

COUNTRY STATISTICS AND COUNTRY INFORMATION:

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Background Notes from the U.S. Department of State

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>

Country Data – an annotated guide by the Library of Congress's Business Reference Services to publications and websites which contain statistical and other data on countries of the world.

<http://www.loc.gov/rr/business/BERA/issue7/countries.html>

The Central Intelligence Agency's **The World Factbook**
(<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>)

Updated periodically; provides country maps and information for topics such as communications, geography, economics, government, history, the military, people, politics, transportation, and transnational issues.

This resource also provides country rankings for various attributes and offers appendixes with additional value-added information.

Country Codes and International Resources: <http://countrycodes.boomja.com/>

Thousands of pages of editor-selected information on International travel, travel insurance, maps, cell phones, trade currency, newspapers and other media; history, economics, embassies, business etiquette, country dialing codes and city dialing codes, as well as global import and export regulations, tax law, military, flags and more.

CountryWatch <http://www.countrywatch.com>

Country Information from Temple University Libraries:

<http://guides.temple.edu/general-country-info>

Country Profiles from ELDIS: <http://www.eldis.org/go/country-profiles®ion=21>

Economist.com: <http://www.economist.com/countries/>

Provides News, country profiles, forecasts, statistics and more on select countries of the world.

National Geographic:

<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/places/directory.html?fs=plasma.nationalgeographic.com>

RFE: Resources for Economists: Country Profiles <http://www.rfe.org>

Contains Economic Data by Country: http://www.rfe.org/showCat.php?cat_id=6

University of Colorado, Government Publications Department, University Libraries, Statistics and other Information on Countries:
<http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/govpubs/for/foreigngovt.htm>

STATISTICAL INFORMATION:

Nationmaster: www.nationmaster.com

Can compare statistics among two or more countries on a variety of indicators.

University of Michigan. Statistical Resources on the Web: (covers many International Statistics and International topics, such as Foreign Trade):

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/statsnew.html>

Where to Find Statistics on the 'Net: <http://home.istar.ca/~obyrne/stats.html>

World Bank Development Indicators:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20535285~menuPK:1192694~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html>

World Trade Indicators: Statistics by Region for 2008:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/TRADE/0,,contentMDK:21685943~menuPK:207553~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:239071,00.html>

U.N. and International Data/Statistics By Subject: <http://data.un.org/>

(can search by Country or Keyword in the internal Search Engine, **provides detailed statistical information by topic/keyword or by country.**) An excellent new resource!

Yearbook of the United Nations

<<http://unyearbook.un.org/>>

United Nations Demographic Yearbook

<<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/dyb/dyb2.htm>>

United Nations Statistics Division

<<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/default.htm>>

U.N. Site Map

<<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/sitemap.htm>>

Statistical Yearbook of the League of Nations League of Nations. Statistical and Disarmament Documents

<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govinfo/collections/league/stat.html>

UNESCO Institute for Statistics

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=2867_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC>

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES:

Information about countries of the world is collected by and available from the United States Government and from individual states and countries as well.

For instance, California's [Centers for International Trade Development: CITD](http://www.citd.org) (www.citd.org) and [TradePort](http://www.tradeport.org) (www.tradeport.org) help Californians expand trade. TradePort offers country profiles from the World Trade Press .

Major English-speaking countries besides the United States furnish country information, and their Web sites offer U.S. citizens different country perspectives.

For instance, [Austrade](http://www.austrade.gov.au) (www.austrade.gov.au) ,

the [Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's Country, Economy and Regional Information](http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo) (<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo>),

[Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada](http://www.international.gc.ca/index.aspx) (www.international.gc.ca/index.aspx) , and the

[United Kingdom's DFID: Department for International Development](http://www.dfid.gov.uk) (www.dfid.gov.uk) and

[Foreign & Commonwealth Office](http://www.fco.gov.uk) (www.fco.gov.uk) all furnish snapshots of countries.

The U.S. Federal Government produces a few premier country studies resources.

CIA's [World Leaders](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/index.html) (<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/world-leaders-1/index.html>) offers an online directory of the Chiefs of State and Cabinet Members of Foreign Governments.

NationMaster (<http://www.nationamaster.com>) even enables individuals to view many of these statistics in maps offering graphic-rich formats.

The general, overall site [U.S. Department of State](http://www.state.gov) (<http://www.state.gov>) offers a wealth of information, including foreign policy news.

