

U.S. Affiliated Pacific Basin Jurisdictions Legal, Geographic and Demographic Information

The United States has special relations with 6 jurisdictions in the Pacific Basin. Two of these six jurisdictions are territories – American Samoa and Guam and one is a commonwealth – the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. These three jurisdictions are part of the United States, as is Puerto Rico (a commonwealth) and the U.S. Virgin Islands (a territory). The residents of these territories are U.S. citizens, except in American Samoa where the islands are U.S. nationals.¹ These three Pacific jurisdictions are often referred to as the Flag Territories.

Three other jurisdictions – the Republic of Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) (comprised of Yap, Pohnpei, Chuuk and Kosrae) – are now independent nations, but previously were districts of the United Nations' Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) created after WWII and administered by the United States. These latter three are often referred to as “Freely Associated States” (FAS) and as “COFA” (Compact of Free Association) states/jurisdictions/nations. For some Federal programs, all six jurisdictions are included in the term “Pacific Insular areas”; for other programs, the term designates only the Flag Territories.

The Compacts of Free Association are agreements designed to mutually benefit the three COFA nations and the U.S. The status of free association recognizes an island government as a sovereign, self-governing state/nation with the capacity to conduct foreign affairs consistent with the terms of the Compact. The Compacts place responsibility for military defense of the three nations with the U.S. and in turn the U.S. has the right to exclude any foreign power from having a military presence in the region. COFA citizens have the right to travel to the United States without visas to maintain “habitual residence” and to pursue education and employment.

Under the initial Compacts, the three nations received economic assistance for 15 years.² This economic assistance included “Compact” funding, some Federal block grant funding and continued eligibility to compete for other Federal grants.³ Although the basic relationship of free association continues indefinitely, the economic provisions were recently renegotiated for the FSM and the RMI. For the FSM and the RMI, the amendments to the Compact signed into law in December 2003, extend the original Compact for another 20 years. They continue key U.S. economic assistance in the areas of health, education, the environment, private sector development, public infrastructure and public sector capacity building.

The Secretary of the Interior has administrative responsibility for coordinating Federal policy in the territories of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. It also has responsibility to administer and oversee assistance provided to the Freely Associated States. Within the Department, the Office of Insular Affairs executes these responsibilities on behalf of the Secretary.

¹ U.S. law makes a distinction between “citizenship” and “nationality” – all U.S. citizens are U.S. nationals, but some U.S. nationals are not U.S. citizens. In Title 8 of the U.S. Cod, the term “national of the United States” is defined as a person who, though not a citizen of the United States, owes permanent allegiance to the United States [8USC § 1101(a)(22)]. A person born in an “outlying possession” of the U.S. is a U.S. national, but not a U.S. citizen [8USC § 1408] and the term “outlying possessions of the United States” means American Samoa and Swains Island [8USC § 1101(a)(29)].

² The economic provisions for FSM and RMI expired in 2001 but were extended 2 years while negotiations continued for the new Compact; the economic provisions for Palau don't expire until 2009.

³ In the original Compact negotiations, the COFA states requested that U.S. Public Health Service programs be available to them. They are not eligible though for the Medicare or Medicaid programs. COFA nations also have the right to use U.S. currency and the U.S. Postal Service provides international postal service.

