

# US in the WORLD

CONNECTING PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES TO ENSURE A HEALTHY PLANET



Largest metropolitan areas by population (1996): Nashville (1,117,178), Memphis (Tenn., Ark., Miss.) (1,078,151), Knoxville (649,277)



Comparison at same scale

Tennessee  
Area: 42,144 sq. miles  
Population: 5.4 million

Honduras  
Area: 43,277 sq. miles  
Population: 5.8 million



Largest urban area by population (1995): Tegucigalpa (995,000)

Every winter, a bird, the Tennessee warbler, travels to Honduras' 5-million-hectare broadleaf and conifer forests. In May 1998, devastating wildfires ravaged Mexico and Central America, forcing Honduras' airports to close and producing haze in some U.S. states—including Tennessee and its neighbors. These transboundary exchanges illustrate the delicate equilibrium of Tennessee and Honduras as they share common ecological territory.

From the Blue Ridge Mountains in the east to the Mississippi River in the west, Tennessee's diverse ecosystems showcase a rich array of wildlife, plant life, and habitats. Due in large part to the state's location across 10 distinct landscape regions, these systems rank it among the top 10 states for biological diversity. Tennessee boasts over 200 globally rare sites and more rare, threatened, or endangered species than any other state without a coastline.

As Central America's second largest country, Honduras also offers an immense diversity of terrain and habitat. It can be divided into three principal regions: highlands and interior valleys, lowlands of the Caribbean, and lowlands of the Pacific. Like Tennessee, Honduras' location and topography have given rise to a diversity of ecosystems—including marine, coastal, terrestrial, and riverine. As a result, it has one of Central America's highest species diversities, second only to Costa Rica.

Notwithstanding this natural wealth, the median household income for Tennesseans—\$30,300 between 1994 and 1996—is well below the U.S. average. Tennesseans, however, fare much better than Hondurans. In Honduras, 73 percent of the population lives at or below poverty level, making it the poorest country in Central America. Deterioration of natural

resources has contributed significantly to this low level of socioeconomic welfare.

More Tennesseans than Hondurans live in urban areas, but Honduras' main cities (Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula) are growing fast. This results from three factors: a total fertility rate of 5.3 children per woman; an influx of refugees from neighboring countries; and rural landlessness that spurs rural-to-urban migration.

While urban and industrial areas make up only 2 percent of Tennessee, the most water pollution problems occur in these areas. Threats include siltation, increased development, agricultural runoff, and the effects of mining. Development is also responsible for forest fragmentation and loss of large-scale ecological processes. Statewide air monitoring data depict steady improvements in air quality, yet

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# TENNESSEE

## Demographic and Health Trends

- Tennessee's population increased 10 percent between 1990 and 1997, about the same as the South as a whole and slightly higher than the average for the United States.
- Migration—particularly from other states—has fueled most of Tennessee's growth in the 1990s. Of the nearly one-half million persons the state gained between 1990 and 1997, about 300,000 came from other states.
- Nashville has emerged as Tennessee's largest metropolitan area in the 1990s, due to a 13 percent increase between 1990 and 1996.
- Most of Tennessee's slowest growing counties are rural. Hancock in east Tennessee, Clay and Pickett in middle Tennessee, and Obion and Haywood in west Tennessee all have grown by less than 2 percent since 1990.

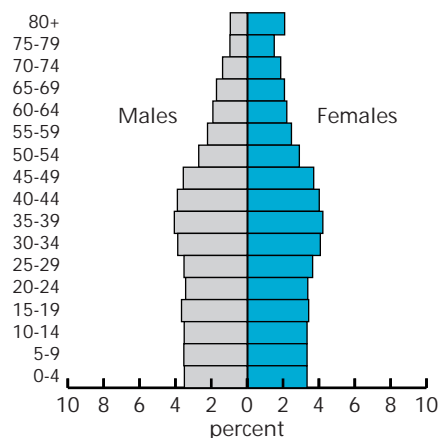
## Natural Resources and Wildlife Issues

- In 1996, 9.3 million persons visited Great Smoky Mountains National Park—more visitors than any other national park. This popularity has produced problems. Traffic inside the park currently is up to 3.9 million cars annually, producing air pollution that is sometimes worse than that of Los Angeles. In addition, the rapid growth of nearby communities is affecting wildlife habitat.
- In 1996, 74 percent of Tennessee's stream miles and 78 percent of its lake acres were found to be of excellent water quality. The challenges involved with further improvement, however, vary by region. Agricultural runoff has the greatest impact in west Tennessee; industrial and residential development in middle Tennessee; and mining in parts of east Tennessee.
- Tennessee has 68 endangered and threatened animals. Among them are the red wolf, the red-cockaded woodpecker, the bald eagle, the peregrine falcon, six species of darter, and 16 species of pearl mussel. The state's 19 endangered and threatened plants include the Blue Ridge goldenrod, Eggert's sunflower, and the Tennessee yellow-eyed grass.

