



Country Profile: Timor

Occupying 5,743 square miles on the eastern half of an island in the Timor Sea between Indonesia and Australia, Timor-Leste has a population of approximately 1.1 million people. Timor-Leste became independent on May 20, 2002, and is now a democratically governed, independent nation with an elected President and Parliament.

In the violence that followed Timor-Leste's 1999 independence referendum, the country's infrastructure, never robust, was totally destroyed and has been only partially rebuilt. In April 2006, violence erupted again in and around the capital, Dili, resulting in further damage to infrastructure and setting back economic growth. Electricity, telephone and telecommunications, roads and lodging remain unreliable, particularly outside of the capital. Timor-Leste's economy relies largely on international assistance and revenues from oil and gas production. Read the Department of State's [Background Notes](#) on Timor-Leste for additional information.

COUNTRY OVERVIEW



Country Name:	Timor - Leste
Continent:	Asia
Capital City:	Dili
Boundary Countries:	Indonesia 228 km
Recommended Hospitals in Capital:	None at this time.
Main Cities:	Dili, Pante Makasar, Ermera, Suai, Manatuto, Baucau, Liquica, Viqueque.
Country Size:	15,007 sq km
Population:	1,108,777 - note: other estimates range as low as 800,000 (July 2008 est.)

COUNTRY GENERAL INFORMATION

Language:	Tetum (official), Portuguese (official), Indonesian, English <i>note: there are about 16 indigenous languages; Tetum, Galole, Mambae, and Kemak are spoken by significant numbers of people</i>
Currency:	US dollar (USD)
Predominant Religions:	Roman Catholic 98%, Muslim 1%, Protestant 1% (2005)
National Holidays:	Independence Day, 28 November (1975)
Economic Status:	<p>In late 1999, about 70% of the economic infrastructure of Timor-Leste was laid waste by Indonesian troops and anti-independence militias. Three hundred thousand people fled westward. Over the next three years a massive international program, manned by 5,000 peacekeepers (8,000 at peak) and 1,300 police officers, led to substantial reconstruction in both urban and rural areas.</p> <p>The mid-2006 outbreak of violence and civil unrest disrupted both private and public sector economic activity and created 100,000 internally displaced persons - about 10 percent of the population. While real non-oil GDP growth in 2006 was negative, the economy probably rebounded in 2007. The underlying economic policy challenge the country faces remains how best to use oil-and-gas wealth to lift the non-oil economy onto a higher growth path and reduce poverty. In late 2007, the new government announced plans aimed at increasing spending, reducing poverty, and improving the country's infrastructure, but it continues to face capacity constraints. In the short term, the government must also address continuing problems related to the crisis of 2006, especially the displaced Timorese.</p>
Security:	Timor-Leste Defense Force (Forças de Defesa de Timor-L'este, Falintil (FDTL)): Army, Navy (Armada)

US Presence:	<u>U.S. Embassy in Dili</u> Avenida de Portugal Praia dos Coqueiros Dili, Timor-Leste tel: (670) 332-4684
Major Airports:	Airports: 8, Airports w/paved runways: 3 Dili - Presidente Nicolau Lobato International Airport (DIL/WPDL) Dili Airport, East Timor, Dili, EAST TIMOR <i>Tel:</i> (Civil Aviation) +670 331 7110 <i>Fax:</i> +670 331 7111 <i>Customs Tel:</i> +670 3333 9399 <i>Fax:</i> +670 3317 262

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