhinos, and many varieties of tropical water birds such as flamingos, cranes, storks and pelicans. 179 species of mammals have been recorded, 14 of which are endangered (2002).

Transport: There are 30,400km of roads, 19% paved. The road network links with all neighbouring countries except Tanzania in the north. There is a new toll road from Maputo to Witbank in the industrial heartland of South Africa.

The railway network extends to 3,116km.

Beyond domestic needs, Beira, Maputo and Nacala are important ports for Malawi, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

International airports are Maputo International, 3km north-west of the city, and Beira, 13km from the city.

Society

KEY FACTS 2009

Population per sq km: 29
 Life expectancy: 48 years
 Net primary enrolment: 80%

Population: 22,894,000 (2009); 38% lives in urban areas and 7% in urban agglomerations of more than 1 million people; growth 2.8% p.a. 1990–2009; birth rate 38 per 1,000 people (48 in 1970); life expectancy 48 years (39 in 1970 and 43 in 1990).

Ethnic groups include Makua–Lomwe in the north, Makonde in the far north, Thonga in the southern lowlands, Chopi and Thonga in the Inhambane coastal province, and Shona mainly in the central Manica and Sofala provinces.

Language: Portuguese (official) and three main African groups: Tsonga, Sena–Nyanja, Makua–Lomwe. English is widely spoken.

Religion: Christians 30% (mainly Roman Catholics), Muslims 20% (mainly in the north), most of the rest holding traditional beliefs, which incorporate some Christian practices.

Media: The daily newspapers are *Notícias* (largest and oldest and partly government-owned) and *Diário de Moçambique* (independent), both in Portuguese. *Demos*, *Domingo*, *Fim de Semana*, *Savana* and *Zambeze* are published weekly in Portuguese.

Television is a very popular medium in urban areas, radio in the rural areas. *Televisão de Moçambique*, the public TV service, is the sole national network, and *Radio Moçambique* is the public radio provider operating national and provincial services in Portuguese, English and indigenous languages. There are several private TV channels and radio stations.

Some 9% of households have TV sets (2006). There are 14 personal computers (2005) and 27 internet users (2009) per 1,000 people.

Education: Public spending on education was 5.0% of GDP in 2006. There are seven years of compulsory education starting at age six. Primary school comprises cycles of five and two years and secondary two cycles each of three years. Some 44% of pupils complete primary school (2007). The school year starts in January.

Tertiary education is provided at the Eduardo Mondlane University (in Maputo), *Universidade Pedagógica* (Maputo, and branches in Beira and Nampula) and the Higher Institute for International Relations (Maputo). Private tertiary institutions include the Higher Polytechnic and University Institute (Maputo, and a branch in Quelimane), the Catholic University (Beira) and the Higher Institute for Science and Technology of Mozambique (Maputo). The female–male ratio for gross enrolment in tertiary education is 49:100 (2005). Literacy among people aged 15–24 is 70% (2008).

Health: The national health service lost its monopoly of health care in 1992. 47% of the population uses an improved drinking water source and 17% have adequate sanitation facilities (2009). Infant mortality was 96 per 1,000 live births in 2009 (180 in 1960). Malaria and AIDS are serious problems. In 2009, 11.5% of people aged 15–49 were HIV positive – and there are regular outbreaks of cholera.

Communications: Country code 258; internet domain '.mz'. Main towns are connected by satellite phones. Mobile phone coverage is generally good in urban areas. There are internet cafes in Maputo. Postal services are available in main centres.

There are 4 main telephone lines and 261 mobile phone subscriptions per 1,000 people (2009).

