

## Chile

**Type of Government:** Unitary presidential constitutional republic

**Head of Gov:** President Michelle Bachelet (term ends 2018)

**Capital City:** Santiago

**Ideology:** Left-leaning (64% of population benefit from government social welfare).

**Region:** Latin America (same region as Argentina)

**Neighbours:** Argentina, Bolivia, Peru



### DEMOGRAPHICS

- **Population:** 17 million (6<sup>th</sup> largest in region). Low population growth but low infant mortality rate.
- **Religion:** Christian 85% (predominately state backed Roman Catholicism).
- **Age:** Median age of 33, life expectancy of 78 (about average).
- **Ethnicities:** 95% white, 4% Mapuche, 1% other indigenous peoples. Lots of immigration from elsewhere in the region but most of the population is originally European.
- **National Language:** Spanish, with a minority speaking English and German.

### ECONOMY

- Relatively high GDP of US\$ 316.9 billion (43<sup>rd</sup> worldwide).
- World Bank Classification: High-Income Economy; considered a “developed country”.
- Poverty Rate: 15% below line
- GDP growth was 5.6% (2012 est.) maintained from 5.8% (2011 est.), 5.7% (2010 est.)
- Inflation rate: 3% (2012 est.).
- One of South America’s most stable and prosperous nations with the strongest sovereign bond rating in the region
- Chile has the highest degree of economic freedom in South America (ranking 7th worldwide)

### Major Industries

- Services 53%
- Industry (light industrial and food and textile processing) 20%
- Agriculture 5.1% of GDP

### Exports

- **Major Trading Partners:** China, United States, Japan, Republic of Korea and Brazil
- Mining (particularly copper products at 42% of all exports) at 49.5% of total exports
- Industrial goods 27.5% of total exports
- Agriculture 5% of total exports

## Natural Resources

- Large copper and nitrite reserves
- Forests frequently being used for timber

## MILITARY

**Size:** 79,800 active troops. The Chilean military is widely engaged in a variety of peacekeeping missions

**Army:** 305 Light and Medium Tanks, 1366 armoured vehicles, and 64 artillery units. The Chilean army is regarded as one of the most professional and technologically advanced in South America.

**Air Force:** 14,600 service people and around 170 aircraft.

**Navy:** Argentina possesses 66 surface naval vessels, and 4 submarines.

## POLITICS

### Domestic politics

- Ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the region, behind Uruguay, on the Global Peace Index
- Highest per capita income in the region
- Lowest perception of corruption in the region

### Foreign Policy Concerns

- Largely pro-UN: a founding member state of the UN, active in many peacekeeping missions, and the first South American nation to join the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).
- Chile maintains strained relations with neighbouring Bolivia due to the Atacama border dispute, which makes Bolivia a landlocked country.
- Border disputes with the neighbours – lots of drug problems near Bolivia and Peru.



## More Information

Wikipedia: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chile>

CIA: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ci.html>

BBC: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-19357497>

Latest news from the New York Times (<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/chile/>)

The Economist ([www.economist.com/topics/chile](http://www.economist.com/topics/chile)),

The Guardian (<http://www.theguardian.com/world/chile>), and