Related sites include [Websites of U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and Diplomatic Missions](http://usembassy.state.gov) (<http://usembassy.state.gov>); and Travel.State.gov, which supplies travel information and warnings

The Department of State's *Background Notes*, (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/>) accessible from the home page under "Countries," also provides country facts and foreign relations synopses.

The Department of State also produces the annual [Country Reports on Human Rights Practices](http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/) (<http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/>) and [Country Reports on Terrorism](http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/) (<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/>)

Important aspects of doing business abroad include identifying market opportunities and understanding trade rules.

[Export.gov](http://www.export.gov), the U.S. government's export portal, provides a single access point about export procedures, industries, markets, trade leads, and events.

From its [Market Research Library](http://www.buyusainfo.net/adsearch.cfm?search_type=int&loadnav=no) (http://www.buyusainfo.net/adsearch.cfm?search_type=int&loadnav=no) individuals may search by report type to access the most recent U.S. Commercial Service's *Country Commercial Guides* and other market materials. Prepared by embassies and several other U.S. government agencies, the *Country Commercial Guides* assess country risks for doing business, and therefore provide good overviews of countries' economic and political environments.

Related Web sites that identify market opportunities and gauge foreign investment receptiveness are the international offices and development banks for various countries at [BuyUSA.gov](http://www.buyusa.gov), [e-Market Express](http://www.buyusa.gov/eme) (<http://www.buyusa.gov/eme>) , and the [International Trade Association's Country Information](http://web.ita.doc.gov/ticwebsite/tic.nsf/All/Country%20Information?OpenDocument). (<http://web.ita.doc.gov/ticwebsite/tic.nsf/All/Country%20Information?OpenDocument>) and the Market Research Library allowing the researcher to check for industries by countries as well as obtain other international data (http://www.buyusainfo.net/adsearch.cfm?search_type=int&loadnav=no)

Other important resources for importers and exporters are the [Office of the United States Trade Representative's Building Partnerships through Trade](http://www.ustr.gov), ([http://www.ustr.gov/](http://www.ustr.gov)) which supplies access to trade agreements, policies, and analysis;

and the [U.S. Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Statistics](http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/) (<http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/>)

and [U.S. International Trade Statistics](http://censtats.census.gov/sitc/sitc.shtml). (<http://censtats.census.gov/sitc/sitc.shtml>)

Important agricultural Web sites with country information include one from the U. S. Department of Agriculture : [Foreign Agricultural Service](http://www.fas.usda.gov/) (<http://www.fas.usda.gov/>)

Energy production and usage is also an international issue. The Energy Information Administration, the statistical division of the U.S. Department of Energy, offers Country Study Statistics (<http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/country/index.cfm>)

[IAEA.org: International Atomic Energy Agency](http://www.iaea.org/) (<http://www.iaea.org/>)

and the related [Country Nuclear Power Profiles](http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/cnpp2003/CNPP_Webpage/pages/countryprofiles.htm) (http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/cnpp2003/CNPP_Webpage/pages/countryprofiles.htm) both resources focus on international security issues.

Labor is also an important component of conducting business or trade abroad. Information abounds on the topic of labor worldwide, and much of it comes from the Department of Labor, including the Bureau of International Labor Affairs- ILAB (<http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/>)

Consult [Foreign Labor Trends](http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/media/reports/flt/main.htm) (<http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/media/reports/flt/main.htm>), and [A Chartbook of International Labor Comparisons: The Americas, Asia, Europe](http://www.dol.gov/asp/media/reports/chartbook/index.htm) (<http://www.dol.gov/asp/media/reports/chartbook/index.htm>.)

Almost every U.S. agency produces some form of international information.\

International economic accounts data, for instance, are available from the [U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis \(BEA\)](http://www.bea.gov/), (<http://www.bea.gov/>) and [International Justice Stats](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/ijs.htm) (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/ijs.htm>) provide Bureau of Justice statistics. All yield useful country insights.

OTHER SOURCES FOR INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS:

EDUCATION: Consult the [National Center for Educational Statistics' International Comparisons in Education](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/international/) (<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/international/>)

INTERNATIONAL STATISTICS:

[FedStats' International, State, County, and Local Area Statistics](http://www.fedstats.gov/regional.html) (<http://www.fedstats.gov/regional.html>) also offers links to international statistics, without requiring users to know the exact agency names.

The [Statistical Abstract of the United States](http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/) (<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/>) is a good place to start when looking for international statistics. This resource has a “Comparative International Statistics” section; each table lists its source and Internet links.

