

Kenya



KEY FACTS

Joined Commonwealth:	1963
Population:	41,610,000 (2011)
GDP p.c. growth:	0.4% p.a. 1990–2011
UN HDI 2011:	world ranking 143
Official languages:	Kiswahili, English
Time:	GMT plus 3hr
Currency:	Kenyan shilling (KSh)

Geography

Area:	582,646 sq km
Coastline:	536km
Capital:	Nairobi

Kenya lies astride the equator, extending from the Indian Ocean in the east to Uganda in the west and from the United Republic of Tanzania in the south to Ethiopia and Sudan in the north. On the east and north-east it borders Somalia.

The country is divided into eight provinces (Central, Coast, Eastern, Nairobi, North-Eastern, Nyanza, Rift Valley, Western).

Area: 582,646 sq km including 13,400 sq km of inland waters.

Topography: There are four main regions. The north-east plain is arid. The south-east region is fertile along the Tana river, in the coastal strip and in the Taita Hills, which rise to 2,100m. The north-

west is generally low-lying and arid but includes Lake Turkana, 260km long, and many mountains, including Nyiru (2,800m). The south-west quarter, a plateau rising to 3,000m, includes some of Africa's highest mountains: Mount Kenya (5,200m), Mount Elgon (4,320m) and the Aberdare Range (4,000m). The Great Rift Valley runs across the plateau from north to south, 50–65km wide and 600–1,000m deep. West of the Rift the plateau falls to Lake Victoria and eastward the rivers Tana and Athi (or Galana downstream) flow into the Indian Ocean.

Climate: The coastal areas are tropical, with monsoon winds. The lowlands are hot and mainly dry. The highlands are much cooler and have four seasons. Nairobi, 1,700m above sea level, has a mean temperature that ranges from a minimum of 13°C to a maximum of 25°C; Mombasa, on the coast, from a minimum of 23°C to a maximum of 29°C. Rainfall varies from a mean annual 150mm at Lodwar in the north-west to 1,470mm at Kisumu, near Lake Victoria in the west. Northern parts of the country were hit by severe floods in the latter part of 2007.

Environment: The most significant issues are water pollution from urban and industrial wastes; degradation of water quality from increased use of pesticides and fertilisers; water hyacinth infestation in Lake Victoria; deforestation; soil erosion; desertification; and poaching.

Vegetation: Thornbush and grassland are characteristic of much of the country. Varied forest covers about 13,000 sq km of the south-west quarter, at 2–3,500m above sea level. Forest covers 6% of the land area, having declined at 0.3% p.a. 1990–2010. Arable land comprises 9% and permanent cropland 1% of the total land area.

Wildlife: Kenya's wildlife is probably the most famous in the world. Wild mammals include lions, leopards, cheetahs, zebras, antelopes, gazelles, elephants, rhinoceroses, hippopotami, baboons and many kinds of monkeys. There are 359 recorded species of mammals, of which 51 are endangered. Reptiles include crocodiles and more than 100 species of snake. There is a rich variety of native birdlife and the country is visited by migrant birds which



did you know?

The father of US President Barack Obama was a Kenyan national.

Kenyan athletes hold eight Commonwealth Games records and nineteen world records.

Kenya hosts the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and a national chapter of the Commonwealth Human Ecology Council.



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Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and Sudan have signed a regional free trade agreement between the major economies in the region. This network has catapulted Masumali Meghji Insurance Brokers Ltd into the regional markets.

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breed in Europe. There are 344 species of birds, 24 of which are endangered. Wildlife is protected in reserves extending to 45,500 sq km, or some 8% of the total land area.

Main towns: Nairobi (capital, pop. 3.25m in 2010), Mombasa (Coast, 917,800), Nakuru (Rift Valley, 275,300), Eldoret (Rift Valley, 251,900), Kisumu (Nyanza, 230,600), Ruiru (Central, 167,100), Thika (Central, 106,000), Malindi (Coast, 82,200), Kitale (Rift Valley, 81,300), Bungoma (Western, 76,700), Kakamega (Western, 71,300), Garissa (North-Eastern, 63,900), Kilifi (Coast, 63,900), Mumias (Western, 57,900), Meru (Eastern, 51,600), Nyeri (Central, 49,400), Wajir (North-Eastern, 41,400), Lamu (Coast, 32,400) and Marsabit (Eastern, 16,700).

