



# Facts about Cuba. Did you know?

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**Did you know:** that the United States has imposed an economic, commercial, and financial blockade on Cuba since 1962?

- that the economic damage of this blockade to Cuba has been over \$1.16 trillion?
- that the United Nations has condemned this United States policy annually since 1992?
- that in 2016 of the 193 member nations, not one country voted against the declaration? Only two countries — the United States and Israel — abstained.
- that Cuba has official diplomatic relations with 160 nations?
- that according to the U.S. government, “The embargo on Cuba is the most comprehensive set of American sanctions ever imposed upon a country”?
- the blockade of Cuba is still in effect even after the Dec. 17, 2014 decision to formalize diplomatic relations?

**Did you know:** that U.S. tourism to Cuba is prohibited by United States law?

- that the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) allows travel only in 12 regulated categories of activities?
- that since 2012, all Cuban citizens have had the right to travel abroad including for tourism and including to the United States?
- the United States imposed a \$619 million fine on ING Bank and a \$9 billion fine on BNP Bank Paribas fine and HSBC paid \$1.9 billion for violating the unilateral U.S. sanctions against conducting business in Cuba? As a result banks and other companies are reluctant to engage in transactions with Cuba, denying Cuban diplomatic offices the ability to conduct normal and legal business transactions.

**Did you know:** that there are 52,000 Cuban medical workers offering their services in 92 countries?

- that Cuba has the largest medical school in the world, the Latin American School of Medicine (ELAM)?

- that over 23,000 doctors from 123 countries have studied at ELAM?
- that nearly 200 students from the U.S. have studied medicine at ELAM?
- that half the students are women?
- that the students receive medical training at no cost; the only commitment is to work in underserved communities?
- that Cuba has nearly 500 health professionals serving on the front lines against Ebola in West Africa?
- that these Cuban volunteers comprise the world's largest contingent of health workers fighting Ebola?
- that ELAM graduates from the United States voluntarily provided medical care at the Standing Rock protest actions?

**Did you know** Cuba's International health professionals are known as the Henry Reeve Brigade, named for a U.S. citizen who died in 1876 fighting for Cuban independence against Spain?

- which was established in 2005 and are especially trained in disaster relief?
- the Reeve Brigade first volunteered their services to the United States victims of Hurricane Katrina? This offer was rejected by the United States.
- that since then, the Reeve Brigade has provided medical services to Pakistan, Indonesia, Guatemala, Haiti, West African nations, and most recently, Nepal.

**Did you know:** that life expectancy in Cuba is 79.39 years and in the United States, 78.8 years virtually equal?

- that Cuba has a better child mortality rate than the United States 4.6 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015, compared to 5.87 for the United States?
- that all health care in Cuba is provided at no cost?
- that per capita spending on health care in Cuba is \$186; 1/25 of the amount spent in the United States?
- that the ratio of patients per doctor in Cuba is 170-1; the best in the world? (The ratio in the United States is 390-1.)

**Did you know:** that Cuba has a literacy rate of 99.8%?

- that education is provided at no cost to all Cubans and at all levels of education; it is 100% government supported?
- that over 8 million people in the world have learned how to read through the Cuban literacy method: Yo Si Puedo” (Yes, I can)?

**Did you know:** that Cuba identifies itself as an Afro-Cuban country and has ongoing efforts to protect its African roots?

- that Afro-Cubans have education levels and health indicators equivalent to those of white Cubans?
- that Afro-Cubans are represented in the highest levels of government?

**Did you know:** that the World Wildlife Fund called Cuba “the only country in the world to have achieved sustainable development” measured as a combination of human development index and environmental sustainability?

**Did you know:** that the first example of a terrorist bombing of a civilian airplane took place on 10/6/76 when a Cubana airliner (flight 455) was blown out of the sky killing all 73 aboard?

- that those responsible for this terrorist act, Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch, have lived freely in Miami, Florida?
- that terrorist attacks against Cuba, most originating from the United States, have resulted in 3,478 deaths?
- that there have been over 5000 terrorist actions against Cuba?

**Did you know:** that Cuba has a union organization, Central de Trabajadores de Cuba (CTC) that was founded in 1939?

- that membership is voluntary, dues are paid directly by members, and 98% of workers are members of unions?

**Did you know:** that Cuban women have had a dedicated organization, the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), to represent women’s issues since 1960?

- that 90% of Cuban women are members of the FMC?
- that Cuban law guarantees fully paid maternity leave for 18 weeks and 60% pay for a full year?
- that according to the United Nations Cuba is among the countries with the best women’s rights indicators?
- that 43% of Cuban parliament members are

women?

- that 66.1% of Cuban professionals are women?
- that most Cuban judges, attorneys and lawyers are women, a fact that is not common in any other country?

**Did you know:** that the leader of Cuba’s National Center for Sex Education (Genesex), and advocate of LGBT rights is Mariela Castro, daughter of Raul Castro, Cuba’s president and Vilma Espin, founder of the Federation of Cuban Women and a guerilla in the revolutionary war?

- that LGBT rights in Cuba are fully protected by National Labor Laws?
- May 17 the International Day Against Homophobia is celebrated in Cuba?

**Did you know:** that Cuba has a parliamentary system of government; the National Assembly of Peoples’ Power?

- that elections take place in Cuba every 5 years?
- that although voting is voluntary, participation is over 90% in every election?
- voter registration is automatic at age 16?
- that membership in the Communist party is not a requirement for candidates?
- that all elections are contested?
- that candidates for office are proposed directly from the communities in local meetings?
- that votes are secret and are counted in public while observed by school children?

**Did you know:** that Cuba spends 12.8% of its GDP on education, 45% on health, and only 1% on military spending

**Did you know:** that over 35% of Cubans have daily access to the Internet including in over 200 WiFi zones

**Did you know:** that United States law demands that in order to play major league baseball in the United States, Cuban players must defect and renounce their Cuban citizenship?