

# Mozambique



## KEY FACTS

Joined Commonwealth:	1995
Population:	25,203,000 (2012)
GDP p.c. growth:	3.7% p.a. 1990–2012
UN HDI 2012:	world ranking 185
Official language:	Portuguese
Time:	GMT plus 2hr
Currency:	Mozambique metical (MT)

## Geography

Area:	799,380 sq km
Coastline:	2,470 km
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.

**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 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 49 per cent of the land area, having declined at 0.5 per cent p.a. 1990–2010. Arable land comprises seven per cent and permanent cropland 0.4 per cent 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. Some 179 species of mammals have been recorded, 12 of which are endangered (2012).

**Main towns:** Maputo (capital, pop. 1.13m in 2010), Matola (greater Maputo, 757,800), Nampula (Nampula province, 534,800), Beira (Sofala, 440,400), Chimoió (Manica, 259,200), Nacala (Nampula, 221,400), Quelimane (Zambézia, 204,700), Tete (Tete, 170,000), Lichinga (Niassa, 162,100), Pemba (Cabo Delgado, 160,500), Garue (Zambézia, 129,000), Gurué (Zambézia, 122,300), Xai-Xai (Gaza, 119,700), Maxixe (Inhambane, 107,900), Cuamba (Niassa, 102,500), Angoche (Nampula, 86,400), Dondo (Sofala,

## Did you know?

Grça Machel is a former Chairperson of the Commonwealth Foundation.

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

79,700), Montepuez (Cabo Delgado, 79,000), Mocuba (Zambézia, 71,200) and Inhambane (Inhambane, 66,500).

**Transport:** There are 30,330 km of roads, 21 per cent 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 3,116 km.

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

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

## Society

### KEY FACTS 2012

Population per sq km:	32
Life expectancy:	50 years
Net primary enrolment:	86%

**Population:** 25,203,000 (2012); 31 per cent of people live in urban areas and seven per cent in urban agglomerations of more

than one million people; growth 2.8 per cent p.a. 1990–2012; birth rate 39 per 1,000 people (48 in 1970); life expectancy 50 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 per cent (mainly Roman Catholics), Muslims 20 per cent (mainly in the north), most of the rest holding traditional beliefs, which incorporate some Christian practices.

**Health:** Public spending on health was three per cent of GDP in 2011. The national health service lost its monopoly of health care in 1992. Some 47 per cent of the population uses an improved drinking water source and 19 per cent have access to adequate sanitation facilities (2011). Infant mortality was 63 per 1,000 live births in 2012 (180 in 1960). Malaria and AIDS are serious problems and there are regular outbreaks of cholera. In 2012, 11 per cent of people aged 15–49 were HIV positive.

## 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 (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 per cent 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 (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 one 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.

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 President Chissano was re-elected with 53 per cent of the votes, his main rival, Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama, securing 34 per cent. In the parliamentary elections Frelimo won 129 seats (44 per cent of the votes), Renamo 112 seats (38 per cent) and the Democratic Union nine seats (5 per cent).

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.

**Education:** There are seven years of compulsory education starting at the age of six. Primary school comprises seven years and secondary five, with cycles of three and two years. Some 31 per cent of pupils complete primary school (2011). The school year starts in January.

Tertiary education is provided at Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (in Maputo); Universidade Pedagógica (Maputo, with branches in Beira and Nampula); Instituto Superior de Relações Internacionais (Maputo); and Universidade Lúrio (established in 2006, with campuses at Nampula, Pemba and Niassa, in the three most northerly provinces). Private tertiary institutions include the Higher Polytechnic and University Institute (1996, Maputo, with a branch in Quelimane); Catholic University (1997, Beira); and Higher Institute for Science and Technology of Mozambique (1997, Maputo). The female–male ratio for gross enrolment in tertiary education is 1.60:1 (2011). Literacy among people aged 15–24 is 72 per cent (2010).

**Media:** The daily newspapers are *Notícias* (largest and oldest and partly government-owned) and *Diário de Moçambique* (independent), both in Portuguese. *O País* and *Savana* 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, provincial and local services in Portuguese, English and indigenous languages. There are several private TV channels and radio stations.

Some nine per cent of households have TV sets (2006). There are 14 personal computers per 1,000 people (2005).

**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 cafés in Maputo. Postal services are available in main centres.

There are three main telephone lines, 362 mobile phone subscriptions and 48 internet users per 1,000 people (2012).

**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).

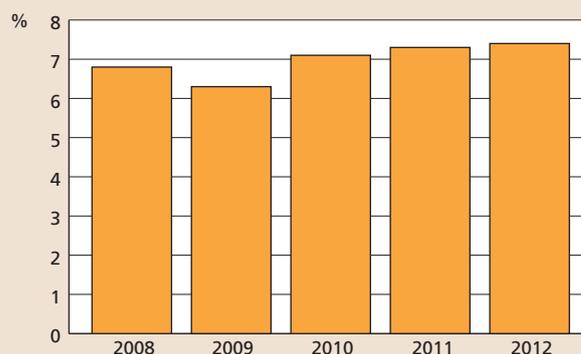
## Economy

### KEY FACTS 2012

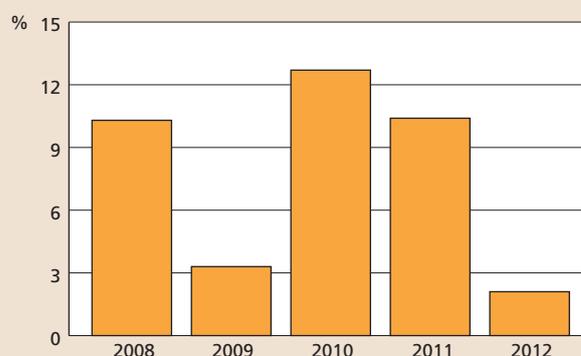
GNI:	US\$12.8bn
GNI p.c.:	US\$510
GDP growth:	7.0% p.a. 2008–12
Inflation:	7.7% p.a. 2008–12

