

THE WORLD FACTBOOK



China



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In general, information available as of 1 January, 2004 was used in the preparation of The World Factbook 2004.

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Introduction**China**[Top of Page](#)**Background:**

For centuries China stood as a leading civilization, outpacing the rest of the world in the arts and sciences. But in the 19th and early 20th centuries, China was beset by civil unrest, major famines, military defeats, and foreign occupation. After World War II, the Communists under MAO Zedong established a dictatorship that, while ensuring China's sovereignty, imposed strict controls over everyday life and cost the lives of tens of millions of people. After 1978, his successor DENG Xiaoping gradually introduced market-oriented reforms and decentralized economic decision making. Output quadrupled by 2000. Political controls remain tight while economic controls continue to be relaxed.

Geography**China**[Top of Page](#)**Location:**

Eastern Asia, bordering the East China Sea, Korea Bay, Yellow Sea, and South China Sea, between North Korea and Vietnam

Geographic coordinates:

35 00 N, 105 00 E

Map references:

[Asia](#)

Area:

total: 9,596,960 sq km

land: 9,326,410 sq km

water: 270,550 sq km

Area - comparative:

slightly smaller than the US

Land boundaries:

total: 22,117 km

border countries: Afghanistan 76 km, Bhutan 470 km, Burma 2,185 km, India 3,380 km, Kazakhstan 1,533 km, North Korea 1,416 km, Kyrgyzstan 858 km, Laos 423 km, Mongolia 4,677 km, Nepal 1,236 km, Pakistan 523 km, Russia (northeast) 3,605 km, Russia (northwest) 40 km, Tajikistan 414 km, Vietnam 1,281 km

Coastline:

14,500 km

Maritime claims - as described in UNCLOS 1982 (see Notes and Definitions):

territorial sea: 12 NM

continental shelf: 200 NM or to the edge of the continental margin

contiguous zone: 24 NM

exclusive economic zone: 200 NM

Climate:  

extremely diverse; tropical in south to subarctic in north

Terrain:  

mostly mountains, high plateaus, deserts in west; plains, deltas, and hills in east


Elevation extremes:  

lowest point: Turpan Pendi -154 m

highest point: Mount Everest 8,850 m

Natural resources:  

coal, iron ore, petroleum, natural gas, mercury, tin, tungsten, antimony, manganese, molybdenum, vanadium, magnetite, aluminum, lead, zinc, uranium, hydropower potential (world's largest)

Land use:  

arable land: 13.31%

permanent crops: 1.2%

other: 85.49% (1998 est.)

Irrigated land:  


525,800 sq km (1998 est.)

Natural hazards:  

frequent typhoons (about five per year along southern and eastern coasts); damaging floods; tsunamis; earthquakes; droughts; land subsidence



Environment - current issues:  

air pollution (greenhouse gases, sulfur dioxide particulates) from reliance on coal produces acid rain; water shortages, particularly in the north; water pollution from untreated wastes; deforestation; estimated loss of one-fifth of agricultural land since 1949 to soil erosion and economic development; desertification; trade in endangered species

Environment - international agreements:  

party to: Antarctic-Environmental Protocol, Antarctic Treaty, Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Marine Dumping, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Tropical Timber 83, Tropical Timber 94, Wetlands, Whaling

signed, but not ratified: none of the selected agreements

Geography - note:  

world's fourth largest country (after Russia, Canada, and US); Mount Everest on the border with Nepal is the world's tallest peak;

People**China**[Top of Page](#)**Population:**   

1,298,847,624 (July 2004 est.)

Age structure:  

0-14 years: 22.3% (male 153,401,051; female 135,812,993)
15-64 years: 70.3% (male 469,328,664; female 443,248,860)
65 years and over: 7.5% (male 46,308,923; female 50,747,133) (2004 est.)

Median age:  

total: 31.8 years
male: 31.5 years
female: 32.2 years (2004 est.)

Population growth rate:  

0.57% (2004 est.)

Birth rate:   


12.98 births/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Death rate:   

6.92 deaths/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Net migration rate:  

-0.4 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2004 est.)

Sex ratio:  

at birth: 1.12 male(s)/female
under 15 years: 1.13 male(s)/female
15-64 years: 1.06 male(s)/female
65 years and over: 0.91 male(s)/female
total population: 1.06 male(s)/female (2004 est.)

Infant mortality rate:   




total: 25.28 deaths/1,000 live births
female: 29.14 deaths/1,000 live births (2004 est.)
male: 21.84 deaths/1,000 live births

Life expectancy at birth:   

total population: 71.96 years
male: 70.4 years
female: 73.72 years (2004 est.)

