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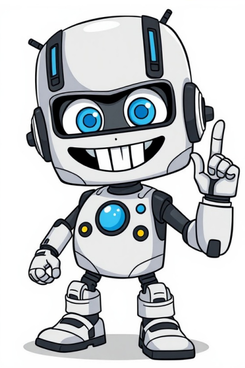

Het startpunt van jouw vakantie naar Mauritius. Lees over de praktische info ter plaatse en welke reisdocumenten je nodig hebt. Ontdek de hoogtepunten: bezoek de witte zandstranden op Île aux Cerfs en bewonder de lokale flora en fauna in het Black River Gorges National Park. Beklim de berg Le Morne Brabant en geniet van het uitzicht. Kies voor een privé rondreis in combinatie met Zuid-Afrika of een familie groepsreis voor een onvergetelijke ervaring. Hier vind je alles voor jouw vakantie naar Mauritius.De mooiste bezienswaardigheden van Mauritius Duik naar het scheepswrak Sirius in de Grand Baie. Of combineer een dag op het paradijselijke strand van Île aux Cerfs met een bezoek aan de hoofdstad Port-Louis voor de Mauritiaanse cultuur.ANWB Creditcard Speciaal voor leden zijn er de ANWB Creditcards. Overal op vakantie veilig en verzekerd betalen. Dat voelt goed!Shop alles voor je vakantie Van wandelschoenen tot koffers en van reisgidsen tot milieustickers. Je vindt het in één van onze winkels of webwinkel.ANWB Doorlopende Reisverzekering Ga goed verzekerd op reis. De doorlopende reisverzekering van de ANWB is als beste getest door de Consumentenbond.Pechhulp op vakantie Met Wegenwacht Europa is de beste hulp altijd dichtbij. Zo kun je, ook bij pech, van je vakantie blijven genieten. Het tropische eiland Mauritius vormt met zijn parelwitte stranden, hoge temperaturen en een helderblauwe zee de ideale vakantiebestemming. Duik tijdens je vakantie op Mauritius tussen de koraalriffen in de Indische Oceaan, ontdek het bijzondere natuurverschijnsel Seven Coloured Earth of ontspan met een cocktail bij Trou Aux Biches. Een goede reisvoorbereiding voor een vakantie naar Mauritius Ga je zelf de weg op tijdens een vakantie op Mauritius? In de voormalige Britse kolonie rijdt men links en haalt men rechts in. Het wegennetwerk is over het algemeen goed en er zijn geen tolwegen op het eiland. Houd er wel rekening mee dat verkeersborden vaak ontbreken. Met een nauwkeurige landkaart vind je gemakkelijk zelf de weg, dus huur een auto om het eiland te verkennen. Vakantie op Mauritius: tips en bezienswaardigheden Duikers beleven een onvergetelijke vakantie op het eiland Mauritius. Aan de noordkust, bij Trou Aux Biches, liggen talrijke scheepswrakken voor spectaculaire duikavonturen. Zwem tussen de tropische vissen en kleurrijke koraalriffen. Reis vervolgens naar het binnenland om de Seven Coloured Earth in nationaal park Black River Gorges te ontdekken. Bij het museum L'Aventure du Sucre in Pamplemousses kom je alles te weten over de suikerrietplantages. Bekijk het reisaanbod naar Mauritius Interesse in een vakantie naar Mauritius? Kies dan voor een prachtige groepsreis of singlereis naar het schitterende eiland. Ook is het een optie om je vakantie te combineren met een reis naar Zuid-Afrika. One of the most beautiful islands in the world, Mauritius is a multidimensional destination as perfect for families as it is for couples on honeymoon – for just about anyone, really.Part of its considerable charm is entirely natural: Mauritius rises from the Indian Ocean like a vision. You can easily imagine how early seafarers must have felt when spotting its beaches and palm trees, forests and mountains, reefs and wild horizons. Mauritius was also a prototype for multifaceted island tourism, combining the escapist pleasures of luxury resorts by the sea with rich cultural depth beyond the front gates. As well as the beaches, you can dive into Mauritius' intriguing historical backstory, unique conservation success stories and sizzling-hot culinary experiences.Here's how to get the most out of any trip to Mauritius. Snorkeling in Mauritius. The lagoon around the island is as beautiful under the water as it is from the stunning beaches. iStockphoto 1. Dive the west coastA stunning lagoon surrounds Mauritius, and these shallow waters are picture-perfect in their own right, with spectacular diving at the reefs on the lagoon rim. Along Mauritius' west coast, the waves break out near the horizon and the dropoff where the lagoon meets the open ocean is a world of underwater cliffs, populated by an astonishing array of marine life. Flic en Flac is the starting point for many of the best dives, including La Cathédrale, a fine spot to see scuttling lobsters.2. Relax on the beautiful beachesThe beaches for which Mauritius is famed encircle the island like a garland. All of the resorts have their own, but there's so much sand around that you're never far from a peaceful public beach where you can share the sea with picnicking local families rather than hordes of visiting tourists. The richest choices lie along the east coast; southern beaches are quieter and wilder, while the west coast is better for those looking for activity out on the water. A pink pigeon in Mauritius. You can spot these endemic birds at Black River Gorges National Park. CameraBaba/Shutterstock 3. Hike the Black River GorgesIn the forested interior of Mauritius, Black River Gorges National Park is a precious and protected wilderness that's somehow only half an hour from the beach. Its dense forest is home to many native species of flora and fauna, including three endangered bird species: the Mauritius kestrel, the echo parakeet and the pink pigeon. As you hike through forests and past waterfalls, watch out for white-tailed tropicbirds flying high above the gorges or pink pigeons hanging out near the trail.4. Head up to the mountains of ChamarelAmong the many worthwhile excursions away from the coast, a trip to Chamarel might be the most rewarding. High in the hills and with glorious views down toward the coast in places, Chamarel has become a culinary hot spot thanks to a growing number of casual family-run dining rooms and fine-dining restaurants hidden away among the trees. Other reasons to come include the famous colored sands of Terres de 7 Couleurs, Mauritius' quirky museum of illusions and the Rhumerie de Chamarel, a fascinating, eco-friendly rum distillery. Mauritian cuisine combines Indian, Chinese, Franco-Mauritian and Creole influences. Yapasphoto StefClement/Shutterstock 5. Sample Mauritian Creole cookingDiversity is a defining feature of Mauritian life, and the island's cultural melting pot is most apparent (and tastiest) in its cuisine. Indian, Chinese, Franco-Mauritian and Creole influences come together in Mauritian kitchens – making dining here at once a genuine pleasure and a globe-trotting adventure. The island boasts world-renowned chefs and endless places to sample local delicacies and staples. If we had to pick one place to try, it would be the stellar home-style cooking of chef Marie-Ange at informal the Palais de Barbizon in Chamarel.6. Live in the moment on RodriguesOne of Mauritius' most remote quarters, Rodrigues – 600km (372 miles) away from the main island – feels like it occupies a different time and space altogether. Life in this peaceful outpost is focused on the pleasure of day-to-day living and connecting with the land and the people. Spend your days taking boat trips to outlying islands, communing with giant tortoises, perusing the Saturday market at Port Mathurin, or diving and snorkeling off the south coast or around La Passe St François. While there's plenty to do, a big part of Rodrigues' charm comes from something altogether simpler: slowing down, and savoring the joy of just being here. Giant water liles at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden. natalya sterleva/Shutterstock 7. Ponder rare, gigantic species at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical GardenThere are times in Mauritius when it seems as if the wild tangle of tropical vegetation is visibly growing larger before your very eyes. Nowhere is this truer than in the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Gardens at Pamplemousses, originally founded as the vegetable garden for the nearby Mon Plaisir Château in 1735. The garden has expanded considerably from its original footprint, and the stars of this gargantuan show are today the giant Victoria amazonica water lilies and soulful giant tortoises. There are so many head-turning, magnificent specimens to take that you'll need a few hours to explore. Eureka House in Mauritius. zigzag12/Shutterstock 8. Imagine the past at Mauritius' historic mansionsUninhabited until the Dutch took possession of the islands in 1598, Mauritius was at various times a colony of the Dutch, French and British before it gained independence in 1968. Under European rule, giant sugar and tea estates filled every available pasture of the Mauritian interior, and the centerpieces of these prized plantations were French-style colonial mansions, which today are some of the Indian Ocean's greatest architectural treasures.Like mini châteaux adapted to the tropics, these stately homes have gorgeous gardens, high ceilings, ornate verandas and cantilevered windows to catch the breeze. Check out Eureka House in Moka or Château Labourdonnais near Pamplemousses for fine examples of the style. A beach in northern Mauritius. Walter Bibikow/Getty Images 9. Indulge in the ultimate resort experienceIf you're looking to unwind and unplug by the water, the beach resorts of Mauritius have few peers. Some resorts are the height of exclusivity – if you're staying at one of these lavish properties on a honeymoon or luxury break, you may never want to leave the resort grounds. Other resorts cater wonderfully to families, with kids clubs, water sports and more. Whichever secluded corner of the island you head to, you'll find abundant resorts to choose from. Expect large and luxurious rooms, multiple swimming pools, ample gardens, world-class restaurants, organized activities and perhaps a no-indulgence-spared spa.10. Explore an untouched wilderness on Île aux AigrettesOn the edge of the lagoon just off Mauritius' pristine southeastern coast, Île aux Aigrettes offers a vision of the ancient and wild land that greeted early explorers. The old-growth ebony forest here is a microcosm of to the island's ecosystem before the arrival of European colonists in the 16th century. Restored as part of a government-backed conservation project, the forest today shelters all manner of endangered bird and other wildlife species. Just be careful not to trip over a Mauritian giant tortoise. Dreamy Trou d'Argent is only accessible via the Rodrigues Coastal Walk. louma/Shutterstock 11. Meander along the Rodrigues Coastal WalkRodrigues already feels like the end of the earth – and the coastal walk from Graviers to St François just confirms it. Save for the occasional cloud or passing seabirds, there's nothing to interrupt the views over the ocean to the distant horizon – and the silence has to be experienced to be believed. Best of all, it's the only way to reach Trou d'Argent, which must be Mauritius' prettiest beach.12. Look for whales and dolphinsIf east coast Mauritius is known for its resorts, the west coast is all