Transport: 63,270km of roads, 14% paved, and around 1,920km of railway. The main railway line runs between Mombasa and Nairobi, and branch lines connect with Taveta on the Tanzanian border in the south and Kisumu on Lake Victoria in the west.

Mombasa is the chief port for Kenya and an important regional port, handling freight for and from Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, including a substantial volume of food aid. Ferries ply the coast between Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu.

Jomo Kenyatta International Airport is 13km south-east of Nairobi. Moi International is 13km west of Mombasa.

Society

KEY FACTS 2011

Population per sq km:	71
Life expectancy:	57 years
Net primary enrolment:	83% (2009)

Population: 41,610,000 (2011), 24% lives in urban areas and 9% in urban agglomerations of more than 1 million people; growth 2.7% p.a. 1990–2011; birth rate 37 per 1,000 people (51 in 1970); life expectancy 57 years (52 in 1970 and 60 in 1990).

The ethnic composition of the population is estimated as: Kikuyu 22%, Luhya 14%, Luo 13%, Kalenjin 12%, Kamba 11%, Kisii 6% and Meru 6%. There are Masai, Arab, Asian and European minorities.

Language: Kiswahili and English are official languages. Each of the ethnic groups has its own language.

Religion: Christians 78% (mainly Protestants and Roman Catholics), Muslims 10%, and most of the rest hold traditional beliefs.

Health: Public spending on health was 1% of GDP in 2009. 59% of the population uses an improved drinking water source and 32% have adequate sanitation facilities (2010). Infant mortality was 48 per 1,000 live births in 2011 (122 in 1960). Malaria is the main endemic health problem, and AIDS is a severe problem. In 2011, 6.2% of people aged 15–49 were HIV positive.

Education: Public spending on education was 6.7% of GDP in 2010. There are eight years of compulsory education starting at age six. Primary school comprises eight years and secondary four. The school year starts in January.

Among Kenya's many higher education institutions are University of Nairobi; Kenyatta University (main campus Nairobi; other campuses at Kitui, Mombasa and Ruiru); Moi University (in Eldoret since

1984); Egerton University, the principal agricultural university with its main campus at Njoro, Nakuru (established as a university in 1987); Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (in Juja since 1994); and a growing number of private universities. The female–male ratio for gross enrolment in tertiary education is 0.70:1 (2009). Literacy among people aged 15–24 is 93% (2010).

Media: English-language daily newspapers include *Daily Nation* and *The Standard* (established 1902). *Taifa Leo* is published daily in Kiswahili. Weeklies include *The EastAfrican* (for an international audience). Newspapers from Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania are widely circulated in the country.

Radio is the main source of news and information for most Kenyans. The Kenya Broadcasting Corporation provides public radio services in English, Kiswahili and 15 other Kenyan languages, and public TV services in English and Kiswahili. Many private radio stations and TV channels compete with the public services, particularly in the urban areas, and private radio stations increasingly provide national services, and broadcast in other national languages as well as Kiswahili.

Some 32% of households have TV sets (2007). There are 14 personal computers per 1,000 people (2005).

Communications: Country code 254, followed by 20 for Nairobi and 41 for Mombasa; internet domain '.ke'. Public phones work with coins or phonecards (card booths are blue, coin-operated booths are red). There are internet cafes and post offices in most towns.

There are 7 main telephone lines, 675 mobile phone subscriptions and 280 internet users per 1,000 people (2011).

Public holidays: New Year's Day, Labour Day (1 May), Madaraka Day (1 June), Moi Day (10 October), Kenyatta Day (20 October), Jamhuri Day (Independence Day, 12 December), Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

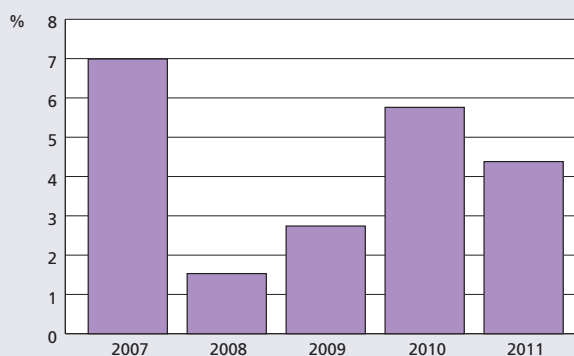
Religious and other festivals whose dates vary from year to year include Good Friday, Easter Monday and Eid al-Fitr (End of Ramadan, three days).