Island Jurisdiction	Relation to US	Individuals	Congress	Geography	Population
American Samoa	Territory of the U.S. Unincorporated ¹ Unorganized ²	U.S. Nationals (may become naturalized U.S. citizens)	Non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives ³	<p>7 islands (5 volcanic islands & 2 coral atolls) dispersed across 150 miles of water</p> <p>76 square miles of land</p> <p>The island of Tutuila is 56.5 sq miles & has ~95% of the population. Ofu, Olosega and Ta'u lie 60 miles from Tutuila</p> <p>4,700 miles SW of San Francisco 2,500 miles S-SW of Honolulu 1,800 miles N-NE of New Zealand Only Pacific jurisdiction south of equator</p> <p>American Samoa is slightly larger than Washington, D.C.</p>	<p>57,291⁴</p> <p>Population density: 753/square mile</p> <p>Median age-21.3 ~39% <15 years of age⁴</p> <p>Infant mortality: (MCH) 13.3/1000 births 2004</p> <p>~35% of residents are foreign nationals⁴</p>
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)	<p>Self-governing Commonwealth of the U.S.</p> <p>Former Mariana Islands District of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands⁵</p>	U.S. Citizens (since 1986)	Resident Representative to the U.S. ⁶	<p>14 islands, including Saipan, Rota & Tinian, stretching across 430 miles of ocean</p> <p>183.5 square miles of land</p> <p>Rota lies 75 miles from Saipan and <50 miles from Guam.</p> <p>The main island of Saipan is located: 3,700 miles W of Honolulu 1,500 miles S of Tokyo 110 miles NE of Guam</p> <p>2 ½ x the size of Washington, DC</p>	<p>69,221⁷</p> <p>Population density: 377/square mile</p> <p>Median age – 28.7 22.5% <15 years of age⁷</p> <p>Infant mortality: (MCH) 5.9/1000 births - 2004</p> <p>~56% of residents are foreign nationals⁷</p>
Guam	Territory of the U.S. Unincorporated Organized (1950)	U.S. Citizens (since 1950)	Non-voting delegate to the U.S. House of Representatives	<p>1 island</p> <p>212 square miles</p> <p>3,700 miles W-SW of Honolulu 1,500 miles S of Tokyo 1,500 miles E of Manila</p> <p>3 x the size of Washington, DC</p>	<p>154,805⁸</p> <p>Population Density: 730/square mile</p> <p>Median Age -27.4 ~30% <15 years of age⁸</p> <p>Infant Mortality: (MCH) 11.2/1000 births - 2004</p> <p>~18% of residents are foreign nationals⁸</p>

<p>Federated States of Micronesia: Kosrae, Chuuk, Pohnpei, Yap</p>	<p>Sovereign state, freely associated with the United States via a treaty, the Compact of Free Association (COFA)⁹</p> <p>Former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands administered by the United States (1947-1986)¹⁰</p> <p>Independence was attained in 1986 under a Compact of Free Association with the US. This was amended in 2003 and the amended Compact entered into force June 25, 2004.</p>	<p>Citizens of FSM¹¹</p> <p>The COFA permits FSM citizens to enter the US freely (i.e., without a visa and in a nonimmigrant status) to maintain habitual residence and to pursue education & employment¹²</p>	<p>Ambassador to the U.S.</p>	<p>607 small islands grouped into 4 states</p> <p>270.8 sq miles land area and 2,776 sq miles lagoon; stretches 1700 miles from east to west and occupies > 1 million sq miles of the Pacific Ocean</p> <p>Kosrae: 1 high island – 42.3 sq miles</p> <p>Chuuk: 7 major island groups with a total of 290 islands – 49.2 sq miles¹³</p> <p>Pohnpei: 1 major island & 8 smaller outer islands – 133.4 sq miles¹³</p> <p>Yap: 4 large islands, 7 small islands, & 134 atolls & islets – 45.6 sq. miles of land Stretches across 600 miles and covers 500,000 sq miles in the Western Caroline Island chain</p> <p>2500 to 4100 miles SW of Hawaii</p> <p>4 times the size of Washington, DC</p>	<p>107,008¹⁴ plus ~15,000 nonimmigrants in the US</p> <p>Population density: 395/sq mile</p> <p>Kosrae: 7,686 pop. PopDen: 170/sq mile</p> <p>Chuuk: 53,595 pop. PopDen: 1,088/sq mile</p> <p>Pohnpei: 34,486 pop. PopDen: 255/sq mile</p> <p>Yap: 11,241 pop. PopDen: 243/sq mile</p> <p>Median age: 18.9¹⁴ ~38% < 15 years of age</p> <p>Infant Mortality: (MCH) 21.8/1000 births–2003¹⁵</p> <p>~ 2% of residents are foreign nationals</p>
<p>Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI)</p>	<p>Sovereign state, freely associated with the United States via a treaty, the Compact of Free Association.</p> <p>Former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands administered by the United States (1947-1986). (see endnote 10)</p> <p>In 1986 independence was attained under a Compact of Free Association with the US.¹⁶ This was amended in 2003 and the amended Compact entered into force in May 2004.</p>	<p>Citizens of RMI See Endnotes 11 and 12</p>	<p>Ambassador to the U.S.</p>	<p>5 islands and 29 atolls; the islands and the islets of the atolls total 1225¹⁷</p> <p>70 sq miles land area & 4,507 sq miles lagoon. Occupies 822,779 sq miles of the Central Pacific.</p> <p>Majuro Atoll is comprised of 64 islets. 3.75 sq miles of land and 114 sq miles of lagoon¹⁸</p> <p>Kwajalein Atoll is comprised of 93 islets. 6.33 sq miles of land & 839 sq miles of lagoon</p> <p>Ebeye is one of the islets of Kwajalein Atoll. It is ~80 acres or .14 sq miles (~½ of the land area of the Mall in Washington, DC)</p> <p>2500 miles SW of Hawaii 2500 miles SE of Japan 1500 miles E of Guam</p> <p>about the size of Washington, DC</p>	<p>50,848¹⁹</p> <p>Population density: 726/sq mile</p> <p>Majuro Atoll: 23,676 Pop Den: 6,300/sq mile²⁰</p> <p>Kwajalein Atoll: 10,902 PopDen: 1,722/sq mile</p> <p>Ebeye: 9,345 PopDen: 66,750/sq mile²¹</p> <p>Median age: 17.8 years ~39% < 15 years of age</p> <p>Infant mortality: (MCH) 25.3/1000 births - 2004</p> <p>~2.3% of residents are foreign nationals</p>

