

PALAU

1. DEMOGRAPHICS, GENDER AND POVERTY

The estimated multi-ethnic population of Palau was 19 907 in 2005, with a natural per annum increase of 5.7%. The population consists of 70% Palauans (who are a conglomeration of Micronesian with Malayan and Melanesian admixtures), 28% Asians (mainly Filipinos, followed by Chinese, Taiwanese and Vietnamese) and 2% Caucasian (2000 est.).

Since the 1990 census, life expectancy at birth has been higher for women than men; the 2004 estimate stood at 75.7 years for women and 67.8 years for men. In 2000, the ratio of girls to boys in primary school was 97.25 girls per 100 boys and the ratio of girls to boys in secondary school was 88 girls per 100 boys. Also in 2000, the share of women in employment in the non-agricultural sector (includes self-employed and unpaid) was 40.1%, and 3.7% of the seats in the national Parliament were held by women.

Population	[Total]	19 907	Life expectancy at birth (years)	[Both]	71.62 (2004)
	[0-14 years]	4798 (24.10%)		[Male]	67.80 (2004)
	[65+ years]	1136 (5.70%)		[Female]	75.68 (2004)
Crude birth rate (per 1000 population)		12.60 (2004)	Total fertility rate		1.54 (2004)
Crude death rate (per 1000 population)		6.90 (2004)	% of population served with safe water	[Total]	95.40 (2003)
				[Urban]	99.00 (2003)
				[Rural]	89.00 (2003)
Infant mortality rate (per 1000 live births)		16.22 (2004)	% of population with adequate sanitary facilities	[Total]	99.00 (2003)
				[Urban]	99.00 (2003)
				[Rural]	98.00 (2003)
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births)		11.58 (2004)			

2. POLITICAL AND SOCIOECONOMIC SITUATION

2.1 Political situation

Palau is a democratic republic with directly elected executive and legislative branches. Presidential elections take place every four years to select the President and the Vice-President, who run on separate tickets. The Palau National Congress (*Olbiil era Kelulau*) has two houses. The Senate has nine members, elected nationwide. The House of Delegates has 16 members, one from each of Palau's 16 states. All of the legislators serve four-year terms. Each state also elects its own governor and legislature.

The Council of Chiefs is an advisory body to the President that contains the highest traditional chiefs from each of the 16 states. The Council is consulted on matters concerning traditional laws and customs.

The judicial system consists of the Supreme Court, the National Court, the Court of Common Pleas, and the Land Court. The Supreme Court has trial and appellate divisions and is presided over by the Chief Justice.

The current head of state is President Tommy Esang Remengesau, Jr. The Vice-President is Elias Camsek Chin.

2.2 Economic situation

Palau's real per capita gross domestic product (GDP) of US\$ 5678 makes it one of the wealthier Pacific island states. The economy consists primarily of tourism, subsistence agriculture and fishing. The Government is the major employer of the workforce, relying heavily on financial assistance from the United States of America. Business and tourist arrivals numbered 87 462 in 2004. Long-term prospects for the key tourist sector have been bolstered greatly by the expansion of air travel in the Pacific, the rising prosperity of leading East Asian countries, and the willingness of foreigners to finance infrastructure development.

3. HEALTH SITUATION

3.1 Health trends

The health of Palauans seems to have improved a little, as manifested in improved health indicators such as increased life expectancy at birth and a decreased under-five mortality rate. Also, sanitation has improved, with the entire population now having access to excreta disposal facilities.

Tuberculosis remains a problem, while the prevalence of leprosy has increased slightly. Modern lifestyle-related diseases (circulatory diseases and cancer) remain at the top of the list of major causes of death.

It is expected that environmental problems will increase with more foreign investment and workers on the islands in coming years. Water pollution is a major concern due to the lack of sufficient land area for proper waste disposal. Progressive industrial development will continue to worsen both air and marine quality. Marine life and reefs will be affected by the pollution.

3.2 Health systems

'Health for all' remains a top priority in the socioeconomic development of Palau. The Government aims to provide enough trained and qualified staff to provide quality services in all outlying dispensaries, including the more remote areas and islands, as well as at the main hospital in Koror.

Although health services are supported by grants and funds from the Federal Government of the United States of America, in addition to the provision of technical support from several United Nations agencies, resource requirements will still be dependent on successful economic development.

A new hospital has been built, with United States funding, to accommodate more patients. More staff are needed as a result. Training of more local health workers is needed to replace the expensive expatriate staff. Subsequent to the enactment of a new mandatory retirement law, there is an urgent need to train younger people to replace older personnel who are close to retirement age.

In 1998, Palau had a health workforce comprising 20 doctors, two dentists, a midwife, a pharmacist and 106 other health personnel. In 2003, the number of doctors increased to 25. In 2005, there were 111 nurses. Plans are being made to develop a nursing school at Palau Community College to provide essential training for health personnel in-country and thereby avoid losing health workers who are trained abroad.

