

**OFFICIAL NAME:** Republic of Zimbabwe

**CAPITAL:** Harare (Salisbury)

**SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT:** Multiparty Republic

**AREA:** 390,600 Sq Km (150,812 Sq Mi)

**ESTIMATED 2000 POPULATION:** 12,833,000

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**LOCATION & GEOGRAPHY:** Zimbabwe is a landlocked country located in South Central Africa. It is bound by South Africa to the south, Botswana to the southwest, Zambia to the northwest and Mozambique to the northeast, east and southeast. The country is located on a high rolling plateau known as the Veld that is divided into three topographical regions. (1.) The High Veld which stretches southwest and northwest with an elevation between 1,200 metres (3,937 feet) and 1,600 metres (5,250 feet). The High Veld has a smooth terrain with rocky hills known as Kopjes and is marked by an eastern mountain range whose highest point is Mt. Inyangani as well as the Great Dyke which is a series of eroded ridges. (2.) The Middle Veld which has an elevation of between 900 metres (2,953 feet) and 1,200 metres (3,937 feet). (3.) The Low Veld which is below 900 metres (2,953 feet) and accounts for around 20% of the land area. The principal rivers are the Sabi and Lundi, although the principal drainage system is provided by the Zambezi and Limpopo Rivers. The Victoria Falls are located in western Zimbabwe and are one of the most spectacular falls in the world. Major Cities (pop. est.); Harare (Salisbury) 1,184,200, Bulawayo 621,000, Chitungwiza 274,000, Mutare 131,800, Gweru 124,700 (1992). Land Use; forested 23%, pastures 12.5%, agricultural-cultivated 7.5%, other 58% (1993).

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**CLIMATE:** Zimbabwe has a sub-tropical climate that is influenced by altitude. There are four distinct seasons. (1.) A warm wet season from November to March. (2.) A transitional season from April to May. (3.) A cool dry winter season from May to August and (4.) a warm dry season from August to October. Rainfall is highest on the High Veld with an average annual precipitation of up to 1,020 mm (40 inches) while the Middle Veld receives 410 mm to 610 mm (16 to 24 inches) and the Low Veld receives less than 400 mm (12 inches). Average temperature ranges in Harare (Salisbury) are from 7 to 21 degrees Celsius (45 to 70 degrees Fahrenheit) in June or July to 16 to 27 degrees Celsius (61 to 81 degrees Fahrenheit) in November.

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**PEOPLE:** Zimbabwe has four principal ethnic groups. (1.) Black Africans who account for 96% of the population. (2.) Whites or Europeans who account for 3.5% of the population. (3.) Coloreds who are of mixed African and European or Indian descent and (4.) Asians or Indians who combined with the Coloreds account for .5% of the population. Most Africans belong to two major tribal groups, the Shona who account for 71% of the population and the Ndebele who constitute 16%.

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**DEMOGRAPHIC/VITAL STATISTICS:** Density; 25 persons per sq km (64 persons per sq mi) (1991). Urban-Rural; 26.4% urban, 73.6% rural (1988). Sex Distribution; 48.8% male, 51.2% female (1992). Life Expectancy at Birth; 57.9 years male, 61.4 years female (1987). Age Breakdown; 46% under 15, 28% 15 to 29, 15% 30 to 44, 7% 45 to 59, 3% 60 to 74, 1% 75 and over (1990). Birth Rate; 41.7 per 1,000 (1990). Death Rate; 10.3 per 1,000 (1990). Increase Rate; 31.4 per 1,000 (1990). Infant Mortality Rate; 67.0 per 1,000 live births (1989).

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**RELIGIONS:** Around 45% of the population are Christians while Muslims account for 1% and the remainder follow either local native tribal beliefs or a Syncretist faith which is a mixture of Christian and local beliefs.

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**LANGUAGES:** The official language is English, although Shona and Ndebele are widely spoken with both from the Bantu family of languages.

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**EDUCATION:** Aged 15 or over and having attained: no formal schooling 24.5%, primary 42.9%, secondary and higher 31.7% (1987). Literacy; literate population aged 15 or over 3,413,000 or 76.0% (1985).

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**MODERN HISTORY - WWII TO 1993:** In 1953 Britain established the Central African Federation which included Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) and Nyasaland (Malawi). In 1957 the African National Congress (ANC) was reformed under Joshua Nkomo and renamed the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU). In 1962 the ZAPU were banned and in Aug. 1963 the ZAPU split to form another party called the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). In 1963 Britain dissolved the federation and Southern Rhodesia became known as Rhodesia. In 1964 the Rhodesian government demanded its independence and on Nov. 11, 1965 Prime Minister Ian Smith declared Rhodesia's independence. During the 1960's the ZANU and ZAPU launched guerrilla offensives against the government. In 1969 Rhodesian voters, mostly Whites, approved a new constitution designed to prevent Black African majorities from ever gaining control of the government and on Mar. 2, 1970 Rhodesia declared itself a republic, although it was never internationally recognized. In 1971 Britain and Rhodesia reached an agreement that included provisions to gradually increase black representation in the government. In Dec. 1972 fighting erupted between government troops and the ZANU and ZAPU guerrillas. In 1974 the groups agreed to a cease-fire. In 1976 widespread fighting again broke out between government troops and the Black guerrillas which continued until Sept. 1979 when both sides finally agreed to the formation of a new government. On April 18, 1980 Britain recognized the country's independence as a Republic