Republic of Palau	Sovereign state, freely associated with the United States via a treaty, the Compact of Free Association Former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands administered by the United States (1947-1994) ²²	Citizens of the Republic of Palau	Ambassador to the U.S.	6 island groups 196 square miles of land Stretch across 700 miles on a northeast to southwest axis; the Southwest Islands lie ~300 miles SW of the main island group 4500 miles SW of Honolulu 814 miles SW of Guam 500 miles SE of the Philippines ~2.5 x the size of D.C.	19,129 ²³ Population density: 98/square mile Median age: 30.8 years 26.6% < 15 years of age ²¹ Infant mortality: (MCH) 9.6/1000 births - 2004 39% are foreign nationals
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Endnotes:

¹ Unincorporated means that not all provisions of the U.S. Constitution apply.

² Unorganized means that the Congress has not provided an “organic act” to American Samoa. (An organic act is used by Congress to confer powers of government upon a territory, providing for the organization of a territorial government and its relationship to the U.S. government.) Rather, the Congress delegated the authority over American Samoa to the Secretary of Interior, who authorized the territory to draft a constitution, under which it currently operates.

³ The 103rd Congress gave the delegates from Outlying Areas represented in the House of Representatives (Guam, American Samoa and the U.S. Virgin Islands) the right to vote in the Committee of the Whole, but not on matters before the entire House. They therefore have the same powers & privileges as Representatives in standing Committees of the House, but are not able to vote on the House floor.

⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population and Housing Profile 2000 – American Samoa, Issued May 2004. *2000 Census of Population and Housing*. Retrieved January 28, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/island/ASprofile.pdf>. Approximately 17,700 of the foreign nationals are from Samoa, 1,150 from Tonga and 650 from the Philippines.

⁵ After the defeat of the Japanese in WWII, the United Nations created the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI) in 1947. The TTPI included the Northern Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, Palau, Yap, Truk (now Chuuk) and Ponape (now Pohnpei) which also included Kusaie (now Kosrae). The United States administered the TTPI as a “strategic trust”, which indicated the strategic military position of the jurisdictions to U.S. national defense.

⁶ The Resident Representative is an elected official. Under Commonwealth Law the Resident Representative can maintain an office in Washington, DC; represent the Commonwealth before the Congress and Federal agencies; advocate CNMI programs and policies; and act as a liaison for official and unofficial matters pertaining to CNMI.

⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population and Housing Profile 2000 - Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Issued May 2003. *2000 Census of Population and Housing* Retrieved January 28, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/island/CNMIprofile.pdf>. Approximately 15,000 of the foreign born are from the Philippines; 15,000 from China; 2,100 from the Federated States of Micronesia; 1,800 from Korea and 1,240 from Palau.

⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census. Population and Housing Profile 2000 – Guam, Issued May 2004. *2000 Census of Population and Housing*. Retrieved January 28, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.census.gov/prod/cen2000/island/GUAMprofile.pdf>. Approximately 19,100 persons were born in the U.S. Of the foreign born, 32,630 were born in the Philippines; 6,980 in the FSM; 3,250 in Korea; 2,710 in China; 2,450 in Japan and 1,334 in Palau.

⁹ The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of Palau and the Republic of the Marshall Islands are independent nations - they have their own ambassadors to the U.S. as well as their own representatives to the U.N. Each has signed a treaty with the United States called a Compact of Free Association.

¹⁰ The people in the TTPI districts of Truk, Yap, Ponape, and Kusaie voted in a referendum on July 12, 1978 to form a Federation under the Constitution of the Federated States of Micronesia. The FSM Constitution was implemented on May 10, 1979. The Compact of Free Association Treaty was signed October 1, 1982. A period of negotiating, related agreements and completion of constitutional processes of ratification followed, and the Compact entered into force on November 3, 1986. US Public Law 99-239 (January 14, 1986) contains the text of the Compact and related provisions of U.S. law.