about getting out on and under the water. Spinner or bottlenose dolphins are frequently sighted in the lagoon off Tamarin, and you can avoid the free-for-all by going to see them with Dolswim, which follows strict rules to ensure the dolphins are not disturbed. From July to October or November, humpback whales migrate down through the open ocean off the west coast and can be spotted breaching beyond the lagoon. Enjoying just-caught fish on the sand is one of Mauritius' greatest pleasures. Scott Biales DitchTheMap/Shutterstock 13. Sample seafood on the sandGlobal culinary influences and celebrity resort chefs lie at one end of Mauritius' culinary spectrum. On the other, there's no finer dining experience than grabbing a table at a beachfront shack in Trou aux Biches on the north coast or St François in Rodrigues, and ordering the freshest seafood imaginable. Take your pick from lobster, prawns, octopus, grilled fish, calamari and more, deciding whether you want it served grilled or smothered in a red Creole sauce. Then sit back, and enjoy a seafood feast with a view.14. Explore by boat for epic views from the waterWhile Mauritius and remote Rodrigues get all the attention, there's an often-missed archipelago of inner islands within a day's boat trip of the main island. To the east are Île des Deux Cocos and Île aux Cerfs – crowded in parts, but offering some gorgeous quiet corners. Pretty Île aux Bénitiers lies off the west coast; away to the north, there's even more choice: Coin de Mire, Île Plate and Îlot Gabriel are all delightful. Combine exploring with time spent snorkeling and a picnic lunch, and you have one fine Mauritius day. The view from the top of Le Morne Brabant. kamnacestach/Shutterstock 15. Climb Le Morne BrabantThe dramatic peak rising abruptly from the southwest shore of Mauritius, Le Morne Brabant is a UNESCO World Heritage–listed site that served as a home for a group of people dubbed the Maroons, who escaped from slavery and took refuge on this once-remote peninsula. Upon learning that a group of officers was heading to their camp, the Maroons leaped to their deaths rather than be captured again – even though legend has it that the officers were dispatched to inform the community that slavery had been abolished. After a tough but thrilling climb to the top of this poignant peak, you can take in of most of Mauritius. A humbling monument commemorating the people who died is at the base of the mountain. Skip to content Scroll Up Introduction & Quick Facts References & Edit History Facts & Stats Geography & Travel Countries of the World Where is Mauritius located geographically? What is the capital city of Mauritius? What are the official languages spoken in Mauritius? What is the significance of the dodo bird in relation to Mauritius? How does Mauritius's cultural diversity reflect its history? What are some of the main economic activities in Mauritius? How does tourism impact the economy and environment of Mauritius? Mauritius, island country in the Indian Ocean, located off the eastern coast of Africa. Physiographically, it is part of the Mascarene Islands. The capital is Port Louis. Mauritius lies about 500 miles (800 km) east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. Its outlying territories are Rodrigues Island, situated about 340 miles (550 km) eastward, the Cargados Carajos Shoals, 250 miles (400 km) northeastward, and the Agalega Islands, 580 miles (930 km) northward from the main island. Mauritius also claims sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago (including Diego Garcia), some 1,250 miles (2,000 km) to the northeast, although this claim was long disputed by Britain. A tentative agreement between Mauritius and Britain to resolve the competing claims was announced in October 2024, and a final agreement to cede sovereignty to Mauritius was signed in May 2025. Audio File: National anthem of Mauritius Head Of Government: Prime Minister: Navin Ramgoolam Capital: Port Louis Population: (2025 est.) 1,232,000 Currency Exchange Rate: 1 USD equals 45.188 Mauritian rupee Head Of State: President: Dharam Gokhool Form Of Government: republic with one legislative house (National Assembly [691]) Official Language: English2 Official Religion: none Official Name: Republic of Mauritius Total Area (Sq Km): 2,007 Total Area (Sq Mi): 775 Monetary Unit: Mauritian rupee (Mau Re; plural Mau Rs) Population Rank: (2025) 160 Population Projection 2030: 1,293,000 Density: Persons Per Sq Mi: (2025) 1,589.7 Density: Persons Per Sq Km: (2025) 613.9 Urban-Rural Population: Urban: (2023) 39.9% Rural: (2023) 60.1% Life Expectancy At Birth: Male: (2022) 70 years Female: (2022) 77 years Gni (U.S.$ '000,000): (2023) 14,615 Gni Per Capita (U.S.$): (2023) 11,590 Literacy: Percentage Of Population Age 10 And Over Literate: Male: (2022) 94.9% Female: (2022) 91.9% MauritiusCountryside of Mauritius.The island of Mauritius is volcanic in origin and is almost entirely surrounded by coral reefs. The northern part is a plain that rises to a central plateau, varying in elevation from about 900 to 2,400 feet (270 to 730 meters) above sea level. The plateau is bordered by small mountains that may have formed the rim of an ancient volcano; the highest point (2,717 feet [828 meters]) is Piton de la Petite Rivière Noire in the southwest. The two major rivers, the Grand River South East and the Black River, are the primary sources of hydroelectric power. Lake Vacoas, one of the main reservoirs, is the chief source of water. More than half of the country's area is arable, and it is almost entirely planted in sugarcane, the major export crop. Vegetables and tea for local consumption are also grown. The climate is maritime subtropical, with fairly uniform temperature throughout the year. Mean temperatures vary from the mid-70s F (low to mid-20s C) at sea level to the upper 60s F (upper 10s C) on the high plateau. Two seasons are recognized: hot (December to April) and cool (June to September). Annual rainfall varies from around 35 inches (900 mm) on the west coast to 60 inches (1,525 mm) on the southeast coast and about 200 inches (5,080 mm) on the central plateau. Which Country Is Larger? Quiz Mauritius hempMauritius hemp (Furcraea gigantea).The vegetation includes some 600 indigenous species, even though little original forest is left. The fauna includes the samber (a long-tailed, dark brown deer), tenrec (a spiny insectivore), and mongoose, as well as a variety of birds and insects. The island was once home to the dodo, a flightless bird that was extinct by 1681. Efforts began in the late 20th century to save several other species of endemic birds that were close to extinction. Approximately two-thirds of the population is of Indo-Pakistani origin, most of whom are descendants of indentured laborers brought to work in the sugar industry during the 19th and early 20th centuries. About one-fourth of the population is Creole (of mixed French and African descent), and there are small numbers of people of Chinese and Franco-Mauritian descent. Although English is the official language, it is spoken by a very small percentage of the population. Creole, a French-based patois, is spoken by about four-fifths of the population and is the lingua franca of the country. Bhojpuri, an Indo-Aryan language, is spoken by one-tenth of the population, and French is spoken by a small percentage. Other languages spoken on the island include Hindi, Chinese, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu. Mauritians commonly speak two, three, or even more languages, and the educational system supports a wide range of language instruction. Religious affiliation varies: about half of the population is Hindu, about one-third is Christian (the majority of whom are Roman Catholic), and—with the exception of a small group of Buddhists—the majority of the remainder are Muslims. The population density in Mauritius is the highest of African countries and is among the highest in the world. Overpopulation became a serious problem after the eradication of falciparum malaria by the early 1950s led to a sharp increase in population. Driven by government policy, supported by all the Mauritian religious communities, and assisted by the rapid pace of economic growth, the rate of natural increase dropped rapidly in the last decades of the 20th century, and it is now below the world average. Emigration, primarily to Britain and France, also helped slow the annual growth rate. The birth rate remains well below the world average, while the death rate is similar to the world average. Life expectancy—about 70 years for men and more than 75 years for women—is higher than the world average and is well above the average for African countries. About two-fifths of the country's population is younger than age 30. Mauritius has a mixed developing economy based on manufactured exports, agriculture, tourism, and financial services. Government efforts to diversify the economy after 1980 have been successful, and the island is no longer as completely dependent on sugar production as it was throughout most of its history. The gross domestic product, among the highest of African countries, grew more rapidly than the population in the 1990s and 2000s. fishing in MauritiusFishermen placing nets in a lagoon near Rodrigues Island, a dependency of Mauritius.Although the significance of the agricultural sector has diminished with efforts to diversify the economy, it is still important. Sugar production, generating about one-sixth of export earnings, occupies about four-fifths of the total arable land. Tea and tobacco are also cash crops. Subsistence crops include potatoes, tomatoes, and bananas. The livestock population primarily consists of poultry, sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle. Forests make up about one-fifth of the total land area of Mauritius. Rapid deforestation occurred during the colonial era, and non-native species were introduced to repopulate the forestland, including the slash pine (Pinus elliottii), which is predominant, Japanese cedar (Cryptomeria japonica), and Moreton Bay pine (Araucaria cunninghamii). Eucalyptus trees and trees that belong to the beefwood (Casuarina) family are also present. Roundwood is the primary forest product, of which some two-fifths is used for fuel; sawn wood is also produced. Mauritius is unique among countries in the region in that it consumes more wood products than it produces and must import the difference. Technical assistance from Japan and India is regenerating the fishing industry, which has grown in importance. Mauritius's waters contain many species of fish with commercial value, including tuna, snapper, and grouper. Aquaculture is practiced with such species as channel bass and sea bream. De Republiek Mauritius is een land gelegen ten oosten van het vasteland van Afrika. Het ligt ter hoogte van Mozambique en Madagascar in de Indische Oceaan. Met een oppervlakte van 1969 vierkante kilometer is Mauritius net wat groter dan de