# Eastern Highlands Province

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Papua New Guinea</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>Goroka</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## Government

- **Governor**: Malcolm Smith Kela (2002-)

## Area

- **Total**: 4,324.3 sq mi (11,200 km²)
Geography

- Eastern Highlands Province is made up of rugged mountain terrain and broad valleys. It has low coastal areas in the Markham and Ramu valleys. The Province's two highest peaks, Mt Tabletop and Mt Michael are located on Kratke and Bismarck Range respectively. They rise at a height of more than 3,000 metres above sea level. Specifically, Mt Michael is situated 3750 metres above sea level while Mt Tabletop is at 3,686 metres.
- Asaro and Lamari rivers both flow into the Puraari which is one of PNG's five major river systems. The Yonki Hydro-Power Station is fed by the Ramu river.
- The Province is entered through the Kassam Pass and exited to other Highlands provinces at Daulo Pass. Kassam Pass offers a picturesque view of the Markham and Ramu valleys while Daulo Pass reveals a breath taking view of Goroka's lush, green valleys.
Districts and LLGs

- District map of Eastern Highlands Province
- Each province in Papua New Guinea has one or more districts, and each district has one or more Local Level Government (LLG) areas. For census purposes, the LLG areas are subdivided into wards and those into census units.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>District Capital</th>
<th>LLG Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daulo District</td>
<td>Asaro</td>
<td>Asaro Watabung Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goroka District</td>
<td>Goroka</td>
<td>Goroka Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Goroka Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henganofi District</td>
<td>Henganofi</td>
<td>Henganofi Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kainantu District</td>
<td>Kainantu</td>
<td>Kainantu Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kainantu Urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lufa District</td>
<td>Lufa</td>
<td>Lufa Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obura-Wonenara District</td>
<td>Lamari</td>
<td>Lamari Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Yelia Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okapa District</td>
<td>Okapa</td>
<td>Okapa Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unggai-Benna District</td>
<td>Benna</td>
<td>Unggai-Benna Rural</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Climate

Monthly rainfall follows a seasonal pattern with a wet season from December to early April having mean monthly rainfalls of about 203 mm to 305 mm. A dry season follows, with monthly falls in the general range of 51 mm to 102 mm. The months of April–May and October–November tend to be transitional.

Temperature ranges are more equal. At Goroka the maximum temperature for whole year is 26 °C.

At Goroka, mean humidity varies from 87% at 09:00 hours to 57% at 15:00 hours. Associated with this typical cycling of cloud movement found in the Highlands in the early morning valley slopes and bottom are submerged in fog with high hills and ranges protruding into clear sunlight. As the day progresses the fog lifts from the valleys and clouds begin to form on the ranges frequently with associated local convectional storms. Towards the evening the cloud extends from the ranges to the valleys and with cooling sinks to valley bottoms. This cycle of afternoon cloud and storm on the ranges and morning fog in the valley bottoms, where airstrips are located, makes the maintenance of flight schedules difficult.

Vegetation

Grasslands dominate a broad area of land especially in the valleys which is predominantly inhabited by people. This is a result of continuous burning and excessive use of the land to do gardening.

Secondary forests and shrub re-growth formed in primary forest locations which takes longer to grow due to continuous burning.

At higher altitudes as in Bismarck and Kratke ranges, the vegetation type is mountain rainforest dominated by beech forest and pandanus species. At much higher altitude over 3,000 metres, alpine grassland and moss forest are common vegetation type. At lower altitude (1,500 metres or less) especially towards border areas of coastal provinces where there is very high rainfall and humidity, lowland rainforest is found. The vegetation type is very diverse and heterogeneous in species composition and is home to a diverse range of exotic flora and fauna.
History

- 18,000 years ago - people lived in the Lamari valley in rock shelters.
- 11,000 years ago - inhabitants at Kaliavana, Asaro Valley.
- 9,000 years ago - trade links with people along the coast, were still hunters and gatherers.
- 1927 - Lutheran missionaries in the Asaro and Bena valleys.
- 1930s - Arrival of Australian gold prospectors and kiaps to the Province.
- 1942-1945 - World War II - many villagers worked as labourers or carriers for the Allies.
- 1943 - Goroka bombed several times by the Japanese.
- 1946 - Goroka becomes an administrative centre.
- 1950s - First road link from Goroka to Lae completed. Expatriates began growing arabica coffee in Goroka and Kainantu which becomes PNG's top cash crop.

Demography

Eastern Highland Province has a total population of 432,972 (PNG Citizens) and 1,173 (Non-citizens). This is an increase of 31% since the 1990 Census figure.

The province makes up 8.3% of the Total PNG Population, which is the fourth highest population in the country after Southern Highlands, Morobe and Western Highlands Provinces.

The population distribution among the eight districts of the Province ranges from Obura/Wonenara with the lowest population of 29,688 to Kainantu with the highest population of 91,771. The capital of the province, Goroka town has an urban population of 19,523 which is 27% of the Goroka District population of 71,870. The other major town of the province, Kainantu town has an urban population of 6,788. About 94% of the populations live in the rural areas.

The population density of the province is 38 persons per square kilometre, with an average household size of 1.4 persons.

The average annual growth rate of the province has increased significantly, from 0.8% between 1980 and 1990, to 3.6% between 1990 and 2000. This is slightly higher than the national average annual growth rate of 3.6% between 1990 and 2000. This is slightly higher than the national average annual growth rate of 3.2% for the same period. With such a population growth rate, the province can expect to have a population of around half a million in the next five years.