Economy

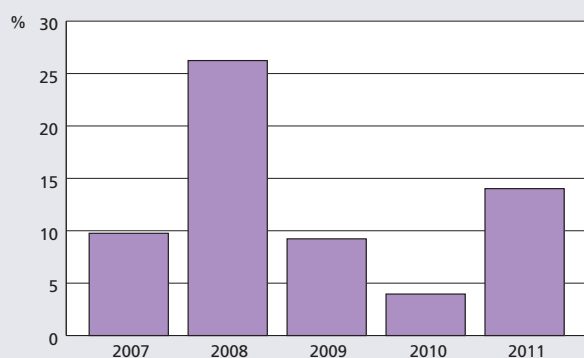
KEY FACTS 2011

GNI:	US\$34.1bn
GNI p.c.:	US\$820
GDP growth:	4.3% p.a. 2007–11
Inflation:	12.4% p.a. 2007–11

Real Growth in GDP

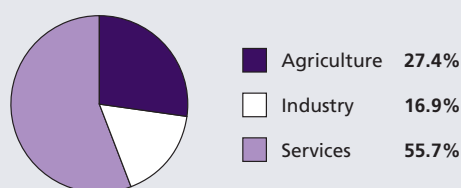


Inflation



Kenya is the most developed of the original three countries of the East African Community (Kenya, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania). It was formerly one of Africa's strongest economies, with average annual growth of 5% in the late 1980s, based on agriculture (notably tea and coffee production and horticulture)

GDP by Sector (2011)



and tourism. Poor harvests and political uncertainty slowed growth in the early 1990s; a foreign exchange crisis resulting from the withholding of aid by donors between December 1991 and November 1993 brought low growth and high inflation (46% in 1993). The country has been afflicted by recurring droughts during two decades.

However, after 1993 the government took steps to liberalise the economy, removing import licensing, price and foreign-exchange controls, and reducing the public sector by privatisation of state enterprises and cutting the civil service. This resulted in a period of

History

Archaeological evidence suggests that Kenya may be the birthplace of the human race, as 3.25 million years ago the Rift Valley was the home of *Homo habilis*, from whom *Homo sapiens* descended.

Little is known of the early history of Kenya's interior, except that peoples from all over the African continent settled here. Arab merchants established trading posts on the coast during the seventh century. The Portuguese took control of coastal trading from the early 16th century, but by 1720 they had been driven out by the Arabs. For the following century, the coastal region was ruled mainly by the Arabian Omani.

Around 1750 the Masai, a people of nomadic cattle-herders whose young men formed a military elite (*el morani*), began entering Kenya from the north and spreading out southwards, raiding and rustling. At the end of the 1850s there were Masai by the coast near Mombasa. During the 1860s, the Masai drove back Europeans attempting to penetrate the interior of the country. Two outbreaks of cattle-disease in the 1880s, an outbreak of smallpox in 1889–90 and internecine fighting between supporters of two rival chiefs weakened the Masai considerably by the 1890s.

The British were invited to the coastal region during the 1820s by the Omani Mazrui Dynasty, to help it with a local power struggle. By the middle of the century, Britain and Germany were competing for control of the coast and its hinterland. A British protectorate was declared in 1895 over what is now Kenya and Uganda and, following a survey made by Lord Delamere, European and European-descended settlement took place until the start of the 1914–18 war.

A railway was constructed 1895–1901, linking the port of Mombasa with Kisumu on Lake Victoria. Many Asians arrived during this period, in particular to work on the construction of the railway. Nairobi became the headquarters of the British administration.

A legislative council for whites was formed in 1907 (first election 1919). Local native councils were introduced in 1925. White settlers moved increasingly into the fertile lands, displacing African peoples, including the Masai and the Kikuyu. By the 1940s, the Highlands were monopolised by whites.

In 1944, the Kikuyu-dominated Kenya African Union (KAU) was established, part of the first African nationalist movement in East Africa. The KAU demanded access to the Highlands. Jomo Kenyatta, who had spent much of the 1930s and 1940s campaigning in Europe for territorial, economic and political rights for Africans, became president of the KAU in 1947. The KAU came into increasing conflict with the European settlers. A guerrilla war for independence and land resettlement was waged 1952–56 by the nationalist Land Freedom Army, the so-called 'Mau Mau'.