Nederlandse provincie Utrecht. Een fraai groen laaggebergte domineert het binnenland van Mauritius. De 177 kilometer lange kustlijn bestaat vooral uit prachtige tropische stranden omgeven door een helderblauwe zee met koraalrif. Mauritius is volgens velen een lust voor het oog en mede daardoor een droombestemming. Niet voor niets dat men graag bereid is om bijna tienduizend kilometer te overbruggen om van een vakantie op Mauritius te genieten. Wil je een reis naar Mauritius boeken? Wij hebben het je gemakkelijk gemaakt. Reisaanbieders, autoverhuurders, luchtvaartmaatschappijen die naar Mauritius vliegen... alles wat je nodig hebt om jouw vakantie naar Mauritius te boeken op één pagina. Regel in een paar kliks jouw reis naar Mauritius. betrouwbare bedrijven gemakkelijk online te regelen kortingen worden direct verwerkt Op deze site proberen we zo compleet mogelijk de basisinformatie over Mauritius te geven aan onze lezers. Als redacteur heb je natuurlijk ook altijd een persoonlijke voorkeur. Geregeld ontvangen we de vraag wat nou onze favoriete bezienswaardigheden en activiteiten op Mauritius zijn. Dat lees je terug op het reisblog van onze redacteur Patrick, die met regelmaat Mauritius bezoekt: de 5 leukste bezienswaardigheden en activiteiten op Mauritius Mauritius kent geen inheemse bevolking. De geschiedenis tot de eerste kolonisatie is daarom nergens beschreven. Op het moment dat de Portugezen begin zestiende eeuw als eerste op het eiland Mauritius aankwamen was het onbewoond. Er zijn ook nooit sporen gevonden die duiden op een eerdere bewoning van Mauritius. Overigens hadden de Portugezen het nog niet over Mauritius, maar over Cirne. Dit Portugese woord betekent in het Nederlands 'zwaan'. De Portugezen vestigden zich niet op Mauritius. Wel gebruikten ze het eiland als tussenstop tijdens hun handelsreizen. Het waren de Nederlanders (jawel!) die zich als eerste in kleine hoeveelheden vestigden op Mauritius. Zij koloniseerden het eiland in 1638 en vernoemden het naar Maurits van Oranje, de prins van Oranje. De Nederlanders verbleven tot begin achttiende eeuw op Mauritius. Een zware orkaan trof het eiland in 1695. De schade was dermate groot dat de Nederlanders het heropbouwen niet rendabel genoeg vonden. De V.O.C. verlegde haar focus richting Kaap de Goede Hoop in Zuid-Afrika. In het jaar 1710 verhuisden de Nederlanders naar deze strategisch betere plek. In 1721 koloniseerden de Fransen het door de Nederlanders verlaten eiland. De ligging op de handelsroute naar het Verre Oosten was voldoende basis voor Frankrijk om hier een Franse kolonie te stichten. De Fransen gingen ook de suikerplantages exploiteren. Hiervoor gebruikten zij slaven die afkomstig waren uit Madagaskar en het Afrikaanse vasteland. Dit zijn de voorouders van een groot deel van de hedendaagse bevolking op Mauritius. De Fransen werden in 1810 van het eiland verjaagd door de Britten. De directe aanleiding hiervoor zou zijn dat de Britten veel last hadden van kapers die vanuit Mauritius opereerden. De Britten zijn verantwoordelijk voor de komst van veel Aziaten naar Mauritius. Zij haalden gastarbeiders uit China en Maleisië die het werk van de slaven over moesten nemen. Je merkt nog steeds dat er in Mauritius een vrij grote Chinese samenleving is, met name in Port Louis. Tot ver in de vorige eeuw is Mauritius een kroonkolonie van het Verenigd Koningrijk gebleven. Hoewel Mauritius in 1968 onafhankelijk werd bleef de Britse vorstin Elizabeth II wel het staatshoofd. Ook viel het land nog binnen het toenmalige Brits Gemenebest. In 1992 werd de Republiek Mauritius uitgeroepen. Wel is de voormalige Britse kolonie binnen het Gemenebest van naties gebleven. Sinds de onafhankelijkheid in 1968 heeft Mauritius een vrij grote transformatie ondergaan. De economie was voorheen vooral gebaseerd op landbouw. Het gemiddelde inkomen in Mauritius was daarom altijd vrij laag. Sinds de onafhankelijkheid is men druk aan de slag gegaan om voor meer diversiteit in de inkomstenbronnen te zorgen. Dat zorgde voor een stabielere economie en meer welvaart voor de lokale bevolking. Door zich naast de landbouw ook te concentreren op toerisme, textiel en (vooral financiële) dienstverlening is er een substantiële inkomensgroei ontstaan. Mauritius is erin geslaagd om een goede vrije markteconomie te ontwikkelen waarin investeerders succesvol zaken kunnen doen. In de lijst van landen op basis van koopkrachtpariteit staat Mauritius tegenwoordig bij de top 70 best scorende landen. Hiermee zijn ze een voorbeeld voor veel andere Afrikaanse landen. Dat Mauritius een relatief welvarend land is merk je als toerist ook wel. Hoewel armoede zeker niet uitgebannen is merk je dat Mauritius minder arm is dan veel andere Afrikaanse bestemmingen. De geschiedenis van Mauritius heeft voor een bonte mix aan mensen en religies gezorgd. Je zou natuurlijk verwachten dat je vooral blanken (nakomelingen van de Franse en Britse kolonisten) en vanwege de nabije ligging bij het Afrikaanse continent donkere mensen aan zou treffen. Hoe apart is het dan om te zien dat er vooral Indo-Mauritianen rondlopen. Bijna zeventig procent van de mensen heeft hun roots in India en omringende landen liggen. Dat is gekomen door de vele contractarbeiders die in de negentiende eeuw richting Mauritius kwamen om vooral op de suikerplantages te werken. Iets meer dan een kwart van de inwoners is van creoolse afkomst. Dit zijn vooral afstammelingen van de Afrikaanse slaven die tot het afschaffen van de slavernij werkzaam waren op de suikerplantages en het eiland niet meer hebben verlaten. De Frans-Mauritianen (nakomelingen van de blanke Fransen die naar Mauritius gekomen zijn) en Sino-Mauritianen (Mauritianen van Chinese afkomst) zijn met respectievelijk 2 en 3 procent van de bevolking duidelijke minderheden in Mauritius. In Mauritius is er vrijheid van godsdienst. Opvallend is hoe vredig de verschillende religies naast elkaar leven. Zo heb je in Port Louis, de hoofdstad van Mauritius, geloofsgebouwen van de vier belangrijkste religies op enkele honderden meters van elkaar staan: een Boeddhistische tempel, een Hindoestaanse tempel, een Islamitische Moskee en een Rooms-katholieke kathedraal zijn allemaal binnen een vierkante kilometer te bezoeken. Het Hindoeïsme is de grootste religie met een aandeel van meer dan de helft. Het Christendom is goed voor ongeveer dertig procent en de islam voor ongeveer 17%. Opvallend is dat de meeste officiële feestdagen een christelijke achtergrond hebben. Van oorsprong troffen de Europeanen een eiland aan dat vooral bebost was. Het zijn deze kolonisten die verantwoordelijk zijn voor de transformatie van het eiland. Zij hebben grote delen van het eiland ontbost om plek te maken voor vele hectaren aan suikerriet. Tegenwoordig beslaat de suikerteelt ongeveer tweederde van het landoppervlakte. Vooral in de lager gelegen gebieden in het noorden en oosten van het eiland zie je enorme oppervlaktes aan suikerplantages. De bergachtige gebieden in centraal Mauritius en in het Black Forrest National Park zijn nog steeds redelijk bebost. Je ziet alle soorten bomen, van verschillende palmensoorten tot een loofbomen en ook naaldbomen. Het klimaat van Mauritius zorgt ervoor dat veel bomen- en plantensoorten goed gedijen op het eiland. Van de ongeveer 900 plantensoorten die je op Mauritius aantreft is ongeveer een derde deel endemisch. Deze planten komen alleen maar op Mauritius voor. In de loop der jaren is door ingrijpen van de mens in de natuur het aantal endemen afgenomen is. Dat geldt ook voor de diersoorten die vroeger alleen maar op Mauritius voorkwamen en inmiddels uitgestorven zijn of met uitsterven bedreigd worden. Het bekendste en misschien wel meest tragische voorbeeld hiervan is de dodo. Deze enorme vogels die niet kon vliegen had tot de komst van de Nederlandse kolonisten eigenlijk geen natuurlijke vijanden. Ongeveer een halve eeuw nadat de Nederlanders zich op Mauritius vestigden is de dodo voor het laatst levend gespot. Op het gebied van van dieren is er in en rond Mauritius voldoende te zien. Op het eiland leven verschillende reptielensoorten waarvan de reuzenschildpad het meest bekende voorbeeld is. Je hoeft niet de vrije natuur in om te speuren naar deze trage en grote beesten, maar je kunt naar La Vanille Park of Casela World of Adventures gaan om er tussen te lopen. Andere reptielen die je op het eiland kunt zien zijn gekko's en de Leiolopisma telfairii, wat een inheemse hagedissensoort is. Vogelaars kunnen genieten van de grote verscheidenheid aan zangvogels, waarvan sommigen zeer fel gekleurd zijn. Goed je ogen en oren openhouden als je de natuur ingaat, maar als je ergens zit te eten dan heb je kans dat de vliegende kruimeldieven vanzelf op je afkomen. Opvallend is dat Mauritius slechts één inheemse zoogdierensoort kent: de vleerhond. Deze grote vleermuizen leven van fruit en vormen daarom een bedreiging voor sommige fruitsoorten die op het eiland voorkomen. Je zult een vleerhond niet zomaar in het wild zien. In La Vanilla Nature Park kun je ze wel in gevangenschap bewonderen. Alle andere zoogdieren op het eiland zijn door de kolonisten geïntroduceerd. De koraalriffen rondom Mauritius zorgen voor een grote verscheidenheid aan vissoorten en andere zeedieren. Mauritius is een goede bestemming om te snorkelen of te duiken. Ook leven er rond de wateren rond Mauritius grote aantallen dolfijnen en haaien. Er zijn daarom volop opties om aan een boottocht deel te nemen waarbij je dolfijnen gaat spotten. In de periode juli/augustus tot oktober/november kun je ook walvissen zien. De bultrugwalvis leeft dan in dit gebied en dit is dus dé periode om een dagexcursie te doen om deze fraaie dieren te bewonderen. Het land Mauritius bestaat niet alleen uit het eiland Mauritius. Om het eiland heen liggen een aantal onbewoonde eilanden zoals Ile aux Cerfs, Ile Plate en Ile Ronde. Er is echter ook nog een wat groter bewoond eiland dat ook tot het land Mauritius hoort, en dat is Rodrigues. Dit eiland ligt ongeveer 550 kilometer ten oosten van Mauritius en is alleen maar per vliegtuig te bereiken. De enige reguliere vluchten die richting Sir Gaëtan Duval Airport op Mauritius gaan komen vanaf Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport op Mauritius. Daarnaast vliegt ook Air Austral tussen La Réunion en Rodrigues. Daar waar Mauritius vrij dichtbevolkt is en het toerisme zich vooral richt op het luxere segment, daar is Rodrigues juist een ecobestemming waar duurzaamheid en een relaxte levenswijze belangrijk zijn. Zo is het gebruik van plastic tassen absoluut verboden en zijn er meer maatregelen genomen om de fraaie natuur van Rodrigues te beschermen. Als toerist kom je in een wereld terecht van vriendelijke mensen, mooie wandelroutes en een aantal rustige droomstranden. Overnachten is ook een stuk eenvoudiger en vooral goedkoper dan op Mauritius zelf. De ruim veertigduizend inwoners zijn oprecht geïnteresseerd in de toeristen die het eiland bezoeken. Een vriendelijke glimlach is dan ook hetgeen dat je regelmatig zult krijgen en een gesprek aangaan is zeker de moeite waard, hoewel veel inwoners van Rodrigues het Engels nog niet zo goed machtig zijn. We doen ons best om de informatie op www.mauritiusvoorbeginners.nl zo accuraat, eerlijk en actueel mogelijk te houden. Toch kan het gebeuren dat er een foutje insluipt of er iets veranderd is wat we nog niet op deze site vermeld hebben. Opmerkingen kunnen verstuurd worden via e-mail. Island country in the Indian Ocean This article is about the independent island nation in the Indian Ocean. For other uses, see Mauritius (disambiguation). Not to be confused with Mauritania. Republic of MauritiusRépublique de Maurice (French)Repiblik Moris (Morisyen) Flag Coat of arms Motto: Stella Clavisque Maris Indici (Latin)[1]"Star and Key of the Indian Ocean"Anthem: "Motherland"Islands of the Republic of Mauritius* Islands of Mauritius labelled in black.