Another good starting place for finding the statistical agencies of other countries is the [U.S. Census Bureau's Statistical Agencies \(International\)](http://www.census.gov/main/www/stat_int.html) (http://www.census.gov/main/www/stat_int.html)

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Library of Congress is a leader in digitized collections and Web resource directories, in addition to providing library catalogs and bibliographic information

From its [Global Gateway: World Culture & Resources](http://international.loc.gov/intldl/intldlhome.html) (<http://international.loc.gov/intldl/intldlhome.html>), visitors may access both Portals to the World and Research Guides and Databases.

Portals to the World, which is organized by LOC subject experts, facilitates the identification of key Internet resources from countries. Organized alphabetically and then subdivided by topical area, it serves as a good starting point

Currently, the Federal Research Division prepares shorter and regularly updated [Country Profiles](http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/) (<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/>) that furnish overviews of countries' economic, political, military, and national security climates. This resource's main menu of hyperlinked country names also lists the months and years the profiles were created. As with its predecessor, country coverage is selective.

Other items available from Research Guides and Databases are the the [Global Legal Information Network \(GLIN\)](http://www.glin.gov/search.action) (<http://www.glin.gov/search.action>) GLIN is a database of country laws, regulations, judicial decisions, and legal documents.

Other LOC Web sites that may supplement country studies are the [Geography & Map Reading Room](http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/) (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/geogmap/>) and [BEOnline+](http://www.loc.gov/rr/business/beonline/subjectlist.php), (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/business/beonline/subjectlist.php>) from the Business Reference Services division.

[Global Resources: The International Collections of the Library of Congress](http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/int-aboutcoll.html) (<http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/int-aboutcoll.html>) provides an overview and serves as a portal to a variety of these LOC international resources

FEDERAL RESERVE

The Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the central bank of the United States, controls and monitors monetary policy, money supplies, and banking operations in the United States.

The Federal Reserve has an elaborate library system supporting its many regional banks. Its libraries disseminate a wealth of information pertinent to country studies, especially information relating to macroeconomic variables.

Resources available include [Global Economic Indicators](http://www.ny.frb.org/research/global_economy/globalindicators.html) (http://www.ny.frb.org/research/global_economy/globalindicators.html) (Federal Reserve Bank of New York); and the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland's [Inflation Central: World Inflation](http://www.clevelandfed.org/research/Inflation/World-Inflation/Index.cfm), (<http://www.clevelandfed.org/research/Inflation/World-Inflation/Index.cfm>) featuring interactive charts.

The Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis's recently rolled out [Liber8](http://liber8.stlouisfed.org/) (<http://liber8.stlouisfed.org/>) which it describes as “an economic information portal for librarians and students.” Liber8 contains the in-house IES (International Economic Statistics) Database, accessible from its home page, and featuring international economic statistics.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION RESOURCES AND STATISTICS

UNCTAD: United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), study trade factors and patterns, and economic strength and competitiveness and offer statistics and country and trade profiles.

Among the important free online publications from UNCTAD for studying various types of trade statistics is [Development and Globalization: Facts and Figures](http://globstat.unctad.org/html/index.html) (<http://globstat.unctad.org/html/index.html>)

UNCTAD also offers country fact sheets that provide foreign direct investment figures and offer specialized types of information, such as [Largest Transnational Corporations](http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intltemID=2443&lang=1) (<http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intltemID=2443&lang=1>)

Researchers may navigate to the WTO's [Statistics Database](http://stat.wto.org/Home/WSDBHome.aspx?Language=) (<http://stat.wto.org/Home/WSDBHome.aspx?Language=>) which offers trade profiles and tariff profiles for countries; or they may go to WTO's [International Trade Statistics 2007](http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2007_e/its07_toc_e.htm). (http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2007_e/its07_toc_e.htm)

At this site, one may browse by country members, and quickly access pages that contain, among other more lengthy reports and publications, OECD statistical profiles

Another valuable resource is [International Trade Statistics](http://www.intracen.org/tradstat/) (<http://www.intracen.org/tradstat/>), which in its current version includes 2001-5 import/export data under "General Trade Data 2001-2005." This is an interactive database with statistics retrievable by either country or product groups

[UN Comtrade](http://comtrade.un.org/) (<http://comtrade.un.org/>) offers another valuable series of statistical databases.

The IMF site offers hyperlinked macroeconomic statistics and projections from its premier publication, [World Economic Outlook](http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2008/01/index.htm) (<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2008/01/index.htm>) links directly to countries' central banks, in many cases; and offers access, via the Country Information page, to the full text of in-depth IMF country reports, which go back to the 1990s.