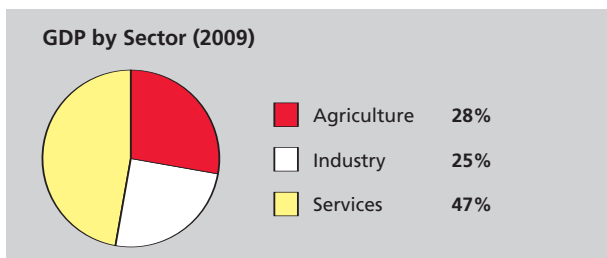
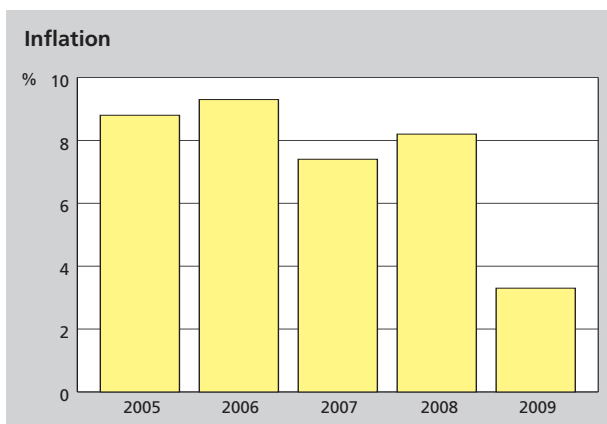
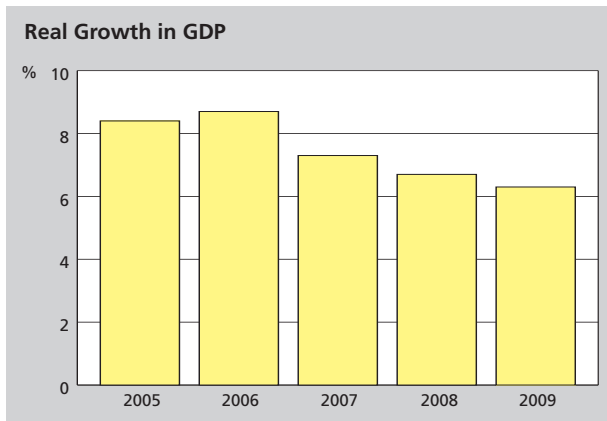
Public holidays: New Year's Day, Heroes' Day (3 February), Women's Day (7 April), Workers' Day (1 May), Independence Day (25 June), Lusaka Peace Agreement Day (7 September), Armed Forces Day (25 September), Peace and National Reconciliation Day (4 October), Maputo City Day (Maputo only, 10 November), Family/Christmas Day (25 December).

Economy

KEY FACTS 2009

GNI:	US\$10.0bn
GNI p.c.:	US\$440
GDP growth:	7.5% p.a. 2005–09
Inflation:	7.4% p.a. 2005–09

Overview: The government first embarked on economic reforms in the late 1980s, aiming to undercut the unofficial economy, give real value to the currency and remove administrative hindrances to productive enterprises. Subsidies to state enterprises in deficit were progressively reduced. Food subsidies in urban areas were removed



in 1988. After 1989, the government focused on reducing poverty, improving living standards and strengthening the country's institutions. An ambitious privatisation programme was implemented from the mid-1990s and efficiency in the former state enterprises rose dramatically. Fishing is an important activity and prawns are a major export. Aluminium exports have grown rapidly since the Mozal smelter came on stream in 2000, and large reserves of oil, gas and coal have been found.

Mozambique's economy has since 1994 been recovering after almost two decades of war and underdevelopment. The government's reconstruction and reform programme has won approval from the international financial institutions and from donors. Growth from the mid-1990s was very strong and new confidence in the economy began to attract investment. This growth started from a very low base: the country is among the world's poorest and is heavily dependent on aid, compounded in February 2000 by the disastrous floods, when 650,000 people

were made homeless, huge areas of farmland and 30,000 cattle lost, and roads and bridges destroyed, and again in early 2001 – though damage was less severe.

Until 1987, the metical was maintained at an artificially high level and a black market rate of 50 times the official rate developed. Between 1987 and mid-1994 the currency depreciated by 14,000%. Then from the mid-1990s, with continuing strong growth, the metical remained reasonably stable and inflation was brought under control, until it climbed over 10% again in the early 2000s, and monetary policy had to be tightened to stabilise the currency.

The strong growth of the 1990s was interrupted briefly in 2000, due to the devastation caused by the extensive floods, and then resumed at 13% in 2001. The Mozambican economy has been increasingly resilient to external shocks. A booming construction sector and continued growth in agricultural production have helped sustain strong economic growth which averaged nearly 8% p.a. during 2002–07, and continued at 6.7% in 2008, 6.3% in 2009 and about 8.5% in 2010, in spite of the world economic downturn and lull in foreign direct investment, particularly in minerals exploration.

Trade: Exports of goods and services account for 33% of GDP (2008). Principal exports are aluminium, fish and seafood (especially prawns), electricity (from the Cahora Bassa dam on the Zambezi river), tobacco and cotton fibre.

