



COUNTRIES IN PERSPECTIVE

PHILIPPINES



*Panampangan Island Sandbar
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*Mayon Volcano
Flickr/Bar Fabella*

Chapter 1 | Philippines Countries in Perspective

Geography

Introduction

The Philippines is a tropical archipelago located in Southeast Asia between the Philippine Sea and the South China Sea. The landscape, which consists of volcanic islands, narrow coastal plains, and mountains, is largely the result of the country's position above the Pacific and Eurasian tectonic plates - an area called the "Ring of Fire." This region makes the Philippines vulnerable to volcanic eruptions, frequent earthquakes, tsunamis, and typhoons. The environment is impacted by mismanagement of natural resources, pollution, and climate change.

Area

The 7,107 islands of the Philippine archipelago are spread over 298,170 sq km (115,124 sq mi) of land and 1,830 sq km (706.5 sq mi) of water.¹ At a total of 300,000 sq km (115,830 sq mi), the land area is slightly larger than Arizona. The archipelago stretches nearly 1,850 km (1,149 mi) from Y'Ami Island in the north to Sibutu Island in the south. It is approximately 1,000 km (621 mi) wide.²

The Philippine archipelago is surrounded by four tropical seas: the Philippine Sea to the east, the South China Sea to the west and north, the Sulu Sea to the southwest, and the Celebes Sea to the south. Neighbor states include Taiwan and China to the north, Malaysia and Indonesia to the south, and Vietnam to the west. The Philippines' territorial sea claims extend as far as 100 nautical miles from the closest coastline.



*Bacuit Archipelago 29
Flickr/Ben Beiske*

This area includes the Sulu Sea in its entirety, along with the northern section of the Celebes Sea. The Philippines, along with China, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Vietnam, hold a contested claim over the Spratly Islands (also known as Kalayaan or "Freedom" Islands) in the South China Sea.^{3, 4, 5} In addition, the Philippines claims sovereignty over the Scarborough Reef, located in the South China Sea, and Malaysia's Sabah State, located in northern Borneo.⁶

Geographic Divisions

The Philippine islands are divided into three groups: the northern group, which includes Luzon and the capital, Manila; the centrally located Visayan islands, which includes Samar, Panay, Negros, Cebu, Bohol, and Leyte islands; and Mindanao, along with the southern Sulu Archipelago, in the southern Philippines.⁷ About 1,000 of these islands are populated.⁸ The majority of the landmass, 94%, is made up of 11 islands: Luzon, Mindanao, Palawan, Samar, Negros, Panay, Mindoro, Leyte, Cebu, Bohol, and Masbate.^{9, 10} Luzon and Mindanao measure 105,000 sq km (40,541 sq mi) and 95,000 sq km (36,680 sq km), respectively. By contrast, half of the Philippine islands measure less than 2.5 sq km (0.96 sq mi).¹¹

The geography of the islands contributed to the evolution of unique species of wildlife which are indigenous to each place due to the isolated habitat.¹² Today, many species are threatened due to loss of habitat, the introduction of new species, and pollution^{13, 14.}

Luzon

Luzon, the northernmost island in the Philippines, is also the largest and most populated. The Luzon island group comprises Luzon Island and the islands of Batanes, Babuyan, Romblon, Masbate, Catanduanes, Marinduque, Mindoro, and Palawan.¹⁵ Manila, the capital city, and Quezon City make up a large metropolitan area on the edge of Manila Bay. Industries, such as textile and metal manufacturing, are located around the metropolitan area. Agriculture is concentrated in central Luzon where the mountainous and jagged coastline leads into a flat, fertile interior. This plain produces the majority of the country's rice and much of its sugarcane.^{16, 17, 18}

Luzon's topography is characterized by a rugged coast, two mountain ranges, and central plains. The coast is dotted with numerous resorts. Located on the southern portion of Luzon are Manila Bay, the Taal Volcano, Laguna de Bay (the Philippines' largest freshwater lake), and Mayon Volcano. The northern portion of the island is mountainous. It is drained by the Cagayan River. The Sierra Madre Mountains, located along the eastern side from the north to the central part of the country, is the longest mountain range in the country. Running parallel and west of the Sierra Madre, the Cordillera Central range includes Mount Pulog, the highest peak in the range with an elevation of 2,928 m (9,606 ft).¹⁹ The Sierra Madre and the Cordillera Central join to form the heavily forested Caraballo Mountains in central Luzon.²⁰ The Zambales Mountains are west of the Central Luzon Valley.²¹



*View of Bataan from Corregidor Island
Flickr/cisc1970*

Visayas

The Visayan Islands are situated between Luzon and Mindanao in the center of the archipelago.²² The islands are divided into three sub-regions: Western Visayas (major islands Negros and Panay), Central Visayas (major islands Bohol and Cebu), and Eastern Visayas (major islands Samar and Leyte).²³ Eastern Visayas is one of the poorest areas

of the Philippines, partly because its location faces the full brunt of typhoons.^{24, 25} The Central Visayas are among the most densely populated islands in the archipelago. The major urban areas in the Visayan Islands are Cebu on Cebu Island and Iloilo City on Panay Island.²⁶



*Philippines Fishing VillageE, South China Sea
Flickr/John Tewell*

Most of the Visayan Islands are mountainous. Samar and Masbate are the hilly exceptions. Panay and Negros have large plains suitable for sugarcane and rice cultivation. Other major crops include corn, banana, tobacco, and coconut. Fishing is an important industry.²⁷ Intensive agriculture and overfishing have taken a toll on the environment.²⁸

Mindanao

The second largest island, Mindanao, is located at the southern end of the archipelago. The island has numerous peninsulas and deep bays. Forests and mountains cover much of the island. Mount Apo, the highest peak in the country and an active volcano, reaches a height of 2,954 m (9,690 ft).²⁹ The Agusan and Mindanao rivers form extensive swamps and fertile basins.^{30, 31} Narrow plains run parallel to most of the coast.³² The Diwata Mountains line the east coast of the island.³³

Mindanao is home to much of the Philippines' minority Muslim (or Moro, from the Spanish "Moors") population in a predominantly Roman Catholic country.³⁴ Many Filipinos migrated to lesser-populated Mindanao after World War II.³⁵ Some native tribes from the island resisted what they considered occupation and annexation of their land and demanded their own state.³⁶ After nearly 50 years of conflict, the separatists and the government agreed to grant the region increased autonomy, but the final version of the settlement is still in progress. Since 2016, Mindanao has been home to Islamists loyal to the Islamic State terrorist group, leading to clashes with government troops.^{37, 38, 39}

Climate

Due to its proximity to the equator, the climate in the Philippines is tropical.⁴⁰ There are three seasons: the relatively cool dry season from December to February, the hot dry season from March to May, and the wet season from June to November. In Manila, the temperature usually hovers around 27°C (80°F).⁴¹ In other parts of the country, temperatures may rise to 38°C (100°F).^{42, 43} Due to the heat and surrounding bodies of water, humidity is high, ranging from 71% in March to 85% in September.⁴⁴

The climate is directly affected by the northeast monsoon from December to February and the southwest monsoon from May to October.⁴⁵ Annual rainfall is heavy in the winter on the east coasts and heavy in the summer on the west coasts. Average annual rainfall ranges from 96 to 406 cm (38 to 160 in).⁴⁶ Typhoons can occur throughout the year but most often from July through October.^{47, 48}



*Rainy day in Cebu, Philippines
Flickr/Taylor Miles*

Bodies of Water

The Philippines is home to 412 river basins, about 72 lakes, and 8 major swamps covering over 482,000 ha (1,191,047 ac).^{49, 50, 51} Luzon's major rivers include the Pasig - which passes through Manila - Cagayan, Agno, Pampanga, Chico, and Bicol.^{52, 53} Mindanao's principal rivers include the Mindanao and the Agusan.⁵⁴ Eighteen river basins, mostly in Luzon and Mindanao, are greater than 1,400 sq km (540 sq mi).⁵⁵ The five longest rivers are the Cagayan, Mindanao, Agusan, Pulangi, and Pampanga.⁵⁶ The Palawan River on Palawan Island is one of the longest underground rivers in the world.⁵⁷ The Mindanao River is a major transportation artery for inland communities and trading hubs such as Pagalungan, Cotabato City, and Datu Piang.⁵⁸

The largest lake in the country is Laguna de Bay, southeast of Manila, with an area of 922 sq km (356 sq mi).⁵⁹ This shallow lake, with an average depth of 2.8 m (9 ft), provides water for agriculture and fish for fishermen. Intense urbanization and industrialization along the lake have led to an increase in water pollution.⁶⁰

Lake Lanao, located in central Mindanao south of the city of Marawi, is the Philippines' second largest lake with an area of 340 sq km (131 sq mi). The lake is fed by four

tributaries and its only outlet is the Agus River, which flows north to Iligan Bay. Lake Lanao is one of the planet’s ancient lakes. Overfishing, pollution, introduced species, and algae contamination have led to the disappearance of many endemic fish species.^{61,62}



Lake Taal
Flickr/Babak Fakhmzadeh

Lake Taal, in southwestern Luzon, is the Philippines’ third largest lake.^{63, 64} The lake is situated about 48 km (30 mi) south of Manila in a crater of an extinct volcano.⁶⁵ In the middle of the lake there is a small volcanic island, and in the center of the island there is yet another crater containing an even smaller lake called Yellow Lake. Lake Taal is the deepest lake in the Philippines and has a surface area of 244 sq km (94 sq mi).⁶⁶

Manila Bay, one of the finest natural harbors in the world, was a major reason for the Spanish decision to make Manila the capital. It is close to mainland Southeast Asia and is well protected by Luzon’s Cordillera Central range in the east and the mountainous Bataan Peninsula in the west. The bay has a surface area of 2,000 sq km (770 sq mi).⁶⁷

Major Cities

City (Urban Agglomeration)	Population (2015)
Manila	23,371,436
Davao	1,439,598
Cebu	2,476,708
Quezon	2,936,116

Manila

Located in central Luzon Island, Manila became the capital of the Philippines in 1571. Known as the “Pearl of the Orient,” it was a thriving, multicultural and international trading center from the late 1800s until World War II.⁶⁹ Manilla suffered extensive damage during WWII.⁷⁰

Today, Manila is a burgeoning commercial center in one of the world’s most populous metropolitan areas. Metro Manila has



Manila City
Flickr/Kenneth Tan



After sunset - Manila Bay
Flickr/Kenneth Tan

about 17 cities including Manila City, Pasay, Quezon City, and the Makati financial district. In addition to commerce and finance, Manila’s diverse economy includes textile production, food processing, publishing, printing, and tourism.^{71, 72,} ⁷³ Filipinos get around in vehicles called jeepneys (small buses made of jeep frames), elevated rail, taxis, and private cars.⁷⁴ Vehicle emissions are a significant source of air pollution in Manila.⁷⁵ Another major concern for the city is addressing the needs of millions of Filipinos who live in shantytowns.^{76, 77, 78}

Davao City

Davao City, on Mindanao Island, is the country’s largest city in terms of area. The city’s history has made it a cultural melting pot. After Spanish rule, it was a Japanese colony until World War II. After its destruction during the war, the city was rebuilt with American, Spanish, and Moorish influences.⁷⁹ In the 1980s, Davao was affected by the armed conflicts that raged in the southern Philippines and was known as the country’s murder capital.⁸⁰

Today, Davao City is peaceful and thriving. It is the center of commerce and trade for the island as well as the regional administrative and commercial hub. It has 50 small

ports servicing both passenger traffic and international cargo. Its international ports ship a natural fiber called abaca, a major crop native to the region. Other industries include textiles, cement, and plywood.⁸¹

Cebu City



*Cebu City 2015
Flickr/I_dean_m*

Cebu City, on the eastern coast of Cebu Island, is the oldest city in the country. It was first reached by Ferdinand Magellan in 1521, then in 1565 by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, who initially made it the Spanish colonial capital. Starting with a rebellion in 1898, the city was a center of resistance to Spanish and US occupation. During WWII, Cebu's port escaped destruction, and the city was rebuilt around it. Today, Cebu is the commercial, cultural, and transportation center of the Visayan region. It is an important education center, home to five major universities.^{82, 83}

Quezon City

Ten km (6 mi) north of Manila, fast-growing Quezon City is part of the capital metropolitan area. Named after President Manuel Luis Quezon, the city was the capital of the Philippines from 1948 to 1976. Today, it is home to light industry, expansive resettlement housing projects, and the country's premier university, the University of the Philippines.⁸⁴