By navigating to the “Data and Research” page from the [World Bank's](http://www.worldbank.org/) (<http://www.worldbank.org/>) home page, and then using the "Data" tab (<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/0,,menuPK:476823~pageP>

[K:64165236~piPK:64165141~theSitePK:469372,00.html](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20535285~menuPK:1192694~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:469372,00.html)) one may view country information on the "Development Data and Statistics" page, including basic economic and demographic statistics.

Alternative Websites for the World Bank Development Indicators is:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20535285~menuPK:1192694~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html>

OR:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20798108~menuPK:64133152~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html>

Researchers may navigate from this page to Millennium Development Goals and the Online Atlas of the MDGs, which also feature country information. Also available, under "Data" and then "AAGs," are the popular Country at a Glance tables.

Two premier databases that provide detailed education and gender statistics are [Education Statistics Database: EdStats](http://devdata.worldbank.org/eoutcomes.pdf) (<http://devdata.worldbank.org/eoutcomes.pdf>) and [GenderStats](http://devdata.worldbank.org/) (<http://devdata.worldbank.org/>)

WHO offers content by country: resources include [Library & Information Networks for Knowledge Database \(WHOLIS\)](http://dosei.who.int), (<http://dosei.who.int>) a library of its publications; [WHOSIS \(WHO Statistical Information System\)](http://www.who.int/whosis/en/) (<http://www.who.int/whosis/en/>) for health-related data and statistics; and specialized reports like [Health Behaviour in School-aged Children](http://www.hbsc.org/) (<http://www.hbsc.org/>).

Country information targeting the Americas is available from the regional Pan American Health Organization. (<http://www.paho.org/english/country.htm>)

[Doing Business](http://www.doingbusiness.org) (<http://www.doingbusiness.org>) is a joint venture between the World Bank and its private arm the International Finance Corporation. [Doing Business](http://www.doingbusiness.org) can be used to easily generate reports about economies and country comparisons, as well as accessing laws of countries. In addition, individuals may access Economy Rankings from the home page, which offers an "Ease of Doing Business Rank" for 175 countries.

[Enterprise Surveys](http://enterprisesurveys.org) (<http://enterprisesurveys.org>) provides insights into investment climates based on the survey responses of more than 66,000 firms worldwide. [FDI.net](http://www.miga.org), from the [Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency](http://www.miga.org) (<http://www.miga.org>) of the World Bank, offers foreign direct investment financial information, and related information for relevant countries of the world to aid business professionals in making key decisions concerning investment abroad.

Similarly crafted products yielding useful snapshots of select data are [Governance Matters 2007: Worldwide Governance Indicators, 1996-2006](http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21407148~menuPK:34457~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html) (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21407148~menuPK:34457~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>)

Many international organizations have partnered to collaborate on statistics that likely could not be obtained independently. An interesting collaboration is the [Joint External Debt Hub \(JEDH\)](http://www.jedh.org/) (<http://www.jedh.org/>) giving estimates of national debt and related statistics and information.

JEDH is a joint project of the IMF, OECD, Bank for International Settlements, and World Bank. Like the IMF and OECD, the BIS enables international monetary cooperation by serving as a bank for central banks worldwide.

From its [Central Bank Websites](http://www.bis.org/cbanks.htm) page (<http://www.bis.org/cbanks.htm>), the BIS links to the sites of countries' central banks, which often list key country interest rates that may be used as indicators in country risk analyses.

Another trend among organizations is collaborating with or gleaning information from governments and commercial firms to achieve goals. For instance, country information in FDI.net is partially from government sources, but also comes from country intelligence firms like the [Oxford Business Group](http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/) (<http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/>)

UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations was formed in 1945, an international organization founded to promote peace and avoid international conflicts. The UN fosters international cooperation in many areas besides peace and security, including human rights and economic, social, trade, and political development; in turn the UN has become an authoritative powerhouse for all types of country information.

For instance, the [United Nations Statistics Division's Statistical Databases](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/databases.htm) (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/databases.htm>) provides users with streamlined access to two fee-based subscription databases, and thirteen unrestricted databases, on a variety of wide-ranging topics. Yet there appears to be no centralized Web site or portal that provides streamlined, comprehensive access to all the best UN country-level information.

Many UN agencies provide topical country profiles for their particular area--important information that should not be overlooked.

