Getting Started...

Country Information

Web versions of this and other Getting Started guides are available at [http://www.marymount.edu/lls/guides](http://www.marymount.edu/lls/guides)

The following sources in this guide are good places to begin your research.

**Country Overview**

Political, geographic, economic, and sociological summaries organized by country.

The reports include recent news articles, country profiles, forecasts, fact sheets, and economic data.

**Encyclopaedia Britannica.** [http://www.aladin.wrlc.org](http://www.aladin.wrlc.org)
Lists entries on all world countries detailing their geography, people, economy, government, society, cultural life, and history. Provides a list of best websites on the country. Also, allows one to compare two different countries by maps, flags, statistics, events, and multimedia.

**The Europa World Year Book** (2 vol.) REF JN1 .E85
Volume 1 consists of entries on the United Nations and its other sister organizations, as well as entries on other international organizations. Then half of volume one and volume two include an Introductory Survey that constitutes information on economic, social, and political factors of states and countries. It concludes with overviews of governments, constitutions, and officials.

**Global Gateway: World Culture and Resources.** [http://international.loc.gov/intldl/intldlhome.html](http://international.loc.gov/intldl/intldlhome.html)
Links to the international sites at the Library of Congress.

Produced by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress, the studies are a historical, social, cultural, economic, and political analysis of 101 world countries.

Produced by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress, 50 country profiles “offer brief summarized information on a country, historical background, geography, society, economy, transportation and telecommunications, government and politics, and national security.”

**U.S. Department of State Background Notes.** [http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn)
Provides publications which include “facts about the land, people, history, government, political conditions, economy, and foreign relations of independent states, some dependencies, and areas of special sovereignty.”

Click on countries and retrieve background information and up to date reports on all countries in the world.
**Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations** (6 vol.) REF G63 .W67
Details the organization of the United Nations and the geography, history, economics of the world. In the last volume on world leaders, the edition provides a biography of the leaders from each country of the world.

**Statistics**

**Gale Country and World Rankings Reporter** REF HA154 .G35
“3,000 country and world rankings on a variety of topics, including arts and leisure, demographics, education, government, expenditures, taxes, etc. from government, business, and general interest sources.”

**The Illustrated Book of World Rankings** REF HA155 .K87
“Is designed as an international scorecard that compares and ranks over 190 nations of the world according to their performance in almost 300 key areas.”

**International Database (IDB).** [http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/](http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/)
From the U.S. Census Bureau, provides tables, country rankings, and world population information.

**International Statistical Agencies** [http://www.bls.gov/bls/other.htm](http://www.bls.gov/bls/other.htm)
Links to international statistical agencies.

**NationMaster.com.** [http://www.nationmaster.com](http://www.nationmaster.com)
Statistics worldwide on the environment, education, energy, immigration, terrorism, transportation, and more.

**The Statesman’s Year-Book** (annual) REF JA51 .S7
Divided into two sections, the first part covers International Organizations, beginning with the United Nations and also including worldwide organizations. The second part delves into the history, territory and population, social statistics, climate, constitution and government, recent elections, current administration, current leaders, international relations, economy, industry, international trade, communications, social institutions, and culture of each country in the world.

**Statistical Abstract of the United States**
Look at Section 30, which gives comparative international statistics.

**Statistical Abstract of the World** REF HA154 .S83
“Is a comprehensive presentation of data on 186 countries of the world in a uniform format.”

**Statistical Yearbook or Annuaire statistique** (annual) REF HA12.5 .U63
Produced by the United Nations, it provides “a wide range of internationally available statistics on social and economic conditions and activities at the national, regional, and world levels.” It is divided into four parts: world and region summary, population and social statistics, economic activity, and international economic relations.

**United Nations Development Programme/Human Development Reports**
Rates countries by Human Development Index, which entails life expectancy, literacy and school enrollment, and standard of living.

Enables a comparison of statistical information on United Nations member states in the fields of population, economy, health, technology, and the environment.


Organized by income level and geographic region or specific country; includes data on population, environment, and the economy.

**Culture**

**Countries and Their Cultures** (4 vol.) REF GN307 .C68

Provides information on the geography, demography, linguistic affiliation, history, ethnic relations, food, economy, society, political life, and religion of each country in the world.

**CultureGrams** (4 vol.) REF GT150 .C85

Discusses the background, people, customs, lifestyle, and society of each country, as well as giving the contact information of the embassies and consulates of each country for the United States.

**Encyclopedia of World Cultures** (10 vol.) REF GN307 .E56

Provides cultural overview of countries worldwide. Includes bibliography at the end of each entry.

**Worldmark Encyclopedia of Cultures and Daily Life** (4 vol.) REF GN333 .W67

Provides information on 500 cultures of the world, covering twenty different areas of daily life including clothing, food, language, and religion.

**Politics**


Lists the chiefs of state, the election process, and the election results.

**Constitution Finder** [http://confinder.richmond.edu](http://confinder.richmond.edu)

Links to constitutions, charters, amendments, and other related documents.

**Constitutions of the World** REF K3165 .M33

Summarizes and gives the history, influences, fundamental rights, division of powers of the legislative system in one hundred nations.

**Embassy** [http://embassy.org](http://embassy.org)

Provides a comprehensive list of embassies located in Washington, D.C.