*Gua Musang
Flickr/Wakx*

Environmental Issues

The Philippines faces a number of environmental issues including climate change, deforestation, soil erosion, pollution, improper disposal of solid and toxic wastes, coral reef degradation, mismanagement and abuse of coastal resources, and overfishing.^{85, 86} The government has made significant progress in environmental conservation and protection, particularly in the area of biodiversity.⁸⁷ Nevertheless, existing threats to the environment continue to undermine these efforts. Specifically, land conversion and development combined with expanded farming have taken a toll on the country's forest cover, marine life, and the environment. Mining has contributed to deforestation, soil erosion, toxic waste, and poor quality of air and water in major urban areas.^{88, 89} Massive deforestation and desertification increase the likelihood of flooding.⁹⁰ Vehicles and factories add to the pollution.^{91, 92}



*Volunteers working in the rain after an earthquake
Flickr/All Hands Volunteers Photobank*



*Typhoon Haiyan - Tacloban, Philippines
Flickr/Nove foto da Firenze*

Deforestation and climate change are two primary environmental concerns. Before 1900, rainforest covered nearly two-thirds of the Philippine archipelago.^{93, 94} As late as the 1970s, the Philippines was one of the world's largest tropical hardwood exporters. Today only about 3% of the original rainforest is left.⁹⁶ Forests are an important energy source as charcoal and fuel-wood, especially for the poverty-stricken rural population.⁹⁷

The Philippines' natural resources are at risk due to climate change. Impacts of climate change include alterations of biological events, changes in species distribution and behavior, increased threats of species extinction, and the increased occurrence of disease.⁹⁸

Natural Hazards

Natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, typhoons, and tsunamis are the result of the Philippines' topography and geographic location. Because the

country is situated in the Pacific Ocean, between the Pacific and Eurasian tectonic plates, high magnitude earthquakes are common. There are 37 volcanoes in the Philippines, 23 of which are active. Two especially destructive earthquakes shook the Philippines in the 20th century, one in August 1976 (8.0 on the Richter scale) and the other in July 1990 (7.8 on the Richter scale).^{99, 100}

Because of its location in the warm waters of the western rim of the Pacific Ocean, the Philippines experiences more tropical storms than any other country in the world.¹⁰¹ Of the 22 typhoons that typically occur in a year, at least 6 usually cause death and destruction.¹⁰² In 2013, the catastrophic typhoon Haiyan killed more than 6,300 people as it crossed through the central Philippines.¹⁰³

The Philippine Islands are situated at the top of volcanic mountains rising from the ocean floor. Half of all above-sea-level volcanoes in the world lie in this region.¹⁰⁴ Hundreds of volcanoes dot the Philippine landscape, but most are extinct or dormant.¹⁰⁵ They produce fertile soil and significant geothermal energy.^{106, 107} Currently, 23 volcanoes are active, including Mayon (Luzon), Taal (Luzon), Kanlaon (Visayas), and Bulusan (Luzon).¹⁰⁸ The eruption of Mount Pinatubo on the northern island of Luzon in 1991 was one of the largest volcanic eruptions in the 20th century.^{109, 110}

Mayon, the Philippines' most active volcano, has erupted about 50 times in the past 5 centuries.^{111, 112} Its most catastrophic eruption occurred in 1814, resulting in 1,200 fatalities and the destruction of several towns.¹¹³ In 2013, a phreatic explosion caused Mayon to spew rocks and steam, leading to five deaths. In 2014, an eruption caused more than 58,000 Luzon residents to flee the area.^{114, 115}

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Assessment

1. Mount Pinatubo is a dormant volcano at the center of the capital, Manila.
2. Manila became the capital of the Philippines under Spanish colonial rule.
3. The Philippines are divided into three island groups.
4. Lake Taal is a shallow, saline lake located near the city of Marawi.
5. Cebu City is the oldest city in the Philippines.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. True; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True;

Philippines Countries in Perspective

Chapter 1 | Geography

Assessment

6. Mayon is the Philippines' most active volcano.

7. The “Ring of Fire” refers to the method by which vast areas of the Philippines' natural rainforest are cleared for planting palms trees and rice.

8. Jeepney is one of the major crops native to the island of Mindanao.

9. The Philippines has lost most of its original rainforest.

10. Summer is the monsoon season in the Philippines.

Assessment Answers: 6. True; 7. True; 8. False; 9. False; 10. False



U.S. soldiers battling with Moro fighters
Wikimedia / Public Domain

Chapter 2 | Philippines Countries in Perspective

History

Introduction

The Philippines has a long history of migration, colonization, and conflict. The earliest inhabitants migrated from the Asian mainland and Taiwan and settled in scattered communities throughout the Philippine islands, which were ruled by neighboring kingdoms. Although Filipinos traded extensively with China, Indonesia, India, and Japan and were influenced by their religious practices, the Philippines did not become united until the Spanish arrived. The Spanish established their first permanent settlement in 1565 and ruled the Philippines for 333 years, making Catholicism the national religion. The Spanish-American War of 1898 led to a declaration of independence by Philippine nationalists, but the islands became an American colony at the end of that war.

Despite some resistance, the United States worked toward building a democracy in the Philippines. The Japanese occupation during World War II delayed democratization, but the Philippines became an independent state in 1946. The country's constitution and political structures are based on U.S. models. The Philippines has experienced instability since independence because power has generally remained in the hands of a corrupt and abusive oligarchy. Since 1986, Filipinos have ousted two presidents through popular protests and attempted many coups against other leaders. The nation has yet to overcome corruption, poverty, and inequality.



The Tabon Caves
wikimedia / Jimaggro

The Pre-Spanish Period

Earliest Human Habitation

Human settlement in the Philippines could date as far back as 67,000 years.^{1,2} The Aetas, a dark-skinned, short-statured Asian group of hunter-gatherers, migrated to the Philippine islands over a land bridge during the last glacial period about 30,000 years ago.³



Austronesian people
wikimedia / Jimaggro

Migration to the archipelago spanned thousands of years. Among the migrants were the Malayo-Polynesians, a subgroup of the Austronesians, who came by sea from Taiwan between 3,000 and 1,500 BCE.⁴ In the Philippines, they organized themselves by kinship groups in settlements called *barangay*, named after the boats they used for travel. *Datus*, local chieftains, ruled over the nobles, freemen, slaves, and workers in the settlements. The communities sustained themselves through fishing, mining, weaving, rice cultivation, and trading.⁵

Hindu and Chinese Influences (200 CE-16th Century BCE)

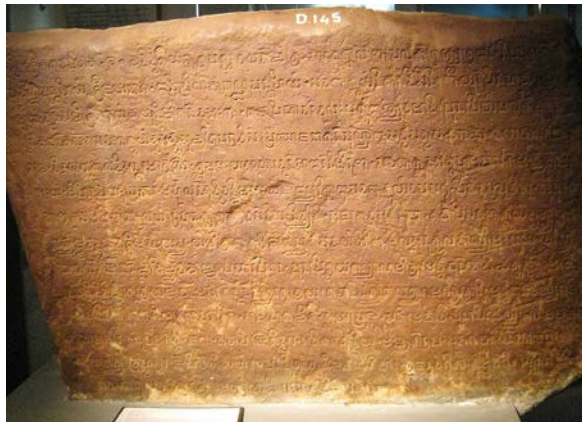
In their westward journeys, the Austronesians met the ancient civilizations of China and India. The Indians and the Chinese in turn traveled eastward, eventually reaching the Philippine islands. The Chinese exerted substantial commercial influence by the 15th century when they governed several islands in the northern Philippines.⁶

While neither the Vedic nor Buddhist cultures of India established deep roots in the archipelago or succeeded in replacing indigenous animist beliefs, Filipinos did adopt some Sanskrit words.⁷ Additionally, agricultural practices such as irrigated rice cultivation were imported from continental Asia and replaced indigenous dry field farming.⁸



*Buddhist temple
Flickr / IRRRI Photos*

Sri Vijaya Kingdom (7th-13th Centuries)



*Talang Tuo inscription is a Srivijaya
Wikimedia / Gunawan Kartapranata*

Sri Vijaya, a Buddhist kingdom centered in Palembang, in southeastern Sumatra, was a major maritime and commercial power in Southeast Asia by the 8th century CE and ruled the important straits of Sunda and Malacca. By the 12th century, the kingdom controlled international trade routes and its influence extended to the present-day Philippines. Continued raids, however, weakened Sri Vijaya, and by the end of the 13th century it was vanquished by the rival Javanese kingdom of Singhasari.⁹

Majapahit Rules the Straits (13th-16th Centuries)

Mongols invaded in 1292 and assisted in founding a new dynasty in the archipelago: the Majapahit Kingdom.¹⁰ This new kingdom followed the Hindu religion. At its peak, it commanded the straits of Malacca and Sunda and controlled kingdoms in the Malay Archipelago, Borneo, Sumatra, Bali, and the Philippines.¹¹

Islam Spreads through the Archipelago



Singosari temple at Singosari
Wikimedia / Edi W.

Arab Muslim traders reached the Philippine islands in the 10th century.¹² Between the 14th and early 16th centuries, Islam spread throughout the archipelago, as far north as Luzon. In the northern and central islands, however, Islam never penetrated beyond coastal towns and villages.¹³ Filipino Muslims were later called Moros by the Spanish.¹⁴

The Spanish Period (1521-1898)

Magellan: First Contact

The first European to land in the Philippines was Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese-born navigator and explorer for the Spanish crown, in the 16th century. Commissioned by King Charles I to circumnavigate the globe, Magellan reached Cebu in the spring of 1521, promptly claiming the archipelago for Spain.¹⁵ The following month, Magellan was killed by Lapu-Lapu, a local chieftain from Mactan Island. Of the approximately 250 men who left on five ships from Spain three years earlier, only one ship and 17 men survived to return to Spain.^{16, 17}

A Colony of Spain

King Charles's son, Felipe II of Spain, dispatched more ships to the archipelago, which was named "Felipinas" in his honor in 1542.¹⁸ The decentralized nature of the barangay social structure facilitated Spain's colonization of the Philippines.¹⁹ The first permanent settlement was established in 1565. Miguel López de Legazpi from New Spain (Mexico) was the first Spanish governor.²⁰ Legazpi defeated the Muslims in Manila and made it his capital in 1571.²¹

The Spanish converted most Filipinos to Catholicism through a new colonial social system. They created new state-administered ecclesiastical establishments, co-opted local leaders, protected the interests of Christian converts, and conferred land titles to members of a new social class, the *principalia*. Jesuits and other religious orders met with little indigenous resistance, and most of Luzon, central Philippines, and coastal Mindanao were converted. The Christianization process destroyed traditional ways of communal land use and ownership, forced different tribes to live together, and broke territorial boundaries. The new cultural community of the lowlands left the Muslims and the upland tribes alienated.²²



Immaculate Conception Parish Church (Batac, Ilocos Norte)
Flickr / Public Domain

General discontent against the colonizers spilled over into open resentment and revolt. During the Seven Years' War (1756-63), the British East India Company briefly captured Manila and faced indigenous armed resistance. The resistance marked the beginning of a nationalist spirit that Spain could not subdue.²³

Nationalist Rebellion



Jose Rizal
Wikimedia / Public Domain

In the late 19th century, Filipino students and exiles returning from abroad with modern ideas of nationalism and independence joined the native elite class (*ilustrados*) and rural residents in anti-Spanish revolt. The revolt was divided among two camps: the reform-minded and the independence-driven. One of the earliest nationalist leaders was the Chinese-Filipino reformer Jose Rizal. Rizal was a member of a group called the Propaganda Movement. In 1892, he established the Philippine League (*Liga Filipina*), a non-violent political organization. After Rizal was arrested and exiled to Mindanao, the group split, and some members joined *Katipunan*, an underground secret society.²⁴

Katipunan was founded by Andres Bonifacio, another

Chinese-Filipino, with the intent of overthrowing the Spanish. It was a highly organized group, composed of 30,000 lower-middle class members. In 1896, the Katipunan revolted, but the Spanish captured and executed many of the rebels, including Jose Rizal.²⁵

In 1897, Emilio Aguinaldo emerged as the head of the newly formed revolutionary government. He executed Bonifacio, whom he saw as a rival, and mobilized against the Spanish. Once again, the Spanish defeated the rebels and Aguinaldo and his followers were exiled to Hong Kong.²⁶



Portrait of Emilio Aguinaldo (1869-1964)
Wikimedia / Public Domain

The American Period (1898-1946)

The Spanish-American War



Admiral Dewey at the Battle of Manila
Wikimedia / Public Domain

The United States declared war on Spain in 1898 after the U.S.S. Maine mysteriously exploded in Cuba, then a Spanish colony.²⁷ The war moved to Manila, where Commodore George Dewey defeated the Spanish fleet.²⁸ Nationalist leader Emilio Aguinaldo returned to the Philippines as a war-time partner of the United States.²⁹ In exchange for the possibility of Philippine independence, Aguinaldo provided the United States with valuable intelligence and military assistance. Aguinaldo unilaterally declared Philippine independence on 12 June 1898. With Spain's departure, Britain, France, Germany, and Japan sent warships to Manila Bay, sensing a power vacuum. But the United States had no intention to relinquish its newly attained strategic and trade advantages. In the 1898 Treaty of Paris, Spain granted Cuba independence and sold the Philippines to the United States for USD 20 million.³⁰

