



## People's Republic of China

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, the country was beset by civil unrest, major famines, military defeats, and foreign occupation. After World War II, the communists under MAO Zedong established an autocratic socialist system that, while ensuring China's sovereignty, imposed strict controls over everyday life and cost the lives of tens of millions of people. After 1978, MAO's successor DENG Xiaoping and other leaders focused on market-oriented economic development and by 2000 output had quadrupled. For much of the population, living standards have improved dramatically and the room for personal choice has expanded, yet political controls remain tight. Since the early 1990s, China has increased its global outreach and participation in international organizations.

### Physical Geography

**Official Name:** People's Republic of China

**Region:** Eastern Asia

**Size in Square Kilometers:** 9,596,960 sq km

**Bordering Countries:** North Korea, Russia, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Laos and Vietnam.

**Physical Features:** mostly mountains, high plateaus, deserts in west; plains, deltas, and hills in east

**Climate:** extremely diverse; tropical in south to subarctic in north

### Cultural Geography

**Population:** 1,367,485,388 (July 2015 est.)

**Ethnic Groups:** Han Chinese 91.6%, Zhuang 1.3%, other (includes Hui, Manchu, Uighur, Miao, Yi, Tujia, Tibetan, Mongol, Dong, Buyei, Yao, Bai, Korean, Hani, Li, Kazakh, Dai and other nationalities) 7.1%

**Official language:** Standard Chinese or Mandarin (official; Putonghua, based on the Beijing dialect),

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**Spoken Languages:** Yue (Cantonese), Wu (Shanghainese), Minbei (Fuzhou), Minnan (Hokkien-Taiwanese), Xiang, Gan, Hakka dialects, minority languages (see Ethnic groups entry)

**\*note:** Zhuang is official in Guangxi Zhuang, Yue is official in Guangdong, Mongolian is official in Nei Mongol, Uighur is official in Xinjiang Uygur, Kyrgyz is official in Xinjiang Uygur, and Tibetan is official in Xizang (Tibet)

**Capital:** Beijing, Located Near the Bohai Gulf, Northeast China (Urban population: 19 million)

**Other Major Cities:** Shanghai, Located on the Yangtze Delta, Central East China (Urban population: 22 million), Tianjin, Located on the Bohai Gulf, Northeast China (Urban population: 11 million)

**Average Quality of Life:** Below Average

### Political Geography

**Founded:** 1 October 1949 (People's Republic of China established)

**Type of government:** Communist

**Country's leaders:**

**President:** Xi Jinping

**Premier of the State Council:** Li Keqiang

**Chairman of the Standing Committee:** Zhang Dejiang

**Active Military Personnel:** 2,333,000

**Allies:** Shanghai Cooperation Organization members (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan)

### Economic Geography

**Total Gross Domestic Product (GDP):** \$19.39 trillion (2015 est.)

**Natural Resources:** coal, iron ore, petroleum, natural gas, mercury, tin, tungsten, antimony, manganese, molybdenum, vanadium, magnetite, aluminum, lead, zinc, rare earth elements, uranium, hydropower potential (world's largest), arable land

**Currency:** Renminbi

**Exports:** electrical and other machinery, including data processing equipment, apparel, furniture, textiles, integrated circuits

**Imports:** electrical and other machinery, oil and mineral fuels; nuclear reactor, boiler, and machinery components; optical and medical equipment, metal ores, motor vehicles; soybeans

**Biggest Trading Partners:**

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**Exports: US 18%, Hong Kong 14.6%, Japan 6%, South Korea 4.5% (2015)**

**Imports: South Korea 10.9%, US 9%, Japan 8.9%, Germany 5.5%, Australia 4.1% (2015)**