within the Commonwealth. Robert Mugabe, the ZANU leader, became Prime Minister and Rhodesia officially changed its name to Zimbabwe. In 1981 fighting broke out between the Shona and the Ndebele ethnic groups. In Feb. 1982 the coalition government broke up after the dismissal of Nkomo from the Cabinet when arms were discovered on farms owned by the ZAPU. In 1983 there was widespread unrest as government troops cracked down on dissident activities which resulted in the deaths of a few hundred people. In May 1986 the South African defense force launched an offensive against an alleged ANC base in the capital. In Oct. 1987 Prime Minister Mugabe was elected President. In Sept. 1989 student demonstrations for greater freedom and expression, led to the arrest of several hundred protesters as well as the temporary closure of the University of Zimbabwe. In Nov. 1989 a Bill was passed which gave the President the power to establish a single-party system of government and in Mar. 1990 Pres. Mugabe was re-elected. In Dec. 1990 legislation was passed which allowed for the confiscation of White-owned farms with compensation to be determined by the government. In March 1991 the Paris Club of Western Aid Donors pledged a further US \$700 million. In June 1991 the government approved the removal of all Marxist-Leninist references from the constitution. In the same month a split within the main opposition party, Zimbabwe Unity Movement, lessened opposition to the ruling ZANU party. In Oct. 1991 Pres. Mugabe announced that he would prefer more positive measures to promote a political change in South Africa instead of economic sanctions. Also in 1991 the government which expected a good maize harvest in 1992 elected to sell off their maize reserves at low prices. However, in 1992 a prolonged drought severely affected the country's maize production and forced the government to purchase imported maize. This further exacerbated the country's economic problems and decreased the government's popularity. In Jan. 1992 Pres. Mugabe's wife, Sally a native Ghanan passed away. In April 1992 Vice Pres. Joshua Nkomo authorized the government's transport minister to visit his South African counterpart in an attempt to resolve the delays in the importation of maize via South Africa. In May 1992 a number dissatisfied intellectuals established the Forum for Democratic Reform in an attempt to encourage the formation of opposition parties with sound economic programs. In June 1992 the government's of Zimbabwe and South Africa signed a accord to make possible drought relief for Zimbabwe. In Aug. 1992 the country's second largest city Bulawayo began to suffer water shortages which in turn led to reduced electricity supplies. Also in 1992 the government canceled a US300+ million order for MiG-29 fighter with Russia. In 1993 a number of government projects were postponed in an attempt to improve the country's economic situation. On April 27, 1993 the government announced a number of trade liberalization measures in an attempt to encourage further foreign investment. In June 1993 the Sengwa colliery, established to supply fuel to the ferrochrome industry, was forced to close following the collapse of the world chrome market. In July 1993 the government also announced liberalization plans for the agricultural sector. Also in 1993 a new political party formed, the Forum Party, with a former chief justice, Enoch Dumbutshena as leader. The party promised to instigate a privatization program of state-owned enterprises if elected to power.

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**CURRENCY:** The official currency is the Dollar (ZD) divided into 100 Cents.

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**ECONOMY:** Gross National Product; USD \$5,756,000,000 (1993). Public Debt; USD \$3,021,000,000 (1993). Imports; ZD \$11,798,400,000 (1993). Exports; ZD \$10,164,200,000 (1993). Tourism Receipts; USD \$103,000,000 (1993). Balance of Trade; ZD -\$2,475,600,000 (1992). Economically Active Population; 3,260,000 or 38.3% of total population (1987). Unemployed; 7.2% (1987).

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**MAIN TRADING PARTNERS:** Its main trading partners are South Africa, the UK, the USA and Germany.

**MAIN PRIMARY PRODUCTS:** Asbestos, Chrome, Coal, Copper, Cotton, Gold, Iron, Maize, Millet, Nickel, Sugar, Tin, Tobacco, Wheat.

**MAJOR INDUSTRIES:** Agriculture, Cement, Cigarettes, Coke, Fertilizers, Iron and Steel, Mining, Textiles, Tourism.

**MAIN EXPORTS:** Asbestos, Chrome, Cotton, Foodstuffs, Gold, Tobacco.

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**TRANSPORT:** Railroads; route length 2,759 km (1,714 mi) (1989), passenger-km 870,403,000 (540,843,000 passenger-mi) (1989), cargo ton-km 10,592,000 (7,254,000 short ton-mi) (1989). Roads; length 85,237 km (52,964 mi) (1989). Vehicles; cars 173,000 (1989), trucks and buses 80,000 (1989). Merchant Marine; nil. Air Transport; passenger-km 709,000,000 (440,552,000 passenger-mi) (1989), cargo ton-km 12,394,000 (8,489,000 short ton-mi) (1989).

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**COMMUNICATIONS:** Daily Newspapers; total of 2 with a total circulation of 195,340 (1994). Radio; receivers 801,000 (1994). Television; receivers 137,100 (1994). Telephones; lines 128,100 (1993).

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**MILITARY:** 45,000 (1995) total active duty personnel with 91.1% army, 0.0% navy and 8.9% air force while military expenditure accounts for 4.3% (1993) of the Gross National Product (GNP).