The Philippine-American War



The Battle of Quingua, April 23, 1899
Wikimedia / Public Domain

For the next two years, Aguinaldo's guerrillas battled U.S. forces and attempted to create a new government. A revolutionary congress met near Manila and declared Aguinaldo as the president of a new republic.³¹ Greatly outnumbered and outgunned, the Filipinos lost 16,000 fighters and at least 200,000 civilians to famine and disease.³² The United States lost 4,300 soldiers. Aguinaldo admitted defeat in 1901. Most of the guerrillas laid down their arms, though some resistance continued until 1913, particularly among Muslims in the southern islands.³³

The American Colony

The United States' mission in the Philippines was intended to be a temporary phase while the U.S. prepared the Philippines for independence.³⁴ The first Philippine Commission, appointed by U.S. President McKinley in 1899, recognized Filipino aspirations for independence but also stated that the country was not ready. The 1900 Taft Commission began establishing the governmental institutions necessary for a democratic government.³⁵

The American authorities established a new judicial system, civil service, and free public elementary education.³⁶ Catholicism was disestablished as the state religion. Negotiating with the Vatican, the United States bought vast friar land holdings and redistributed them, mainly to estate owners. Religious orders were allowed to remain.³⁷



The official Presidential portrait of William McKinley
Wikimedia / Public Domain

A new legislative structure was also created. Filipinos held their first elections for the legislative assembly in 1907. The Philippine Assembly (lower house) and the Philippine Commission (upper house appointed by the American president) comprised the bicameral legislature. As a result of the Jones Act of 1916, the Assembly's name was changed to the House of Representatives; the Commission became the Senate, whose members were popularly elected, not appointed.^{38, 39}



Manuel Luis Quezon y Molina
Wikimedia / Public Domain

Filipinos also organized their own political parties, some of whom collaborated with U.S. leadership. The country's influential native, educated elite, called *ilustrados*, established the Federalista Party, which sought to make the Philippines an American state. Federalistas became supreme-court judges, governors, and civil servants. However, their vision had limited appeal; the party changed its name to the National Progressive Party, and advocated for the independence of the Philippines. In 1907, another party, the Nacionalistas, emerged and gained a lasting political presence. The party also represented wealthy Filipino elites and publicly called for independence; but in fact, it actively supported American authorities in a manner called "policy of attraction." Filipinos also formed a communist and a socialist party, both sympathetic to tenant farmers' resistance to elite land owners.⁴⁰

Commonwealth

The Philippines became a self-governing commonwealth in 1935. A new government, presided over by Nacionalista Party member Manuel Quezon, was meant to transition the commonwealth to a sovereign nation over 10 years.⁴¹ The leadership sought to improve the lives of Filipinos, but the small Muslim minority feared the domination of the Catholic majority would threaten the Muslim way of life. Their fears came true, as Catholics from the north flooded into Mindanao, crowding the Moros out of their homeland. The Catholic encroachment produced animosity and hostility and later led to the founding of Muslim separatist movements, including the Moro National Liberation Front and Abu Sayyaf.^{42, 43}

World War II and Japanese Occupation

Japan attacked the Philippines 10 hours after the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. U.S. and Philippine forces retreated to the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor Island, at the mouth of Manila Bay. The Japanese occupied Manila in January 1942 and fought the American and Philippine forces until spring. During the fighting, the Japanese captured 80,000 prisoners of war and forced them to march to a prison camp 105 km (65 mi) to the north. During the infamous “Bataan Death March,” some 10,000 men died from harsh treatment, starvation, and disease.⁴⁴

Japan promised independence to the Philippines, but Japanese authorities began organizing a new government structure to direct civil affairs. Most of the Filipino elite collaborated with the Japanese in order to pass information to the Allies and to protect themselves and other Filipinos from the harsh Japanese rule.⁴⁵



Surrender of American troops at Corregidor, Philippine Islands, May 1942
Wikimedia / Public Domain

Unlike the elites, most of the general population did not collaborate with the Japanese. Some 260,000 Filipinos were involved in anti-Japanese guerrilla organizations, limiting Japanese control to 12 of the 48 provinces by the end of the war. One of the largest and most effective resistance groups was the Hukbalahaps, known as Huks (short for Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon, or People’s Anti-Japanese Party). It was led by communist party member Luis Taruchad and had 30,000 members, many recruited from among tenant farmers in central and southern Luzon. Some of the heaviest fighting took place in Luzon. Manila also experienced fierce fighting, and the city, along with the rest of the country, suffered extensive damage. The Allied Forces and Filipino guerillas defeated the Japanese, who surrendered in September 1945. An estimated one million Filipinos died in the war.^{46, 47}

An Independent Nation

Early Independence Period

The Philippines became an independent republic on 4 July 1946, with Manuel Roxas as president. Independence arrived amid post-war devastation, concerns about Japanese collaborationists, rampant inflation, food shortages, and a dependency

on the United States. The United States maintained 23 military installations in the country and provided military support.⁴⁸

The Huk Rebellion (1945-53) marked the first eight years of independence.⁴⁹ Elite landowners, many of whom had supported the Japanese during the war, returned to their lands and forcefully demanded back rent from peasants, many of whom had fought the Japanese. To this backdrop, the Huks, by then renamed the People's



Post-Independence (1946-Present)
Wikimedia / Public Domain

Liberation Party (Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan), led an insurgency to gain political participation and reform the legislature and security forces. Their struggle weakened and fell into criminal activity by 1951.⁵⁰



Manuel Roxas, Speaker of H., Philippines
Wikimedia / Public Domain

The next elected president, populist Ramon Magsaysay (1953-1957) of the Nacionalista Party, brought reforms that were beneficial to tenant farmers in the Christian north but not to Muslims in the south.⁵¹ Magsaysay's successors, Carlos Garcia and Diosdado Macapagal, focused on domestic and economic reforms and developing deeper regional ties.^{52, 53} Macapagal dealt with popular

tensions over the large U.S. military presence.⁵⁴ In 1964, he proclaimed 12 June as the national day of independence, commemorating Emilio Aguinaldo's declaration of independence in 1898, in addition to 4 July 1946 as the day of independence from the United States.⁵⁵

The Marcos Era

Nacionalista Party leader Ferdinand Marcos defeated Macapagal in 1965 and dominated Philippine politics for the next two decades. During his first term, Marcos implemented many beneficial public works and infrastructure programs that also enriched his allies and friends. He also lobbied the



Flag of the Armed Forces of the Philippines
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United States for aid and sent 2,000 troops to help South Vietnam in the Vietnam War. In 1967, the Philippines became a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).⁵⁶

During Marcos's second term, economic growth stagnated, optimism faded, and violent crime increased. Socialist insurgents and Muslim secessionists threatened national security. The Muslim rebels were divided into two camps, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and its splinter group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Muslim-Christian violence increased in Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, where many Christians from the north had migrated with support from the government.⁵⁷



Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos during a state visit at the White House in 1966
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Ferdinand Marcos takes the Oath of Office for a second term before
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Citing communist threats and lawlessness, Marcos suspended habeas corpus in 1971. Martial law followed in 1972 and lasted until 1981. Investigations later showed that government agent provocateurs may have orchestrated bombings in Manila and other large cities. In 1973, Marcos gained absolute power through a new constitution. He restricted liberties, suppressed opposition, and consolidated power. Rampant corruption and cronyism in his administration contributed to significant economic decline.⁵⁸

People Power!

Benigno Aquino, a wealthy, charismatic, pro-democracy opposition member, emerged as one of Marcos's main rivals and critics. Sensing a threat, Marcos first imprisoned Aquino and then allowed him exile to the United States in 1980. Fully aware of the risks, Aquino decided to return home in August 1983. As he stepped off the plane in Manila, he was gunned down by Philippine soldiers.⁵⁹

Aquino's assassination was the beginning of the end of the Marcos regime. Aquino's widow, Corazon, stepped in to lead the opposition to Marcos. The "People Power" movement grew over the next three years, winning the support of traditional politicians, business leaders, and the Catholic Church. Meanwhile, a parallel movement was growing within the military, consisting of young officers who, disgusted with the corruption of the Marcos government, sought to restore professionalism to the armed forces.⁶⁰

In February 1986, Marcos won another term in office in snap elections that were held due to pressure from the United States.^{61, 62} The elections were universally dismissed as fraudulent.⁶³ After the vote, many government and military personnel demanded Marcos's resignation and joined the opposition. Marcos ordered the army to put down the insurrection, but hundreds of thousands of Filipinos flooded the streets and joined forces with rebel troops. The "People Power" revolution forced Marcos from power on 22 February.⁶⁴

An ailing Marcos, his high-profile wife Imelda, and their relatives fled to Hawaii, where he died in 1989. Filipino history from colonization to the end of the Marcos era has been summed up by Filipinos in the following way: "Three hundred years in a Spanish convent, 50 years of Hollywood, and 20 years of 'his and hers.'" The joke encapsulated the hope that the People Power revolution represented a distinct break from the country's past.⁶⁵

Presidency of Corazon Aquino

Corazon Aquino came to power amid great hopes for reform.⁶⁶ She released hundreds of political prisoners; endorsed a new constitution, which limited the president to a single six-year term; and revived an independent judiciary and a freely elected legislature.^{67, 68} She also lifted the censorship restrictions instituted during martial law and initiated efforts to recover the hundreds of millions of dollars stolen by the Marcos family. Yet Aquino failed to adequately address the contentious issue of land reform, which was at the heart of Philippine income inequality.⁶⁹ Her administration was weak and fractious, and the country did not reach full political and economic stability during her tenure.⁷⁰ She survived



Philippine President Corazon Aquino
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seven military coup attempts.⁷¹ At the end of her rule, she endorsed Fidel Ramos, her defense secretary and a West Point graduate, for the presidential election.⁷²

Post-Aquino Politics

Fidel Ramos won the presidential election in 1992.⁷³ Ramos granted amnesty to military rebels, communist insurgents, and Muslim separatists; he also legalized the communist party.⁷⁴ In 1996 he made peace with the Moro National Liberation Front.^{75, 76} Ramos also focused on rebuilding the economy and restoring investor confidence. Nicknamed “Steady Eddy,” he implemented several deregulation and anti-monopoly measures.⁷⁷



Philippine President Corazon C. Aquino
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President Joseph Estrada
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In 1998, movie star Joseph Estrada won the presidential elections in a landslide amid promises to reduce poverty and spur private enterprise.⁷⁸ However, charges of corruption dogged Estrada from the beginning, and he became the first Filipino president to face impeachment. He was ultimately ousted from office in 2001 by insider political maneuvering and massive street protests.⁷⁹ His short-lived presidency showed that Philippine political institutions remained susceptible to corruption.⁸⁰

Vice President Gloria Arroyo succeeded Estrada. A Ph.D. economist and daughter of former President Macapagal (1961-65), she confronted an ailing economy in which a wealthy minority owned most of the land while the majority remained trapped in a subsistence livelihood near the poverty line.^{81, 82, 83} In July 2003, Arroyo declared a month-long state of emergency due to an armed mutiny in Manila. After completing Estrada’s term, Arroyo was reelected in 2004.⁸⁴ While had some success in generating greater tax revenues, her husband’s questionable business dealings led to calls for her resignation in 2005.⁸⁵ Further controversy ensued when she pardoned Estrada, who had been sentenced to life in prison for massive corruption.⁸⁶ Insurgent activity and extra-judicial murders by government forces increased during her term.^{87, 88}

A 2007 failed coup attempt reflected the uneven support for Arroyo within the armed forces, which was problematic given the military's role in combating terrorism and insurgencies.^{89, 90}

Current Events



president Gloria Macapagal Arroyo
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In 2010, Liberal Party Senator Benigno S. Aquino III, son of Benigno and Corazon Aquino, won the presidential election by a landslide.⁹¹ Aquino's major accomplishment was achieving peace with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in 2012 after four decades of violence. The deal promised greater autonomy to Mindanao's Muslim region. During Aquino's tenure, the Philippines won a favorable judgment from the international tribunal in The Hague regarding a dispute with China over disputed islands in the South China Sea; China has rejected the decision. However, Aquino's administration faced criticism for economic growth that benefited only the elites and for the sluggish response to the devastating Super Typhoon Haiyan in 2013.⁹²

By the 2016 election, Filipinos were ready for change. That change came in the form of Rodrigo Duterte, the gun-toting mayor who had rid Davao City of crime. Duterte continued his tough-guy image and promised to fill Manila Bay with the bodies of criminals. In May 2016, Duterte won the presidential election by a wide margin. He immediately initiated a brutal war on drugs that left thousands dead, mostly by death squads and extrajudicial killings.⁹³ In January 2017, Duterte issued an order expanding access to birth control for poor women.⁹⁴ In September 2017, government forces killed Isnilon Hapilon - leader of the ISIS-affiliated Abu Sayyaf militant group who was fighting alongside one of the leaders of the Maute Group - and retook the southern city of Marawi after five months of fighting.⁹⁵



Benigno Aquino III takes the oath of office as the 15th President of the Philippines
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Philippines Countries in Perspective

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Assessment

1. Ferdinand Magellan was the first Spanish governor of the Philippines.
2. The United States bought the Philippines from Spain.
3. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was the first woman elected as leader of the Philippines.
4. The Philippines is named after the indigenous group that greeted the first Spanish explorers, the Filipinos.
5. The encroachment of Catholics from the north into Mindanao threatened the Muslims who had been living in the region for centuries.
6. The people who settled in the Philippine archipelago are thought to have come from Taiwan.
7. The ilustrados are the Muslims inhabitants of the southern Philippines.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. False; 6. True; 7. False

Philippines Countries in Perspective

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Assessment

8. Most Filipinos collaborated with the Japanese during World War II in order to drive the United States out of the Philippines and protect themselves.
9. The “People Power” revolution ousted President Ferdinand Marcos from power.
10. The Philippines was embroiled in insurgency and rebellion immediately after gaining independence.

