

URUGUAY

Continent: South America

[Population](#): 3.5 million

[Life Expectancy \(at Birth\)](#): 78.4

[Governance System](#):

Capital: Montevideo

[Area](#): 175,020 km²

Major Languages: Spanish

[GDP \(2021\)](#): 59,320 US\$ millions

Select Global Rankings

[Human Development Index](#): 58th

[Fragile States Index - Inverted](#): 23rd

[Soft Power 30 rank](#): NR

[Human Freedom Index](#): 33rd

[World Happiness Ranking](#): 30th

[Good Country Index](#): 45th

Elite Sport System Rankings

[Global Cup Ranking](#): NR

[Per Capita Cup Ranking](#): NR

[Olympic Medals – Summer '20](#): 0 (NR)

[Olympic Medals – Winter '22](#): 0 (NR)

Football/World Cup Profile

[FIFA Region](#): CONMEBOL

[FIFA Ranking](#): 14

World Cup Appearances: 14

Best World Cup Performance(s): Champions (1930, 1950)

Qualification: CONMEBOL 3rd place

[World Cup Group](#): H

Last World Cup Appearance: 2018

URUGUAY in INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS (by Oliver Campbell)

Uruguay has had a rather tumultuous [history](#), being colonized by both the Portuguese and the Spanish, going from a monarchy, then to military dictatorship, finally becoming a democracy in 1985. During its period of military rule, political opponents were either jailed or killed, with human rights abuses being committed across the country. During this period, 160 people went missing. Most recently in the 21st century, Uruguay has reconstructed their image as human rights promoters, opening a commission in 2000 into the 160 people gone missing, and in 2009 took repealed laws shielding former dictators from prosecution of human rights abuses. In 2013 Uruguay was the second country to legalize gay marriage in South America (after Argentina) and was also the second country to legalize abortion for all women. Uruguay was also the first country to legalize the production, sale, and consumption of recreational marijuana in 2013, which drew heavy criticism from the [UN drugs watchdog](#), saying it violates international law. Uruguay was also the first host country of the FIFA World Cup tournament in [1930](#), later winning the championship with a 4-2 win over Argentina.

Uruguay is a part of several international organizations such as the United Nations, but other regional groups like the Organization of American States (OAS) and MERCOSUR.

[OAS](#) is an international organization devoted to promoting democracy, human rights, security, and development in the Americas. It is the oldest regional organization, having first began in 1889 at the First International Conference of American States.

[MERCOSUR](#) is an organization of South American states with the goal of promoting and expanding trade and investment in the South American region. It is essentially the integration of South American economies (of member states). Aside from the organizations already listed, Uruguay is a part of almost 30 other international organizations, making them a very active member of the international community, especially when compared to their size.

Uruguay's international reputation is strong, with it being viewed as a free and fair country when it comes to [democratic rights and civil liberties](#). Uruguay also ranks very highly when compared to other countries in the OECD, and even ranks highly overall in terms of their economy and democratic status. They are one of the best performers in the Latin America economy, and have done considerably well in their COVID response. Uruguay's primary [economic and political allies](#) are neighbours Argentina and Brazil, although they do have a working relationship with Venezuela, Peru, Columbia, and even arms-length relations with Mexico and Bolivia. Uruguay also has strong ties with Europe and the United Kingdom.