Total fertility rate:   

1.69 children born/woman (2004 est.)

HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate:   

less than 0.1% (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS:   

850,000 (2001 est.)

HIV/AIDS - deaths:   

30,000 (2001 est.)

Nationality:  

noun: Chinese (singular and plural)

adjective: Chinese

Ethnic groups:  

Han Chinese 91.9%, Zhuang, Uygur, Hui, Yi, Tibetan, Miao, Manchu, Mongol, Buyi, Korean, and other nationalities 8.1%



Religions:  

Daoist (Taoist), Buddhist, Muslim 1%-2%, Christian 3%-4%

note: officially atheist (2002 est.)

Languages:  

Standard Chinese or Mandarin (Putonghua, based on the Beijing dialect), Yue (Cantonese), Wu (Shanghaiese), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan, Hakka dialects, minority languages (see Ethnic groups entry)

Literacy:  

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 86%

male: 92.9%

female: 78.8% (2003 est.)

Government**China**[Top of Page](#)**Country name:**  



conventional long form: People's Republic of China

conventional short form: China

local short form: Zhong Guo

abbreviation: PRC

local long form: Zhonghua Renmin Gongheguo

Government type:  

Communist state

Capital:  

Beijing

Administrative divisions:  

23 provinces (sheng, singular and plural), 5 autonomous regions* (zizhiqu, singular and plural), and 4 municipalities** (shi, singular and plural); Anhui, Beijing**, Chongqing**, Fujian, Gansu, Guangdong, Guangxi*, Guizhou, Hainan, Hebei, Heilongjiang, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, Jiangsu, Jiangxi, Jilin, Liaoning, Nei Mongol*, Ningxia*, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Shandong, Shanghai**, Shanxi, Sichuan, Tianjin**, Xinjiang*, Xizang* (Tibet), Yunnan, Zhejiang; note - China considers Taiwan its 23rd province; see separate entries for the special administrative regions of Hong Kong and Macau

Independence:  

221 BC (unification under the Qin or Ch'in Dynasty 221 BC; Qing or Ch'ing Dynasty replaced by the Republic on 12 February 1912; People's Republic established 1 October 1949)

National holiday:  

Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China, 1 October (1949)

Constitution:  

most recent promulgation 4 December 1982

Legal system:  

a complex amalgam of custom and statute, largely criminal law; rudimentary civil code in effect since 1 January 1987; new legal codes in effect since 1 January 1980; continuing efforts are being made to improve civil, administrative, criminal, and commercial law

Suffrage:  

18 years of age; universal

Executive branch:  

chief of state: President HU Jintao (since 15 March 2003) and Vice President ZENG Qinghong (since 15 March 2003)

elections: president and vice president elected by the National People's Congress for five-year terms; elections last held 15-17 March 2003 (next to be held mid-March 2008); premier nominated by the president, confirmed by the National People's Congress

head of government: Premier WEN Jiabao (since 16 March 2003); Vice Premiers HUANG Ju (since 17 March 2003), WU Yi (17 March 2003), ZENG Peiyan (since 17 March 2003), and HUI Liangyu (since 17 March 2003)

cabinet: State Council appointed by the National People's Congress (NPC)

election results: HU Jintao elected president by the Tenth National People's Congress with a total of 2,937 votes (4 delegates voted against him, 4 abstained, and 38 did not vote); ZENG Qinghong elected vice president by the Tenth National People's Congress with a total of 2,578 votes (177 delegates voted against him, 190 abstained, and 38 did not vote); 2 seats were vacant

Legislative branch:  

unicameral National People's Congress or Quanguo Renmin Daibiao Dahui (2,985 seats; members elected by municipal, regional, and provincial people's congresses to serve five-year terms)

elections: last held December 2002-February 2003 (next to be held late 2007-February 2008)

election results: percent of vote - NA%; seats - NA

Judicial branch:  

Supreme People's Court (judges appointed by the National People's Congress); Local Peoples Courts (comprise higher, intermediate and local courts); Special Peoples Courts (primarily military, maritime, and railway transport courts)

Political parties and leaders:  

Chinese Communist Party or CCP [HU Jintao, General Secretary of the Central Committee]; eight registered small parties controlled by CCP

Political pressure groups and leaders:  

no substantial political opposition groups exist, although the government has identified the Falungong spiritual movement and the China Democracy Party as subversive groups

International organization participation:

AfDB, APEC, ARF, AsDB, ASEAN (dialogue partner), BIS, CDB, FAO, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICRM, IDA, IFAD, IFC, IFRCS, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, Interpol, IOC, IOM (observer), ISO, ITU, LAIA (observer), MINURSO, MONUC, NAM (observer), OPCW, PCA, SCO, UN, UN Security Council, UNAMSIL, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNITAR, UNMEE, UNMIL, UNMOVIC, UNTSO, UPU, WCO, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WToO, WTrO, ZC

Diplomatic representation in the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador YANG Jiechi
consulate(s) general: Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York, and San Francisco
FAX: [1] (202) 328-2582
telephone: [1] (202) 328-2500
chancery: 2300 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20008

Diplomatic representation from the US:

chief of mission: Ambassador Clark T. RANDT, Jr.
embassy: Xiu Shui Bei Jie 3, 100600 Beijing
mailing address: PSC 461, Box 50, FPO AP 96521-0002
telephone: [86] (10) 6532-3831
FAX: [86] (10) 6532-6929
consulate(s) general: Chengdu, Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Shenyang

Flag description:

red with a large yellow five-pointed star and four smaller yellow five-pointed stars (arranged in a vertical arc toward the middle of the flag) in the upper hoist-side corner

Economy**China**[Top of Page](#)**Economy - overview:**

In late 1978 the Chinese leadership began moving the economy from a sluggish, inefficient, Soviet-style centrally planned economy to a more market-oriented system. Whereas the system operates within a political framework of strict Communist control, the economic influence of non-state organizations and individual citizens has been steadily increasing. The authorities switched to a system of household and village responsibility in agriculture in place of the old collectivization, increased the authority of local officials and plant managers in industry, permitted a wide variety of small-scale enterprises in services and light manufacturing, and opened the economy to increased foreign trade and investment. The result has been a quadrupling of GDP since 1978. Measured on a purchasing power parity (PPP) basis, China in 2003 stood as the second-largest economy in the world after the US, although in per capita terms the country is still poor. Agriculture and industry have posted major gains especially in coastal areas near Hong Kong, opposite Taiwan, and in Shanghai, where foreign investment has helped spur output of both domestic and export goods. The leadership, however, often has experienced - as a result of its hybrid system - the worst results of socialism (bureaucracy and lassitude) and of capitalism (growing income disparities and rising unemployment). China thus has periodically backtracked, retightening central controls at intervals. The government has struggled to (a) sustain adequate jobs growth for tens of millions of workers laid off from state-owned enterprises, migrants, and new entrants to the work force; (b) reduce corruption and other economic crimes; and (c) keep afloat the large state-owned enterprises, many of which had been shielded from competition by subsidies and had been losing the ability to pay full wages and pensions.

From 80 to 120 million surplus rural workers are adrift between the villages and the cities, many subsisting through part-time, low-paying jobs. Popular resistance, changes in central policy, and loss of authority by rural cadres have weakened China's population control program, which is essential to maintaining long-term growth in living standards. Another long-term threat to growth is the deterioration in the environment, notably air pollution, soil erosion, and the steady fall of the water table especially in the north. China continues to lose arable land because of erosion and economic development. Beijing says it will intensify efforts to stimulate growth through spending on infrastructure - such as water supply and power grids - and poverty relief and through rural tax reform. Accession to the World Trade Organization helps strengthen its ability to maintain strong growth rates but at the same time puts additional pressure on the hybrid system of strong political controls and growing market influences. China has benefited from a huge expansion in computer internet use. Foreign investment remains a strong element in China's remarkable economic growth. Growing shortages of electric power and raw materials will hold back the expansion of industrial output in 2004.

GDP:   

purchasing power parity - \$6.449 trillion (2003 est.)

GDP - real growth rate:   

9.1% (official data) (2003 est.)

GDP - per capita:   

purchasing power parity - \$5,000 (2003 est.)

GDP - composition by sector:  

agriculture: 14.5%

industry and construction: 51.7%

services: 33.8% (2002)



Population below poverty line:  

10% (2001 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:  

lowest 10%: 2.4%




highest 10%: 30.4% (1998)

Distribution of family income - Gini index:  

40 (2001)

Inflation rate (consumer prices):   




1.2% (2003 est.)

Labor force:   

753.6 million (2002 est.)

Labor force - by occupation:  

agriculture 50%, industry 22%, services 28% (2001 est.)

Unemployment rate:   

urban unemployment roughly 10%; substantial unemployment and underemployment in rural areas (2003 est.)




