Kiribati

- **Capital**: Tarawa (1°28’N, 173°2’E)
- **International airport(s)**: Bonriki International Airport, Tarawa; Cassidy International Airport, Kirimati
- **Official language(s)**: English, Gilbertese
- **Currency**: Kiribati dollar, Australian dollar (AUD)
- **Time**: UTC+12, +13, +14
- **Region**: Pacific

**GEOGRAPHY**

Kiribati (pronounced kee-ree-bas) consists of 33 coral islands with a total land area of 810 km². Only 21 of the islands are inhabited. The islands are scattered over 3.5 million km² in the Central Pacific Ocean, making it one of the most remote and geographically dispersed countries in the world.

It is composed of three island groups: the Gilbert Islands, the Line Islands and the Phoenix Islands. All of the islands are atolls or ring-shaped with central lagoons, except for the island of Banaba, which is a raised limestone island. It is the only country situated in four hemispheres of the world. It is also the furthest ahead of Greenwich meantime at UTC +14, making it the first country in the world to see the New Year. Caroline island was the first island to ring in the Third Millennium in 2000 and, to celebrate the occasion, it was renamed Millennium Island.

Most of the atolls are low-lying, making them vulnerable to tidal surges and rising sea levels as a result of global warming. Two small uninhabited islets, Tebua Tarawa and Abanua, which ironically means 'the beach which is long-lasting', disappeared below the sea in 1999. In 2014, to escape climate change, Kiribati acquired 20 km² of land in Fiji for the purpose of food security and as a possible refuge.

**CLIMATE**

Kiribati experiences a hot and humid equatorial maritime climate, moderated by the trade winds. The temperature in Kiribati is closely related to the temperatures of seas surrounding the islands. There is almost no variation in temperature, with average monthly temperatures falling between 27 and 28 °C through the year. Annual rainfall varies greatly throughout the year and between islands. Average annual rainfall is generally below 1 200 mm in Kiribati but varies between 1 000 and 3 000 mm across the country: the northern parts of the Gilbert and Line groups receive more rain than the Phoenix group. (World Bank, 2020)

The Phoenix islands are also home to the second largest marine protected area in the world, called the Phoenix Islands Protected Area. In 2010, it was inscribed to UNESCO’s list of World Heritage Sites.

**ECONOMY**

Kiribati is among the least developed Pacific island nations with a GDP per capita of US$1 657 in 2019. Foreign aid and personal remittances provide important sources of funding at 10 per cent of GDP each (UNCTAD, 2021). Fish constitute the bulk of goods exports, with over 80 per cent share. According to the items attribute is mandatory, Kiribati's large exclusive economic zone in the Pacific accounts for one quarter of the global total of tuna species. The ADB estimates that revenue from fishing licenses equals two thirds of GDP in Kiribati. Together agriculture, forestry and, especially fishing, account for almost one fourth of GDP, while services constitute the largest economic sector (UNCTAD, 2021). Kiribati was the destination of 12 thousand tourist arrivals in 2019 and 9 thousand in 2018. Inbound tourism expenditure was below 2 per cent over GDP in 2018 (UNWTO, 2021). EVI of Kiribati is the highest among the SIDS and in the world (UN DESA, 2020).

**CULTURE**

The name Kiribati is the Gilbertese pronunciation of Gilberts, - Ki-ruh-bas, - the main archipelago of the country. The letter ‘s’ doesn't exist in the 13-letter Gilbertese alphabet and is written as ‘t’. This explains why Kiribati isn't pronounced the way it is spelled.

The native islanders of Kiribati are known as I-Kiribati. They are Micronesian, the largest ethnic group accounting for around 96 per cent of the country's population. The most widely practiced religion in Kiribati is Christianity. The most important institutional symbol in Kiribati is the maneaba ni Maungatabu, social and community hall, where people meet to discuss matters of importance, under the leadership of elected elders, Unimwane and Christian leaders.

The traditional dances of Kiribati, or 'te Mwaie ni Kiribati', are unique bird-like dances, imitating the movements of the frigate bird while walking and flying.

Oreano is a traditional team sport and the national sport in Kiribati - two opposing teams throw a heavy woven ball of somewhere between 2 to 5 kg, which should be caught without being dropped or injuring the players. Other popular sports are canoe racing and football.