4. NATIONAL HEALTH PLAN AND PRIORITIES

The national health priorities are:

- to deliver quality health care, including community-based health care, in order to improve the health of the population and contribute towards building a

- balanced economy;
- to increase the accessibility of health services through the establishment of outlying dispensaries/health centres;
- to train and certify health workers and allied health workers in proper training institutions;
- to establish a nursing school at Palau Community College;
- to control communicable and noncommunicable diseases;
- to improve the nutritional status of community members through the implementation of a national action plan for food and nutrition; and
- to protect environmental health

5. MAJOR INFORMATION SOURCES

Palau Government Statistics (<http://www.palau.gov.net>)

Palau Statistics (<http://www.spc.int/prism>)

Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, United States of America Department of State (<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ci/bgn/1840.htm>)

Ministry of Health

6. ADDRESSES

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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	INDICATORS	DATA			Year	Source
		Total	Male	Female		
1	Area (1 000 km ²)	0.49			2004	4
2	Estimated population ('000s)	19.91	10.70	9.21	2005	5
3	Annual population growth rate (%)	1.64 ^a	...	...	2003 est	5
4	Percentage of population					
	- 0–14 years	24.10	22.94	25.46	2005	5
	- 65+ years	5.70	4.33	7.30	2005	5
5	Urban population (%)	77.35	...	...	2005	5
6	Crude birth rate (per 1 000 population)	12.60	...	...	2004	5
7	Crude death rate (per 1 000 population)	6.90	...	...	2004	5
8	Rate of natural increase of population (% per annum)	5.70	...	...	2004	5
9	Life expectancy (years)					
	- at birth	71.62	67.80	75.68	2004	5
	- Health-adjusted Life Expectancy (HALE) at age 60	...	10.20	12.00	2002	9
10	Adult literacy rate (%)	99.90 ^b	99.90 ^b	99.80 ^b	2005	5
11	Neonatal mortality rate (per 1 000 live births)	14.00 ^c	...	...	2000	11
12	Infant mortality rate (per 1 000 live births)	16.22	19.02	13.24	2004	5
13	Under-five mortality rate (per 1 000 live births)	6.89	6.89	0.00	2004	5
14	Total fertility rate (women aged 15–49 years)			1.54	2004	5
15	Maternal mortality ratio (per 100 000 live births)			11.58	2004	5
16	Percentage of newborn infants weighing at least 2500 g at birth	91.00	...	...	1998	7
17	Prevalence of underweight children under five years of age	...	...	...
18	Percentage of pregnant women with anaemia			1.20	1998	7
19	Immunization coverage for infants (%)					
	- BCG	...	...	...	2004	10
	- DTP3	98.00	...	...	2004	10
	- OPV3	98.00	...	...	2004	10
	- Measles	100.00	...	...	2004	10
	- Hepatitis B III	98.00	...	...	2004	10
20	MCH coverage (pregnancies, deliveries, infant care)					
	- Percentage of pregnant women cared for by skilled health personnel			99.64	1998	7
	- Percentage of pregnant women immunized with tetanus toxoid (TT2)			100.00	2004	10
	- Percentage of deliveries at home by skilled health personnel (as % of total deliveries)			...		
	- Percentage of deliveries in health facilities (as % of total deliveries)			18.50	1998	7
21	Percentage of women in the reproductive age group using modern contraceptive methods			17.20	2000	8
22	Condom use rate of the contraceptive prevalence rate	...	...	...
23	HIV prevalence among 15–24 year-old pregnant women			...		
24	Number of children orphaned by HIV/AIDS ^{ab}		