Budget:  

revenues: \$228.4 billion




expenditures: \$267.1 billion, including capital expenditures of \$NA (2002 est.)

Industries:  

iron and steel, coal, machine building, armaments, textiles and apparel, petroleum, cement, chemical fertilizers, footwear, toys, food processing, automobiles, consumer electronics, telecommunications

Industrial production growth rate:   

16.2% (2003 est.)

Electricity - production:   

1.42 trillion kWh (2001)




Electricity - production by source:  

fossil fuel: 80.2%

hydro: 18.5%

other: 0.1% (2001)

nuclear: 1.2%

Electricity - consumption:   

1.312 trillion kWh (2001)

Electricity - exports:  

10.3 billion kWh (2001)

Electricity - imports:  

1.8 billion kWh (2001)

Oil - production:   

3.3 million bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - consumption:   




4.57 million bbl/day (2001 est.)

Oil - exports:   




409 million bbl/day (2001)

Oil - imports:   

1.82 billion bbl/day (2001)




Oil - proved reserves:   




26.75 billion bbl (1 January 2002)

Natural gas - production:   



30.3 billion cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - consumption:   
27.4 billion cu m (2001 est.)



Natural gas - exports:   
0 cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - imports:   
0 cu m (2001 est.)

Natural gas - proved reserves:   
1.29 trillion cu m (1 January 2002)



Agriculture - products:  
rice, wheat, potatoes, sorghum, peanuts, tea, millet, barley, cotton, oilseed, pork, fish



Exports:   
\$436.1 billion f.o.b. (2003 est.)




Exports - commodities:  
machinery and equipment, textiles and clothing, footwear, toys and sporting goods, mineral fuels



Exports - partners:  
US 21.5%, Hong Kong 18%, Japan 14.9%, South Korea 4.8% (2002)



Imports:   
\$397.4 billion f.o.b. (2003 est.)



Imports - commodities:  
machinery and equipment, mineral fuels, plastics, iron and steel, chemicals



Imports - partners:  
Japan 18.1%, Taiwan 12.8%, South Korea 9.7%, US 9.2%, Germany 5.6% (2002)

Debt - external:   
\$184 billion (2003 est.)

Economic aid - recipient:  
NA

Currency:  
yuan (CNY)
note:: also referred to as the Renminbi (RMB)

Currency code:  
CNY

Exchange rates:  
yuan per US dollar - 8.28 (2003), 8.28 (2002), 8.28 (2001), 8.28 (2000), 8.28 (1999)

Fiscal year:  

calendar year

Communications **China**[Top of Page](#)**Telephones - main lines in use:**   

214.42 million (2002)

Telephones - mobile cellular:   

206.62 million (2002)

Telephone system:  

general assessment: domestic and international services are increasingly available for private use; unevenly distributed domestic system serves principal cities, industrial centers, and many towns

domestic: interprovincial fiber-optic trunk lines and cellular telephone systems have been installed; a domestic satellite system with 55 earth stations is in place

international: country code - 86; satellite earth stations - 5 Intelsat (4 Pacific Ocean and 1 Indian Ocean), 1 Intersputnik (Indian Ocean region) and 1 Inmarsat (Pacific and Indian Ocean regions); several international fiber-optic links to Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, Russia, and Germany (2000)

Radio broadcast stations:  

AM 369, FM 259, shortwave 45 (1998)

Television broadcast stations:  

3,240 (of which 209 are operated by China Central Television, 31 are provincial TV stations and nearly 3,000 are local city stations) (1997)

Internet country code:  

.cn

Internet hosts:   

156,531 (2002)

Internet users:   

59.1 million (2002)

Transportation **China**[Top of Page](#)**Railways:**   *total:* 70,058 km*standard gauge:* 68,000 km 1.435-m gauge (18,668 km electrified)*narrow gauge:* 3,600 km 1.000-m and 0.750-m gauge local industrial lines*dual gauge:* 22,640 km (not included in total) (2003)**Highways:**   *total:* 1,402,698 km*paved:* 314,204 km (with at least 16,314 km of expressways)*unpaved:* 1,088,494 km (2000)

Waterways:  

110,000 km (1999)

Pipelines:  

gas 13,845 km; oil 15,143 km; refined products 3,280 km (2003)

Ports and harbors:  

Dalian, Fuzhou, Guangzhou, Haikou, Huangpu, Lianyungang, Nanjing, Nantong, Ningbo, Qingdao, Qinhuangdao, Shanghai, Shantou, Shenzhen, Tianjin, Wenzhou, Xiamen, Xingang, Yantai, Zhanjiang (2001)

