

Approximately 85 per cent of the people follow the Roman Catholic religion. Many people in Mindanao and other islands in the south are Muslims. The remainder of the population observes indigenous religious customs or belongs to local Protestant sects.

Pilipino, the official form of Tagalog, is the national language of the Philippines and the government is promoting its use in schools throughout the country. English continues to be widely spoken and understood and taught in most schools, and is used in business and official work. The use of Spanish is declining.

The literacy rate of the Philippines is high — 97 per cent in Manila and approximately 83 per cent in the country as a whole. English is the official language of instruction in schools throughout the country.

General Information

CLIMATE. The climate of the Philippines is tropical with the average daily temperature varying from 25 degrees C in the cooler winter months, to 28 degrees C and occasionally as high as 32 degrees C in the hot season.

The northern half of the country has three seasons: a cooler period from November to February, a hot and dry season from March through June, and a wet interval from July to October during which the area is subject to typhoons. The climate in the southern half of the country is less variable and seldom affected by tropical storms.

HOLIDAYS. The statutory and religious holidays are:

New Year's Day	– January 1
Maundy Thursday	– Variable
Good Friday	– Variable
Labour Day	– May 1
Araw ng Kagitingan	– May 6
Phil. Independence Day	– June 12
Phil.-American Friendship Day	– July 4
Heroes Day	– Last Sunday of August
All Saints' Day	– November 1
Bonifacio Day	– November 30
Christmas Day	– December 25
Rizal Day	– December 30