* Tromelin Island (part of the French Southern and Antarctic Lands, claimed by Mauritius).* The Chagos Archipelago (the British Indian Ocean Territory) are set to be transferred to Mauritius in 2025.[2]Capitaland largest cityPort Louis20°12′S 57°30′E / 20.2°S 57.5°E / -20.2; 57.5Official languagesNone (de jure)EnglishFrench (de facto)[3]Language spoken at home (2022)[4]90.0% Mauritian Creole5.1% Bhojpuri4.4% French0.6% EnglishEthnic groups 67% Indian28% Creole3% Chinese2% French[5]Religion (2022)[6]47.9% Hinduism32.3% Christianity18.2% Islam1.6% others / noneDemonymMauritianGovernmentUnitary parliamentary republic• President Dharam Gokhool• Vice-President Robert Hungley• Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam• Deputy Prime Minister Paul Bérenger• Speaker of the National Assembly Shirin Aumeeruddy-Cziffra LegislatureNational AssemblyIndependence from the United Kingdom• Constitution of Mauritius 12 March 1968• Republic 12 March 1992 Area • Total2,040 km2 (790 sq mi) (169th)• Water (%)0.07Population• 2022 census1,235,260[7][8][4]• Density605.5/km2 (1,568.2/sq mi)GDP (PPP)2025 estimate• Total $42.810 billion[9] (137th)• Per capita $33,954[9] (60th)GDP (nominal)2025 estimate• Total $16.515 billion[9] (133rd)• Per capita $13,099[9] (69th)Gini (2017)36.8[10]medium inequalityHDI (2023) 0.806[11]very high (73rd)CurrencyMauritian rupee (MUR)Time zoneUTC+4 (MUT)Date formatdd/mm/yyyy (AD)Calling code+230ISO 3166 codeMUInternet TLD.mu Mauritius,[a] officially the Republic of Mauritius,[b] is an island country in the Indian Ocean, about 2,000 kilometres (1,100 nautical miles) off the southeastern coast of East Africa, east of Madagascar. It includes the main island (also called Mauritius), as well as Rodrigues, Agaléga, St. Brandon (Cargados Carajos shoals)[12][13] and the Chagos Archipelagos[14]. The islands of Mauritius and Rodrigues, along with nearby Réunion (a French overseas department), are part of the Mascarene Islands. The main island of Mauritius, where the population is concentrated, hosts the capital and largest city, Port Louis. The country spans 2,040 square kilometres (790 sq mi) and has an exclusive economic zone covering approximately 2,000,000 square kilometres (580,000 square nautical miles).[15][16] The 1502 Portuguese Cantino planisphere has led some historians to speculate that Arab sailors were the first to discover the uninhabited island around 975, naming it Dina Arobi.[17][18] Called Ilha do Cirne or Ilha do Cerne on early Portuguese maps, the island was visited by Portuguese sailors in 1507.[19] A Dutch fleet, under the command of Admiral Van Warwyck, landed at what is now the Grand Port District and took possession of the island in 1598, renaming it after Maurice, Prince of Orange. Short-lived Dutch attempts at permanent settlement took place over a century aimed at exploiting the local ebony forests, establishing sugar and arrack production using cane plant cuttings from Java together with over three hundred Malagasy slaves, all in vain.[20] When French colonisation began in 1715, the island renamed "Isle de France". In 1810, the United Kingdom seized the island and under the Treaty of Paris, France ceded Mauritius and its dependencies to the United Kingdom. The British colony of Mauritius now included Rodrigues, Agaléga, St. Brandon, the Chagos Archipelago, and, until 1906, the Seychelles.[12][13] Mauritius and France dispute sovereignty over the island of Tromelin, the treaty failing to mention it specifically.[21] Mauritius became the British Empire's main sugar-producing colony and remained a primarily sugar-dominated plantation-based colony until independence, in 1968.[22] In 1992, the country abolished the monarchy, replacing it with the president. In 1965, three years before the independence of Mauritius, the United Kingdom split the Chagos Archipelago away from Mauritius, and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches from the Seychelles, to form the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT).[23] The local population was forcibly expelled and the largest island, Diego Garcia, was leased to the United States restricting access to the archipelago.[24] Ruling on the sovereignty dispute, the International Court of Justice has ordered the return of the Chagos Islands to Mauritius leading to a 2025 bilateral agreement on the recognition of its sovereignty on the islands, signed in May 2025.[25][26][27][28] Given its geographic location and colonial past, the people of Mauritius are diverse in ethnicity, culture, language and faith. It is the only country in Africa where Hinduism is the most practised religion.[29][30] Indo-Mauritians make up the bulk of the population with significant Creole, Sino-Mauritian and Franco-Mauritian minorities. The island's government is closely modelled on the Westminster parliamentary system with Mauritius highly ranked for economic and political freedom. The Economist Democracy Index ranks Mauritius as the only country in Africa with full democracy while the V-Dem Democracy Indices classified it as an electoral autocracy.[31][32] Mauritius ranks 73rd (very high) in the Human Development Index and the World Bank classifies it as a high-income economy.[33] It is amongst the most competitive and most developed economies in the African region.[34] The country is a welfare state. The government provides free universal health care, free education up through the tertiary level, and free public transportation for students, senior citizens, and the disabled.[35] Mauritius is consistently ranked as the most peaceful country in Africa.[36] Along with the other Mascarene Islands, Mauritius is known for its biodiverse flora and fauna with many unique species endemic to the country. The main island was the only known home of the dodo, which, along with several other avian species, became extinct soon after human settlement. Other endemic animals, such as the echo parakeet, the Mauritius kestrel and the pink pigeon, have survived and are subject to intensive and successful ongoing conservation efforts.[37] The first historical evidence of the existence of the island now known as Mauritius is on a 1502 map called the Cantino planisphere which was smuggled out of Portugal, for the Duke of Ferrara, by the Italian 'spy' Alberto Cantino. On this purloined copy of a Portuguese map, Mauritius bore the name Dina Arobi or Dina Arobin (likely Arabic: دنية عروبي Daniyah 'Arūbi or corruption o Dībah 'Arūbi).[38][39][dubious – discuss] In 1507, Portuguese sailors visited the uninhabited island after being blown off course from their route to India via the Mozambique channel. The island appears with the Portuguese names Cirne (a typographical error where the 's' of the Portuguese 'Cisne' (Swan) became an 'r') or Do-Cerne (typo of 'do Cisne' meaning 'of' or 'belonging to the Swan') on early Portuguese maps, almost certainly from the name of a ship called Cisne which was captained by Diogo Fernandes Pereira in the 1507 expedition which discovered Mauritius and Rodrigues which he called ilha de Diogo Fernandes but poorly transcribed by non-Portuguese speakers as Domigo Friz or Domingo Frias.[40] Diogo Fernandes Pereira may have been the first European to sail east of Madagascar island ('outer route' to the East Indies) rather than through the perceived saf

Mauritian president Ameenah Gurib-Fakim resigned over a financial scandal.[114] The incumbent president is Prithvirajsing Roopun[115] who has served since December 2019. In the November 2019 Mauritius general elections, the ruling Militant Socialist Movement (MSM) won more than half of the seats in parliament, securing incumbent Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth a new five-year term.[116] On 25 July 2020, Japanese-owned bulk carrier MV Wakashio ran aground on a coral reef off the coast of Mauritius, leaking up to 1,000 tonnes of heavy oil into a pristine lagoon.[117] Its location on the edge of protected fragile marine ecosystems and a wetland of international importance made the MV Wakashio oil spill one of the worst environmental disasters ever to hit the western Indian Ocean.[118] On 10 November 2024, the opposition coalition, Alliance du Changement, won 60 of the 64 seats in the Mauritian general election. Its leader, former prime minister Navin Ramgoolam, became new prime minister.[119] Main article: Geography of Mauritius The total land area of the country is 2,040 km2 (790 sq mi). It is the 170th largest nation in the world by size. The Republic of Mauritius comprises Mauritius Island and several outlying islands. The nation's exclusive economic zone covers about 2.3 million km2 (890,000 sq mi) of the Indian Ocean, including approximately 400,000 km2 (150,000 sq mi) jointly managed with the Seychelles.[120][121][122] Mauritius is 2,000 km (1,200 mi) off the southeast coast of Africa, between latitudes 19°58.8'S and 20°31.7'S and longitudes 57°18.0'E and 57°46.5'E. It is 65 km (40 mi) long and 45 km (30 mi) wide. Its land area is 1,864.8 km2 (720.0 sq mi).[123][124] The island is surrounded by more than 150 km (100 mi) of white sandy beaches, and the lagoons are protected from the open sea by the world's third-largest coral reef, which surrounds the island.[125] Just off the Mauritian coast lie some 49 uninhabited islands and islets, several of which have been declared natural reserves for endangered species. Mauritius Island (Mauritian Creole: Lil Moris; French: Île Maurice, pronounced [il mɔʁis]) is relatively young geologically, having been created by volcanic activity some 8 million years ago. Together with Saint Brandon, Réunion, and Rodrigues, the island is part of the Mascarene Islands. These islands emerged as a result of gigantic underwater volcanic eruptions that happened thousands of kilometres to the east of the continental block made up of Africa and Madagascar.