Assessment Answers: 8. False; 9. true; 10. True



*Bonifacio Global City - Philippines
flickr/Patrick Del Rosario*

Chapter 3 | Philippines Countries in Perspective

Economy

Introduction

The Philippines has grown to become a regional economic powerhouse, behind only China and Vietnam, with a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 6.3% per year. A strong services sector, increased private consumption, and government spending drive economic growth. A relatively stable political environment encourages foreign direct investment (FDI), which has been on the rise in recent years. A large, educated, English-speaking workforce and substantial remittances from Filipinos who work abroad sustain the rising economy. The Philippines enjoys record low unemployment and has seen substantial poverty reduction since 2012.^{1, 2, 3}

But economic challenges remain. Most of the country's wealth is held by a rich minority. Many of the recently created jobs are tedious, low paying, and in the informal sector; underemployment is high and poverty is still widespread. The country still needs improvement in the areas of governance, legal impartiality, and fair regulations to improve the business climate.⁴

Agriculture



*Technician uses a 4 panel leaf color chart
flickr / IRRI Photos*

The agricultural sector, which includes forestry and fisheries, has historically been the backbone of the nation's economy. Over 40% of the country's total land area is arable farmland. The volcanic soil is rich and fertile, supporting a variety of crops throughout the year.^{5, 6} The main agricultural products include rice, fish, livestock, poultry, bananas, coconut/copra, corn, sugarcane, mangoes, pineapple, and cassava.⁷ Rice, coconut,

and corn are the staple crops. Rice is grown in north-central Luzon, south-central Mindanao, and the western Visayas.⁸ The Philippines is the world's second-largest producer of coconut.¹⁰

Agriculture accounts for 9.7% of the country's GDP, a steady decline from 13.97% in 2000.^{11, 12} Continued rural to urban migration, natural disasters (drought and storms), and economic crises have contributed to the sector's decline.^{13, 14} The agricultural sector employs over one-fourth of the population and is the second largest employer in the Philippines.¹⁵ Farmers work on either small plots of rented land or on large plantations.¹⁶ Much of the land is owned by a small group of wealthy landowners, a legacy from 19th century economic development.^{17, 18}

The agriculture sector faces several challenges. Income and productivity are lower than in the industry and services sectors. Productivity and efficiency have seen little growth since the 1990s. The country's agricultural bureaucracy has



*A farmer uses a hand tractor or power tiller
flickr / IRRI Photos*

experienced several high-profile corruption scandals that enriched public officials at the expense of poor farmers. An excessive focus on rice has led to the neglect of other areas such as coconuts and fisheries.¹⁹ Government subsidies of rice, in an attempt to ensure a stable food supply, have actually led to an increase in food costs and a rise in the undernourished population.²⁰ Improper application of chemicals used in rice cultivation has led to serious soil degradation. Despite a ban on hardwood exports, heavy logging and inadequate reforestation have led to a vast reduction in forested land.²¹ Destructive fishing methods, such as cyanide fishing, kill not only the fish but also coral reefs, and damage fishing areas.^{22, 23}

Industry

Industry accounts for 30% of the country's GDP but employs only 17.5% of the workforce.²⁴ The industry sector includes manufacturing, mining and quarrying, construction, electricity, and gas and water.²⁵ The government has encouraged domestic and foreign investment in industry through tax credits and favorable credit terms.²⁶ The most important industries are semiconductors and electronics assembly; food and beverage manufacturing; construction; electric, gas, and water supply; chemical products; radio, television, and communications equipment; petroleum and fuel; textiles and garments; non-metallic minerals; basic metal industries; and transport equipment.²⁷ Challenges in the industry sector include poor infrastructure, supply deficits, and expensive logistics.^{28, 29}



*Factory in Philippines
flickr / Jonathan S. Igharas*

The manufacturing subsector in the Philippines has fluctuated since growing significantly during the 1950s, but has stabilized in past decades.^{30, 31} Many factories in the Philippines are subcontractors or licensees of foreign firms that make finished products out of unfinished imported goods for export. Manufacturing benefits from a low-cost, highly educated workforce. Today, this sector is the second-best performing among ASEAN countries.³² Manufacturing is slowly losing ground to the fast-growing services sector.^{33, 34}

Services

The Philippine service sector comprises over 59.5% of the nation's GDP and employs 55.6% of the labor force.³⁵ The sector includes wholesale and retail, motor vehicle repair, transportation and storage, public administration, accommodation and food services, administrative and support services, education, finance and insurance, social work, and information and communication.³⁶ The IT industry in particular is promising.³⁷ The Philippines has become a leading provider of business process outsourcing (BPO) services, although the industry started slowing down in 2017.^{38, 39, 40}

Energy



*Gas Turbine System Technician.
flickr / U.S. Pacific Fleet*

The Philippines imports 90% of the petroleum it needs.⁴¹ In 2016, crude oil production was an estimated 5,502 bbl (barrels per day) and oil reserves were estimated to be 100 million bbl.⁴² The country's main oil and gas fields are located off Palawan Island.⁴³

Natural gas reserves are estimated at 98.54 billion cu m (3.4 trillion cu ft).⁴⁴ The Oil Rim project, located underneath the Malampaya natural gas field, has led to

significant production of natural gas.⁴⁵ The Deepwater Gas-to-Power Project, operated by Shell, Chevron, and the Philippine National Oil Company (PNOC), is the country's largest natural gas development project and one of the biggest sources of foreign investment.⁴⁶ In 2015, massive natural gas and mineral deposits were discovered in Luzon's Cagayan Valley and in the Philippine Sea.^{47, 48} The Philippines is also pursuing joint energy exploration and development with China in the areas of the South China Sea disputed by the two nations.⁴⁹

Geothermal resources are so vast they have reduced some of the country's dependence on oil.⁵⁰ The Philippines continues to be the world's second-largest producer of geothermal energy after the United States. Nearly 9% of the Philippines' electricity comes from geothermal sources.^{51, 52, 53}

In terms of coal, demand is too high, and the country must continue to import coal for power generation and industrial use.⁵⁴ In the past, Filipinos used solar, agri-waste, animal waste, and other methods to produce small amounts of energy in rural areas.⁵⁵

Under President Duterte, the Philippines is attempting to become a significant player in the global renewable energy industry. The country's first Filipino-owned solar panel factory opened in 2017, with plans to export to the United States and the European Union.⁵⁶

Natural Resources

The Philippines is rich in mineral resources. Untapped mineral wealth is estimated at over USD 840 billion worth of gold, copper, and chromate deposits.⁵⁷ The archipelago also has significant deposits of silver, nickel, coal, sulfur, gypsum, marble, limestone, silica, clay, and phosphate. Most of the minerals (including gold, copper, and chromite) are located in Luzon and Mindanao.^{58, 59} The Visayas has deposits of nonmetallic minerals such as marble, salt, sulfur, cement, phosphate, and silica.⁶⁰ Mining accounts for less than 1% of the country's GDP, yet constitutes up to 25% of private incomes in mining regions such as Caraga and Mimaropa.⁶¹



*Gold mining in Philippines
flickr / Luc Forsyth*

In the 1980s and 1990s, high operational costs, decreased demand, labor disputes, high interest rates, natural disasters, and power shortages reduced the growth of the copper and gold industries.⁶² Even today, high production costs, low metal prices, and insufficient investment in infrastructure pose challenges to the industry. Red tape, disputes over land ownership, and the Muslim and communist insurgencies have been additional concerns for developers.⁶³ In early 2017, the Philippine environmental protection agency closed 23 mining operations and canceled 75 mineral production-sharing agreements located in watersheds.⁶⁴

Trade

In 2016, the Philippines had an estimated trade deficit of USD 27.7 billion, which was 8.97% of the country's GDP.^{65, 66} Major exports are semiconductors and electronic products, machinery and transport equipment, wood manufactures, chemicals, processed food and beverages, garments, coconut oil, copper concentrates, seafood, and bananas/fruits. The country's leading export partners are Japan, the United States, Hong Kong, China, Singapore, and Germany. The Philippines imports electronic



*A shipment of rice from Vietnam gets unloaded in Manila, Philippines.
flickr / IRRI Photos*

products, mineral fuels, machinery and transport equipment, iron and steel, textile fabrics, grains, chemicals, and plastic. The leading import partners are China, Japan, the United States, Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, and Indonesia.⁶⁷

Trade between the United States and the Philippines totaled USD 18 billion in 2016.⁶⁸ The two countries' trade ties are based on the 1989 bilateral Trade and Investment Framework Agreement. The Philippines also has free trade agreements with Australia, New Zealand, Japan, China, South Korea, and the ASEAN member nations.⁶⁹

The Philippine economy has been based on international trade. The nation recently became part of the international division of labor. Materials used in consumer goods destined for store shelves in North America and Europe are imported into the Philippines duty-free and then assembled for re-export.⁷⁰ The Philippine government has established special economic zones, touted as free of red tape and corruption, to attract new investors with on-site recruitment centers and financial incentives.⁷¹ There are 366 such "ecozones" throughout the Philippines, including IT parks, manufacturing zones, agro-industrial zones, tourism zones, and medical tourism parks.^{72, 73}

Tourism

Tourism is a big business in the Philippines, contributing over 19% to the GDP.⁷⁴ Metro Manila has many tourist attractions, including cathedrals, shrines, museums, galleries, parks, shops, restaurants, and nightclubs. Numerous tropical islands with vast stretches of white sand and blue sea offer surfers, scuba divers, and vacationers a worldly paradise. The government recognizes that tourism is vital to the national economy and an important tool for socio-economic growth and has passed regulations to keep the country an excellent travel destination and attract investment.⁷⁵

The Philippines tourism sector has grown over the past several years.⁷⁶ In the past, economic and political instability, terrorist threats in the southern islands, and a belief that neighboring countries offered better attractions kept tourists from visiting the archipelago.^{77, 78} Tourist arrivals have been steadily increasing and reached 5.97

million people in 2016. The major markets for tourism in the Philippines are South Korea, the United States, China, Japan, and Australia.^{79, 80}

The Philippines is also known for sex tourism. Child sex tourism, in particular, is a serious problem, with the majority of the clientele coming from Northeast Asia, Europe, and North America.⁸¹ There are an estimated half-million sex workers in the Philippines, of whom almost one-fifth are minors. Despite being illegal, prostitution is a USD 400 million per year industry.⁸²

Banking and Finance



*The Asian Development Bank headquarters in Mandaluyong City.
flickr / Asian Development Bank*

The Central Bank issues the national currency, the Philippine peso (PHP), and conducts banking operations, along with other private and government-owned banks.⁸³ In November 2017, USD 1 was worth PHP 51.43.⁸⁴ The Central Bank's monetary policy aims to promote low and stable inflation and balanced economic growth.^{85, 86} The bank sees lower oil prices and weak economic growth as risks to stable inflation.⁸⁷

Financial services contribute a substantial amount to the service sector and the country's overall economic growth.⁸⁸ The banking sector is comprised of 42 commercial banks, 60 thrift banks, and 500 rural and cooperative banks. Commercial banks make up 90% of the banking system's resources.⁸⁹ In 2014, the government opened the banking market to full international participation, after decades of limiting the activities of non-Philippine banks.⁹⁰