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INDICATORS		DATA			Year	Source			
		Total	Urban	Rural					
25	Proportion of population with sustainable access to an improved water source	95.40	99.00	89.00	2003	1			
26	Proportion of population with access to improved sanitation	99.00	99.00	98.00	2003	1			
27	Proportion of the population using solid fuels for cooking or heating (%)	1.00	...	...	2000	8	
28	Proportion of households with access to secure tenure	...	...	...		
29	Proportion of vehicles using unleaded gasoline (%)	...	...	...		
30	Health care waste generation (metric tons per year)	...	...	...		
31	Human development index	0.86	...	...	1998	3	
32	Per capita GDP at current market prices (US\$)	5678.00	...	...	2003	5	
33	Rate of growth of per capita GDP (%)	-1.73 ^a	...	...	2003	5	
34	Health expenditure								
	Total health expenditure								
	- amount (in million US\$)			...					
	- total health expenditure on health as % of GDP			9.70	2003	2			
	- per capita total expenditure on health (in US\$)			607.00	2003	2			
	Government expenditure on health								
	- amount (in million US\$)			11.87	FY2004/2005	5			
	- general government expenditure on health as % of total expenditure on health			86.70	2003	2			
	- general government expenditure on health as % of total general government expenditure			16.39	FY2004/2005	5			
	External source of government health expenditure								
	- external resources for health as % of general government expenditure on health			...					
	Private health expenditure								
	- private expenditure on health as % of total expenditure on health			13.30	2003	2			
	Exchange rate in US\$ of local currency is: 1 US\$ =			...					
35	Health insurance coverage as % of total population			...					
INDICATORS		DATA						Year	Source
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		
		Number			Rate per 10 000 population				
36	Health workforce								
	- physicians	25	12.31	2003	12
	- dentists	2	1.10	1998	7
	- pharmacists	1	0.55	1998	7
	- nurses	111 ^f	55.76	2005	13
	- midwives	1	0.56	1998	7
	- other nursing/ auxiliary staff	87	48.00	1998	7
	- other paramedical staff (e.g. medical assistants, laboratory technicians, X-ray technicians)	13	7.20	1998	7
	- other health personnel (health inspectors, assistant sanitarians, traditional workers, etc.)	6	3.30	1998	7
37	Yearly new graduates – physicians					
38	Yearly new graduates – nurses					

INDICATORS		DATA						Year	Source
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		
39	Ten leading causes of morbidity	Number			Rate per 100 000 population				
	1. Injuries (all types)	2911	...	...	16 073.99	...	...	1998	7
	2. Unspecified upper respiratory infection	1806	...	...	9972.39	...	...	1998	7
	3. Unspecified otitis media	1625	...	...	8972.94	...	...	1998	7
	4. Colitis, enteritis and gastroenteritis	687	...	...	3793.48	...	...	1998	7
	5. Acute tonsillitis	591	...	...	3263.39	...	...	1998	7
	6. Acute pharyngitis	531	...	...	2932.08	...	...	1998	7
	7. Unspecified allergy	496	...	...	2738.82	...	...	1998	7
	8. Unspecified gastritis and duodenitis	343	...	...	1893.98	...	...	1998	7
	9. Acute lymphadenitis	343	...	...	1893.98	...	...	1998	7
	10. Unspecified urinary tract infection	338	...	...	1866.37	...	...	1998	7
40	Ten leading causes of mortality	Number			Rate per 100 000 population				
	1. Cardiovascular diseases	18	...	...	99.39	...	...	1998	7
	2. Unknown and other	18	...	...	99.39	...	...	1998	7
	3. Other circulatory diseases	16	...	...	88.34	...	...	1998	7
	4. Other injuries	14	...	...	77.31	...	...	1998	7
	5. Cancer	13	...	...	71.78	...	...	1998	7
	6. Respiratory diseases	6	...	...	33.13	...	...	1998	7
	7. Digestive diseases	6	...	...	33.13	...	...	1998	7
	8. Suicide	5	...	...	27.61	...	...	1998	7
	9. Car accidents	4	...	...	22.08	...	...	1998	7
	10. Coronary heart disease	4	...	...	22.08	...	...	1998	7
41	Selected diseases under the WHO-EPI	Number of cases			Number of deaths				
	- Diphtheria	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Pertussis (whooping cough)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Tetanus	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Neonatal tetanus	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Poliomyelitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Hib meningitis	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Measles	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Mumps	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
	- Rubella	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10
- Congenital rubella syndrome	0	0	0	0	0	0	2004	10	
42	Selected communicable diseases	Number of cases ^{aa}			Number of deaths				
	Hepatitis viral (all forms)	5	3	2	...	...	...	2004	5
	- Type A	...	...	...	...	...	...
	- Type B	...	...	...	...	...	...
	- Type C	...	...	...	...	...	...
	- Type E	...	...	...	...	...	...
	- Unspecified		
	Cholera	0	0	0	0	0	0	2003	5
	Typhoid fever		
	Encephalitis		
	Plague		
Syphilis			