For general country information and detailed information about governments and the legislatures, a good starting point is the [United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance: UNPAN](http://www.unpan.org) (<http://www.unpan.org>) and its related [Publication Administration Country Profiles](http://www.unpan.org/dpepa/country%20profiles/countries.asp) site. (<http://www.unpan.org/dpepa/country%20profiles/countries.asp>)

A valuable forecasting tool is [World Population Prospects: The 2006 Revision Population Database](http://esa.un.org/unpp/), which predicts populations to the year 2050.
(<http://esa.un.org/unpp/>)

The UN has Web sites with country information for every major business sector. These include the Food and Agriculture Organization's [FAO Country Profiles and Mapping Information System](http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/inventory.asp?lang=en)
(<http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/inventory.asp?lang=en>)

and the [International Telecommunication Union](http://www.itu.int) (<http://www.itu.int>) along with [UNIDO: United Nations Industrial Development Organization](http://www.unido.org) (<http://www.unido.org>)

The UN has formed several regional commissions for economic development information, but these commissions do not all provide uniform kinds of country-level information.

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe stands out for offering the useful [UNECE Statistical Database](http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/Dialog/Default.asp) (<http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/Dialog/Default.asp>)

and for publishing an annual compilation of country profiles with many visuals, the current one being [UNECE Countries in Figures 2007](http://www.unece.org/stats/profiles2007/)
(<http://www.unece.org/stats/profiles2007/>)

Other resources with topical country information are the [United Nations Crime and Justice Information Network](http://www.uncjin.org/) (<http://www.uncjin.org/>);

[United Nations Environment Programme](http://na.unep.net/) (<http://na.unep.net/>) and

[UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=29008&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)
(http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=29008&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)

and the related **UNESCO Institute for Statistics**, accessible under "Statistics" on the home page.(http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?ID=2867_201&ID2=DO_TOPIC)

The **UNESCO Institute for Statistics** focuses on the "core themes" of education, literacy, science/technology, and culture/communication, and would be a good resource for finding specialized reports about the state of the world's libraries.

The UN produces many resources that document its development efforts.

The [United Nations Development Programme](http://www.undp.org/) (<http://www.undp.org/>) offers news and general information. Other resources are the UNDP's Human Development Reports, available from the UNDP home page and Statistics of the Human Development Report, accessible from the Human Development Reports page; these include the highly publicized Human Development Index (HDI) rankings.

Two related databases from the UN Statistics Division are [Millennium Development Goals Indicators](http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx) (<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Default.aspx>) covering indicators, or goals and targets, related to poverty, hunger, education, and mortality;

and [Social Indicators](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/default.htm)

(<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/products/socind/default.htm>) a listing with links to data on topics such as childbearing, literacy, and water supply and sanitation.

Other UN agencies focusing on similar humanitarian issues are:

The [Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcmePage.aspx)

(<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Pages/WelcmePage.aspx>),

[UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency](http://www.unhcr.org/country/btn.html) (<http://www.unhcr.org/country/btn.html>)

, [UNAIDS: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS](http://www.unaids.org/en/) (<http://www.unaids.org/en/>)

, and the [United Nations University World Institute for Development Economics](http://www.wider.unu.edu/research/Database/en_GB/database/)

[Research World Income Inequality Database](http://www.wider.unu.edu/research/Database/en_GB/database/)

(http://www.wider.unu.edu/research/Database/en_GB/database/)

[UNICEF](http://www.unicef.org) (<http://www.unicef.org>) provides news, statistics, and information on issues affecting children's lives.

The UN's [World Food Programme](http://www.wfp.org/english/) (<http://www.wfp.org/english/>) reports on efforts to reduce hunger around the world.

The UN-sponsored [ReliefWeb](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc100?OpenForm)

(<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/dbc.nsf/doc100?OpenForm>) addresses humanitarian disasters and emergencies.

The International Labor Organization, another part of the UN, studies labor issues such as employment, wages, and working conditions. It offers thirty-one databases, including [Child Labour Statistics](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/lang--en/index.htm).

(http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Statistics/lang--en/index.htm)

WomenWatch, also a UN organization, offers special reports, e.g., those produced by

the [Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/)

(<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>).

Among its numerous databases, the UN offers two related general country studies resources:

[Cyberschoolbus](http://cyberschoolbus.un.org) (<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org>) and InfoNation, available in basic and advanced versions from the Cyberschoolbus home page:

InfoNation Advanced's (<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation3/menu/advanced.asp>) interactive capabilities include options to compare statistics simultaneously for up to six countries.

Cyberschoolbus also links to the well-designed Country at a Glance (<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/infonation/index.asp>) which uses a topical approach to provide information about UN member states.