Foreign Investment

Developing countries such as the Philippines are dependent on foreign capital to improve productive capacity. In the past, widespread corruption, lack of transparency, inadequate infrastructure, regulatory inconsistency, a slow and complex judicial system, and constitutionally mandated restrictions on certain sectors have hindered investment in the Philippine economy.^{91, 92} Foreign direct investment has been increasing in recent years, reaching USD 7.9 billion in 2016, but remains weak considering the country's economic potential. The largest foreign investors are

the Netherlands, Australia, the United States, Japan, and Singapore. The sectors of the Philippine economy that receive the most investment are electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply; real estate; manufacturing; and transport and storage.⁹³

Standard of Living

The Philippine government spends 4.7% of its GDP on healthcare. Filipinos' life expectancy is 68.5 years, with 65 years for males and 72 for females, giving the country a life expectancy world ranking of 121. The major causes of death are heart disease, stroke, and pneumonia.^{94, 95} The country's maternal mortality rate is 114 deaths per 100,000 live births, a world ranking of 74. It ranks at 78 in infant mortality, with 21.9 deaths per 1,000 live births.⁹⁶



*RAF C17 Aircraft Brings Aid to the Philippines.
flickr / Defence Images*



*Typhoon Haiyan natural disaster
flickr / Photo Unit*

Poverty is a persistent problem for the Philippines. The government sets the poverty threshold at PHP 21,753 (USD 424) per year.^{97, 98} In recent years, the poverty rate has gradually decreased, reaching 21.6% in 2015.⁹⁹ Some causes of poverty are the immunity of the farming and fishing sectors to improving economic trends, insufficient family planning, a weak manufacturing sector, and entrenched land distribution patterns that favor the wealthy.¹⁰⁰ External shocks such as natural

disasters and elevated global food and fuel prices also contribute to increased poverty levels.^{101, 102}

Over 44% of the population in the Philippines is urban.¹⁰³ Urban businesses drive the growth of the national economy.¹⁰⁴ Rural areas lag behind in both development and poverty reduction. The poverty gap between regions and provinces, and between urban and rural areas in particular, are widening. Poverty has been pervasive and most severe in the countryside, where 70% of the poor population lives. The Philippines' rural poverty is significantly higher than that of other countries in the region such as Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, and Malaysia.^{105, 106, 107}

Employment

In 2016, the unemployment rate was 5.5%, but 18% of those working were underemployed.¹⁰⁸ Over 77% of those unemployed were between 15 and 34 years old; over 62% were male.¹⁰⁹ Over 10 million Filipinos work in the informal sector. The Duterte administration is prioritizing large infrastructure projects and foreign official development assistance as vehicles for job creation and poverty relief.¹¹⁰ City governments are establishing higher and vocational education initiatives to help job seekers gain the knowledge and skills sought by employers.¹¹¹ Remittances from Filipinos working overseas account for 10.2% of the country's GDP.^{112, 113} An estimated 2.2 million Filipinos are currently working abroad, some because they cannot find jobs in the Philippines.¹¹⁴

Looking Forward

The Philippine economy is projected to keep growing robustly.¹¹⁵ The country is about to transition from lower-middle income to upper-middle income status.¹¹⁶ The Duterte administration is focused on combatting illegal drugs and corruption as means of poverty reduction and economic growth benefitting all Filipinos. The government's socioeconomic agenda includes comprehensive tax reform, higher investment, improved competitiveness, infrastructure development, and social spending.¹¹⁷



*Telecommunications, in the Philippine
flickr / dbgg1979*

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Assessment

1. Coconut is one of the main crops of the Philippines.
2. Poverty, terrorism, and fierce competition with other Asian countries have devastated the Philippines' outsourcing industry.
3. "Ecozones" are the 23 areas that the Philippine environmental protection agency has closed to mining operations.
4. The oil fields off the Palawan Island meet most of the Philippines' petroleum needs.
5. Land distribution patterns that favor the wealthy exacerbate poverty.

Assessment Answers: 1. True; 2. True; 3. False; 4. False; 5. True

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Assessment

6. Government subsidies of rice ensure food security and sustainable agriculture.
7. The Philippines uses geothermal energy to produce electricity.
8. The Philippine economy relies on remittances from Filipinos who work abroad.
9. Sex tourism is legal in the Philippines.
10. Many factories in the Philippines are subcontractors or licensees of foreign firms.

Assessment Answers: 6. False; 7. true; 8. True; 9. True; 10. True



*Loay bohol tribes men
flickr / canencia*

Chapter 4 | Philippines Countries in Perspective

Society

Introduction

With a population of 104 million people, the Philippines is a mix of ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups.¹ The cultural diversity arises from the country's geographic location and centuries of colonization. Malay, Chinese, Arab, Spanish, and American influences can be seen in the languages, religions, foods, clothing, and even sports of the Philippines. Filipinos are a family-oriented and spiritual people. The official languages are Filipino and English, and indigenous languages are spoken at home. Christianity and Islam are mixed with pre-colonial beliefs, and traces of Spanish colonial culture are still evident in many traditions and customs.^{2, 3}

Ethnic Groups



Mindanao Native Women
flickr / Klaus Stiefel

Filipinos are descendants of Malays who migrated to the archipelago some 30,000 years ago from mainland Asia. The oldest residents, the Negritos, distinguished by short stature and dark skin, are believed to be indigenous to the islands. They constitute a small percentage of the total population. Chinese, Arab, and Indian peoples also migrated to the archipelago over the centuries. Many Filipinos trace their ancestry to these groups and to the Spaniards and Americans who colonized the Philippines between the 16th and

20th centuries.⁴ *Mestizo* is the name for Filipinos mixed with any foreign ancestry, especially Spanish or Chinese.^{5, 6}

Communities spread across the Philippines had little contact with people living on other islands. Hence, culture, traditions, and languages diverged widely. Today, Filipino society is composed of nearly 100 distinct ethnic groups, and over 170 languages, four of which are becoming extinct.^{7, 8}

Ethnicity is usually associated with a specific region. Filipino ethnic groups are divided into three main categories: lowland Christians, southern Muslims, and indigenous highlanders.^{9, 10} The major ethnic groups in the Philippines are Tagalog (28%), Cebuano (13%), Ilocano (9%), Bisaya/Binisaya (7.6%), Hiligaynon Ilonggo (7.5%), and Bikol (6%).^{11, 12}



Mindoro
flickr / Jon Lecuyer

Tagalogs, the largest ethnic group, are lowland Christians who live mostly in central and southern Luzon and Mindoro.^{13,}

¹⁴ Many Tagalogs live in Manila, the capital city, and are highly visible in politics and business. Tagalogs and Visayans also make up the Catholic population of Mindanao.¹⁵

The term Visayan refers to people who trace their roots to the central islands of the Visayan region. Cebuano, Hiligaynon Ilongo, and Waray-Waray are subgroups of the Visayan population.¹⁶ High population density and official encouragement prompted some to migrate to Mindanao, where they continue to identify themselves as Visayan.^{17, 18}



*Igorot people outside of the Baguio botanical gardens
flickr / Cesar*

The Ilocano, the third largest ethnic group, live mainly in northern Luzon and have a history of emigration and economic success. Some of the Ilocanos' success is attributed to President Ferdinand Marcos, an Ilocano, who gave his people lucrative government jobs during his rule from 1965 to 1986.¹⁹

Muslim Filipinos, or Moros, have historically lived on the southern island of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago. In 2010, more than 94% of Muslim Filipinos lived in Mindanao, but some have left to escape violence and poverty.²⁰ The Moros are a culturally autonomous group, with their own legal system, language, and religious traditions. The culture represents a mixture of Islam and Adat, a pre-Islamic culture.²¹ Muslims resisted Spanish and American colonial rule, coining the term Bangsamoro, which means "nations of Moros." The three main Moro groups are the Tausug, Maranao, and Maguindanao. The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao was established in 1987 to give the Moros a greater degree of independence from Manila. The region includes the provinces of Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi, and the cities of Marawi and Lamitan.^{22, 23, 24}

Most of the indigenous populations live in remote areas of Luzon, Mindoro, and Mindanao. They include the Negrito, Bontoc, Kalinga, Ifugao, Tingguian, Badogo, Mandaya, Mangyan, and Benguet.²⁵ The Filipino mountain dwellers are known collectively as *igorot*, meaning "mountaineer." The Ifugao are the ancestors of the *igorot* who built the Banaue rice terraces on the mountains of northern Luzon.^{26, 27} The area is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.²⁸

Languges

Most of the over 170 languages spoken in the Philippines belong to the Malayo-Polynesian language family.^{29, 30} Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, and Maranao are the country's four principal languages.³¹

Filipino, based on the Tagalog language and spoken in Manila, south-central and central Luzon, and the Marinduque and Mindoro islands, was declared the official language of the Philippines in 1987. Since many non-Tagalog peoples equated the dominance of the Tagalog language with Tagalog cultural dominance, the official name of the national language was changed to Pilipino in the 1950s. In 1987, it was renamed Filipino. Filipino and English are used in government offices, the media, and higher education.^{32, 33, 34} Since English is widely used, Filipinos often speak using a mixture English and Filipino words or phrases known as "Taglish," a combination of the words Tagalog and English.³⁵

Cebuano is spoken by various ethnic groups in the Visayas and Mindanao. Tribes in northern Luzon speak Ilocano, and those in Mindanao speak Maranao (Maranaw).^{36, 37} Chavacano, which is a mixture of Spanish vocabulary and indigenous grammatical structure, is spoken in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and other provinces.^{38, 39}

Religion

The Philippines claims to be the only Christian nation in Asia.⁴⁰ In the 16th century, Spanish colonists converted the majority of Filipinos to Catholicism, the faith practiced by more than 80% of the population.⁴¹ Protestant missionaries made some converts starting in the early 20th century. Today, Protestants, Evangelicals, and other Christian sects, including the Aglipaya and the Iglesia ni Kristo, make up approximately 10% of the population.^{42, 43, 44}



Interior of a Church in Manila | flickr / Zack Lee

Filipinos are a deeply religious people. Despite the constitutional separation of church and state, religion, especially the Catholic Church, influences politics and

society. The pope is extremely popular, and most Filipinos fall in line with Catholic views on divorce and abortion.^{45, 46} In addition to Christianity, many Filipinos practice traditional animist beliefs and worship the Virgin Mary alongside many other gods and spirits.^{47, 48}

In 1380, Arab traders introduced Islam to the Sulu archipelago and some parts of Luzon. By the early 16th century, Islam was practiced throughout the archipelago's coastal regions. Upon the arrival of the Spanish in the 16th century, Christianity was introduced, and Islam was pushed to the southern islands of Mindanao, Sulu, and Palawan, with small communities in Cebu and Luzon. Today, the Sunni Muslims of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago comprise about 5% of the population.^{49, 50, 51}



*The Grand Mosque, Cotabato City
flickr / SIPAT: View from the Edge*

Followers of other organized and non-organized religions, such as Buddhism and Taoism, make up 2.5% of the population. Although the Chinese population in the Philippines is small, they introduced the beliefs and practices of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism to Filipinos.^{52, 53}

Cuisine



*Sweet-sour lapu lapu
flickr / shankar s.*

Philippine cuisine is as diverse as the many groups that inhabit the archipelago. Malay, Spanish, and Chinese flavors influence indigenous and foreign dishes. Rice and seafood, two of the country's major agricultural products, are staples of the Philippine diet. Most dishes are made with steamed or boiled rice or rice noodles complemented by fish, chicken, beef, or pork (for non-Muslims).^{54, 55}

Filipinos enjoy a variety of foods, such as regional dishes, American cuisine, and local fast food. Many vegetable dishes include non-vegetarian ingredients. Typical dishes include the Spanish-inherited

morcon (beef prepared with pork fat inside), *pochero* (beef, chicken, or pork stew with green beans and cabbage), and *paella* (a rice, seafood, and meat dish). Local Chinese noodle dishes called *pancit*, rice porridge, and spring rolls are popular.⁵⁶ During festivals, holidays, or large get-togethers, families prepare *lechon* (a whole roasted pig), cooked over coals for several hours. During meals, food is usually brought to the table and eaten buffet style with spoons and forks.⁵⁷



Coconut Wine
flickr / Anton Diaz

Coconut and sugar, which are abundant crops, are used in many dishes. Coconut milk is used for cooking meat, fish, or vegetables and as a sweetener in candies and fruit salad.⁵⁸ It is used in *lambanog*, a distilled alcoholic beverage, and in a coconut wine called *tuba*. Some ingredients allow cooked foods to last several meals. In the absence of refrigeration, foods like *adobo* (chicken or pork stew prepared in vinegar, soy sauce, and garlic) and *sinigang* (fish soup with vegetables or tamarind) are ways to preserve leftovers in a tropical climate.^{59, 60}

