**TUVALU**

Demographic, economic and gender profile

**Factsheet**

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**Land area**

30 km²

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**Gross Domestic Product (GDP)**

- GDP (million, current USD, 2017): 39.7
- GDP per capita (current USD, 2017): 3550
- GDP growth rate (%: average 2010-2017): 2.8

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**Population**

- Total (2017): 11,192
- Density (per km², 2017): 373
- Urban (% of total, 2017): 62
- Life expectancy (years, 2016, male/female): 65/71

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**Human Development**

- Human Development Index (HDI) 2018: ..
- HDI rank: ..
- Population below income poverty line (%: 2010): 3.3
- Gini Index (2010): 39.1
- UN LDC group: Yes

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**Tuvalu’s sectoral structure of economic activity**

(share of GDP in per cent, 2016)

- Agriculture: 24.3
- Industry: 8.2
- Services: 67.5

Source: Calculations based on UNCTADstat Database

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**KEY FACTS**

- The services sector remains the main source of employment in Tuvalu.
- As in the other 9PICs¹, Tuvalu’s small market prevents it from enjoying the potential benefits of economies of scale. This, combined with geographical remoteness, creates difficulties for the country to integrate into international markets.

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**Note:**

- HDI is a composite index that integrates three basic dimensions of human development: life expectancy at birth as a proxy of the ability to live a long and healthy life; mean years of schooling and expected years of schooling as a proxy of acquired knowledge; and gross national income per capita as a proxy of the ability to achieve a decent standard of living. An HDI close to zero indicates greater distance from the maximum that can be achieved on the factors entering the HDI and vice versa. For technical details, see http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-index-hdi.
- Based on USD (PPP) 1.90 per day.
- The Gini coefficient measures the deviation of the distribution of income among individuals or households from a perfectly equal distribution. A coefficient of 0 represents perfect income equality (all persons or households have the same income) and a value of 1, perfect income inequality (all income is concentrated by one person or one household).
- ¹ Nine Pacific Island Countries Signatories of the PACER Plus (9PICs).

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## Trade profile

Tuvalu’s membership in trade agreements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement</th>
<th>Scope</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA)</td>
<td>Duty free access to the markets of Australia and New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cotonou Agreement</td>
<td>Development; political; economic and trade cooperation. From “non-reciprocal” trade preferences in favour of Africa, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries to reciprocal trade preferences through Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA)</td>
<td>Progressive reduction/elimination of tariffs among member countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PICTA Trade in Services Protocol (PICTA-TIS)</td>
<td>Preferential trade among the parties on a range of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus</td>
<td>Trade in goods and services, temporary movement of skilled workers, investment, development and economic cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Scheme of Preferences (GSP)</td>
<td>Beneficiaries have duty free or preferential access to the donor country markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everything But Arms (EBA)</td>
<td>Beneficiaries enjoy full duty free and quota free access to the European Union market for all products (except arms and armaments)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNCTAD Secretariat

### Tuvalu’s trade composition by product group between 2015-2017

#### (per cent shares)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Imports</th>
<th>Exports</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary products</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>59.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource-based manufacture</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low technology manufacture</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>11.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium technology manufacture</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High technology manufacture</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unclassified</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculations based on UNCTADstat Database

### Tuvalu’s main export and import products

#### (2015-2017 average)

**EXPORTS (share of total)**

- Fish, fresh (live or dead), chilled or frozen: 58.8
- Ships, boats & floating structures: 7.1
- Baby carriages, toys, games & sporting goods: 4.2
- Special yarn, special textile fabrics & related: 2.5
- Cathode valves & tubes: 2.4
- Other: 24.9

**IMPORTS (share of total)**

- Ships, boats & floating structures: 15.0
- Petroleum oils or bituminous minerals >70% oil: 8.1
- Cathode valves & tubes: 3.6
- Structures & parts, n.e.s., of iron, steel, aluminium: 3.0
- Mechanical handling equipment, & parts, n.e.s.: 2.9
- Other: 67.5

Source: Calculations based on UNCTADstat Database
Tuvalu's main export and import partners (2015-2017 average)