A state of emergency was declared 1952–60, during which more than 80,000 people were detained. During the fighting, large numbers of people were killed, sometimes in fights with settlers, sometimes in internecine fights. The KAU was banned in 1953 and Kenyatta was imprisoned. However, wider African representation followed and in 1957, African members were elected to the legislative council. A transitional constitution, introduced in 1960, allowed for political parties and gave Africans a majority on the legislative council.

The Kenya African National Union (KANU) was then formed. Its leaders, while Kenyatta was in prison (1953–61), were Tom Mboya (a Luo trade unionist), Oginga Odinga (a distinguished Luo) and James Gichuru. Other African politicians formed the Kenya African Democratic Union, led by Ronald Ngala and Daniel arap Moi. Released in August 1961, Kenyatta formed an all-party African government and accepted the KANU presidency. Elections were held in May 1963, as a result of which KANU took power at independence in December 1963.

Kenya became a republic in December 1964, with Kenyatta its first president. In 1966 Odinga resigned from the vice-presidency

lower inflation and positive growth in real GDP – based on tea, coffee and horticulture production, tourism and a growing manufacturing sector. There were good harvests in the mid-1990s, but very heavy unseasonal rains in 1997–98 severely damaged the harvest and transport infrastructure and caused growth to stall. This was followed by drought in 1999–2000.

The relationship with the IMF and other international agencies was turbulent during the 1990s and early 2000s. In August 2000, IMF support – suspended since 1997 – was resumed when it agreed a three-year poverty reduction and growth loan, conditional on all senior officials, including the president, declaring their assets each year. Relations with aid donors were strained during 2001–02, and some disbursements were delayed; relations only improved after the change of government in December 2002. The new government committed itself to structural adjustment, including privatisation of Kenya Commercial Bank, Telkom Kenya and Kenya Railways; it enacted anti-corruption legislation; and concluded a poverty reduction and growth facility with the IMF. Commitments of support by other multilateral and bilateral donors and a new round of debt-rescheduling then followed.

The 2000s opened with very slow growth, but the economy had recovered by the mid-2000s, when it grew by at least 5% p.a. Then, feeling the impact of both drought and global recession, it slowed sharply (growing by 1.5% in 2008), recovering in 2009 (2.7%) and becoming vigorous in 2010 (5.8%), 2011 (4.4%) and 2012 (about 5%).

Constitution

Status:	Republic with executive president
Legislature:	Parliament
Independence:	12 December 1963

The constitution in force until August 2010 had been amended many times since the republic was formed in December 1964. It provided for the unicameral National Assembly consisting of 210 members directly elected every five years and 12 non-constituency members appointed by the president, plus the speaker and attorney-general. The multiparty system was introduced in December 1991.

The president – directly elected and limited to two five-year terms – is head of state, head of the cabinet and commander-in-chief of

- to form the Kenya People's Union (KPU). Throughout the 1960s, radical elements within KANU challenged the moderates, who were led by Mboya (assassinated 1969 in unclear circumstances) and Moi (who with the entire membership of the Kenya African Democratic Union had earlier joined KANU). Following a dispute, the KPU was banned and Odinga detained. Kenyatta was elected unopposed to a third presidential term in September 1974. He died in 1978, aged 82. The presidency passed to Moi.

There were numerous constitutional amendments under Moi's presidency. In 1982, KANU became the sole legal political party. In 1986, control of the civil service was transferred to the president's office, and the president was given power to dismiss High Court judges and the auditor-general. Also in 1986 the secret ballot for parliamentary elections was replaced by public queue-voting.

Moi was returned to power in the 1988 elections. Ethnic tensions increased in some rural areas. Aid was frozen from 1991, as a result of the dissatisfaction among donors over human rights and economic conditions. The government then began to reform the political system. The secret ballot had been brought back in 1990, the tenure of office of judges and the auditor-general was restored in 1992, a multiparty system was introduced and the government called elections for December 1992.

Several new opposition parties to KANU emerged for the first multiparty elections in December 1992. They included the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD–Kenya), led by Oginga Odinga until his death in 1994, the Democratic Party led by Mwai Kibaki, and FORD–Asili led by Kenneth Matiba. A Commonwealth observer group at the elections concluded that they were flawed, but sufficiently free and fair for the results to be acceptable as the democratic will. KANU led by Daniel arap Moi won, against a divided opposition. In 1993 aid began slowly to flow again.