Merchant marine:  

total: 1,850 ships (1,000 GRT or over) 18,724,653 GRT/27,749,784 DWT

by type: barge carrier 2, bulk 355, cargo 822, chemical tanker 28, combination bulk 10, combination ore/oil 2, container 165, liquefied gas 28, multi-functional large load carrier 8, passenger 6, passenger/cargo 46, petroleum tanker 272, rail car carrier 1, refrigerated cargo 27, roll on/roll off 25, short-sea/passenger 39, specialized tanker 10, vehicle carrier 4

foreign-owned: Cambodia 1, Greece 2, Hong Kong 12, Japan 1, South Korea 2, Liberia 1, Malaysia 1, Panama 1, Taiwan 2, Tanzania 1

registered in other countries: 790 (2003 est.)

Airports:  

507 (2003 est.)

Airports - with paved runways:  

total: 332

over 3,047 m: 49

2,438 to 3,047 m: 97

914 to 1,523 m: 22

under 914 m: 35 (2003 est.)

1,524 to 2,437 m: 129

Airports - with unpaved runways:  

total: 175

under 914 m: 66 (2003 est.)

over 3,047 m: 23

2,438 to 3,047 m: 10

914 to 1,523 m: 40















1,524 to 2,437 m: 36

Heliports:  

15 (2003 est.)

Military**China**[Top of Page](#)**Military branches:**  

People's Liberation Army (PLA): comprises ground forces, Navy (including naval infantry and naval aviation), Air Force, and II Artillery Corps (strategic missile force), People's Armed Police Force (internal security troops, nominally a state security body but included by the Chinese as part of the "armed forces" and considered to be an adjunct to the PLA), militia

Military manpower - military age:	 	18 years of age (2004 est.)
Military manpower - availability:	 	<i>males age 15-49:</i> 379,524,688 (2004 est.)
Military manpower - fit for military service:	 	<i>males age 15-49:</i> 208,143,352 (2004 est.)
Military manpower - reaching military age annually:	 	<i>males:</i> 12,494,201 (2004 est.)
Military expenditures - dollar figure:	  	\$60 billion (2003 est.)
Military expenditures - percent of GDP:	  	3.5-5.0% (FY03 est.)

Transnational Issues

China

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Disputes - international:



involved in complex dispute with Malaysia, Philippines, Taiwan, Vietnam, and possibly Brunei over the Spratly Islands; the 2002 "Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea" has eased tensions but falls short of a legally binding "code of conduct" desired by several of the disputants; most of the rugged, militarized boundary with India is in dispute, but the two sides are committed to begin resolution with discussions on the least disputed Middle Sector; Kashmir remains the world's largest and highly militarized territorial dispute with portions under the de facto administration of China (Aksai Chin), India (Jammu and Kashmir) and Pakistan (Azad Kashmir and Northern Areas), but recent discussion and confidence-building measures among parties are beginning to defuse tensions, India does not recognize Pakistan's ceding lands to China in a 1964 boundary agreement; in 2003 China together with Taiwan asserted their claims to the Japanese-administered Senkaku Islands (Diaoyu Tai) with increased media coverage and protest actions; China and Kazakhstan have resolved their border dispute and are working to demarcate their large open borders to control population migration, illegal activities, and trade; certain islands in Yalu and Tumen rivers are in an uncontested dispute with North Korea and a section of boundary around Mount Paektu is indefinite - China has been attempting to stem mass illegal migration of North Koreans escaping famine and oppression into northern China; China continues to seek a mutually acceptable solution to the disputed alluvial islands with Russia at the confluence of the Amur and Ussuri rivers and a small island on the Argun river as part of the 2001 Treaty of Good Neighborliness, Friendship, and Cooperation; boundary delimitation agreements signed in 2002 with Tajikistan cedes 1,000 sq km of Pamir Mountain range to China in return for China's relinquishing claims to 28,000 sq km, but demarcation has not commenced; demarcation of land boundary with Vietnam continues but maritime boundary and joint fishing zone agreement remains unratified; China occupies Parcel Islands also claimed by Vietnam and Taiwan; groups in Burma and Thailand express concern over China's construction of 13 hydroelectric dams on the Salween River in Yunnan Province

Illicit drugs:  

major transshipment point for heroin produced in the Golden Triangle; growing domestic drug abuse problem; source country for chemical precursors and methamphetamine

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