

EL SALVADOR



Three horizontal blue bands with the national coat of arms in the center; the coat of arms is an emblem surrounded by the words República de El Salvador en la América Central; compare to the flags of Nicaragua and Honduras.



NAME: República de el Salvador (The name comes from the original Spanish name of Provincia de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo el Salvador del Mundo); the Pipil people (related to the Mayas, called their region Cuzhcátl, from Náhuatl for "The Land of Precious Things")

POPULATION: 7,200,000 (2008)

ETHNIC GROUPS: Mestizo (90%); Amerindian (1%); White (9%)

CAPITAL: San Salvador, 2,000,000)

INDEPENDENCE DAY: September 15, 1821 (independence from Spain)

LANGUAGES: Official language: Spanish (popularly called Caliche in El Salvador)

RELIGION: Roman Catholic (83%)

LIFE EXPECTANCY: Men (69); women (76)

LITERACY: 80%

GOVERNMENT: Democratic constitutional republic

President: President Elias Antonio Saca González (2004 - present)

Legislature: Unicameral Legislative Assembly

MILITARY: Salvadoran Army (ES), Salvadoran Navy (FNES), Salvadoran Air Force (Fuerza Aérea Salvadoreña, FAS)

ECONOMY: Exports: manufactured assembly parts, coffee, sugar, shrimp, textiles, chemicals, electricity

MONEY: USA Dollar (since 2001)

GEOGRAPHY: El Salvador is the smallest Central American nation. It is bordered by the Pacific Ocean, Guatemala, and Honduras. It has no access to the Caribbean, but it is in a tropical zone with the rainy season May to October; and a relatively dry season November to April; on the coast it is tropical; and it is temperate in the highlands.

INTERNET CODE: .sv

HISTORY:

- 11,000 BCE (or up to 34,000 BCE): pre-Colombian settlers
- 1500 BCE – 900 CE: Pipil people (related to the Mayas)
- 1525-1528 Spanish conquest of the El Salvador region.
- 1821 El Salvador achieved independence from Spain
- 1839 El Salvador broke away from the Central American Federation
- 1931-1944 Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez became dictator.
- 1932 National hero Farabundo Martí led a peasant rebellion, which was brutally repressed by Hernández Martínez resulting in a massacre of La Matanza in which 30,000 peasants were killed.
- 1979-1991. 75,000 people were killed in a civil war. The leftist guerrillas were known as the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN).
- 1980 Bishop Oscar Romero was murdered in his cathedral for publicly urging the US government not to support El Salvador's dictator.
- 1992 Current Constitution promulgated
- 2001 El Salvador adopted the US dollar as its official currency.
- 2004 President Elías Antonio Saca González elected (ARENA Party)
- 2009 FMLN wins presidency with Mauricio Funes inaugurated on June 1, 2009. Also, new political party formed in alliance with FMLN: Gran Alianza por la Unidad Nacional (GANU)

PRINCIPAL POLITICAL PARTIES:

- Christian Democratic Party (PDC)
- Democratic Convergence (CD)
- Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)
- National Conciliation Party (PCN)
- National Republican Alliance (ARENA)
- Popular Social Christian Party (PPSC)
- Revolutionary Democratic Front (FDR)

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