44% of the populations are literate (males having higher literacy rates). 69% of the populations are married. More women married than men (72% - 65%). 95% of the population are churchgoers. 38% are Seventh Day Adventists, 30% Evangelical Lutherans, 12% Pentecostals and 6% Evangelical Alliance. Population engaged in any form of agricultural activity - 94.7% Population engaged in any income activity - 70.1% Population completed grade 6 - 59.8% Population completed grade 10 - 15.8% Population (15yrs and over) with other educational qualifications - 3.1%
There are approximately 20 different languages in the Eastern Highlands. These are:

- Goroka - Gahuku-Asaro, Benabena, Siane, Alekano
- Henganofi - Kamano-Kafe
- Kainantu - Kamano, Gadsup, Agarabi and Tairora
- Lufa - Yagaria, Gimi
- Marawaka - Baruya, Simbari, Yagwoia
- Okapa - Fore, Gimi, Auyana

**Lifestyle**

Eastern Highlanders are regarded as the friendliest people in the Highlands and have less tribal fights compared to other Highlands provinces. The villagers are hard working people attending to their food gardens and livestock while the educated individuals find work in the cities or towns to earn a living. Intermarriages by Eastern Highlanders to people of other provinces and cultures is a common trend today. There are a lot of people from all over the country and expatriates who have made this province their home either because of work or marriage.

Traditional housing is built in a circular or rectangular shape and the walls weaved from pit pit canes or bamboo. It is built low to keep the interior warm from the cold climate and the high thatched roof, keeps the smoke away from the inhabitants. Cooking and sleeping is done in this communal, open-spaced living arrangement. Traditional homes today use a touch of modern influence and style, with the inclusion of windows and moreover, rooms.

There are various ways in which traditional cooking is done, either by using bamboos, roasting sweet potatoes in the open fire or the ground oven style of cooking called "mumu." Vegetable gardening and tending to livestock is very important to the village people as this is their source of wealth and identity. Vegetables and livestock are given as contribution during funerals, marriages and other festivities.

At traditional wedding ceremonies, the groom's relatives give money, food and other gifts to the bride's relatives. This is commonly known as a "bride-price" and this is an act of buying the bride from her family, who now has responsibilities in looking after her husband's relatives. Today's weddings have a combination of both modern and traditional styles of marriage, a church wedding and payment of bride-price before or after the wedding.

As with any other transitional society moving from traditional times to suddenly be competing in the 21st century, on the free market - the Eastern Highlands has witnessed it's fair share of law and order problems. Most problems stem from the fact that the majority of the youth are not engaged in gainful employment or some other productive activity. Most problems relate to petty theft & pick-pocketing -visitors are therefore advised to leave all valuables in their hotel deposit safe. And further carry minimal valuables on person whilst moving about. When traveling on PMV's or to unknown areas, all visitors should speak to officers at the nearest Police station to obtain a current status report of their destination.
Tribal fighting in the region of Gimi has been going on since 1986, many of the clashes arising over claims of sorcery. In November 2008 it was reported that in Agibu and Amosa villages women had agreed that if they stopped producing males, allowing only female babies to survive, their tribe's stock of boys would go down and there would be no men in future to fight. They agreed to have all new-born male babies killed. It is not known how many male babies were killed by being smothered, but it had reportedly happened to all males over a 10 year period and probably was still happening.

Goroka has the J.K. McCarthy Museum that specializes in historical Highlands artifacts and information. The Raun Raun Theatre who are the national traditional performing arts troupe, National Sports Institute, the Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research who research into health related diseases and experiment to find new vaccines for these diseases.

**Economy**

The Province is the regional trucking centre, having one of the Highlands region's major trucking company's operating in Goroka. The East-West Trucking company freights cargo and provides service to the entire Highlands region. Apart from that, there are other private trucking firms that freight cargo.

The Province's economy lies in the production and export of coffee, which provides the economic back bone and livelihood for all Eastern Highlanders. Leading exporters of coffee based in the Province are PNG Coffee Exports and New Guinea Highlands Coffee Exports as well as PNG's ground coffee manufacturers Goroka Coffee Roasters, Kongo Coffee and Arabicas Ltd. The Coffee Industry Corporation headquarters is also located in Goroka.

The country's largest Hydro Power station is situated in Yonki, Kainantu, and other's like the Kainantu pottery and wool rugs and a new gold mine in Bilimoia which has commenced construction.

Aiyura valley is home to various research stations who research different methods of planting and livestock breeding in the Highlands region. Research stations such as the National Agriculture Research Institute, Coffee Research Institute and the Highlands Fisheries. Aiyura National High School is a part of the valley, including the Summer Institute of Linguistics who specialise in translating bibles into the different languages in the country and provide literacy and linguistic training to interested people.

The economic state of the Eastern Highlands Province has declined with the economic situation of the country. In addition, the deteriorated infrastructure of the province hinders economic growth.

The province derives most of its revenue from the production of coffee. Eastern Highlands is the leading producer of coffee in the Highlands region. It produces large quantities of coffee annually for export. Almost all rural households within the Province own a small plot of coffee as a small family project.
A lot of families have now taken to supplementing their family's income by engaging in small agricultural and livestock businesses. The introduction of vanilla, wheat and rice has had a huge impact on agricultural enthusiasts throughout the Province. Rice and wheat is being grown for own consumption and/or selling while the vanilla is sold to the international market. Pigs, rabbits and especially chickens are readily farmed while fresh vegetables are still grown for the local and national markets.

**Education**

There are approximately 250 primary schools in the Province plus 11 high schools and 1 national high school. These schools are either run by the church or belong to the government.

The University of Goroka - one of PNG's national Universities is located in Goroka and produces qualified teachers for High Schools, Secondary Schools and National High Schools throughout the country including students from neighboring Pacific Islands.

**References**

1. [National Statistical Office of Papua New Guinea](#)
2. [National Statistical Office: 2000 Census Figures, Port Moresby](#)