For dessert, Filipinos enjoy cakes, pudding, flan, and fruit.⁶¹ Philippine fruits include banana, papaya, pineapple, watermelon, and guava. *Halo-halo* (mix-mix) is a favorite cool and creamy summer drink made with fruit, shaved ice, and sweet flavoring.⁶²

Traditional Dress

In many parts of the country, Filipino men and women wear casual western attire such as jeans and T-shirts. Tribal clothing is unique to the culture. Traditional clothing is handmade and displays each tribe's traditions, beliefs, and folklore.⁶³

The formal national attire for men is the richly embroidered *barong tagalog* shirt. This elegantly stitched, long-sleeved tunic



Celebrations in Cebu, Philippines
flickr / Aaron Shumaker

evolved from those worn by Tagalog men before the arrival of the Spanish. During the American colonial era, men adopted suits, but the *barong tagalog* made a comeback after independence. Women can wear the barong tagalog as well.^{64, 65}

For public functions and special occasions, women who opt for a traditional style wear the *terno*, which evolved from the *baro at saya* (blouse and skirt). The *terno* is a long dress identifiable by butterfly sleeves.⁶⁶ Muslim women wear long skirts or pants, long-sleeved shirts, and scarves to cover their heads.⁶⁷

The *malong* is a large hand-woven cloth which can be used as a skirt for men and women, blanket, dress, sheet, prayer mat, and hammock. The *malong* is used as an indicator of social and economic status.⁶⁸

Gender Issues

By law, Filipinas have most of the rights accorded to men. But in practice, women face discrimination in hiring and the workplace. Women have the same property and inheritance rights as men, but in Muslim and indigenous communities, men have more property rights than women.⁶⁹

Since women were granted the right to vote and to be elected in 1937, Filipinas have become important leaders in national and local government, including presidents Corazon Aquino (1986-92) and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (2001-10).⁷⁰

Women account for 25% of elected representatives in Congress, 22.5% of provincial governors, 13% of vice governors, 20% of city mayors, and 16% of vice mayors.⁷¹

Domestic violence, rape, and prostitution are all serious problems in the Philippines. Although such crimes are illegal, enforcement has been ineffective. Sex tourism is also a source of exploitation and forced labor. Sexual harassment is widespread in the workplace. Cases of violence against women often go unreported.^{72, 73}

In July 2017, President Duterte pledged to implement the Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Law, challenging Catholic opposition and an earlier vote by



Women of the Farmers' Association in Salvacion
barangay work together
flickr/PWRDF

Congress to eliminate funding for the contraception the law. Millions of lower-income women depend on state-provided services and supplies to ensure family planning and protection from sexually transmitted diseases.⁷⁴

Arts

Literature

Philippine literature has its roots intraditional folktales, songs, and poems that were passed down orally over generations.⁷⁵ During pre-colonial times, Filipinos used the Baybayin script, which is similar to Sanskrit, to write their oral literature.⁷⁶ Most oral literature was transcribed into the Roman alphabet after Spanish colonization. One epic from the northern Luzon region is *Biag ni Lam-ang* (*Life of Lam-ang*), depicting the adventures of a folk hero.⁷⁷



A rich repository of rice research and literature
icr / IRRI Photos

Filipino *pasyon* (the narrative of the sufferings of Jesus according to Christian



Rizal Shrine in Calamba City
wikimedia / WikiCalambenyo

tradition) dates back to the early 18th century. The 19th century brought dramatic changes as anti-colonial and nationalist ideas brought from abroad by *illustardo* intellectuals were incorporated into the *pasyon*.⁷⁸

The novels of intellectual Jose Rizal contributed greatly to the Philippine nationalist movement.⁷⁹ The American era brought the English language and free verse to the Philippines, as seen in the ethereal poems of Jose Garcia Villa.⁸⁰

Contemporary Philippine literature features poetry, short stories, novels, and essays, many of which have received literary awards.⁸¹ Lualhati Bautista captures the predicaments faced by women in late 20th-century Philippine society in novels such as *Dekada '70* (*Decade '70*) and *Bata, Bata... Pa'no Ka Ginawa?* (*Child, Child...*

How Were You Made?).^{82, 83} The many English-language works of Francisco Sionil José, such as the novels *The Pretenders* and *Mass*, explore the flux of Philippine history and ordinary Filipinos' struggles for social justice.^{84, 85}

Music and Dance

Music and dance are a significant part of daily life. Both western and traditional styles are popular. A genre of music that mixed traditional and western styles, called *pinoy*, emerged in the 1950s. Although *pinoy* was initially western songs translated into regional Philippine languages, Filipino composers eventually created their own songs and sounds. Later, *pinoy* was influenced by other genres such as punk rock and reggae.⁸⁶



Spaniard dance in Manila
flickr/NCCA Official

Traditional music varies by region. Filipino musical instruments include the bamboo flute, gong, drums, violin, bamboo zither, and lute. Some traditional instruments are the *kubing*, a bamboo jaw harp; *kudyapi*, a two-stringed instrument; and *tongali*, a nose flute.^{87, 88} The *kulintang* gong ensembles of the southern islands feature a single-headed drum and a set of gongs. The *kulintang* is a part of Muslim cultural heritage, played by female musicians at weddings and parties.^{89, 90}

Ethnic dance in the Philippines draws heavily on nature-inspired themes. The traditional national folk dance, *tinikling* (bamboo dance), features dancing and hopping between bamboo poles as a bird might try to avoid bamboo traps set by rice farmers. The Moro version of this dance is called *singkil*. Dancers jump between two sets of two crisscrossed poles, each of which is struck together at fast speeds.⁹¹

Sports and Recreation

The sports and recreation that Filipinos enjoy vary by region, from mountain climbing to boxing to bowling. Basketball is a national obsession, and chess and golf are popular pastimes. Other hobbies include *sipa*, *eskrima*, and cockfighting.^{92, 93}

Sipa

Sipa, from the Tagalog word “to kick,” is a traditional sport. It is a cross between soccer and volleyball. Instead of an inflatable ball, Filipinos use a rattan ball, a small metal disk, or rubber bands bunched together. Players hit the object with their feet, legs, head, shoulders, or elbows. The goal is to keep it from landing on the ground.⁹⁴

Eskrima



Martial arts in the Philippines
flickr / Francisco Daum

Cockfighting

Cockfighting (*sabong*) has been described as a national pastime. Tens of thousands of legal and unregistered cockfights take place throughout the islands. Matches are usually held on Sundays and holidays. Razor-sharp spurs are tied to the roosters' legs as they battle until one dies. Male spectators bet through intricate hand signals from the pentagon-shaped arena. Birds bred for fighting spirit and formidable wingspan are imported from the United States.⁹⁶



Cockfighting
flickr / hiroshi77



Basketball is a national obsession
flickr / air21 Express

Eskrima, along with *kali* and *arnis*, is a martial art practiced in the Philippines.

The sport, whose name is adapted from the Spanish word for fencing, draws on fighting styles influenced by Indonesian and Chinese martial arts. Fighters use hands, wooden daggers, or rattan batons.⁹⁵

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Assessment

1. *Mestizo* is a traditional rice dish served in wedding celebrations.
2. Although the majority of Filipinos are devout Catholics who oppose divorce and abortion, President Duterte supports family planning and contraception.
3. Cockfighting is illegal in the Philippines.
4. In Philippine literature, the *pasyon* is a narrative of the suffering of Jesus according to Christian tradition.
5. The Moros are Muslims Filipinos, the vast majority of whom live in the Mindanao island group.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. False; 5. True



*Training on Landmine with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front
flickr / Geneva Call*

Chapter 5 | Philippines Countries in Perspective

Security

Introduction

Since becoming independent in 1946, the Philippines has been plagued by political instability, economic mismanagement, and pervasive corruption. The rule of law has suffered due to weak law enforcement and judicial systems. The mostly Catholic nation has battled Muslim separatists and communist guerillas, causing casualties and internal displacement. Much of the violence over the decades is rooted in poverty. Other internal threats include armed private militias and human trafficking.

U.S.-Philippines Relations

After Philippine independence from the United States, the two countries signed the Military Base Agreement (MBA) granting the United States the right to establish bases in the Philippines. U.S. forces used Philippine bases as staging areas during the Vietnam War. Thousands of U.S. military personnel and civilians were stationed in the Philippines. In 1992, the MBA expired, and the Philippine Congress refused to renew it. Although U.S. bases closed, the two countries continued military cooperation on defense issues through a series of agreements.^{1, 2, 3}



*Security Training Command
flickr / U.S. Pacific Fleet*

In the last five years, the United States has allocated USD 300 million in grant funding to provide the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) with equipment, surveillance, reconnaissance, and training, and U.S. personnel continue to advise and assist Philippine security forces.^{4, 5, 6} In June 2017, Pentagon officials confirmed that Special



*NAVAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTER, Philippines
flickr / U.S. Pacific Fleet*

Forces personnel were helping the AFP in the fight against ISIS-linked militants in Marawi City.^{7, 8} President Duterte's intense courting of China and Russia makes some U.S. policymakers question his reliability in the event of a major crisis in Southeast Asia.⁹ In 2016, President Duterte threatened to end military cooperation after the United States criticized his war on drugs. Yet in November 2017, President Duterte hosted President Donald Trump for a warm and cordial meeting.¹⁰

Relations with Neighbors

Vietnam

The Philippines and Vietnam agreed on a strategic partnership in 2015, during the tenure of Benigno Aquino. The two countries have some converging regional interests. They both desire increased economic cooperation with each other and within the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. They also have an interest in countering China's claims to the disputed waters and islands of the South China Sea.¹¹ After the 2016 Philippine elections, the Vietnam-Philippines relationship was thrown off-balance by President Duterte's criticisms of the United States - Vietnam's ally - and his apparent desire for closer ties with China.¹²



Vietnam Warships Visit Philippines Amid South China Sea Dispute
flickr / Times Asi

China

The maritime dispute over the South China Sea has clouded bilateral relations between the Philippines and China for years as several incidents led to periods of high tension.¹³ ¹⁴ In July 2016, an international tribunal in The Hague ruled in favor of the Philippines, invalidating Beijing's claim over the entire South China Sea and the Spratly Islands. Shortly afterward, President Duterte, who pledged to improve ties with China after his election, temporarily set aside the ruling to avoid confrontation.^{15, 16}

In 2017, Philippine-China relations have seen some positive developments. The two countries signed several agreements covering communications, economic and technical cooperation, human resources, and energy; China has become the Philippines' largest trading partner.^{17, 18, 19} Other achievements included increasing bilateral coast guard cooperation, the establishment of a bilateral consultation mechanism on the South China Sea, and positive momentum on ASEAN-China negotiations toward a code of conduct in the South China Sea.²⁰

The two countries plan to strengthen defense cooperation in the fight against extremism, improve intelligence sharing, and conduct joint counterterrorism exercises.