¹¹ Under the terms of section 141 of the Compact of 1982, citizens of the FSM and the RMI who were formerly citizens of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands became citizens of the FSM and RMI respectively.

¹² Citizens of the FSM and RMI have unrestricted access to the United States to live, work, study and assume "habitual residence" with no U.S. visa requirement without regard to paragraphs (14), (20) and (28) of section 212A of the Immigration and Nationality Act. (See 8 CFR 2121(d); INS CO Wire 2121-P dtd. 11/5/86). In order to enter the United States for the above purposes, citizens of the FSM or RMI must possess an appropriate travel document. Under the amended Compact, an FSM or RMI passport is required.

¹³ The 15 islands of the Chuuk lagoon cover 39 square miles of Chuuk's total 49.2 sq miles; the Chuuk lagoon covers 822 sq miles. It takes commuter boats 1½ hours to 2 hours to cross the lagoon. Chuuk's Mortlock islands lie over 180 miles SE of the Chuuk Lagoon.

The main island of Pohnpei is 129 square miles of the total 133.4 sq miles of Pohnpei state. Pohnpei's outer islands range from 21 miles to 410 miles from Pohnpei proper. They are visited 1/month by a field trip boat.

¹⁴ National Government of the Federated States of Micronesia. Retrieved on January 31, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.fsmsgov.org/info/people.html> Other sources (e.g., CIA) give population estimates that are several thousand higher. Of the approximately 15,000 FSM citizens are living in the U.S. as nonimmigrants, 7,000 reside in Guam; 3,000 in CNMI; and 5,000 in Hawaii & mainland.

¹⁵ Because of the relatively small populations in the COFA states, a small number of deaths may change the infant mortality rate quite significantly. Variation is also noted between data sources. The CIA website gives an infant mortality rate of 31.28 (2004 est.): <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/fm.html#People>.

¹⁶ The Government of the Marshall Islands and the Government of the U.S. signed the final version of the Compact of Free Association on June 25, 1983. It was signed into law by President Reagan on January 14, 1986 (PL 99-239). The Compact entered into force for RMI on October 21, 1986 (Presidential Proclamation No. 5564).

¹⁷ None of the atoll islands is more than a few meters above sea level. The highest point is only 10 meters above sea level. The widest island is less than 1 mile across.

¹⁸ Most sources give the landmass of Majuro as 3.75 (e.g., WHO-WPRO) but one source gives the landmass of Majuro as 3.26 sq miles (<http://www.rmiembassyus.org/statistics/pdf/Demographics/LandAreaDensVarYrs.pdf>.)

¹⁹ Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands – U.S. Embassy. *Land Area and Population by Atoll and Island*. (cite 1999 census data) Retrieved on February 2, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.rmiembassyus.org/statistics/pdf/Demographics/LandAreaDensVarYrs.pdf>. The CIA website (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ps.html>) gives a 'July 2004 est.' population of 57,738 with a median age of 19.6 years.

²⁰ In the Majuro Atoll, the population density of 3 connected islets of Dalap-Uliga-Darrit (~1/2 sq mile land mass) is 30,370 persons/sq mile.

²¹ Ebeye islet in the Kwajalein Atoll is one of the most densely populated areas on earth. A causeway is being built between Ebeye and another islet - Gugeegu Island - to allow people to settle there and relieve some of the overcrowding on Ebeye. The overcrowding in many homes in Majuro and Ebeye has increased the incidence of communicable diseases such as TB, leprosy, and skin and eye diseases.

²² The Compact between the Republic of Palau and the United States entered into force on October 1, 1994.

²³ Republic of Palau – Office of Planning and Statistics. Republic of Palau 2000 Census – Population and Housing Profile. Retrieved on February 1, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.pacificweb.org/rop/Final%20Monograph1a/FINAL%20Monograph1a%20.pdf>. The CIA website (<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ps.html>) gives a 'July 2004 est.' population of 20,016 with a median age of 31.1 years.

Sources :

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U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. *The World Factbook*. Retrieved January 25, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *National Outcome Measure #01- The infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births*. Retrieved on February 2, 2005 from the World Wide Web: <https://performance.hrsa.gov/mchb/mchreports/Search/core/corsch02o.asp>. The sources for the infant mortality data used in the chart are the Title V Block Grant reports submitted by the governments of all the jurisdictions. These annual reports provide information on key measures and indicators of maternal and child health (MCH).

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