

Chile

Key facts in 1929

Area: 756'102 km²^[1]

Population: 4.287 Million^[2]

Life expectancy: 37 Years^[3]

Literacy rate: 56.1%^[4]

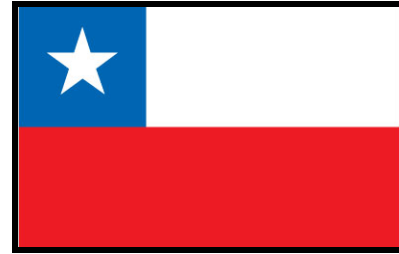
Biggest Minorities: Indigenous people (Mapuche, Aymara)^[5]

Select Main Cities: Santiago, Valparaíso, Concepción^[1]

Neighboring countries: Peru, Bolivia, Argentina^[1]

Sea Access: Yes, Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean^[1]

GDP: 1'900'000'000 \$1929^[6,7]



Recent Historical Background

Chile in the years leading up to 1929 was undergoing significant political and social changes. The early 1920s saw the rise of a social and worker's movement, leading to the establishment of the Chilean Socialist Workers' Party in 1912 and increasing labor strikes.^[8] The instability culminated in a military coup in 1924, followed by a brief return to civilian rule, and then another coup in 1925, which brought Carlos Ibáñez del Campo to power.^[9,10,11] His rule initially brought some stability and modernization efforts to Chile, including reforms in government administration and public works. However, by the end of the decade, Chile, like many other countries, was beginning to feel the effects of the global economic downturn, which would challenge its economic stability and social progress.^[12]

Political Situation

In 1929, Chile was a military-led authoritarian regime with populist elements and aiming at state modernization. The leader of Chile was president Carlos Ibáñez del Campo^[11], who won the 1927 presidential election with 97% of the vote against the communist candidate Elías Laferte.^[13] That election also saw traditional parties marginalized and state-centric movements gaining prominence. Internally, Chile had to deal with economic challenges, labor unrest and political suppression.^[14]

Economic Situation in 1929

The Chilean economy in 1929 was heavily dependent on mining, particularly copper and nitrate, which were major export commodities.^[12,15] The country was industrializing, with significant foreign investment in its mining sector and the development of related industries.^[16] However, Chile was not entirely self-sufficient in food production, relying on imports to cover the needs of its population, especially in urban areas.^[17] Main exports of Chile at that time were copper, nitrate, and other minerals, with imports including food products, machinery, and textiles.^[12] Chile also traded extensively with the United States and European countries, and the Chilean peso was the currency in use.^[18] Major industrial hubs were located in the northern mining regions and in the central valley, which was also the agricultural heartland. The economic system was characterized by a heavy reliance on mineral exports, which made the economy vulnerable to fluctuations in global commodity prices. Civilian research was primarily focused on mining and geology, aiming to improve extraction techniques and resource management.^[16]

Military Strength in 1929

In 1929, the Chilean army was in a unique shape. It simultaneously was among the strongest forces on the American-continent pacific coast in terms of Navy power, with 35 well-equipped warships that have even been used by the United Kingdom in World War I.^[19] Despite having good military planes from the UK, Chile was very unequipped for terrestrial fight, with only about 25'000 active personnel and Chile did not have tanks yet.^[20,21,22]

Key Facts about Military Strength of Chile ^[19,20,21,22]	
Active personnel	25'000
Tanks	0
Cavalry	Unknown
Ships	35
Planes	>15
Funding in 1929\$	36'670'000

Allies/Enemies/Existing territorial disputes in 1929

Main Allies: Chile had historical ties with European powers, particularly the United Kingdom, due to British investments in Chilean mining and commerce.^[23]

Main Enemies: No direct enemies, but Chile had a history of regional rivalries, particularly with Peru and Bolivia, stemming from the War of the Pacific (1879-1884).^[24]

Territorial Disputes: Ongoing issues with Peru and Bolivia over borders established after the War of the Pacific, particularly concerning Bolivia's desire for sovereign access to the Pacific Ocean.^[24]

Some of the main goals for the 1930s

1. Nitrate Industry: In the face of declining nitrate exports due to synthetic alternatives, finding ways to sustain and adapt the nitrate industry was crucial.
2. Political Stability: After a period of social unrest and political changes, establishing a stable and democratic political environment was a significant goal.
3. Modernization: Chile aimed to modernize its economy and society, including efforts to improve education, public health, and infrastructure, to lay the groundwork for future development.

Sources:

1. República de Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 14.02.2024) [In Spanish]
<https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chile>
Territory of Chile over the Years - Wikipedia (Date: 14.02.2024) [In Spanish]
https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historia_territorial_de_Chile
2. Demographics of Chile - Wikipedia. (Date: 14.02.2024) [In Spanish]
https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demografia_de_Chile
3. Life expectancy (from birth) in Chile - Statista (Date: 14.02.2024)
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1071018/life-expectancy-chile-historical/>
4. Literacy Rates - UChile (Date: 28.02.2024)
<https://repositorio.uchile.cl/bitstream/handle/2250/116685/Arriagada%20V.%2C%20Felipe.pdf?sequence=1>
5. Demographics of Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Chile
6. The World Economy: Historical Statistics (Date: 14.02.2024)
<https://web.archive.org/web/20220521073928/https://statlinks.oecdcode.org/4103063.XLS>
7. Inflation Calculator - In2013Dollars (Date: 28.02.2024)
<https://www.in2013dollars.com/>
8. Communist Party of Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communist_Party_of_Chile
9. Government Junta of Chile (1924) - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_Junta_of_Chile_\(1924\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government_Junta_of_Chile_(1924))
10. 1925 Chilean coup d'état - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1925_Chilean_coup_d%27%C3%A9tat
11. Carlos Ibáñez del Campo - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_Ib%C3%A1%C3%B1ez_del_Campo
12. Gran Depresión en Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 14.02.2024)
https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gran_Depresión_en_Chile
13. 1927 Chilean presidential election - Wikipedia (Date: 14.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1927_Chilean_presidential_election
14. THE FAILURE OF POPULISM IN CHILE: LABOUR MOVEMENT AND POLITICS BEFORE WORLD WAR II - JStor (Date: 27.02.2024) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25675112>
15. Economic history of Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_history_of_Chile
16. Mining in Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mining_in_Chile
17. Economic history of Chile - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_history_of_Chile
18. Chilean Trade 1880-1930: A Comment on the Sources for the Age of Exports (Date: 14.02.2024)
<https://diposit.ub.edu/dspace/bitstream/2445/126862/1/680620.pdf>
19. Home - Fighting Ships of the World - Chile - Navypedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://www.navypedia.org/ships/chile/chi_index.htm
20. Republic of Chile - The Online Tank Museum (Date: 28.02.2024)
<https://tanks-encyclopedia.com/coldwar/chile/>
21. Inicios de la aviación chilena - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024) [In Spanish]
https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inicios_de_la_aviaci%C3%B3n_chilena
22. Military Personnel and Spending - Our World in Data (Date: 28.02.2024)
<https://ourworldindata.org/military-personnel-spending>
23. Chile–United Kingdom relations - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chile%E2%80%93United_Kingdom_relations
24. War of the Pacific - Wikipedia (Date: 28.02.2024)
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_of_the_Pacific