Sections include an overview and current news; the site presents information on the economy, environment, health, and technology.

Think Tank and Policy Institute Resources

A Think Tank or Policy Institute conducts analyses, and advocates for causes and policy changes by influencing and offering advice to governments and top decision makers.

These organizations employ various strategies to achieve their objectives. A common method for economic and political think tanks to raise awareness is through the use of country indexes or rankings, such as:

Foreign Policy Magazine's [The Fund for Peace: Failed States Index](http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140) (http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140)

the Fraser Institute's [Economic Freedom of the World Project](http://www.freetheworld.com/), with accompanying annual reports (<http://www.freetheworld.com/>)

the [Freedom House Map of Freedom in the World survey](http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2007) (<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2007>)

the Heritage Foundation's [Index of Economic Freedom](http://www.heritage.org/index/) (<http://www.heritage.org/index/>)

and the World Economic Forum's [Global Competitiveness Network](http://www.weforum.org/), whose flagship publication is the Global Competitiveness Report

[Transparency International](http://www.transparency.org/) (<http://www.transparency.org/>) operates according to the belief that corruption and bribes impede competitiveness and development; accordingly, its two major indexes are the Corruption Perceptions Index and the Bribe Payers Index. Another interesting ranking is the Worldwide Press Freedom Index, available from [Reporters without Borders for Press Freedom](http://www.rsf.org/) (<http://www.rsf.org/>)

[CAW: Country Analytic Work](http://www.countryanalyticwork.net/) (<http://www.countryanalyticwork.net/>) has partnered with fifty-two organizations that focus on country analytic work, and offers partners' reports from its document library. [Eldis](http://www.eldis.org/) ([http://www.eldis.org.](http://www.eldis.org/))

A number of organizations synthesize or reformat information to aid understanding and comparability, and tend to focus on specific topics that may be challenging to locate by other means.

A good example is the World Resources Institute's [EarthTrends: Environmental Information](http://earthtrends.wri.org/) portal (<http://earthtrends.wri.org/>) which furnishes specialized information on topics such as ecosystems and natural resources.

Other specialized Web sites are the [Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research](http://www.cgiar.org/) (<http://www.cgiar.org/>) and its [ASTI: Agricultural Science and Technology Indicators](http://www.asti.cgiar.org/) (<http://www.asti.cgiar.org/>);

[Migration Information Source](http://www.migrationinformation.org/) (<http://www.migrationinformation.org/>) and the [Development Gateway](http://www.developmentgateway.org/index.do) (<http://www.developmentgateway.org/index.do>) portal.

The Cato Institute's [Economic Freedom of the World: An Interactive Map](http://www.cato.org/pubs/efw/map/index.php) (<http://www.cato.org/pubs/efw/map/index.php>) was created out of the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World 2006 Annual Report rankings.

Many other policy institutes act as watchdogs and use the media to draw attention to their causes, especially groups reporting about war atrocities, human rights injustices, and global problems.

Examples of these organizations are Human Rights Watch, Institute for War & Peace Reporting, International Crisis Group, Population Reference Bureau, and WWF: Global Environmental Conservation Organisation.

The [Business & Human Rights Resource Centre](http://www.business-humanrights.org/Home) (<http://www.business-humanrights.org/Home>) is an organization that works closely with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and United Nations Global Compact to promote corporate social responsibilities; it is an excellent starting point for researching the relationships between corporations and poverty.

[OneWorld.net](http://us.oneworld.net/) (<http://us.oneworld.net/>) presents U.S. and international perspectives on global topics from an expansive network of worldwide organizations. By shedding light on irresponsible governments, policy makers, and corporations, all of these entities hope to pressure them to make more responsible decisions and end abuses.

Academic Resources

One good source for locating free Web sites is The [WWW Virtual Library: International Affairs Resources](http://www2.etsu.edu/vl/) (<http://www2.etsu.edu/vl/>) and Temple University: Country Information from Temple University Libraries: <http://guides.temple.edu/general-country-info>

For foreign government documents, individuals may use the University of Richmond's [Constitution Finder](http://confinder.richmond.edu/) [Constitution Finder](http://confinder.richmond.edu/) (<http://confinder.richmond.edu/>) and Northwestern University's [International Documents Collection](http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govinfo/resource/internat/foreign.html) (<http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govinfo/resource/internat/foreign.html>), which contains documents for all countries except nations covered by [Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization: UNPO](http://www.unpo.org/) (<http://www.unpo.org/>).

