ANGOLA

Official language: Portuguese (71%)

Many people also speak Umbundu, Kikongo, Kimbundu, and more

Population: ~33.6 million people

With an average age of 15.9, Angola is one of the youngest in the world

Capital: Luanda

Angola is 481,400 sq mi, twice the size of Texas, and has 18 provinces

49.9% live below $1.90 per day

Oil makes up 90% of exports and 70% of government revenue

Historical Summary

Some of the earliest people to live in the area that became the country of Angola include the San hunter-gatherers, who gave way to Bantu speakers before the area became part of the Kingdom of Kongo in the 13th century. The Portuguese arrived in the late 15th century, converting many people in the Kingdom to Christianity and establishing a colony and the slave trade, mainly with Portugal's South American colony, Brazil.

A Civil War and its Legacy

Like much of the rest of Lusophone Africa, Angola gained independence from colonial Portugal after the Portuguese Colonial War (War of Liberation) and, finally, a military coup in Portugal in 1974. Following independence, a struggle for leadership ensued between MPLA and UNITA, two guerilla organizations previously fighting against colonialism. The resulting Civil War became a proxy for the Cold War and ended more than 25 years later in 2002, displacing more than 4 million Angolans (including more than 400,000 refugees) and littering the country with landmines. In 2017, Angola held its first successful presidential election, and the MPLA's João Lourenço became president.

MPLA

- Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
- Currently rule Angola with João Lourenço as president
- Supported by Cuba and the Soviet Union in civil war
- Founded by Agostinho Neto and led by former president Eduardo Dos Santos

UNITA

- National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
- Second largest political party in Angola today
- Supported by apartheid South Africa and the United States in civil war
- Founded by Jonas Savimbi

Recent History

1483 — Portuguese arrive in Angola

1836 — Slave trade abolished

1975 — Angola gains independence from Portugal; Civil war begins

1999 — UN ends peacekeeping mission

2002 — Savimbi is killed; Civil War ends

2017 — First successful presidential election