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INDICATORS		DATA						Year	Source
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		
42	Selected communicable diseases	Number of cases ^{aa}			Number of deaths				
	Gonorrhoea	38	17	21	...	...	...	2004	5
	Leprosy	6	...	...	...	...	...	2004	10
	Malaria	0	0	0	0	0	0	2003	5
	Dengue/DHF	57	...	...	0	0	0	2004	10
43	Malaria	Prevalence rates			Death rates				
	- Rates associated with malaria (per 100 000 population)	...	...	...	...	...	...
	- Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria prevention measures ^d							...	
	- Proportion of population in malaria-risk areas using effective malaria treatment measures ^e							...	
44	Tuberculosis	Number of cases			Number of deaths				
	- All types	5	...	...	...	...	...	2004	10
	- New pulmonary tuberculosis (smear-positive)	5	...	...	...	...	...	2004	10
		Prevalence rates			Death rates				
	- Rates associated with tuberculosis (per 100 000 population)	91.00	...	...	7.00	...	...	2004	10
		Detection rates			Success rates				
- Proportion of tuberculosis cases detected and cured under directly observed treatment, short-course (DOTS)	95.00	...	...	80.00 (2003)	...	...	2004	10	
		Number of cases			Number of deaths				
45	Acute respiratory infections	2550	1176	1374	...	...	...	2004	5
46	Diarrhoeal diseases	69	41	28	...	...	...	2004	5
47	Cancers								
	All cancers (malignant neoplasms only)	142	...	...	13	...	...	1998	7
	- Trachea, bronchus and lung	6	...	...	4	...	...	1998	7
	- Stomach	0	0	0	0	0	0	1998	7
	- Colon and rectum	0	0	0	1	...	...	1998	7
	- Lip, oral cavity and pharynx	0	0	0	1	...	...	1998	7
	- Liver	2	...	...	3	...	...	1998	7
	- Cervix			3			1	1998	7
	- Leukaemia	0	0	0	0	0	0	1998	7
48	Circulatory								
	All circulatory system diseases	738	...	...	38	...	...	1998	7
	- Ischaemic heart disease	6	...	...	2	...	...	1998	7
	- Acute myocardial infarction	8	...	...	1	...	...	1998	7
	- Rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart diseases	3	...	...	0	0	0	1998	7
	- Cerebrovascular diseases	53	...	...	2	...	...	1998	7
	- Hypertension	375	...	...	9	...	...	1998	7

INDICATORS		DATA						Year	Source
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female		
		Number of cases			Number of deaths				
49	Maternal causes								
	- Haemorrhage			0			0	1998	7
	- Abortion			28			0	1998	7
	- Eclampsia			...			...
	- Sepsis			...			...
	- Obstructed labour			...			...
50	Diabetes mellitus	164	...	...	3	...	...	1998	7
51	Mental disorders	...	...	...	...	...	...
52	Injuries								
	- All types	2911	...	...	25	...	...	1998	7
	- Motor and other vehicle accidents	77	...	...	4	...	...	1998	7
	- Suicide	3	...	...	...	...	...	1998	7
	- Homicide and violence	20	...	...	2	...	...	1998	7
	- Occupational injuries	...	...	...	...	...	...
53	Proportion of population with access to affordable essential drugs on a sustainable basis						...		
54	Health infrastructure	Number			Number of beds				
	Public health facilities								
	- General hospitals			1			80	1998	7
	- Specialized hospitals			0			0	1998	7
	- District/first-level referral hospitals			0			0	1998	7
	- Primary health care centres			12			10	1998	7
	Private hospitals			...			...
Notes:									
Red text	Millennium Development Goals (MDG) indicators								
...	Data not available								
est	Estimate								
FY	The financial year refers to the span from April 1 of respective year to March 31 next year.								
aa	Figures refer to number of new reported cases.								
ab	Proxy indicator for MDG indicator 20: Ratio of school attendance of orphans and school attendance of non-orphans age 10-14 years.								
a	Computed by Health Information and Evidence for Policy Unit of the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific.								
b	Figure refers to 15-24 years old.								
c	Estimates derived by regression and similar estimation methods.								
d	Prevention is measured by the percentage of children ages 0-59 months sleeping under insecticide-treated bednets.								
e	Treatment is measured by the proportion of children ages 0-59 months who were ill with the fever in the two weeks before the survey and who received appropriate antimalarial drugs.								
f	Figure refers to registered nurses, licensed practical nurses and nursing assistants.								
Sources:									
1	Information furnished by WHO Representative for the South Pacific, draft copy, 19 April 2004.								
2	<i>Working together for health.</i> World health report 2006. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2006.								
3	<i>Pacific human development report 1999 (Creating opportunities).</i> New York, United Nations Development Programme, 1999.								
4	<i>Pacific island populations 2004.</i> Noumea, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, 2004.								
5	Palau Statistics (http://www.spc.int/prism)								
6	Palau Ministry of Health Office of Nursing and Palau Board of Health Professionals Licensure (PBHPL).								
7	Information furnished by Ministry of Health, Republic of Palau, 23 April 1999.								
8	<i>Pacific Island Regional Millennium Development Goals report 2004.</i> Noumea, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, UN/ CROP MDG Working Group, November 2004.								

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9	<i>Changing history.</i> World health report 2004. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2004.
10	WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, data received from technical units.
11	<i>Make every mother and child count.</i> World health report 2005. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2005.
12	Information furnished by WHO Representative for the South Pacific, 11 April 2005.
13	Palau Ministry of Health, Office of Nursing; and Palau Board of Health Professional Licensures (PBHPL).