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

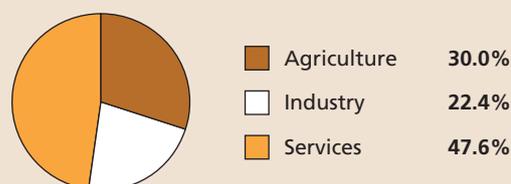
### Real Growth in GDP



### Inflation



### GDP by Sector (2012)



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 grew rapidly after the Mozal smelter came on stream in 2000. Large reserves of natural gas and coal have been found, and gas and coal are set to be important exports, driving strong growth in the 2010s. Other significant exports include electricity (from the Cahora Bassa dam on the Zambezi river), tobacco and cotton fibre.

Mozambique's economy has since 1994 been recovering after almost two decades of war and underdevelopment. The government's reconstruction and reform programme has been supported by the international financial institutions and bilateral aid partners. 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 per cent. Then from the mid-1990s, with continuing strong growth, the metical remained reasonably stable and inflation was brought under control, until it climbed above ten per cent 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 per cent 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 eight per cent p.a. during 2002–07, and continued at more than six per cent p.a. during 2008–14, in spite of the world economic downturn.

## Constitution

Status:	Republic with executive President
Legislature:	Assembléia da República de Moçambique
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:	28 October 2009 (legislative and presidential)
Next elections:	15 October 2014
Head of state:	President Armando Emilio Guebuza
Head of government:	the President
Ruling party:	Frelimo
Women MPs:	39%

President Joaquim Chissano and his party, Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique), won the presidential and parliamentary elections in December 1999. Chissano secured 52.3 per cent of the popular vote and Afonso Dhlakama – leader of Renamo (Resistência Nacional Moçambicana) and the candidate for 11 opposition parties – received 47.7 per cent. In the parliamentary elections Frelimo took 133 seats (48.5 per cent) and Renamo 117 (38.8 per cent).

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.

In the December 2004 elections Guebuza – with 63.7 per cent of the votes – and Frelimo – with 160 seats – defeated Dhlakama (31.7 per cent) 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 per cent); 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.

In October 2009 Guebuza and Frelimo were returned to power. In the presidential contest Guebuza received 75 per cent of votes, Renamo leader Dhlakama 16 per cent and Daviz Simango of the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM) nine per cent; the turnout was 44 per cent. In the parliamentary elections Frelimo won 191 seats (with 75 per cent of votes), Renamo 51 seats (18 per cent) and MDM eight (four per cent). 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, Non-Aligned Movement, Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, Southern African Development Community, United Nations and World Trade Organization.

## Traveller information

**Immigration and customs:** Passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of departure. Visas are required by all Commonwealth nationals.

**Travel within the country:** Traffic drives on the left. Car hire is available in Maputo and Beira; an international driving permit is recommended. Paved roads connect Maputo with Beira, and Beira with Tete.

Domestic flights link Maputo with Beira and other main towns. Air-taxi services are also available. Regular bus services cover most of the country. In the more rural areas, converted trucks (*chapas*) are operating. There are three unconnected rail networks, and services are infrequent. Taxis are available in the larger towns.

**Travel health:** Prevalent diseases where appropriate precautionary measures are recommended include cholera, dengue fever, diphtheria, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, malaria, rabies, schistosomiasis (bilharzia) and typhoid.

There were 1,718,000 tourist arrivals in 2010.

## Further information

Government of Mozambique: [www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz](http://www.portaldogoverno.gov.mz)

Comissão Nacional de Eleições (electoral commission):  
[www.stae.org.mz](http://www.stae.org.mz)

Instituto Nacional de Estatística: [www.ine.gov.mz](http://www.ine.gov.mz)

Banco de Moçambique (central bank): [www.bancomoc.mz](http://www.bancomoc.mz)

Travel Discover Mozambique:  
[www.turismomocambique.co.mz](http://www.turismomocambique.co.mz)

Commonwealth Secretariat: [www.thecommonwealth.org](http://www.thecommonwealth.org)

Commonwealth of Nations:  
[www.commonwealthofnations.org/country/Mozambique](http://www.commonwealthofnations.org/country/Mozambique)

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## Media

*Notícias*: [www.jornalnoticias.co.mz](http://www.jornalnoticias.co.mz)

*O País*: [opais.sapo.mz](http://opais.sapo.mz)

*Savana*: [www.savana.co.mz](http://www.savana.co.mz)

Televisão de Moçambique: [www.tvm.co.mz](http://www.tvm.co.mz)

Agência de Informação de Moçambique:  
[www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news](http://www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news)

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