[126] They are no longer volcanically active and the hotspot now rests under Réunion Island. Mauritius is encircled by a broken ring of mountain ranges, varying in height from 300 to 800 metres (1,000 to 2,600 ft) above sea level. The land rises from coastal plains to a central plateau where it reaches a height of 670 m (2,200 ft); the highest peak is in the south-west, Piton de la Petite Rivière Noire at 828 metres (2,717 ft). Streams and rivers speckle the island, many formed in the cracks created by lava flows. A panoramic view of Mauritius Island Main article: Rodrigues The autonomous island of Rodrigues is located 560 km (350 mi) to the east of Mauritius, with an area 108 km2 (42 sq mi).[126] Rodrigues is a volcanic island rising from a ridge along the edge of the Mascarene Plateau. The island is hilly with a central spine culminating in the highest peak, Mont Limon at 398 m (1,306 ft). The island also has a coral reef and extensive limestone deposits. According to Statistics Mauritius, at 1 July 2019, the population of the island was estimated at 43,371.[127] Main article: Chagos Archipelago The Chagos Archipelago is composed of atolls and islands, and is located approximately 2,200 kilometres north-east of the main island of Mauritius. The islands are set to be transferred to Mauritius in 2025, having previously formed the British Indian Ocean Territory, with the exception of Diego Garcia, which remains under British administration on a 99-year lease. To the north of the Chagos Archipelago are Peros Banhos, the Salomon Islands and Nelsons Island; to the south-west are The Three Brothers, Eagle Islands, Egmont Islands and Danger Island. Diego Garcia is in the south-east of the archipelago.[13] In 2016, the Chagossian population was estimated at 8,700 in Mauritius, including 483 natives; 350 Chagossians live in the Seychelles, including 75 natives, while 3,000, including 127 natives, live in the UK (the population having grown from the 1200 Chagossians who moved there).[128] Main article: St. Brandon St. Brandon, also known as the Cargados Carajos shoals, is located 402 kilometres (250 mi) northeast of Mauritius Island. Saint Brandon is an archipelago composed of the remnants of the lost micro continent of Mauritia[129] and consists of five island groups, with between 28 and 40 islands in total, depending on seasonal storms, cyclones, and related sand movements. In 2008, the Privy Council (United Kingdom) judgment (Article 71) confirmed Raphaël Fishing Company as "the holder of a Permanent Grant of the thirteen islands mentioned in the 1901 Deed (transcribed in Vol TB25 No 342) subject to the conditions therein referred to".[130] In 2002, St. Brandon was classified in 10th place globally by UNESCO for inclusion as a World Heritage Site well ahead of any other Mauritian candidates at the time.[131] On 8 May 2024, the Saint Brandon Conservation Trust was launched internationally at the Corporate Council on Africa in Dallas, Texas.[132] The trust's mission is to protect, restore and conserve St. Brandon. Main article: Agaléga The twin islands of Agaléga are located some 1,000 kilometres (600 miles) to the north of Mauritius.[126] Its North Island is 12.5 km (7.8 mi) long and 1.5 km (0.93 mi) wide, while its South Island is 7 by 4.5 km (4.3 by 2.8 mi). The total area of both islands is 26 km2 (10 sq mi). According to Statistics Mauritius, at 1 July 2019, the population of Agaléga and St. Brandon was estimated at 274.[127] Main article: Tromelin Island Aerial view of Tromelin Island Tromelin Island lies 430 km north-west of Mauritius. Mauritius claims sovereignty over Tromelin island, though it is registered as a part of France. The French took control of Mauritius in 1715, renaming it Isle de France. France officially ceded Mauritius including all its dependencies to Britain through the Treaty of Paris, signed on 30 May 1814 and in which Réunion was returned to France. The British Colony of Mauritius consisted of the main island of Mauritius along with its dependencies Rodrigues, Agaléga, St. Brandon, Tromelin (disputed) and the Chagos Archipelago, while the Seychelles became a separate colony in 1906. It is disputed whether the transfer of Isle de France (as Mauritius was previously known under French rule) and its dependencies to Britain in 1814 included Tromelin island. Article 8 of the Treaty of Paris stipulate the cession by France to Britain of Isle de France "and its dependencies, namely Rodrigues and the Seychelles". France considers that the sovereignty of Tromelin island was never transferred to Britain. Mauritius's claim is based on the fact that the transfer of Isle de France and its dependencies to Britain in 1814 was general in nature, that it was beyond those called out in the Treaty of Paris, and that all the dependencies of Isle de France were not specifically mentioned in the Treaty. Mauritius's claim is that since Tromelin was a dependency of Isle de France, it was 'de facto' transferred to Britain in 1814. The islands of Agaléga, St Brandon and the Chagos Archipelago were also not specifically mentioned in the Treaty of Paris but became part of the British Colony of Mauritius as they were dependencies of Isle de France at that time. In addition, the British authorities in Mauritius had been taking administrative measures with respect to Tromelin over the years; for instance, British officials granted four guano operating concessions on Tromelin island between 1901 and 1951.[21] In 1959, British officials in Mauritius informed the World Meteorological Organization that it considered Tromelin to be part of its territory.[133] A co-management treaty was reached by France and Mauritius in 2010 but has not been ratified.[134] Main articles: Chagos Archipelago sovereignty dispute and Expulsion of the Chagossians Map of the Chagos Archipelago Mauritius has long sought sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, located 1,287 km (800 mi) to the north-east. Chagos was administratively part of Mauritius from the 18th century when the French first settled the islands. All of the islands forming part of the French colonial territory of Isle de France (as Mauritius was then known) were ceded to the British in 1810 under the Act of Capitulation signed between the two powers.[135] In 1965, three years before the independence of Mauritius, the United Kingdom split the Chagos Archipelago away from Mauritius, and the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches from the Seychelles, to form the British Indian Ocean Territory. The islands were formally established as an overseas territory of the United Kingdom on 8 November 1965.[136] During UK-US discussions on the Indian Ocean in November 1975, the United Kingdom expressed its intention to return the islands of Aldabra, Farquhar, and Desroches to Seychelles to facilitate its peaceful transition to independence by June 1976.[137] Both the UK and the United States acknowledged that these islands could not be used for defense purposes, as they were populated, and forcibly removing inhabitants, as had occurred in the Chagos Archipelago, would be politically unfeasible.[138] On 18 March 1976, the UK and Seychelles signed an agreement to transfer the islands, which officially returned to Seychelles on its Independence Day, 29 June 1976.[139] The BIOT now comprises the Chagos Archipelago only. The UK leased the main island of the archipelago, Diego Garcia, to the United States under a 50-year lease to establish a military base.[135][140] In 2016, Britain extended the lease to the US till 2036.[141] Mauritius has repeatedly asserted that the separation of its territories is a violation of United Nations resolutions banning the dismemberment of colonial territories before independence and claims that the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, forms an integral part of the territory of Mauritius under both Mauritian law and international law.[142] Between 1968 and 1973, British officials forcibly expelled over 1,000 Chagossians to Mauritius and the Seychelles. As part of the deportation, British officials have been accused of ordering the island's dog population of 1,000 to be gassed.[143][144] At the United Nations and in statements to its Parliament, the UK stated that there was no "permanent population" in the Chagos Archipelago and described the population as "contract labourers" who were relocated.[12] Since 1971, only the atoll of Diego Garcia is inhabited, home to some 3,000 UK and US military and civilian contracted personnel. Chagossians have since engaged in activism to return to the archipelago, claiming that their forced expulsion and dispossession were illegal.[145][146] Mauritius considers the territorial sea of the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin island as part of its exclusive economic zone.[15] The military base of Camp Justice on Diego Garcia On 20 December 2010, Mauritius initiated proceedings against the United Kingdom under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to challenge the legality of the Chagos Marine Protected Area (MPA), which the UK purported to declare around the Chagos Archipelago in April 2010. The dispute was arbitrated by the Permanent Court of Arbitration. The Tribunal's decision determined that the UK's undertaking to return the Chagos Archipelago to Mauritius gives Mauritius an interest in significant decisions that bear upon possible future uses of the archipelago.[147] On 25 February 2019, the judges of the International Court of Justice by thirteen votes to one stated that the United Kingdom is under an obligation to bring to an end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible. Only the American judge, Joan Donoghue, voted in favor of the UK. The president of the court, Abdulqawi Ahmed Yusuf, said the detachment of the Chagos Archipelago in 1965 from Mauritius had not been based on a "free and genuine expression of the people concerned". "This continued administration constitutes a wrongful act", he said, adding "The UK has an obligation to bring to an end its administration of the Chagos Archipelago as rapidly as possible and that all member states must co-operate with the United Nations to complete the decolonization of Mauritius."[148] On 22 May 2019, the United Nations General Assembly debated and adopted a resolution that affirmed that the Chagos Archipelago, which has been occupied by the UK for more than 50 years, "forms an integral part of the territory of Mauritius". The resolution gives effect to an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), demanded that the UK "withdraw its colonial administration ... unconditionally within a period of no more than six months". 116 states voted in favour of the resolution, 55 abstained and only Australia, Hungary, Israel and Maldives supported the UK and US. During the debate, the Mauritian Prime Minister described the expulsion of Chagossians as "a crime against humanity".[149] While the resolution is not legally binding, it carries significant political weight since the ruling came from the UN's highest court and the assembly vote reflects world opinion.[150] The resolution also has immediate practical consequences: the UN, its specialised agencies, and all other international organisations are now bound, as a matter of UN law, to support the decolonisation of Mauritius even if the UK claim that it has no doubt about its sovereignty.