[MERLN: Military Education Research Library Network](http://merln.ndu.edu/) (<http://merln.ndu.edu/>), from the National Defense University Library, provides streamlined access to U.S. defense policy statements for potential hot spots; these are called Military Policy Awareness Links (MiPALS).

Michigan State University assembles quality Internet resources.

Examples are the multidisciplinary country studies portal [MSU Global Access](http://www.msuglobalaccess.net/) (<http://www.msuglobalaccess.net/>) and the international business portal [globalEDGE](http://globaledge.msu.edu/) (<http://globaledge.msu.edu/>) from its Center for International Business Education and Research.

An excellent resource, *globalEDGE* offers more than 5,000 annotated Internet resources (including other academic Web sites) that assist with identifying international statistics. *GlobalEdge* also highlights recommended resources and offers usability and content ratings. Value-added informational tools created by the GlobalEdge team include Country Insights, available from the home page, and the annual Market Potential Indicators for Emerging Markets, available under "Resource Desk."

Country Insights identifies major producers of information within countries, such as the central statistical agencies, and provides one-page executive memos that were done in collaboration with Export.gov.

The Market Potential Indicators for Emerging Markets 2007 is an overall ranking based on The Economist's categorization of twenty-seven countries as emerging markets. Other resources available from *GlobalEdge* are industry profiles, news, diagnostic tools, and professional networking.

Other exemplary business Web sites are [GTN: Global Trade Negotiations](http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade/site/tradegov.html) (<http://www.cid.harvard.edu/cidtrade/site/tradegov.html>) from the Center for International Development at Harvard University; and London Business School and Babson College's [GEM: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor](http://www.gemconsortium.org/) (<http://www.gemconsortium.org/>)

The GTN country summaries address key issues impacting countries' overall trading environment and economic outlooks, presented using a succinct narrative approach rather than a quantitative one. GEM evaluates entrepreneurial climates of major countries of the world.

Educational institutions have developed Internet portals to socioeconomic and development data sets and tools for comparison, such as the [Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies](http://www.childpolicyintl.org/) (<http://www.childpolicyintl.org/>) from Columbia University,

And the [Davidson Data Center & Network \(DDCN\)](http://ddcn.prowebis.com/) (<http://ddcn.prowebis.com/>) from the University of Michigan, sponsored by the National Science Foundation. The DDCN supplies data mainly for transitional and emerging markets.

A recommended portal for geographic information is the [Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/) (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/>) from the University of Texas at Austin. It offers maps for countries of global interest, various thematic maps, and links to other Web sites.

The [UC Atlas of Global Inequality](http://ucatlas.ucsc.edu/), (<http://ucatlas.ucsc.edu/>) at the University of California, Santa Cruz, uses geographic information, including GIS, to construct and present data.

Academic Web sites focusing on specific regions of the world are the [African Studies Center](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/AS.html) from the University of Pennsylvania (<http://www.africa.upenn.edu/AS.html>);

[Latin American Network Information Center: LANIC](http://lanic.utexas.edu) (<http://lanic.utexas.edu>)

Country Studies inside LANIC are at: <http://lanic.utexas.edu/subject/countries/>; and

[MENIC: The Middle East Network Information Center](http://menic.utexas.edu/) (<http://menic.utexas.edu/>) both from the University of Texas at Austin; and

[Portal to Asian Internet Resources \(PAIR\)](http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/PAIR/index.html) (<http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/PAIR/index.html>), a joint project between three major universities--the University of Wisconsin at Madison, University of Minnesota, and Ohio State University, in affiliation with the U.S. Department of Education.

COMMERCIAL RESOURCES

The BBC News and The Economist's Web sites offer free profiles or snapshots of countries bundled with key news, appropriately called [BBC News Country Profiles](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm) (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/country_profiles/default.stm) and Economist.com's [Country Briefings](http://www.economist.com/countries/) (<http://www.economist.com/countries/>) respectively.

Features of the BBC News Country Profiles include a podcast of the national anthem for each country, along with a country history time line.

Country Briefings are recognized as free forecasts that provide economic and political outlooks.

One valuable feature of this site is a "Cities Guide" that houses free "Doing ebusiness in ..." guides from the related site [Global Technology Forum](http://www.ebusinessforum.com/) (<http://www.ebusinessforum.com/>)

The Web offers a wealth of materials for finding information on various aspects of doing business worldwide. [FITA: The Federation of International Trade Associations](http://www.fita.org/) (<http://www.fita.org/>) is such a portal, but also provides some in-house materials about countries and doing business.