Constitution

Status:	Republic with executive president
Legislature:	Assembléia da República
Independence:	25 June 1975

A new constitution was adopted in November 1990, replacing the independence constitution. Separating executive, legislative and judiciary powers, it enshrined the principles of political pluralism and election by secret ballot of a government based on majority rule. The president is head of state and government and is directly elected every five years for a maximum of two terms. He or she appoints the prime minister and council of ministers. The national legislature is the 250-member Assembléia da República, members of which are also elected by direct, universal adult suffrage every five years.

The 1990 constitution abolished the death penalty, affirmed the right to strike and protected freedom of movement. It also avows the right to live in a 'balanced environment' and establishes the framework for a liberal market economy and the private ownership of land.

Under the constitution that was adopted in November 2004 and came into force in January 2005, the Constitutional Council was established to ensure strict observance of the constitution, including the electoral acts; also established was the Council of State – comprising the prime minister, and representatives of the opposition and civil society – to advise the president on specific matters. The ombudsman ensures protection of citizens' rights in the public realm. The new constitution emphasises that its interpretation should always be consistent with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Politics

Last elections:	October 2009 (legislative and presidential)
Next elections:	2014
Head of state:	President Armando Emilio Guebuza
Head of government:	the president
Ruling party:	Frelimo

The new constitution adopted in 1990 introduced into the country a multiparty democratic system and a free-market economy, thus paving the way for the peace process. Negotiations mediated by the Italian Roman Catholic community of Sant'Egidio culminated in a peace agreement in October 1992; a UN peacekeeping force arrived in July 1993, and demobilisation of troops began in mid-March 1994. In the multiparty elections of October 1994, Frelimo's Joaquim Chissano was re-elected with 53% of the votes in the presidential election, while Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama won 34%. The parliamentary elections gave 44% of the votes to Frelimo (129 seats), 38% to Renamo (112 seats) and 5% to the Democratic Union (nine seats).

Mozambique, which had long been interested in Commonwealth membership, became the Commonwealth's 53rd member (and the first not to have once been associated with the British Empire) with the agreement of all the other members, at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in New Zealand in November 1995.

In July 1999, 11 opposition parties agreed to support Dhlakama as their joint candidate for the presidency. The presidential and parliamentary elections were held on 3, 4 and 5 December 1999 (the third day was added after heavy rain made voting difficult in some parts of the country). Chissano and Frelimo both won by a narrow margin – Chissano taking 52.3% of the popular vote against Dhlakama's 47.7%, while Frelimo took 48.5% and 133 seats against Renamo's 38.8% and 117 seats.

Chissano announced in mid-2001 that he would not stand for a third term in the election due in 2004 and in June 2002 Frelimo selected Armando Guebuza as its new leader and presidential candidate. At the second annual assembly of the African Union in Maputo in July 2003, Chissano took over the chairmanship and immediately became engaged in resolving conflict in various African countries.

The 2004 elections were held in December and Guebuza – with 63.7% of the votes – and Frelimo – with 160 seats – were well ahead of Dhlakama (31.7%) and Renamo (90 seats). Renamo immediately alleged electoral fraud and threatened to boycott parliament. Commonwealth observers and experts, who attended the elections, expressed concern at the low turnout (estimated at 36%); they further concluded that conditions did exist for the free expression of the will of the people but that some degree of fraud had taken place which could conceivably have been sufficient to affect the results.



History

From the 10th century or earlier, Arabs and Indians traded with populations in the Mozambique area. Portuguese traders took prominence from the 15th century onwards, vying with Arabs and Swahili people along the coast in the commodity and slave trades. In time, Portuguese settlers came, establishing large estates. However, Portuguese control was fiercely resisted and by 1885, when the colonial powers met for the Berlin Conference to formalise colonial boundaries, Portugal only controlled coastal strongholds and a few scattered inland areas. After a series of military campaigns to subdue the African population, Portugal auctioned off land concessions. The Mozambique Company, the Niassa Company and the Zambezi Company, representing largely non-Portuguese (especially British) capital, established plantations in north and central Mozambique, using forced local labour. Many Mozambicans from the south found employment in South Africa's expanding mining industry.

In 1951 Portugal declared Mozambique to be its overseas province and by 1970 some 200,000 Portuguese settlers – mainly peasant and working class people – had been brought to the country by the Portuguese government.

Nationalist groups began to form in the 1960s; three banned groups merged to form Frelimo, the Frente de Libertação de Moçambique, which led a war of attrition to win independence. Frelimo's first president, Dr Eduardo Mondlane, was assassinated by the Portuguese in 1969. After the 1974 revolution in Portugal,

the new government soon started negotiations with the liberation movements in the overseas provinces on self-determination. Mozambique became independent on 25 June 1975. Some 90% of the Portuguese settlers left the country, creating a skills vacuum.