[149] On 3 October 2024 it was announced through a joint statement by the UK and Mauritian governments that the archipelago was to have its sovereignty transferred to Mauritius. The island of Diego Garcia, which contains the military base Camp Justice, was the only exception to this new treaty, with administration being leased to the United Kingdom by the Mauritian government for a period of at least 99 years.[151] The transfer agreement was signed on 22 May 2025, with the provision that the island of Diego Garcia would be leased back to the UK for at least 99 years.[152] The UK government expects the treaty to be ratified near the end of 2025.[2] Black River Gorges National ParkMain article: Geography of Mauritius The environment in Mauritius is typically tropical in the coastal regions with forests in the mountainous areas. Seasonal cyclones are destructive to its flora and fauna, although they recover quickly. Mauritius ranked second in an air quality index released by the World Health Organization in 2011.[153] It had a 2019 Forest Landscape Integrity Index mean score of 5.46/10, ranking it 100th globally out of 172 countries.[154] Situated near the Tropic of Capricorn, Mauritius has a tropical climate. There are 2 seasons: a warm humid summer from November to April, with a mean temperature of 24.7 °C (76.5 °F) and a relatively cool dry winter from June to September with a mean temperature of 20.4 °C (68.7 °F). The temperature difference between the seasons is only 4.3 °C (7.7 °F). The warmest months are January and February with average day maximum temperature reaching 29.2 °C (84.6 °F) and the coolest months are July and August with average overnight minimum temperatures of 16.4 °C (61.5 °F). Annual rainfall ranges from 900 mm (35 in) on the coast to 1,500 mm (59 in) on the central plateau. Although there is no marked rainy season, most of the rainfall occurs in the summer months. Sea temperature in the lagoon varies from 22–27 °C (72–81 °F). The central plateau is much cooler than the surrounding coastal areas and can experience as much as twice the rainfall. The prevailing trade winds keep the east side of the island cooler and bring more rain. Occasional tropical cyclones generally occur between January and March and tend to disrupt the weather for about three days, bringing heavy rain.[155] Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth declared an environmental state of emergency after the 25 July 2020 MV Wakashio oil spill.[156] France sent aircraft and specialists from Réunion and Greenpeace said that the leak threatened the survival of thousands of species, who are at "risk of drowning in a sea of pollution".[157] Mauritius is increasingly vulnerable to climate change, facing rising temperatures, sea levels, and more frequent extreme weather events. The island faces stronger tropical cyclones, prolonged droughts, flash floods, landslides, and marine heatwaves which leading to coral bleaching.[158][159][160] Coastal erosion, driven by rising sea levels, threatens infrastructure and freshwater supplies.[159][161] Climate change is also impacting key sectors such as tourism and fisheries, with significant economic consequences.[159] To adapt, Mauritius is implementing disaster preparedness measures, protecting coastal ecosystems like mangroves, and raising public awareness.[162][163][164] Main article: Wildlife of Mauritius Mauritius was the only known habitat of the extinct dodo, a flightless bird. Mauritius ornate day gecko The country is home to some of the world's rarest plants and animals, but human habitation and the introduction of non-native species have threatened its indigenous flora and fauna.[145] Due to its volcanic origin, age, isolation, and unique terrain, Mauritius is home to a diversity of flora and fauna not usually found in such a small area. Before the Portuguese arrival in 1507, there were no terrestrial mammals on the island. This allowed the evolution of a number of flightless birds and large reptile species. The arrival of humans saw the introduction of invasive alien species, the rapid destruction of habitat and the loss of much of the endemic flora and fauna. In particular, the extinction of the flightless dodo bird, a species unique to Mauritius, has become a representative example of human-driven extinction.[165][166][167] The dodo is prominently featured as a (heraldic) supporter of the national coat of arms of Mauritius.[168] Less than 2% of the native forest now remains, concentrated in the Black River Gorges National Park in the south-west, the Bambous Mountain Range in the south-east, and the Moka-Port Louis Ranges in the north-west. There are some isolated mountains, Corps de Garde, Le Morne Brabant, and several offshore islands, with remnants of coastal and mainland diversity. Over 100 species of plants and animals have become extinct and many more are threatened. Conservation activities began in the 1980s with the implementation of programmes for the reproduction of threatened bird and plant species as well as habitat restoration in the national parks and nature reserves.[169] In 2011, the Ministry of Environment & Sustainable Development issued the "Mauritius Environment Outlook Report," which recommended that St Brandon be declared a Marine protected area. In the President's Report of the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) dated March 2016, St Brandon is declared an official MWF project to promote the conservation of the atoll.[170] The Mauritian flying fox is the only remaining mammal endemic to the island, and has been severely threatened in recent years due to the government sanctioned culling introduced in November 2015 due to the belief that they were a threat to fruit plantations. Prior to 2015 the lack of severe cyclone had seen the fruit bat population increase and the status of the species was then changed by the IUCN from Endangered to Vulnerable in 2014. October 2018, saw the authorisation of the cull of 20% of the fruit bat population, amounting to 13,000 of the estimated 65,000 fruit bats remaining, although their status had already reverted to Endangered due to the previous years' culls.[171] Main articles: Politics of Mauritius and Elections in Mauritius Government House, Port Louis The politics of Mauritius take place in a framework of a parliamentary representative democratic republic, in which the President is the head of state and the Prime Minister is the head of government, assisted by a Council of Ministers. Mauritius has a multi-party system. Executive power is exercised by the Government. Legislative power is vested in both the Government and the National Assembly. The National Assembly is Mauritius's unicameral legislature, which was called the Legislative Assembly until 1992, when the country became a republic. It consists of 70 members, 62 elected for four-year terms in multi-member constituencies and eight additional members, known as "best losers", appointed by the Electoral Service Commission to ensure that ethnic and religious minorities are equitably represented. The UN Human Rights Committee (UNHRC), which monitors member states' compliance with the International Covenant on Political and Civil Rights (ICPCR), has criticised the country's Best Loser System following a complaint by a local youth and trade union movement.[172] The president is elected for a five-year term by the Parliament. The island of Mauritius is divided into 20 constituencies that return three members each. The island of Rodrigues is a single district that returns two members. After a general election, the Electoral Supervisory Commission may nominate up to eight additional members with a view to correct any imbalance in the representation of ethnic minorities in Parliament. This system of nominating members is commonly called the best loser system. The political party or party alliance that wins the majority of seats in Parliament forms the government. Its leader becomes the Prime Minister, who selects the Cabinet from elected members of the Assembly, except for the Attorney General of Mauritius, who may not be an elected member of the Assembly. The political party or alliance which has the second largest group of representatives forms the Official Opposition and its leader is normally nominated by the President of the Republic as the Leader of the Opposition. The Assembly elects a Speaker, a Deputy Speaker and a Deputy Chairman of Committees as some of its first tasks. Mauritius is a democracy with a government elected every five years. The most recent National Assembly Election was held on 7 November 2019 in all the 20 mainland constituencies, and in the constituency covering the island of Rodrigues. Elections have tended to be a contest between two major coalitions of parties. The 2018 Ibrahim Index of African Governance ranked Mauritius first in good governance.[173] According to the 2023 Democracy Index compiled by the Economist Intelligence Unit that measures the state of democracy in 167 countries, Mauritius ranks 20th worldwide and is the only African-related country with "full democracy".[174] The V-Dem Democracy Report described 2024 Mauritius as the 18th most electoral democratic country in Africa and autocratizing.[32] Office held Office holder Incumbency[175] President Dharam Gokhool 6 December 2024[176] Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam 12 November 2024 Vice President Jean Robert Yvan Hungley 6 December 2024[176] Deputy Prime Minister Paul Bérenger 12 November 2024 Chief Justice Rehana Mungly-Gulbul 18 November 2021 Speaker of the National Assembly Shirin Aumeeruddy-Cziffra 29 November 2024 Leader of the Opposition Joe Lesjongard 15 November 2024 Commissioner of Police Rampersad Sooroojebally 15 November 2024 Main articles: Outer Islands of Mauritius and Districts of Mauritius Savanne Flacq RivièreNoire Port Louis RivièreduRempart Pamplemousses PlainesWilhems Grand Port Moka Mauritius has a single first-order administrative division, the Outer Islands of Mauritius (French: Îles éparses de Maurice), which consists of several outlying islands.[177] The following are the island-groups in Mauritius: Island of Mauritius Rodrigues Saint Brandon Agaléga The island of Mauritius is subdivided into nine districts, which are the country's second-order administrative divisions. Main article: Mauritius Police Force All military, police, and security functions in Mauritius are carried out by 10,000 active-duty servicemembers under the Commissioner of Police. The 8,000-member National Police Force is responsible for domestic law enforcement. The 1,400-strong Special Mobile Force (SMF) and the 688-strong coast guard are the only two paramilitary units in Mauritius. Both units are composed of police officers on lengthy rotations to those services. Mauritius also has a special operations military known as GIPM that will intervene in any terrorist attack or high risk operations.