[HLB International](http://www.hlbi.com/) (<http://www.hlbi.com/>) a worldwide organization of accounting firms and business advisers, provides the "Doing Business in ..." guides" from its publications page.

Deloitte, also a major global accounting and consulting enterprise, in collaboration with EIU, offers [International Tax and Business Guides](http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/section_node/0,1042,sid%253D11410,00.html) (http://www.deloitte.com/dtt/section_node/0,1042,sid%253D11410,00.html).

Lex Mundi is an association of law firms that has local lawyers write [Guides to Doing Business](http://www.lexmundi.com/lexmundi/Guides_to_Doing_Business1.asp). (http://www.lexmundi.com/lexmundi/Guides_to_Doing_Business1.asp)

Additional specialized tools are KPMG's [Competitive Alternatives](http://www.competitivealternatives.com/) (<http://www.competitivealternatives.com/>), a resource for comparing major cities and regions around the world; and the work authorization guidelines titled [Country Briefs](http://www.fragomen.com/resources/cdbase.shtml) (<http://www.fragomen.com/resources/cdbase.shtml>) from the law firm Fragomen.

Other "doing business" guides offer global business etiquette and negotiations tips, such as [Getting Through Customs](http://www.kissboworshakehands.com/2004GTC/database.html) (<http://www.kissboworshakehands.com/2004GTC/database.html>)

and [The Bag Lady](http://www.the-bag-lady.co.uk/countries/) (<http://www.the-bag-lady.co.uk/countries/>)

More on Business Customs worldwide can be found at the Executive Planet WIKI: http://www.executiveplanet.com/index.php?title=Main_Page

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Export.gov <http://www.agoa.gov/>

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<http://www.austrade.gov.au/>

Building Partnerships through Trade Office of the United States Trade Representative
<http://www.ustr.gov/>

Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB) U.S. Department of Labor
<http://www.dol.gov/ILAB/>

BuyUSA.gov http://www.buyusa.gov/home/worldwide_us.html

Centers for International Trade Development: CITD
State of California <http://www.citd.org/>

A Chartbook of International Labor Comparisons: The Americas, Asia, Europe
U.S. Department of Labor <http://www.dol.gov/asp/media/reports/chartbook/index.htm>

ChildStats.gov Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics
<http://childstats.gov/>

Country, Economy and Regional Information
Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
<http://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/>

Country Analysis Briefs U.S. Department of Energy
<http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/contents.html>

Country Energy Balances U.S. Energy Information Administration
http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/world/country/an_index.html

Country Information International Trade Association/Export.gov
<http://web.ita.doc.gov/ticwebsite/tic.nsf/All/Country%20Information?OpenDocument>

Country Reports on Human Rights Practices
U.S. Department of State <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/>

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<http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/crt/>

Demographic and Health Surveys U.S. Agency for International Development
<http://www.measuredhs.com/countries/start.cfm>

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<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/>

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U.S. Agency for International Development
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<http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/>

International Justice Statistics
Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice
<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/ijs.htm>

International Minerals Statistics and Information
U.S. Geological Survey
<http://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/>

International, State, County, and Local Area Statistics
FedStats <http://www.fedstats.gov/regional.html>

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<http://www.link2exports.co.uk/>

Market Research Library U.S. Commercial Service
http://www.buyusainfo.net/adsearch.cfm?search_type=int&loadnav=no

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<https://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

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<http://www.loc.gov/rr/business/beonline/subjectlist.php>

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<http://www.ebusinessforum.com/>

Guides to Doing Business Lex Mundi

http://www.lexmundi.com/lexmundi/Guides_to_Doing_Business1.asp

HLB International <http://www.hlbi.com/>

Infoplease Pearson Education <http://www.infoplease.com/>

International Tax and Business Guides

Deloitte <http://www.deloittetaxguides.com/>

Nation Master <http://www.nationmaster.com/>

Allows researchers to compare two or more countries graphically, and automatically generating maps illustrating specific statistical comparative indicators, such as Health, Economics, Labor, etc.

Oxford Business Group <http://www.oxfordbusinessgroup.com/>

Executive Planet: <http://www.executiveplanet.com>

I wish to acknowledge that I profited from related bibliographies by Sam Anderson, and the other Reference Specialists in IIP, at the U.S. Department of State, in the compilation of this bibliography.

RESEARCH WIKI with many other resources: <http://tinyurl.com/6dfaxn>

LAST REVISED September 1, 2009