## Socioeconomic Factors

- Tennessee has had one of the fastest growing economies in the interior South. The state's total gross state product (GSP) increased 20 percent (when adjusted for inflation) between 1990 and 1994—more than twice the national growth rate of 8 percent over the same period. Tennessee's total GSP was \$126.5 billion in 1994.
- Automobile manufacturing has fueled much of Tennessee's growth, due partly to the building of Nissan and Saturn Corporation automobile plants in middle Tennessee. The "Volunteer State" now ranks fourth in terms of auto production (behind Michigan, California, and Ohio), and its auto industry employs nearly 100,000 persons—one-fifth of the state's manufacturing base.

## POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX

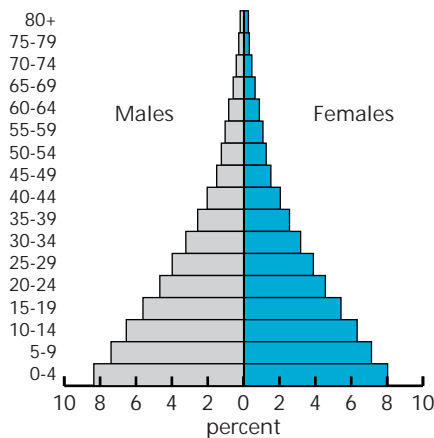


## TENNESSEE FACTS

Population, 1997: 5.4 million
Projected population, 2025: 6.7 million
Annual growth rate: 1.1%
Doubling time (at current rate): 64 years
Average number of children per woman: 1.9
Infant deaths per 1,000 live births: 9.3
Life expectancy: 70 (male), 78 (female)
Persons per square mile: 130
Percent urban: 61
Endangered/threatened animals: 68 species
Endangered/threatened plants: 19 species
Percent of land protected: 6
Wetlands loss, 1780-1980: 59%
Daily water use per capita: 1,920 gallons
Water use for domestic purposes: 8%
Water use for agriculture: 1%
Water use for industry: 9%
Water use for energy production: 82%
Cropland per capita: 2.1 acres
Energy use per capita: 64.9 barrels of oil equiv.
Persons per motor vehicle: 1.0
Adults who are high school graduates: 79%
Elected officials who are women: 13%
Labor force in agriculture: 4%
Labor force in industry: 24%
Labor force in services: 72%
Gross State Product, 1994: \$24,452 per capita

# HONDURAS

## POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX



## HONDURAS FACTS

Population, 1997: 5.8 million

Projected population, 2025: 9.7 million

Annual growth rate: 2.5%

Doubling time (at current rate): 28 years

Average number of children per woman: 5.2

Infant deaths per 1,000 live births: 43

Life expectancy: 65 (male), 70 (female)

Persons per square mile: 133

Percent urban: 47

Threatened animals: 20 species

Threatened plants: 55 species

Percent of land protected: 7.7

Wetlands loss, through 1980s: n.a.

Percent with access to safe water: 87

Percent with adequate sanitation: 87

Daily water use per capita: 212 gallons

Water use for domestic purposes: 4%

Water use for agriculture: 91%

Water use for industry: 5%

Cropland per capita: 0.9 acres

Energy use per capita: 1.3 barrels of oil equiv.

Persons per motor vehicle: 63

Percent of girls in secondary school: 37

Percent of boys in secondary school: 29

Women as % of national legislature: 8

Labor force in agriculture: 38%

Labor force in industry: 20%

Labor force in services: 42%

GDP per capita, 1995: US\$716

## Demographic and Health Trends

■ Honduran women have the highest fertility in Central America—an average of 5.2 children. This level represents a decline of 31 percent since the early 1950s.

■ The country's population will continue to grow in large numbers for many years because high fertility levels in the past have produced a very large young population who will soon move into their childbearing years (see pyramid).

■ Since the early 1950s, mortality rates have fallen by 62 percent and

life expectancy has increased. This rapid mortality decline, also accompanied by a fertility decline, had led to a high population growth rate.

■ By the middle of the 20th century only 18 percent of Hondurans lived in urban areas. By 1975, 32 percent were urban dwellers. At the close of the century, 47 percent were urban. Rural residents are 56 percent less likely to have access to health facilities than are their urban counterparts. They are also less likely to have adequate sanitation or safe water.

## Natural Resources and Wildlife Issues

■ Honduras is currently losing its forests at the rate of over 2 percent annually due to unsound forestry practices, forest destruction by subsistence farmers, the use of wood as a principal energy source for homes and small industries, and widespread forest fires.