[178] Main article: Foreign relations of Mauritius Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, 19 April 2018 Mauritius has strong and friendly relations with various African, American, Asian, European and Oceanic countries. Considered part of Africa geographically, Mauritius has friendly relations with African states in the region, particularly South Africa, by far its largest continental trading partner. Mauritian investors are gradually entering African markets, notably Madagascar, Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The country's political heritage and dependence on Western markets have led to close ties with the European Union and its member states, particularly France. Relations with India are very strong for both historical and commercial reasons. Mauritius established diplomatic relations with China in April 1972 and was forced to defend this decision, along with naval contracts with the USSR in the same year. It has also been extending its Middle East outreach with the setting up of an embassy in Saudi Arabia[179] whose Ambassador also doubles as the country's ambassador to Bahrain.[180] Mauritius is a member of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the African Union, the Commonwealth of Nations, La Francophonie, the Southern Africa Development Community, the Indian Ocean Commission, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, and the Indian Ocean Rim Association. Mauritius has a hybrid legal system derived from English common law and the French civil law. The Constitution of Mauritius established the separation of powers between the legislature, the executive and the judiciary and guaranteed the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual. Mauritius has a single-structured judicial system consisting of two tiers, the Supreme Court and subordinate courts. The Supreme Court is composed of various divisions exercising jurisdiction such as the Master's Court, the Family Division, the Commercial Division (Bankruptcy), the Criminal Division, the Mediation Division, the Court of First Instance in civil and criminal proceedings, the Appellate jurisdiction: the Court of Civil Appeal and the Court of Criminal Appeal. Subordinate courts consist of the Intermediate Court, the Industrial Court, the District Courts, the Bail and Remand Court and the Court of Rodrigues. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is the final court of appeal of Mauritius. After the independence of Mauritius in 1968, Mauritius maintained the Privy Council as its highest court of appeal. Appeals to the Judicial Committee from decisions of the Court of Appeal or the Supreme Court may be as of right or with the leave of the Court, as set out in section 81 of the Constitution and section 70A of the Courts Act. The Judicial Committee may also grant special leave to appeal from the decision of any court in any civil or criminal matter as per section 81(5) of the Constitution.[181] Main article: Demographics of Mauritius Largest cities or towns in MauritiusSource:[182] Rank Name District Pop. 1 Port Louis Port Louis 155,226 2 Vacoas-Phoenix Plaines Wilhems 115,289 3 Beau Bassin-Rose Hill Plaines Wilhems 111,355 4 Curepipe Plaines Wilhems 78,618 5 Quatre Bornes Plaines Wilhems 77,308 6 Triolet Pamplemousses 23,269 7 Goodlands Rivière du Rempart 20,910 8 Centre de Flacq Flacq 17,710 9 Bel Air Rivière Sèche Flacq 17,671 10 Mahébourg Grand Port 17,042 Population pyramid (2020) Mauritius had a population of 1,235,260 (608,090 males, 627,170 females) according to the final results of the 2022 Census. The population on the island of Mauritius was 1,191,280 (586,590 males and 604,690 females), and that of Rodrigues island was 43,650 (21,330 males and 22,320 females); Agalega island total population of 330 (170 males and 160 females).[7][8][4] Mauritius has the second highest population density in the region of Africa. According to the 2022 census, the average age of the population was 38 years.[7][8][4] The 2022 Census indicated that the proportion of children aged below 15 years went down from 20.7% in 2011 to 15.4% in 2022 while the share of persons aged 60 years and over has risen from 12.7% to 18.7% in the same period.[4] Subsequent to a Constitutional amendment in 1982, the census does not compile data on ethnic identities anymore but still does on religious affiliation. The 1972 census was the last one to measure ethnicity.[183][184] Mauritius is a multiethnic society, drawn from Indian, African, Chinese and European (mostly French) origin. Mauritian Creoles carry the Bantu haplotype and their mitochondrial genetics show significant ancestry with enslaved populations from East Africa and Madagascar while Indo-Mauritians carry genes associated with the Chota Nagpur Plateau in Ranchi District, Jharkhand.[185] According to the Constitution of Mauritius, there are 4 distinct communities on the island for the purposes of representation in the National Assembly. Schedule I, Paragraph 3(4) of the Constitution states that The population of Mauritius shall be regarded as including a Hindu community, a Muslim community, and a Sino-Mauritian community, and every person who does not appear, from his way of life, to belong to one or other of those three communities shall be regarded as belonging to the General Population, which shall itself be regarded as a fourth community.[186] Thus each ethnic group in Mauritius falls within one of the four main communities known as Hindus, General Population, Muslims and Sino-Mauritians.[187][188] As per the above constitutional provision, the 1972 ethnic statistics are used to implement the Best Loser System, the method used in Mauritius since the 1950s to guarantee ethnic representation across the entire electorate in the National Assembly without organising the representation wholly by ethnicity.[189] Main article: Religion in Mauritius Religion in Mauritius (2022)[190] Hinduism (47.9%) Christianity (32.3%) Islam (18.2%) No Religion (0.63%) Other/Not stated (0.97%) Geographical distribution by religion (2011) According to the 2022 census conducted by Statistics Mauritius, 47.87% of the Mauritian population follows Hinduism; 32.29% follows Christianity, with more than three-fourths of that number practicing Catholicism; Islam (18.24%)[6]:138 and other religions (0.86%) (including Chinese ethnic religions). 0.63% reported themselves as non-religious and 0.11% did not answer.[190] The constitution prohibits discrimination on religious grounds and provides for freedom to practice, change one's religion or not have any. The Catholic Church, Church of England, Presbyterian Church of Mauritius, Seventh-day Adventists, Hindu Temples Associations and Muslim Mosques Organisations enjoy tax-exemptions and are allocated financial support based on their respective share of the population. Other religious groups can register and be tax-exempt but receive no financial support.[191] Public holidays of religious origins are the Hindu festivals of Maha Shivaratri, Ougadi, Thaipoosam Cavadee, Ganesh Chaturthi, and Diwali; the Christian festivals of All Saints Day and Christmas; and the Muslim festival of Eid al-Fitr.[192] The state actively participates in their organisation with special committees presiding over the pilgrimage to Ganga Talao for Maha Shivaratri and the annual Catholic procession to Jacques-Désiré Laval's resting place at Sainte-Croix.[193] Main article: Languages of Mauritius The Mauritian constitution makes no mention of an official language.[194] It only mentions that the official language of the National Assembly is English; however, any member can also address the chair in French.[195] English and French are generally considered to be de facto national and common languages of Mauritius, as they are the languages of government administration, courts, and business.[196] The constitution of Mauritius is written in English, while some laws, such as the Civil and Criminal codes, are in French. The Mauritian currency features the Latin, Tamil and Devanagari scripts. The Mauritian population is multilingual; while Mauritian Creole is the mother tongue of most Mauritians, most people are also fluent in English and French; they tend to switch languages according to the situation.[197] French and English are favoured in educational and professional settings, while Asian languages are used mainly in music, religious and cultural activities. The media and literature are primarily in French. The Mauritian Creole language, which is French-based with some additional influences, is spoken by the majority of the population as a native language.[198] The Creole languages spoken in different islands of the country are more or less similar: Mauritian Creole, Rodriguan creole, Agalega creole and Chagossian creole are spoken by people from the islands of Mauritius, Rodrigues, Agaléga and Chagos. The following ancestral languages, also spoken in Mauritius, have received official recognition by acts of parliament:[199] Bhojpuri,[200] Chinese,[201] Hindi,[202] Marathi,[203] Sanskrit,[204] Tamil,[205] Telugu[206] and Urdu.[207] Bhojpuri, once widely spoken as a mother tongue, has become less commonly spoken over the years. According to the 2022 census, Bhojpuri was spoken by 5.1% of the population compared to 12.1% in 2000.[4][208] School students must learn English and French; they may also opt for an Asian language or Mauritian Creole. The medium of instruction varies from school to school but is usually English for public and government subsidised private schools and mainly French for paid private ones. O-Level and A-Level Exams are organised in public and government subsidised private schools in English by Cambridge International Examinations while paid private schools mostly follow the French Baccalaureate model. Main article: Education in Mauritius The education system in Mauritius consists of pre-primary, primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. The education structure consists of two to three years of pre-primary school, six years of primary schooling leading to the Primary School Achievement Certificate, five years of secondary education leading to the School Certificate, and two years of higher secondary ending with the Higher School Certificate. Secondary schools have "college" as part of their title. The O-Level and A-Level examinations are carried out by the University of Cambridge through University of Cambridge International Examinations in collaboration with the MES. The tertiary education sector includes universities and other technical institutions in Mauritius. The two main public universities are the University of Mauritius and the University of Technology, in addition to the Université des Mascareignes, founded in 2012, and the Open University of Mauritius. These four public universities and several other technical institutes and higher education colleges are tuition-free for students as of 2019.