**EXPORTS (share of total)**

- Japan: 42.9%
- China: 14.7%
- United Kingdom: 8.3%
- India: 7.0%
- Korea, Republic of: 5.5%
- ROW: 21.5%

**IMPORTS (share of total)**

- Singapore: 24.7%
- Japan: 17.6%
- Fiji: 14.0%
- China: 10.4%
- Australia: 8.9%
- ROW: 24.4%

Source: Calculations based on UNCTADstat Database

### KEY FACTS

- Merchandise exports as a percentage of GDP in Tuvalu remained very low (less than 1 per cent) in both 2005–2007 and 2015–2017, while merchandise imports grew from about 43 to almost 53 per cent of GDP for the same periods. Trade in services, on the other hand, maintained its share of GDP for the same periods of about 10 per cent in the case of exports while it decreased (from 59 to about 47 per cent of GDP) in the case of imports.

- The technological classification of trade for the period 2015–2017 shows that most of Tuvalu’s exports (60 per cent) are primary products and medium technology manufactures (16 per cent). Imports are led by medium technology manufactures (27 per cent) and resource-based manufactures (18 per cent).

- Tuvalu has high dependence on few export products as shown by its concentration index. The index decreased from 0.37 on average for the period 1995–1997 to 0.56 for 2015–2017. Tuvalu’s concentration index of imports also increased significantly for the same periods (from 0.11 to 0.30).

- Tuvalu’s main export markets are in developed Asia (the share grew from 0.7 to 43 per cent between 1995–1997 and 2015–2017) and in developing Asia (about 30 per cent for both periods). Japan and China are the country’s leading export partners; yet, one should note that merchandise exports as a share of GDP is very low in Tuvalu.

- Tuvalu’s imports from developing Asia increased sharply between 1995–1997 and 2015–2017 (from 5 to 47 per cent of total imports). Imports from developed Asia and developing Oceania also rose (from 8 to 18 per cent, and from nil to 14 per cent, respectively). In contrast, developed Oceania relative importance in Tuvalu’s imports weakened (from 50 to 15 per cent of Tuvalu’s total imports).

- Tuvalu is not a member of the WTO.

- Tuvalu is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

### Gender profile

- Tuvalu has achieved gender parity in primary education (UNFPA Pacific Sub-regional Office, 2014). Notably, gender gaps in school enrolment at the secondary and tertiary levels favour women.

- The Labour Force Participation rate in 2016 was 73 per cent for men and 41 per cent for women; among the youth (15–24 years old) it was 53 per cent for men and 26 per cent for women.

- 77 per cent of employed women work in the services sector; 10 per cent in agriculture and 4 per cent in industry.

- Women are mainly employed in the following services: Public administration, community, social, personal and similar services (65 per cent); trade including wholesale, retail trade and repair (11 per cent); and finance (5 per cent).

- Tuvaluan customary law, intrinsic to the Constitution of Tuvalu, can discriminate against women when non-discriminatory and equality principles conflict with the law.

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Note:

1. Lall (2000).

6. The Concentration Index or Herfindahl-Hirschmann Index is a measure of the degree of product concentration of exports (or imports). Values close to 1 indicate that export (or imports) are highly concentrated in a few products while values close to 0 indicate a more homogeneous distribution of exports (or imports) among a wider range of products (UNCTADstat).

7. These periods have been chosen to analyse whether there have been significant changes or not after two decades.

8. PIF is the region’s premier political and economic policy organization.
specially recognised traditional values. This is the case in areas of land, inheritance and decision making. The Constitution is currently under review.

- The Tuvalu National Gender Policy (2014–2019) recognizes the importance of increasing capacity within all sectors of government to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment (including in legislation), and to creating an enabling environment for the full participation of women in economic development and to participate in decision-making so to enhance leadership and governance at all levels. It also calls for the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

**Tuvalu’s gender inputs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ratified International Conventions or Commitments</th>
<th>Gender in trade policy</th>
<th>Other Gender Programmes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agenda 2030 (2015)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing Community Resilience through Empowerment of Women to Address Climate Change and Natural Hazards Programme (IREACH, UN Women).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sources: Pacific Islands Legal Information Institute; University of the South Pacific’s School of Law; UN Women – Asia-Pacific (2018).*