■ Hondurans consume 2.5 percent as much commercial energy per capita as do Americans. Total Tennessean energy consumption per capita,

however, is 50 times higher than Honduran consumption. Traditional fuels (such as fuelwood, charcoal, and animal and vegetable wastes) provide over 50 percent of the energy used in Honduras.

■ Threatened species in Honduras include the jaguar, American crocodile, turtles, dolphins, manatees, warblers, the black solitary eagle, ocellated quail, and magnificent quetzal.

## Socioeconomic Factors

■ Income distribution is highly skewed. The lowest 10 percent receive 1.5 percent of income or consumption and the highest 10 percent receive 42 percent.

■ In 1980, agriculture and industry each accounted for 24 percent of the country's gross domestic product; in 1995, industry's share increased to 33 percent and agriculture's share declined to 21 percent.

■ About 75 percent of Honduran adults are literate—somewhat lower than the 86 percent average for Central America. In Honduras, men and women are equally likely to be able to read and write.

■ Official development assistance accounts for 9 percent of the country's gross national product.

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recent analyses suggest that at current levels 12 counties will not be in compliance with future national standards for ozone.

Environmental problems in Honduras include deforestation, ecological deterioration from an exploitative shrimp industry, mounting pressure on coastal fisheries, the clearing of mangrove lagoons for firewood and agricultural lands, and weak legal and institutional mechanisms. Water resources are fundamental to the country because its economy is based primarily on forestry and agriculture. Water supplies are endangered by inadequate rural watershed management and poor municipal sewerage and refuse disposal. Like in Tennessee, the most affected waters are the rivers that run through the largest cities, and port cities where sewage runs directly into the marshes, bays, and seas. The seasonal scarcity of water becomes acute because of widespread deforestation in the watersheds.

In November 1998, Hurricane Mitch dumped 50 inches of rain on areas in Honduras that, due to drought and deforestation, had little or no vegetation to prevent landslides. At least an estimated 5,000 Hondurans were killed and more than two-thirds of the nation's crops were destroyed.

## Responding to Challenges

Tennessee has engaged local, state, and federal participants in a watershed-based approach to controlling water pollution and improving water quality. This approach recognizes that water quality is a function of not just one stream, but rather an entire watershed, and that each watershed has its own unique need. With regard to air quality, the Tennessee 2000 Initiative was formed in 1993 as a cooperative effort among government, environmental groups, industry, and academia to reduce the release of air toxins.

In Honduras, the U.S. Agency for International Development is funding an \$18 million land use project aimed at reducing the unsustainable practices of small hillside farmers, which lead to erosion and watershed disruption. The Honduran government and international donors have also contributed \$17 million each to a Forestry Development Project that focuses on the sustainable management of commercial pine forests and the effi-

cient manufacturing and marketing of wood products. On a more modest scale, the Greenwood Furniture Project was launched in 1993 with the help of chairmakers from Tennessee and Kentucky, who introduced students to hand-tool working methods. In 1995, the United States provided \$46 mil-

**P**eople in Tennessee and Honduras, along with all other living creatures, need clean and healthy air, water, and land, and a stable climate. But as people strive to meet these fundamental needs and improve their lives, they make demands on Earth's resources—and leave footprints. No species demands as much and leaves as many footprints as humans do. The number of people on the planet has a direct impact on the environment and how resources are used. But the level of consumption and the ways in which natural resources are used also directly affect the health of the planet—locally, regionally, globally.

No matter where one lives, the activities of *all* humans will ultimately determine the well-being of *all* humans.

lion, or about 11 percent of total disbursements of official development assistance, to Honduras and was the third leading donor behind the World Bank and Japan. In 1998, 204 U.S. Peace Corps volunteers were working in the country. ■

**DEFINITIONS:** Doubling Time: The number of years it will take for a population to double, assuming a *constant* rate of natural increase. Average Number of Children Per Woman: Known as the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) or the average number of children a woman would have in her lifetime, assuming that birth rates remained constant throughout her childbearing years. Endangered Species: Any species in danger of extinction throughout all, or a significant portion of its habitat. Threatened Species: Any species likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future throughout all, or a significant portion of its habitat. Gross Domestic Product (GDP): The value of all goods and services produced within a nation in a given year. Gross State Product (GSP): The value of all goods and services produced within a state. It is the state counterpart of the nation's GDP.

**SOURCES:** Major sources are International Labour Organization; National Center for Health Statistics; UNICEF; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Department of Agriculture; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Geological Survey; The World Conservation Union (IUCN); and World Resources Institute. For a complete list of sources, contact PRB.

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