Despite the reforms of the early 1990s, the constitution remained the focus of political discontent, the opposition arguing that

centralisation of power weakens the multiparty system. Some prominent figures within KANU were calling for the restoration of *majimbo* features of the independence constitution, to strengthen the rights of ethnic minorities. In September 1997 the National Assembly approved electoral reforms, including abolition of the anti-secession laws that the government had used to suppress the opposition, granting equal broadcasting time to all political parties and presidential candidates, and giving the opposition representation on the Electoral Commission.

In the December 1997 presidential election, Moi was re-elected with 40% of the votes, Kibaki of the Democratic Party received 31%, Raila Odinga of the National Development Party (NDP) 11%, Michael Kijana Wamalwa of FORD–Kenya 8% and Charity Kaluki Ngilu of the Social Democratic Party 8%. In the simultaneous National Assembly elections, KANU took 109 of the 210 seats, the Democratic Party 39, NDP 21, FORD–Kenya 17, and Social Democratic Party 14.

In November 1999, a further constitutional amendment was enacted to reduce the powers of the president to control the National Assembly, powers that were originally introduced by Kenyatta.

In June 2001, Moi forged the country's first governing coalition when he appointed to the cabinet two members of the opposition NDP – including Raila Odinga, son of Oginga Odinga, the country's first vice-president and a presidential candidate in 1992, and in March 2002 the NDP was merged with KANU. However, Odinga then left KANU and formed the Liberal Democratic Party and in October 2002 joined with Kibaki in the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC). In late 2001, Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of Kenya's first president, was nominated as an MP and appointed minister, emerging in 2002 as KANU's presidential candidate, replacing Moi, who by the end of the year would have been president for 24 years and who was bound by the constitution to stand down.

the armed forces, and appoints the vice-president and cabinet. However, under the internationally-brokered power-sharing agreement, a grand coalition government, comprising president and the new post of prime minister, was established in March 2008.

A commission was set up in 2000 to draw up a new constitution, which – following a constitutional court ruling in March 2004 – would be subject to a national referendum. Draft constitutions were discussed at a series of constitutional conferences. The new constitution that was approved by the National Assembly in April 2010, endorsed by the electorate in the national referendum on 4 August 2010 and promulgated on 27 August 2010 provides for reduction of the president's power; abolition of the post of prime minister (after the next election); an expanded National Assembly (to 350 seats); creation of a senate; significant devolution of power to new county authorities (to be overseen by the senate); recognition of faith courts; a bill of rights; and creation of a supreme court, a new anti-corruption agency, and an independent land commission to promote land reform.

These new provisions were to be implemented in a timetable spanning up to five years, most provisions to come into force after the elections of March 2013. The implementation process is being overseen by two bodies, the Commission for the Implementation of the Constitution and the Commission on Revenue Allocation.

Politics

Last elections:	4 March 2013 (presidential, legislative and local)
Next elections:	2018 (presidential, legislative and local)
Head of state:	President Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta
Head of government:	the president
Ruling party:	Jubilee Coalition

At his third attempt, in a relatively peaceful contest, Mwai Kibaki, the candidate of the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), comfortably won the presidential election in December 2002, with 62.2% of the votes, while Uhuru Kenyatta (the son of Kenya's first president), standing for the Kenya African National Union (KANU), received 31.3%. The National Rainbow Coalition gained a substantial majority in the parliamentary elections, winning 125 seats; KANU took 64 and FORD–People 14 (Forum for the Restoration of Democracy). The Commonwealth observer group present commended the Electoral Commission, said that the elections 'represented a major improvement on previous such exercises' and described the electoral process as credible.

In a referendum in November 2005 a proposed new constitution was decisively rejected. Opposition to this constitution was led by a new grouping, the 'Orange team', comprising Uhuru Kenyatta's KANU and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), a party with members in Kibaki's cabinet. Kibaki then dismissed his cabinet. When in December he formed a new cabinet he excluded opponents of the new constitution (mainly LDP members) and included members of minority parties to shore up support for his government.