[209] The government of Mauritius provides free education to its citizens from pre-primary to tertiary level. In 2013 government expenditure on education was estimated at ₨ 13,584 million, representing 13% of total expenditure.[210] As of January 2017, the government has introduced changes to the education system with the Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education programme, which abolished the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE).[211] The adult literacy rate was at 91.9% in 2022 with 8.8% of the total population holding a tertiary level qualification.[7][8][4] Mauritius was ranked 53rd in the Global Innovation Index in 2025, 1st in Africa.[212][213] Main articles: Economy of Mauritius and International rankings of Mauritius Mauritius is often described as the most developed country in the region of Africa.[214][215] Since independence from Britain in 1968, Mauritius has developed from a low-income, agriculture-based economy to a high-income diversified economy, based on tourism, textiles, sugar, and financial services. The economic history of Mauritius since independence has been called "the Mauritian Miracle" and the "success of Africa" (Romer, 1992; Frankel, 2010; Stiglitz, 2011).[216] In recent years, information and communication technology, seafood, hospitality and property development, healthcare, renewable energy, and education and training have emerged as important sectors, attracting substantial investment from both local and foreign investors.[5] Mauritius has one of the largest exclusive economic zones in the world, and in 2012 the government announced its intention to develop the marine economy.[217] Mauritius has no exploitable fossil fuel reserves and so relies on petroleum products to meet most of its energy requirements. Local and renewable energy sources are biomass, hydro, solar and wind energy.[218] Mauritius contributes approximately 0.01% of global greenhouse gas emissions.[219] The country has pledged to cut emissions by 40% by 2030 compared to projected levels without intervention, with a goal of reaching net zero by 2070.[220] As part of its climate change strategy, Mauritius plans to eliminate coal from electricity generation by 2030, reduce landfill waste by diverting 70% of it through a circular economy approach, and increase the share of electric vehicles to 15% by the same year.[221] Mauritius is ranked high in terms of economic competitiveness, a friendly investment climate, good governance and a free economy.[222][223][224] The Gross Domestic Product (PPP) was estimated at US$29.187 billion in 2018, and GDP (PPP) per capita was over US$22,909, the second highest in Africa.[222][223][224] Mauritius has a high-income economy, according to the World Bank in 2019.[33] The World Bank's 2019 Ease of Doing Business Index ranks Mauritius 13th worldwide out of 190 economies in terms of ease of doing business. According to the Mauritian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the country's challenges are heavy reliance on a few industry sectors, high brain drain, scarcity of skilled labour, ageing population and inefficient public companies and para-statal bodies.[225] According to the 2019 Economic Freedom of the World report, Mauritius is ranked as having the 9th most free economy in the world.[226] Mauritius has historically relied on external financial inflows like tourism revenue, offshore finance and foreign aid.[227] Port-Louis, the capital of Mauritius According to the Financial Services Commission, financial and insurance activities contributed to 11.1% of the country's GDP in 2018.[228] Over the years, Mauritius has been positioning itself as the preferred hub for investment into Africa due its strategic location between Asia and Africa, hybrid regulatory framework, ease of doing business, investment protection treaties, non-double taxation treaties, highly qualified and multilingual workforce, political stability, low crime rate coupled with modern infrastructure and connectivity. It is home to a number of international banks, legal firms, corporate services, investment funds and private equity funds. Financial products and services include private banking, global business, insurance and reinsurance, limited companies, protected cell companies, trust and foundation, investment banking, global headquarter administration.[229][230] Corporate tax rate ranges from 15% to 17% and individual tax rate ranges from 10% to 25%.[231][232] While the country also offers incentives such as tax holidays and exemptions in some specific sectors to boost its competitiveness, the country is often tagged as a tax haven by the press due to individuals and companies who engaged in abusive practices in its financial sector.[233] The country has built up a solid reputation by making use of best practices and adopting a strong legal and regulatory framework to demonstrate its compliance with international demands for greater transparency.[234] In June 2015, Mauritius adhered to the multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, and has an exchange information mechanism with 127 jurisdictions. Mauritius is a founding member of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti Money Laundering Group and has been at the forefront in the fight against money laundering and other forms of financial crime. The country has adopted exchange of information on an automatic basis under the Common Reporting Standard and the Foreign Accounts Tax Compliance Act.[235] Main article: Tourism in Mauritius A tropical beach in Le Morne Mauritius is a major tourist destination, and the tourism sector is one of the main pillars of the Mauritian economy. The island nation enjoys a tropical climate with clear warm sea waters, beaches, tropical fauna and flora, complemented by a multi-ethnic and cultural population.[236] The forecast of tourist arrivals for the year 2019 is maintained at 1,450,000, representing an increase of 3.6% over the figure of 1,399,408 in 2018.[237] Mauritius currently has two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, namely, Aapravasi Ghat and Le Morne Cultural Landscape. Additionally, Black River Gorges National Park is currently in the UNESCO tentative list.[238] Main article: Transport in Mauritius An Urbos 100–3 at Rose Hill Central Station Since 2005 public buses, and later trains, in Mauritius have been free of charge for students, people with disabilities, and senior citizens.[239] The Metro Express railway currently links all five cities and the University of Mauritius at Réduit with planned expansion to the east and south. Former privately owned industrial railways have been abandoned since the 1960s. The harbour of Port Louis handles international trade as well as a cruise terminal. The Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport, the largest one in the Indian Ocean, is the main international airport and serves as the home operating base for the national airline Air Mauritius.[240] The Plaine Corail Airport operates from Rodrigues ensuring air link with the main island of Mauritius and international flights with Réunion. The information and communications technology (ICT) sector has contributed to 5.7% of its GDP in 2016.[241] Additionally, the African Network Information Centre (AFRINIC) – the regional Internet registry for Africa – is based in Ebene. Mauritius is also connected to global Internet infrastructure via multiple optical fibre submarine communications cables, including the Lower Indian Ocean Network (LION) cable, the Mauritius–Rodrigues Submarine Cable, and the South Africa Far East (SAFE) cable. Main article: Culture of Mauritius Prominent Mauritian painters include Henri Le Sidaner, Malcolm de Chazal, Raouf Oderuth and Vaco Baissac while Gabrielle Wiehe is a prominent illustrator and graphic designer.[242] Historical Mauritius. A scene from the 1930s Chinatown 1860s Ebene City The Mauritius "Post Office" stamps, the first stamps produced outside Great Britain, among the rarest postage stamps in the world, are widely considered "the greatest item in all philately".[243] The distinctive architecture of Mauritius reflects the island nation's history as a colonial trade base connecting Europe with the East. Styles and forms introduced by Dutch, French, and British settlers from the seventeenth century onward, mixed with influences from India and East Africa, resulted in a unique hybrid architecture of international historic, social, and artistic significance. Mauritian structures present a variety of designs, materials, and decorative elements that are unique to the country and inform the historical context of the Indian Ocean and European colonialism.[244] Decades of political, social, and economic change have resulted in the routine destruction of Mauritian architectural heritage. Between 1960 and 1980, the historic homes of the island's high grounds, known locally as campagnes, disappeared at alarming rates. More recent years have witnessed the demolition of plantations, residences, and civic buildings as they have been cleared or drastically renovated for new developments to serve an expanding tourism industry. The capital city of Port Louis remained relatively unchanged until the mid-1990s, yet now reflects the irreversible damage that has been inflicted on its built heritage. Rising land values are pitted against the cultural value of historical structures in Mauritius, while the prohibitive costs of maintenance and the steady decline in traditional building skills make it harder to invest in preservation.[244] The general populace historically lived in what are termed creole houses.[245] Main article: Mauritian literature Mauritius is remembered in literature mostly for the novel Paul et Virginie, a classic of French literature, by Bernardin de Saint-Pierre and for Alice's Adventures in Wonderland's Dodo Jean-Marie Le Clézio, Ananda Devi, Nathacha Appanah, Malcolm de Chazal, Eugénie Poujade, Marie-Thérèse Humbert, Shenaz Patel, Khal Torabully, Aqiil Gopee, South-African born Lindsey Collen-Seegobin writing in English and French, Dev Virahsawmy writing mostly in Mauritian Creole and Abhimanyu Unnuth writing in Hindi are some of the most prominent Mauritian writers. Le Clézio, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2008, is of Mauritian heritage and holds dual French-Mauritian citizenship. The island plays host to the Le Prince Maurice Prize. In keeping with the island's literary culture the prize alternates on a yearly basis between English-speaking and French-speaking writers. Main article: Mass media in Mauritius Main articles: Music of Mauritius and Sega (genre) The major musical genres of Mauritius are sega and its fusion genre, seggae, Bhojpuri folk songs and Indian film music especially Bollywood. Western classical music and Indian classical music are taught, respectively, at the François Mitterand Conservatory and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute. Further information: Mauritian cuisine

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