



## INFORMATION ABOUT COUNTRIES LIBRARY RESOURCE GUIDE SHAKE LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER

Compiled by  
Joseph H. Helms, Reference Librarian  
Revised December 2004

### I. LIBRARY REFERENCE COLLECTION

Shake Library's Reference Collection contains several resources that provide factual information about a particular country's history, economic outlook, politics, and culture. The following reference sources are considered standard resources for initiating research on a particular country.

*CultureGrams* (Ref. 910.2 C967) – This is an outstanding reference source for pinpointing information about a country's manners and customs, culture, and other national and social characteristics.

*World Factbook* (Ref. 910.5 U58n) – This reference title is an official publication of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Published annually, the *Factbook* lists countries alphabetically by name, and then provides information about the country's geography, people, government, economy, communications, transportation, military, and transnational issues. The *World Factbook* is available online at the following sites:

- LexisNexis Academic Universe – search under Reference, and then select Country Profiles
- <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

*Europa World Year Book* (Ref. 940.55 E89e) – This two-volume reference source contains more in-depth information about a country. Coverage includes the country's recent history, government, military, economic conditions, education, and public holidays.

*Statesman's Yearbook* (Ref. 305 S797s) – This standard reference source provides background information on countries relating to key historical facts, territory and population, social statistics, climate, constitution and government, military, economic conditions, energy and natural resources, industry, international trade, communications, and social institutions.

*World Today Series* (Ref. 910.3 W927) – This series is published annually in eight volumes. The content probes into a country's geographical setting, history, current government, politics, cultures, and economic problems.

*Doing Business and Investing Series* (Ref. 338.88 D657; located at Reference Desk) – This series is published by the business and investment firm Price Waterhouse Coopers. Each guide provides an overview of a country's economic climate, business opportunities, and legal and tax environment. Some guides have not been updated for several years, so you may need to find more current information in a different source.

## II. FIND ARTICLES (ELECTRONIC PERIODICAL DATABASES)

Access the following database providers by going to the VU Library home page at <http://www.vinu.edu/>, select the Academic Resources tab at the top of the page, then click Shake Library, then Find Articles, and then the database you want to search.

### EBSCOhost Business Source Premier

This database contains the full text for five publications that give detailed information about individual countries. The information is related to the country's business climate, politics, geography, and social overview. Coverage of individual countries will vary between publications. The publications are:

- *Country Monitor*
- *Country Profile – EIU*
- *Country Profile - Datamonitor*
- *Country Report*
- *Country Review*

To see if there is a report on your country, type the name of the publication and the name of your country in the search text box.

### Academic Universe Reference (LexisNexis)

The *Reference* database offers two key publications providing important economic, political and social information on many countries, and they are:

- *The CIA World Factbook*
- *Walden's Country Reports*

These two publications are found under **Country Profiles** in the *Reference* database.

### SIRS KNOWLEDGE SOURCE

*SIRS* contains the full text to the U.S. Department of State's *Background Notes* guides. These official publications cover practically every country in the world from Aruba to Zimbabwe. The *Notes* provide information on a country's people, history, government, political conditions, economy and foreign relations. Use the **Advanced Search** function in *SIRS*. To obtain the best search results, type your search in this fashion from the **Advanced Search** page:

- First textbox: type *Background Notes* and search in **title**
- Second textbox: type the name of your country you are researching and search in **title**

### Encyclopaedia Britannica Online

This standard reference source provides excellent information on individual countries. After accessing *Britannica Online*, type the name of the country you are researching in the search text box, and then select *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.