In 2007, when elections were due, the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) led by Raila Odinga and Orange Democratic Movement–Kenya (ODM–K) led by Kalonzo Musyoka emerged as

the main opponents to Mwai Kibaki and his newly formed coalition, the Party of National Unity (PNU). The PNU included KANU which had earlier left the Orange team, FORD–Kenya, NARC–Kenya (an offshoot of NARC) and several smaller parties. Tensions were high in the pre-election period, with outbreaks of violence.

Following a relatively peaceful polling day on 27 December 2007, the Orange team decisively won the parliamentary elections; ODM took 99 seats and its partner NARC three. The ruling PNU took 43 seats and its coalition partners 35 seats. Of the remaining constituencies declared, ODM–K won in 16 and independents in 11. A re-run was ordered in the three undeclared constituencies.

Unofficial results of the presidential election indicated Raila Odinga led Kibaki by at least 200,000 votes and the absence of any official declaration provoked widespread unrest in the country. When on 30 December 2007 the Electoral Commission published results, Kibaki was ahead with 4,584,721 votes, then Odinga with 4,352,993 and Musyoka with 879,903. Commonwealth observers noted that the elections were 'the most competitive in the country's history' but raised doubts on the handling of the final stages of the presidential election, particularly the delay in announcing the results.

Protests about the presidential election results erupted and intensified in a period that became one of the most violent since independence and hundreds of people were killed. Some of the violence assumed an ethnic dimension with the Kikuyu perceived as pro-Kibaki and the Luo as Odinga supporters. The opposing leaders eventually agreed to work together in a power-sharing coalition government with Kibaki as president and Odinga as prime minister. The agreement was brokered by a group of eminent persons led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. In March 2008 the National Assembly enacted a law to formalise the deal. Odinga subsequently became prime minister in a grand coalition government.

The presidential election held in March 2013 was won in the first round by Uhuru Kenyatta, the candidate of the Jubilee Coalition. He secured 50.1% of votes cast; Raila Odinga of the Coalition for Reforms and Democracy (CORD) took 43.3% and Musalia Mudavadi of Amani 3.9%. Turnout was 86%.

In the simultaneous elections to the National Assembly the Jubilee Coalition won 167 seats, CORD 141 and Amani 24; and in the Senate Jubilee took 21 seats, CORD 20 and Amani 4. Former President of Botswana, Festus Mogae, who led a Commonwealth observer group, commended the peaceful nature of the poll.

International relations

Kenya is a member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, African Union, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community, Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation, Non-Aligned Movement, United Nations and World Trade Organization.

Kenya was a member, with Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania, of the East African Community, which from 1967 had a common market and many shared services, but collapsed in 1977. The three countries again embarked on developing regional co-operation in 1993, bringing about progressive harmonisation of standards and policies across a wide range of activities and

launching a new East African Community in January 2001 and East African Customs Union in January 2005. The Community was enlarged in July 2007 when Burundi and Rwanda became members.

Kenya is also a member of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which was established in 1986 by the six countries in the Horn of Africa to combat drought and desertification and promote food security in the region.

Kenya hosts the headquarters of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi.

Traveller information

Immigration and customs: Passports must be valid for at least six months from the date of arrival. Visas are required by all Commonwealth nationals; they can generally be obtained on arrival. If you are travelling on from Kenya, many countries will require you to have a yellow fever vaccination certificate (see *Travel Health* below).

Travel within the country: Traffic drives on the left. A foreign driving licence is valid in Kenya, as long as it is in English. All major roads are paved.

Scheduled domestic flights link the regions. Fast train services operate between Nairobi and Mombasa, with a journey time of 13 hours and sleeping compartments available. Bus and minibus (*matatu*) services connect the main towns. Taxis and rickshaws (*tuk tuk*) provide urban transport.

Travel health: Prevalent diseases where appropriate precautionary measures are recommended include cholera, dengue fever, diphtheria, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, malaria, meningococcal meningitis, polio, rabies, schistosomiasis (bilharzia), typhoid and yellow fever. The World Health Organization has recommended vaccination against yellow fever.

There were 1,470,000 tourist arrivals in 2010.

Further information

State House, Kenya: www.statehousekenya.go.ke

Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission: www.iebc.or.ke

Parliament: www.parliament.go.ke

Central Bank of Kenya: www.centralbank.go.ke

Kenya Tourist Board: www.magicalkenya.com

Commonwealth Secretariat: www.thecommonwealth.org

Commonwealth of Nations: www.commonwealthofnations.org/country/kenya