Frelimo, under Samora Machel, the country's first president, came to power with strong socialist ideals and the aim of rapid development; initially it made considerable improvements in health and education. However, authority was rigidly centralised and some policies were heavy-handed – in particular, the forced creation of communal rural villages.

Civil war broke out in the late 1970s between the government and Renamo – the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana. Renamo was first supported by the white regime in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and later by South Africa. Commanding widespread support from the disaffected, Renamo was especially active in central provinces such as Sofala, Manica and Zambézia, and later on in the south. Through sabotage, Renamo managed to destroy much of the country's economic and social infrastructure: roads and railways, schools and health centres, houses, shops and factories. Millions of Mozambicans fled as refugees into neighbouring countries, or became *deslocados* (the internally displaced people). More than 1 million people were killed. Machel was killed in a mysterious air crash in 1986 and was succeeded as president by Joaquim Chissano, the former foreign minister.

In October 2009 Guebuza and Frelimo were returned to power. In the presidential contest Guebuza received 75% of votes, Renamo leader Dhlakama 16% and Daviz Simango of the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM) 9%; the turnout was 45%. In the parliamentary elections Frelimo won 191 seats (with 75% of votes), Renamo 51 seats (18%) and MDM 8 (4%). Commonwealth observers, who were once again present, found that the election had generally been well conducted, though there were concerns about lack of transparency in the work of the National Elections Commission.

International relations

Mozambique is a member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, African Union, Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation, Non-Aligned Movement, Organisation of the Islamic Conference, Southern African Development Community, United Nations and World Trade Organization.

Traveller information

Local laws and conventions: It is a legal requirement to carry identity documents or notarised copies of documents at all times and to present them if stopped at a police checkpoint.

Severe punishments are imposed for smuggling and drug taking, which is illegal.

It is illegal to photograph airports, government offices, military establishments, residences and the police or officials without permission from the Ministry of Information.

For business meetings prior appointments are recommended. January is best avoided for business trips, as it is the main holiday month. Business is usually conducted in Portuguese, but translation facilities are available in Maputo. Office hours are Mon–Thur 0730–1230 and 1400–1730, Fri 0730–1230 and 1400–1700.

Immigration and customs: Passports must be valid for six months and those planning to travel on to South Africa should ensure they have two pages free in their passport.

Visas are required by all and should be obtained before visiting the country. Tourist visas bought at the border are not accepted. Heavy fines are imposed on those overstaying their visa.

The land-crossing with South Africa – the Lebombo/Ressano Garcia border – can be very busy during holiday periods.

It is prohibited to import or export the local currency, and foreign exchange must be through commercial banks. The import of firearms requires a permit.

A yellow fever vaccination certificate is required by those arriving from an infected area.

Travel within the country: Traffic drives on the left. An international driving permit is recommended and car hire is available in Maputo and Beira (payment must be in a hard currency). Visitors must keep their licences on them at all times. Tared roads connect Maputo with Beira, and Beira with Tete. Fuel is only available in major towns and all vehicles should be stocked with emergency supplies. Speed limits are usually 40–50kph in towns and 120kph on the open road.

Regular bus services cover most of the country. In more rural areas, converted passenger trucks, known as *chapas*, are also available. Domestic flights link Maputo with Beira, Nampula, Pemba, Quelimane, Vilanculos and Tete. Flights must be booked well in advance. An air taxi service is also available.

There are three unconnected rail networks, and services are infrequent.

Travel health: It is recommended to take out adequate health insurance that will cover transport and treatment in South Africa.

Polio, tetanus, typhoid, cholera and Hepatitis A vaccinations are recommended. In addition, malaria is endemic and presents a serious health risk, and prophylaxis is strongly advised. Visitors should also bring insect repellent and suitable clothing to protect themselves against mosquito bites. Bilharzia is present.

Drinking bottled water is advised.

Money: Credit cards are becoming progressively more accepted in Maputo and some of the larger cities, though it is advisable that visitors check with their bank before using their credit card in Mozambique. Money can be obtained from some ATMs using Visa credit or debit cards. US dollars and South African rand should also be taken, as they are widely accepted; travellers cheques are difficult and expensive to exchange. Banking hours are Mon–Fri 0730–1530.

There were 771,000 tourist arrivals in 2007.

Further information

Government of Mozambique Portal:

www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz

Commonwealth Secretariat: www.thecommonwealth.org

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