

Country Profile

Country Name: Lao PDR

Capital: Vientiane

Political System	
Head of State	(President) Lieutenant General CHOUMMALI Saignason
Political System	Single-party socialist republic/ Communist state
Current Ruling Party/Parties	Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP)
Other Political Parties	Other political parties proscribed
Military and Defence	
Alliances	ASEAN, US-Laos, Sino-Laos, Laos and Thailand
Disputes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laos' dam construction Laos Mekong River dam construction has drawn wide controversy amongst environmentalists and opposition from countries downstream such as Cambodia and Vietnam. The Mekong river is an vital source. for arable land and for families living along the Mekong River. 2. Complete demarcation with Thailand http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/news/kyodo-news-international/130815/thailand-laos-set-complete-border-demarcation-2017
Wars	World War II, Indochina War
Civil Unrest	Civil war in 1638, French Occupation prior and after WWII, Hmong revolution against the regime, Civil war in 1954, Lao Citizens Movement for Democracy (LCMD)

Economy	
Economic Strength/ Ranking	112 out of 192 (2013)
GNI per capita	US\$1,460 (2013) http://data.worldbank.org/country/lao-pdr
Main Trading Partners	1. Exports: Thailand (34%), China (21.5%) and Vietnam (12.2%) (est. 2012) 2. Imports: Thailand (61.2%), China (16.2%) and Vietnam (7.3%) (est. 2012)
Main Sources of Income	1. Agricultural (24.8%) 2. Industry (32%) 3. Services (37.5%) (Est. 2013)
Cultural, Religious and Social Practices	
Population	6,803,699 (estimated as of July 2014)
Demographics	1. Ethnicity: Lao, Khmou, Hmong, Others 2. Median Age: 22 years old 3. Literacy rate: 72.7% (estimated in 2005)
Official Languages	Lao
Major Religions	Buddhist (67%), Christian(1.5%), Others (31.5%) (census as at 2005)
Major Social Problems	1. Methamphetamin/ poppy production Together with Myanmar, Laos has produced a 893 metric tons in 2013, a 22% leap from 2012, of opium. Also, according to a survey, poppy consumption in higher in poppy-growing villages located in the northern provinces of Laos. This affects the standard of living of the villagers since they might be plagued by their addiction and cannot break out of poverty. http://www.rfa.org/english/news/myanmar/opium-12192013160950.html

Geographical Features	
Location	South-eastern part of Asia; north-east of Thailand, west of Vietnam (180°N, 105°E)
Neighbours	Thailand, Vietnam; above Cambodia, below China and Burma
Water Security	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Irrigated land: 3,100 sq km (estimated in 2005) 2. Renewable water resources: 333.5 cubic km (estimated in 2011)
Environmental Concerns	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unexplored ordnance http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/2010/04/140688.htm 2. Deforestation and soil erosion http://chrislang.org/2001/01/03/deforestation-in-vietnam-laos-and-cambodia/ 3. Lack of access to potable water
National Resources	Timber, hydropower, gypsum, tin, gold and gemstones

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