At the conclusion of the crisis in Marawi, China pledged to donate more weapons and military equipment to help the Philippines in the fight against terrorism.^{21, 22, 23}

At a time when most of the international community condemns President Duterte's brutal war on drugs, China is becoming an indispensable ally for the Philippines by contributing billions to infrastructure projects and providing unconditional support for the campaign against illegal drugs.^{24, 25}

Taiwan

An adherent to the One China policy, the Philippines does not recognize Taiwan as an independent country.^{26, 27} But while the policy prevents political and military ties, it does not prevent economic and cultural ones. Taiwan has therefore taken pragmatic steps to boost socioeconomic cooperation with the Philippines and other Southeast and South Asian countries based on mutual interests.^{28, 29} The Philippines is Taiwan's second-largest export partner among ASEAN countries.³⁰ The two countries also share strong traditions of democratic government and a free press.³¹

A brief diplomatic crisis erupted in May 2013 after the Philippine coast guard killed a Taiwanese fisherman in the Luzon Strait, which is claimed by both countries. But the two sides established de-escalation procedures for future incidents and agreed on joint use of the waters.³²



Palau on top
flickr / Charizza Timkang

Palau

The Philippines has had diplomatic relations with Palau since 1997. There are some 5,000 Filipino workers in Palau, making up 20% of the small archipelago's population. The two countries have sought greater economic cooperation, but the Philippines closed its embassy in Palau in 2012 due to budget constraints. Palau maintains its embassy in Manila.^{33, 34}

Brunei

The Philippines enjoys cordial relations with Brunei. Some 23,000 Filipinos live and work in the small, oil-rich, predominately Muslim country. Brunei, which imports most

of its food, is an important customer of the Philippine halal industry. Brunei also takes a keen interest in the resolution of the conflict in Mindanao, and has contributed to international monitoring teams in the area.^{35, 36, 37} The two countries' navies have strong ties.³⁸

Indonesia

The Philippines and Indonesia have strong ties and cooperate on a broad range of issues. The two countries face the threat of violence from Islamic State-inspired terrorism and insurgent groups. Economically, they are working to establish a new shipping route between Davao and General Santos in the Philippines and Bitung in Indonesia.³⁹ Together with Malaysia, they conduct trilateral patrols in the Sulu Sea, which is a major commercial transit point and a base of operations for organized crime and terrorist groups.^{40, 41, 42}

Malaysia

Bilateral relations between the Philippines and Malaysia are defined by the Philippines' claim over the Malaysian state of Sabah, which was part of the Sultanate of Sulu. Filipinos see themselves as the rightful heirs to the Sultanate of Sulu.⁴³ The conflicting claims led to violence in 2013, when armed Filipinos invaded a town in Sabah and clashed with Malaysian security forces. More than 50 people died before the Philippine president intervened to end the conflict.^{44, 45} The Philippines refuses to establish a consulate in Sabah because of its claim, which leaves 800,000 Filipinos who live there as refugees, economic migrants, or undocumented immigrants, subject to abuse and discrimination.^{46, 47}

Despite the Sabah dispute, Malaysia and the Philippines are close partners on economic and security issues. In 2014, Malaysia brokered the Philippines' historic peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).^{48, 49, 50} In June 2017, The governments of the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia initiated a trilateral maritime patrol to combat the threat from local Islamic terror groups. They also agreed to intensify intelligence sharing and strengthen counter-terrorism cooperation.^{51, 52}



*Maritime Special Operations Unit
flickr / JIATF West*

Police

The Philippine National Police (PNP) is the country's civilian national police force. It is responsible for all law enforcement throughout the country, both nationally and locally.⁵³ The PNP became operational in 1991, after the reform and consolidation of the country's diverse and fragmented local and national police units. It falls under a national police commission that answers to the Philippine interior department.⁵⁴

The PNP's organizational structure consists of a directorial staff and various administrative and operational support units. More than 160,000 PNP personnel serve in 1,766 police stations throughout the country. The PNP cooperates with the Philippines' other law enforcement agencies as well as with the Philippine military and INTERPOL.^{55, 56, 57}

Filipinos view the PNP as corrupt and undisciplined; many officers face allegations of torture and bribery. Efforts at reform, such as human rights training and salary increases, have been slow and ineffectual.⁵⁸ Since 2016, the PNP has come under criticism for its role in the thousands of extrajudicial killings caused by the war on drugs waged by President Duterte.⁵⁹

Military

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) consists of the army, navy (including marines), and air force, under the Department of National Defense (DND).^{60, 61} The AFP is responsible for enforcing domestic laws, particularly in remote locales, and has played a prominent role in fighting communist insurgents and Moro separatists.^{62,}

⁶³ There are over 172,000 active military personnel, supplemented by over 325,000 reservists.⁶⁴ Military service is voluntary - there is no conscription - and available to women and men. Applicants must be 17-24 years of age, Philippine citizens, unmarried, and have some college credits.⁶⁵ In 1993, the Philippine Military Academy began accepting female cadets.⁶⁶



*Commander Group Western Pacific speaks with Mr. James Gordem Jr., mayor of Olongapo
flickr / U.S. Pacific Fleet*

The Philippines devotes 1.28% of its GDP to military expenditures, compared to the Southeast Asian average of approximately 2%. The DND is undergoing a multi-phase

military modernization effort begun under former president Benigno Aquino in 2013 and set to conclude in 2028. Under the Duterte administration, military priorities have shifted from external concerns, like the South China Sea, to internal threats like ongoing insurgencies.^{67, 68}

The army possesses 65 light tanks, 461 armored personnel carriers, 242 towed artillery pieces, 39 mortars, and 4 light aircraft.⁶⁹ The navy has 119 total assets, including 4 frigates, 10 corvettes, and 36 patrol craft. The air force has 149 aircraft, including 8 attack aircraft, 74 transport aircraft, 22 trainer aircraft, and 98 helicopters.⁷⁰

Issues Affecting Stability

Armed groups such as Muslim separatists, Islamist terrorist groups, communist rebels, private militias, and criminal gangs have been fighting against the Philippine military for decades in the southern Philippines, where a large part of the population is Muslim. The three main Muslim separatist groups are the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Some smaller separatist groups are viewed by the government as criminal gangs. The New People's Army (NPA), which is the military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), wages the communist insurgency.⁷¹

Moro National Liberation Front

The MNLF was founded in 1971 with the goal of fighting for an independent Moro nation.⁷² The MNLF negotiated a settlement with the government in 1996, ending a decades-long conflict that claimed an estimated 120,000 lives.⁷³ The peace treaty provided limited autonomy to four provinces in Mindanao under the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).⁷⁴ Since the area is only semi-autonomous and the peace negotiations did not address all Moro concerns, low levels of violence continue. Since the settlement, the MNLF has weakened and largely demobilized, but some members splintered off to form the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and Abu Sayyaf.^{75, 76}



*Verification Mission to investigate allegations of landmine use by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front
flickr / Geneva Call*

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

The MILF is the country's largest rebel group, founded in 1981, with the goal of creating an Islamic state in the southern Philippines. Since 1997, the group participated in peace talks with the Philippine government, most of which were brokered by Malaysia. In 2014, the parties reached a framework peace agreement. The Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) provided for substantial political and economic autonomy for the Muslim Moros in portions of Mindanao and Sul, and for the formation of a new, larger autonomous region in Mindanao named Bangsamoro after the Muslims living there.^{77, 78} President Duterte has vowed to push for the implementation of the BBL.⁷⁹

Abu Sayyaf Group

Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), largely composed of Tausug Filipinos, has its roots in the separatist insurgency based in the southern Philippines. In 1991, the group separated from the Moro National Liberation Front. Abu Sayyaf, which means "bearer of the sword," is the most radical and violent jihadist group in the region, known for kidnappings, beheadings, bombings, and assassinations. The group has about 400 members. In 2014, several of its factions declared allegiance to the Islamic State (ISIS). The group has links to Indonesian militant groups such as Mujahidin Indonesia Timur and Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and to jihadist groups in the Middle East, including al-Qaeda. The Philippine government refers to the ASG as criminals and bandits and refuses to hold talks with them.^{80, 81} The group is on the U.S. list of foreign terrorist organizations.^{82, 83} In September 2017, government forces killed ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon and retook the southern city of Marawi after five months of fighting.^{84, 85}

The Maute Group

The Maute Group (MG), based in southern Mindanao, also known as Dawla Islamiyah, is a radical Islamist terrorist group founded by the brothers Omarkhayam and Abdullah Maute, sons of a well-known Marawi family.⁸⁶ The brothers pledged allegiance to ISIS.⁸⁷ In May 2017, the MG tried to seize Marawi City, the Philippines' largest Muslim-majority city, and declare it an Islamic caliphate.⁸⁸ MG was joined by ASG and its leader Isnilon Hapilon. President Duterte declared martial law in Mindanao and appealed to communist rebels to join the fight against the MG and ASG.^{89, 90} After several months of fighting, the military reclaimed Marawi and began rebuilding the city.^{91, 92} The Maute brothers and Hapilon were killed in the fighting.⁹³

New People's Army

Since the communists started their insurgency in the 1960s, about 30,000 people have been killed in armed assaults, assassinations, and executions. The NPA, which is primarily a rural-based guerrilla group, also attacks facilities and infrastructure such as mining sites, plantations, and vehicles. The military claims that the NPA has fewer than 4,000 members, down from a peak of 26,000 in the 1980s.⁹⁴ In 2002, the United States and the European Union placed the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and the NPA on their lists of foreign terrorist organizations.⁹⁵



*Flag of the New People's Army
wikimedia commons.org*

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), which is a coalition that represents the interests of the CPP and the militant NPA, has sought for decades to implement Maoist reforms through negotiations and NPA coercion; it has failed to secure concessions from the government.⁹⁶ A ceasefire between the NPA and the government in 2016 ended after communist rebels killed several soldiers.⁹⁷

War on Drugs

According to a 2012 UN report, the Philippines has the highest rate of methamphetamine hydrochloride (shabu) use in East Asia.^{98, 99} President Duterte made the promise of a brutal war on drugs the centerpiece of his 2016 presidential campaign.^{100, 101} Within 15 months of Duterte's victory, more than 7,000 alleged drug traffickers and drug users had been killed in encounters with police or in so-called vigilante killings.¹⁰² Human rights groups estimated that up to 13,000 were killed, mostly small-time drug dealers and users, and bystanders, including children.^{103, 104, 105} The death of a 17-year-old boy in police custody in August 2017 sparked public protests and demands



*Chinese drug house in Manila
flickr / Hungarian Snow*

for a government investigation.¹⁰⁶ Prominent Catholic leaders and human rights groups called for an end to the killings.^{107, 108}

Shortly afterward, Duterte removed the police from the anti-drugs operations and ordered the Philippines Drug Enforcement Agency to fight the large drug networks and suppliers and halt street-level operations.¹⁰⁹ At the same time, the Philippine Congress voted to cut the budget of the commission that investigates the war on drugs to 1,000 pesos (20 USD) a year.¹¹⁰ In spite of the rampant bloodletting, including the killing of three mayors and the detention of a senator who criticized the war on drugs, public support for Duterte remains strong.^{111, 112}

Human Trafficking

Every year, thousands of Filipinos become victims of modern-day slavery. They are transported, bought, and sold for sexual exploitation, forced labor, and sometimes organ harvesting. In order to address human trafficking, the government enacted the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Law in 2003.¹¹³ The Philippines is one of 38 countries, 7 of which are in Asia, that ratified the UN's Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons.¹¹⁴

According to the PNP, the number of victims of human trafficking has steadily dropped since 2016. However, while more victims have been rescued in police operations, fewer suspects have been arrested, likely because human traffickers are more careful as police intensified operations.¹¹⁵

The Philippines has Tier 1 status in complying with the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA). Tier 1 countries meet the minimum standards of the TVPA for the elimination of human trafficking, the highest compliance level a government can achieve. The Philippines is the only Tier 1 country in Southeast Asia.^{116, 117, 118}

Private Militias

During the 2016 election, the PNP monitored at least 76 private armed groups (PAG) composed of militiamen, police officers, and soldiers.^{119, 120} Over 80% of the PAGs operate in the volatile island of Mindanao. Police surveillance of PAGs usually increases during election season since some of the groups are identified with certain candidates.¹²¹ There were 81 PAGs during the 2013 elections and 107 PAGs in 2010.¹²²

Private militias are armed and given minimal training by the military and are usually placed under the control of local government officials in remote areas where the state is fighting communist or Muslim separatists. In 2009, a private militia at the disposal of the Ampatuan political clan massacred 58 people in southern Mindanao.^{123, 124, 125} After the Maguindanao massacre, President Aquino pledged stricter supervision of state-funded militias but rejected calls to disband them, stating that the government did not have enough money to rely on regular security forces.¹²⁶ In 2017, President Duterte warned governors and mayors accused of involvement in the drug trade and the killings of political opponents that he would use the military to destroy their private armies if necessary.¹²⁷

Outlook



*Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte with U.S. Secretary of State
flickr / State Department photo/ Public Domain*

President Duterte's violent and deadly war on drugs is a primary political risk factor for the Philippines. The effort has played well to Duterte's populist base, but has unnerved investors who are needed to sustain the country's robust economy. As the crackdown continues, Duterte's popularity has begun to decline and he has taken steps to distance himself from his policy. His support from the Philippines' legislature remains strong.^{128, 129}

Another risk factor is the ongoing disaffection of the Moro population in the southern Philippines. The government has made progress in suppressing insurgencies and terrorist groups and reclaiming control over territory, but the underlying reason for the Moros' discontent - a desire for greater autonomy from Manila - has not been resolved. It remains to be seen if President Duterte will continue to support a proposed law that would create a new autonomous region in Mindanao.^{130, 131, 132}

A third political risk for the Philippines is President Duterte's brash and volatile governing style. His casual insults toward other world leaders such as the pope and Barack Obama have dismayed the international community. In pursuit of an "independent" foreign policy, Duterte has cast doubts over the Philippines' long-standing security alliance with the United States and has made friendly overtures to China and Russia, potentially upsetting the balance of power in Southeast Asia.^{133, 134, 135}

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Philippines Countries in Perspective

Chapter 5 | Security

Assessment

1. In accordance with the Military Bases Agreement (MBA) of 1947, the United States has a long-term lease on several military bases in the Philippines.
2. A private militia carried out the Maguindanao massacre.
3. The Philippines and China have competing territorial claims in the South China Sea.
4. The New People's Army signed a peace agreement with the government after the president agreed to release hundreds of political prisoners.
5. Abu Sayyaf is the ruling family of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

Assessment Answers: 1. False; 2. False; 3. True; 4. True; 5. False

6. The Philippine government has shown serious and sustained effort to eliminate human trafficking and prevent the exploitation of Filipino migrant workers.

