

The Republic of Yemen

MAL FACT SHEET



SUMMARY

The Republic of Yemen is located on the Arabian Peninsula bordering Saudi Arabia to the north and Oman to the east with the Red Sea on the west coast and the Gulf of Aden on the southern coast.

Chief of State: Presidential Leadership Council Rashad Muhammad al-ALIMI, Dr. (Claimed by Mahdi al-Mashat)

Capital: Sanaa

Other notable cities: Aden, Ta'izz

Gov Type: In Transition (officially unitary semi-presidential republic)

Population: 42.14 million

History: The Kingdom of Yemen (North Yemen) became independent after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1918. North Yemen became the Yemen Arab Republic in 1962. The British controlled the port of Aden and Southern Yemen starting in 1839. The British withdrew in 1967 creating the independent People's Republic of Southern Yemen. The two countries were officially unified as the Republic of Yemen in 1990.

GEOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The Republic of Yemen is about 527,968 square kilometers in total area and has zero square kilometers of water but has 1,906 kilometers of coastline.

The climate is mostly desert. It is humid and hot on the west coast and temperate in the western mountains which sees seasonal monsoons. The east is extremely hot and dry and consists of only desert.

The Sarawat Mountains are located in the west stretching from Saudi Arabia almost all the way down to the coast in some places. The Rub' al-Khali, nicknamed the "Empty Quarter," is the fifth largest desert in the world and encompasses the central and eastern region of Yemen.

Natural resources include petroleum, fish, rock salt, marble and small deposits of coal, gold, lead, nickel, and copper. There is also fertile soil in the west.

MODEL ARAB LEAGUE

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

DEMOGRAPHICS

Noun: Yemeni(s)

Adjective: Yemeni

Ethnic Groups: Predominantly Arab; Minorities include: Afro-Arab, South Asian, and European

Languages: Arabic (Official), Socotri language is used on Socotra Island and Archipelago; Mahri is widely spoken in eastern Yemen

Religion: 99.1% Muslim (Official; 65% Sunni, 35% Shia); 0.9% other (Jewish, Baha'i, Hindu, and Christian) (2020 est.)

Literacy: 70.1% (Male 85.1%, Female 55%)

Population growth is at 1.78%.

ECONOMY AND GDP

Yemen's economy is described as low-income on the Arabian Peninsula. The civil war has devastated Yemen's infrastructure, trade, and economic institutions. Yemen is dependent on depleting oil and gas reserves. The country has large levels of poverty, food insecurity, and unemployment coupled with high inflation.

(Note: due to the war, there has been limited collection of new data)

Real GDP (Purchasing Power Parity): \$30.93 billion (2026)

Real GDP Growth Rate: 0.5% (2026)

Real GDP Per Capita (PPP): \$1,600 (2026)

GDP (Official Exchange Rate): \$7.4 billion (2026)

Inflation Rate (Consumer Prices): 26.5% (2026)

GDP - Composition: agriculture: 20.3% (2017), industry: 11.8% (2017), services: 67.9% (2017)

Unemployment Rate: 17.32% (2025)

Youth Unemployment: 33 (2026)

MAIN POLITICAL CONTENTIONS

Yemen has been in a state of civil war since 2014 when Houthi rebels, aligned with those loyal to former President. They seized control of the capital, Sana'a, and other parts of the country. This conflict escalated into a broader regional proxy war, with the Houthis supported by Iran and a Saudi-led coalition backing the internationally recognized government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi.

A third secessionist faction, the UAE backed Southern Transitional Council, took control of much of southern Yemen – including Aden – in 2025, but subsequently lost control to the PLC. The west is currently controlled by Houthi forces, who are currently based out of Sanaa.

Yemen's conflict has drawn in regional and international actors, complicating efforts to find a peaceful resolution. Regionally the three factions are supported by UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Iran respectively. To further complicate negotiations, western powers have become increasingly involved in the region following Houthi attacks on international shipping in the Red Sea and the Gulf Aden. Specifically, the United States launched Operation Rough Riders in March of 2025 aimed at killing Houthi leaders and destroying key Houthi targets. A ceasefire was signed but amongst distractions in other parts of the region, Houthis have resumed their attempts to disrupt international shipping.

Yemen: A Timeline