The national dish of Kiribati is Palusami. It consists of coconut cream with onions and curry powder wrapped in taro leaves. It is eaten with roast pork or chicken. Another popular dish is boiled pandanus fruit, or screw pine.
**ECONOMIC TRENDS**

**Gross domestic product**
US dollars at constant prices (2015) in millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GDP per capita**
2019
US$1,657

**Productive Capacity Index**
2018
27.9

**Economic and environmental vulnerability index**
2019
66

**Consumer Price Index growth**
2019
0.3%

**Unemployment rate**
2015
Total 9.3%
Female 5.6%, Male 11.9%

**Main economic sectors, 2019**
Percentage of GDP

- **Services**
- **Industry**
- **Agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing**

**Tourist arrivals**
Thousands of tourists, percentage of GDP

**External financial resources**
Percentage of GDP

**Public debt as % of GDP**
2018
64.3%
## MARITIME TRANSPORT

### Fleet size
**Number of ships**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship type</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total fleet</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>1,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil tankers</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulk carriers</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General cargo</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container ships</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other types of ships</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Port performance
**Ranked by 2019 data within SIDS group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>SIDS Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of port calls</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median time in port (days)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age of vessels</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average size (GT) of vessels</td>
<td>14,257</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Container throughput

| 2019 | 52,100 TEU |

### Bilateral connectivity index, 2019
**Top 5 partners**

No data available

### Liner shipping connectivity index
**Maximum China Q1 2006=100**

![Graph showing liner shipping connectivity index](image)
POPULATION

Total population
Thousands of people, share of urban population

Population development indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty headcount (% of population)</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human development index</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human assets index</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy rate (15+ years, both sexes %)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender inequality index</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Life expectancy at birth 2019: 68 years
Population density 2019: 145 persons per km²
Dependency ratio 2019:
Child: 59.7
Old-age: 6.8

Age structure by gender, 2019
Percentage of total population

Kiribati
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## INTERNATIONAL TRADE

### Merchandise and services trade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2019 (% of GDP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise exports</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise imports</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services exports</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services imports</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Trade openness

- **Goods and services**
  - 2018: 50% of GDP
  - 2019: 0.83

### Food import dependency

- Average 2015-2019: 18.40

### Top 5 partners in merchandise trade, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Exports in millions US dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>11 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>1 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Merchandise exports by product group, 2019

- Agricultural raw materials
- All food items
- Fuels
- Manufactured goods
- Ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold

### Services exports by category, 2019

- Financial, insurance, business, intellectual property
- Transport
- Travel
- Other
### ENVIRONMENT

#### CO₂ emissions per capita
Kg per capita

- **2000**: 0.2
- **2005**: 0.4
- **2010**: 0.6
- **2015**: 0.8

#### CO₂ emissions per GDP
Kg per 2010 US$ of GDP

- **2000**: 0.6
- **2005**: 0.4
- **2010**: 0.2
- **2015**: 0

#### Renewable energy share in total energy consumption, 2017
Percentage of total energy consumption

- Renewable energy: 40%
- Non-renewable energy: 60%

#### Material footprint per capita
kg

- **2016**:...

#### Terrestrial protected area
22.4%

- **2018**:...

#### Marine protected area
11.82%

- **2018**:...

#### Disasters indicators
Data not available

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

#### Trade in ICT goods

- **2016**: Exports: 0.1%
  Imports: 5.6%

- **2014**: Exports: 2.9%
  Imports: 0.0%

#### Trade in ICT services

- **2014**: Exports: 2.9%
  Imports: 0.0%

#### Share of internet users

- **2017**: 15%

#### Fixed broadband vs Mobile broadband subscriptions
Number of subscriptions per 100 people

- **Fixed**: 60
- **Mobile**: 0
Sources
Source of data: UNCTAD (2021) except indicators listed below.
- Adult literacy rate: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2021)
- Distance to nearest neighbour: [NO_PRINTED_FORM] (Package “cshapes,” 2016) https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/cshapes/index.html
- Material footprint: UNEP (2021) https://environmentlive.unep.org/indicator/index/12_2_1
- Number of people affected by disasters: United Nations (2021) https://www.sdgs.un.org/datasets/1be260e9ca1a4674b391b8f1e487490_0

References
- UNEP (2021). 12.2.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP. Available at https://environmentlive.unep.org/indicator/index/12_2_1 (accessed 13 January 2021).