7. Bangsamoro are the specialized army units that fight Muslim separatists in the southern Philippines.

8. The Philippine National Police works in conjunction with local police departments throughout the country.

9. President Duterte's war on drugs has been a great success.

10. The state of Sabah is a point of contention between the Philippines and Malaysia.

Assessment Answers: 6. True; 7. True; 8. False; 9. False; 10. True

Further Readings and Resources

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Facts and Figures

Area

Slightly larger than Arizona

Total: 300,000 sq km (115,830 sq mi)

Land: 298,170 sq km (115,124 sq mi)

Water: 1,830 sq km (706.5 sq mi)

Coastline: 36,289 km (22,549 mi)

Terrain: mostly mountains with narrow to extensive coastal lowlands

Maritime claims

Territorial sea: irregular polygon extending up to 100 nm from coastline as defined by 1898 treaty; since the late 1970s, the Philippines has also claimed a polygonal-shaped area in the South China Sea as wide as 285 nm

Continental shelf: to depth of exploitation

Exclusive economic zone: 200 nm (ca. 230 miles/ 370 km)

Natural resources

Timber, petroleum, nickel, cobalt, silver, gold, salt, copper

Natural hazards

Usually affected by 15 and struck by five to six typhoons each year; landslides; active volcanoes; destructive earthquakes; tsunamis

Population

104,256,076 (July 2017 est.)

Age structure

0-14 years: 33.39% (male 17,764,826/female 17,050,168)

15-24 years: 19.16% (male 10,199,389/female 9,780,025)

25-54 years: 36.99% (male 19,597,675/female 18,964,900)

55-64 years: 5.97% (male 2,844,739/female 3,375,139)

65 years and over: 4.49% (male 1,930,273/female 2,748,942) (2017 est.)

Life expectancy at birth

Total population: 69.4 years

Male: 65.9 years

Female: 73.1 years (2017 est.)

Birth rate

23.7 births/1,000 population (2017 est.)

Population growth rate

1.57% (2017 est.)

Literacy

Definition: age 15 and over can read and write

Total population: 96.3%

Male: 95.8%

Female: 96.8% (2015 est.)

Ethnic groups

Tagalog 28.1%, Cebuano 13.1%, Ilocano 9%, Bisaya/Binisaya 7.6%, Hiligaynon Ilonggo 7.5%, Bikol 6%, Waray 3.4%, other 25.3% (2000 census)

Religions

Catholic 82.9% (Roman Catholic 80.9%, Aglipayan 2%), Muslim 5%, Evangelical 2.8%, Iglesia ni Kristo 2.3%, other Christian 4.5%, other 1.8%, unspecified 0.6%, none 0.1% (2000 census)

Languages

Official: Filipino (based on Tagalog) and English

Eight major dialects: Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pangasinan, and Pangasinan

Major infectious diseases

Degree of risk: high

Food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

Vector-borne diseases: dengue fever and malaria

Water contact disease: leptospirosis (2016)

Country name

conventional long form: Republic of the Philippines

conventional short form: Philippines

local long form: Republika ng Pilipinas

local short form: Pilipinas

Government type

Presidential republic

Capital

Manila

Administrative divisions

80 provinces and 120 chartered cities

Provinces: Abra, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Aklan, Albay, Antique, Apayao, Aurora, Basilan, Bataan, Batanes, Batangas, Biliran, Benguet, Bohol, Bukidnon, Bulacan, Cagayan, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Camiguin, Capiz, Catanduanes, Cavite, Cebu, Compostela, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Dinagat Islands, Eastern Samar, Guimaras, Ifugao, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Iloilo, Isabela, Kalinga, Laguna, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, La Union, Leyte, Maguindanao, Marinduque, Masbate, Mindoro Occidental, Mindoro Oriental, Misamis Oc-

cidental, Misamis Oriental, Mountain Province, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, North Cotabato, Northern Samar, Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Palawan, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Quezon, Quirino, Rizal, Romblon, Samar, Sarangani, Siquijor, Sorsogon, South Cotabato, Southern Leyte, Sultan Kudarat, Sulu, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Tarlac, Tawi-Tawi, Zambales, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay

Chartered cities: Alaminos, Angeles, Antipolo, Bacolod, Bago, Baguio, Bais, Balanga, Batac, Batangas, Bayawan, Bislig, Butuan, Cabadbaran, Cabanatuan, Cadiz, Cagayan de Oro, Calamba, Calapan, Calbayog, Candon, Canlaon, Cauayan, Cavite, Cebu, Cotabato, Dagupan, Danao, Dapitan, Davao, Digos, Dipolog, Dumaguete, Escalante, Gapan, General Santos, Gingoog, Himaayan, Iligan, Iloilo, Isabela, Iriga, Kabankalan, Kalookan, Kidapawan, Koronadal, La Carlota, Laoag, Lapu-Lapu, Las Pinas, Legazpi, Ligao, Lipa, Lucena, Maasin, Makati, Malabon, Malaybalay, Malolos, Mandaluyong, Mandaue, Manila, Marawi, Marikina, Masbate, Mati, Meycauayan, Muntinlupa, Munoz, Naga, Navotas, Olongapo, Ormoc, Oroquieta, Ozamis, Pagadian, Palayan, Panabo, Paranaque, Pasay, Pasig, Passi, Puerto Princesa, Quezon, Roxas, Sagay, Samal, San Carlos (in Negros Occidental), San Carlos (in Pangasinan), San Fernando (in La Union), San Fernando (in Pampanga), San Jose, San Jose del Monte, San Juan, San Pablo, Santa Rosa, Santiago, Silay, Sipalay, Sorsogon, Surigao, Tabaco, Tacloban, Tacurong, Tagaytay, Tagbilaran, Taguig, Tagum, Talisay (in Cebu), Talisay (in Negros Occidental), Tanauan, Tangub, Tanjay, Tarlac, Toledo, Tuguegarao, Trece Martires, Urdaneta, Valencia, Valenzuela, Victorias, Vigan, Zamboanga (2009)

Independence Day

12 June 1898 (independence proclaimed from Spain); 4 July 1946 (independence proclaimed from the U.S.)

National holiday

Independence Day (from Spain), 12 June (1898)

Note: 12 June 1898 is the date of independence from Spain; 4 July 1946 is the date of independence from the U.S.

Legal system

Mixed legal system of civil, common, Islamic, and customary law

Suffrage

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch

Chief of State: President Rodrigo Duterte (since 30 June 2016); Vice President Leni Robredo (since 30 June 2016)

Note: the president is both chief of state and head of government

Cabinet: cabinet appointed by the president with the consent of the Commission of Appointments, an independent body of 25 Congressional members including the Senate president (ex officio chairman), appointed by the president

Elections: president and vice president directly elected on separate ballots by simple majority popular vote for a single 6-year term; election last held on 9 May 2016 (next to be held in May 2022)

Legislative branch

Description: bicameral Congress or Kongreso consists of the Senate or Senado (24 seats; members directly elected in multi-seat constituencies by majority vote; members serve 6-year terms with one-half of the membership renewed every 3 years) and the House of Representatives or Kapulungan Ng Mga Kinatawan (297 seats; 238 members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by simple majority vote and 59 representing minorities directly elected by party-list proportional representation vote; members serve 3-year terms)

Elections: Senate – elections last held on 9 May 2016 (next to be held in May 2019); House of Representatives - elections last held on 9 May 2016 (next to be held in May 2019)

Election results: Senate – percent of vote by party – LP 31.3%, NPC 10.1%, UNA 7.6%, Akbayan 5.0%, other 30.9%, independent 15.1%; seats by party – LP 6, NPC 3, UNA 4, Akbayan 1, other 10; House of Representatives – percent of vote by party – LP 41.7%, NPC 17.0%, UNA 6.6%, NUP 9.7%, NP 9.4%, independent 6.0%, others 10.1%; seats by party - LP 115, NPC 42, NUP 23, NP 24, UNA 11, other 19, independent 4, party-list 59

Judicial branch

Highest court(s): Supreme Court (consists of a chief justice and 14 associate justices)

Judge selection and term of office: justices are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Judicial and Bar Council, a constitutionally created, 6-member body that recommends Supreme Court nominees; justices serve until age 70

Subordinate courts: Court of Appeals; Sandiganbayan (special court for corruption cases of government officials); Court of Tax Appeals; regional, metropolitan, and municipal trial courts; sharia courts

Political parties and leaders:

Akbayon [Machris CABREROS]

Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (Struggle of Filipino Democrats) or LDP [Edgardo ANGARA]

Lakas ng EDSA-Christian Muslim Democrats or Lakas-CMD [Ferdinand Martin ROMUALDEZ]

Liberal Party or LP [Francis PANGILINAN]

Nacionalista Party or NP [Manuel “Manny” VILLAR]

Nationalist People’s Coalition or NPC [Eduardo COJUNCO, Jr.]

National Unity Party or NUP [Albert GARCIA]

PDP-Laban [Aquilino PIMENTEL III]

People’s Reform Party or PRP [Narcisco SANTIAGO]

Pwersa ng Masang Pilipino (Force of the Philippine Masses) or PMP [Joseph ESTRADA]

United Nationalist Alliance or UNA

International organization participation (partial list):

Asian Development Bank, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, APT, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), BIS, , Colombo Plan (CP), East Asia Summit (EAS), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Group of 24 (G-24), Group of 77 (G-77), International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Criminal Court (ICC), ICCt (signatory), International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRM), International Development Association (IDA), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), International Finance Cooperation (IFC), International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCS), International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), International Labor Organization (ILO), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Maritime Organization (IMO), International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), International Olympic Committee (IOC), International Organization for Migration (IOM), Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), International Organization for Standardization (ISO), International Telecommunications Satellite Organization (ITSO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Multilateral Investment Geographic Agency (MIGA), United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), Nonaligned Movement (NAM), Organization of American States (OAS) (observer), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) (partner), United Nations (UN), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Union Latina, United Nations Mission in the Liberia (UNMIL), United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), United Nations

Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Universal Postal Union (UPU), World Customs Organization (WCO), World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), World Health Organization (WHO), World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Trade Organization (WTO)

GDP - composition by sector

Agriculture: 9.7%

Industry: 30.8%

Services: 59.5% (2016 est.)

Labor force

43.2 million (2016 est.)

Labor force - by occupation:

Agriculture: 26.9%

Industry: 17.5%

Services: 55.6% (2016 est.)

Unemployment rate

5.5% (2016 est.)

Population below poverty line

21.6% (2015 est.)

Industries

Semiconductors and electronics assembly, food and beverage manufacturing, construction, electric/gas/water supply, chemical products, radio/television/communications equipment and apparatus, petroleum and fuel, textile and garments, non-metallic minerals, basic metal industries, transport equipment

Agriculture products

Rice, fish, livestock, poultry, bananas, coconut/copra, corn, sugarcane, mangoes, pineapple, cassava

Exports – commodities

Semiconductors and electronic products, machinery and transport equipment, wood manufactures, chemicals, processed food and beverages, garments, coconut oil, copper concentrates, seafood, bananas/fruits

Exports - partners

Japan 20.8%, US 15.5%, Hong Kong 11.7%, China 11%, Singapore 6.6%, Germany 4.1% (2016)

Imports – commodities

Electronic products, mineral fuels, machinery and transport equipment, iron and steel, textile fabrics, grains, chemicals, plastic

Imports – partners:

China 17.3%, Japan 11.1%, US 8.4%, Thailand 7.3%, South Korea 6.1%, Singapore 6.1%, Indonesia 5.1% (2016)

Currency

Philippine peso (PHP)

Exchange rates: Philippine pesos (PHP) per US dollar – 47.493 (2016 est.), 47.493 (2015 est.), 45.503 (2014 est.), 44.395 (2013 est.), 42.23 (2012 est.)

Telecommunications

Telephones – main lines in use: 3.83 million

Telephones – mobile/cellular: 113 million (2016 est.)

Internet access

Internet country code: .ph

Users: 56.95 million (2016 est.)

Airports

247 (2013)

Airports – with paved runways: 89 (2017)

Airports – with unpaved runways: 158 (2013)

Heliports: 2 (2013)

Railways

995 km (618 mi)

Military

Branches: Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP): Army, Navy (includes Marine Corps), Air Force (2013)

Military service age and obligation: 17-23 years of age (officers 20-24) for voluntary military service; no conscription; applicants must be single male or female Philippine citizens with either 72 college credit hours (enlisted) or a baccalaureate degree (officers) (2013)