**Political Handbook the World** (annual) REF JF 37. P6

Divided into two parts, the first part gives a brief overview of the country. Subsequently, it delves more deeply into the government and politics, as well as the political parties of each country. Part two of the handbook covers intergovernmental organizations, discussing the establishment, purpose, headquarters, principal organs, leadership, membership, language, origin, and development of each organization.

**Political Parties of the World** REF JF2051 .D39

Gives the background of the political party system in each country and then lists the parties individually with contact information.
Portals to the World  [http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/portals.html](http://www.loc.gov/rr/international/portals.html)
Selected by Area Specialists and other Library Staff at the Library of Congress, this website lists links to electronic resources.

**World Encyclopedia of Parliaments and Legislatures**  REF JF511 .W67
Gives a brief description of the country, its historical background, legislative procedures, elections, and more.

**Geography**

**Atlas of the World**  REF G1021 .G4125
Contains world statistics and images of the earth, world geography, world cities, oceans, world maps, and geographical glossary, regions in the news, and index.

**Encyclopedia of World Geography**  (3 vol.)  REF G63 .E556
Provides a “basic geographic definition and context for the most modern applications of geography to geopolitical aspects and geographic facts related to ancient as well as modern history.”

Printer

**Perry-Castaneda Library Map Collection.**  [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/)
Provides online maps of the world and individual countries for printing and copying.

**Education**

“Provides links to tables and databases comparing the well-being of children in the United States with those in other countries.”

**Education at a Glance 2007.**  [http://www.oecd.org/document/30/0,3343,en_2649_201185_39251550_1_1_1_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/30/0,3343,en_2649_201185_39251550_1_1_1_1,00.html)
“Provides a rich, comparable, and up to date array of indicators on the performance of education system.”

Provides regional overviews of educational assessment. Published by UNESCO.

Provides educational statistics on a worldwide level.

**International Comparisons in Education.**  [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/international/](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/international/)
From the Institute for Education Sciences, National Center for Education Services, compares American education to other countries in the world.

**NCES International Comparisons in Education.**  [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/international/](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/international/)
“Provides statistical data for cross-national comparisons of education.”
UNESCO Country Profiles.  
Statistics on education participation, resources, and literacy.

UNESCO Education Database.  
Statistics worldwide on education, science, technology, publishing, media, and literacy.

“Global and internationally comparable statistics on education, science, technology, culture, and communication.”

World Education Encyclopedia (3 vol.) REF LB15 .W87  
“Comparative, in-depth essays on the educational system of 233 countries and/or territories.”

Health

Country Health Profiles – Pan American Health Organization.  
http://www.paho.org/english/country.htm  
Data and analysis on health and related sociological factors in the nations of the Americas.

Demographic and Health Surveys.  http://www.measurehs.com/countries/start.cfm  
Developed by the U.S. Agency for International Development, the site provides reports on 87 underdeveloped nations that discuss topics such as: household and respondent characteristics, fertility, family planning, maternal and child health, nutrition, and HIV/AIDS.

Data Online for Population, Health, and Nutrition (DOLPHN) “is an online statistical data resource of selected demographic and health indicators gathered from various sources for several countries of the world.”

“Contains information about cultural beliefs, medical issues, and other related issues pertinent to the health care of recent immigrants to Seattle or the United States, many of whom are refugees fleeing war-torn parts of the world.”

Provides public health information on public health issues by region.

“Global data on HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria, and more.”

Worldwide profiles of current health conditions.

“Presents the most recent and comprehensive data on all 193 WHO Member states.”

A yearly assessment of global health with statistics for each country.
Regions

The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Latin America and the Caribbean REF F1406 .C36
Provides entries on the physical environment, economy, peoples, history, politics and society, and culture of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara (4 vol.) REF DT351 .E53
Entries on each African country cover the fields of geography, history, government, peoples, and cultures. Also includes a bibliography at the end of each entry.

Encyclopedia of Latin American History and Culture (5 vol.) REF F1406 .E53
Provides descriptive entries on the history and culture of Latin America detailing the politics, people, and geography of the area. Also includes a brief bibliography at the end of each entry.

Encyclopedia of Modern Asia (6 vol.) REF DS4 .E53
Covers economics, religion, technology, politics, education, arts, environmental issues, international relations, and scientific advances of Asia.

Encyclopedia of the Modern Middle East and North Africa (4 vol.) REF DS43 .E53
Covers the fields of politics, history, economics, religion, sociology, geography, literature, and fine arts in the Middle East and North Africa. Also includes a bibliography at the end of each entry.

“Provides up-to-date coverage of European Union affairs and essential information on European integration.”

Allows the user to browse by country or subject and provides a list of links on Latin America.

Provides a list of links on the Middle East arranged by subject category.

PAIR: Portal to Asian Internet Resources. http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/PAIR/index.html
Provides links to annotated internet resources in 25 subject categories.

Economics

Getting Started Guide International Management
Examine Reinsch Library’s Getting Started Guide on International Management for information on worldwide economic affairs.

For further information, stop by the reference desk, call (703) 284-1649, e-mail library@marymount.edu or send an instant message to AskMULibrary (via AIM, MSN or Yahoo!) during selected hours.

REF: KA 4/08