

FEATURE

BRICS expands with 9 new partner countries

Now it's half of world population, 41% of global economy

BRICS keeps expanding, adding 9 partner countries in January 2025, after admitting 4 new members in 2024. It now makes up roughly half of the global population and more than 41% of world GDP (PPP). It's an economic powerhouse, with top producers of key commodities like oil, gas, grains, meat, and minerals.



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BRICS, the Global South-led forum for economic cooperation, continues to grow in influence, as it seeks to [de-dollarize and transform the international monetary and financial system](#).

After admitting four new members in 2024, BRICS officially welcomes nine new nations as partner countries on January 1, 2025. They are:

- Belarus
- Bolivia
- Cuba
- Indonesia
- Kazakhstan
- Malaysia
- Thailand
- Uganda
- Uzbekistan



Representatives of the 9 BRICS members at the 2024 summit in Kazan, Russia

With its nine members and nine partners, BRICS now makes up roughly half of the global population and more than 41% of world GDP (PPP).

The group is an economic powerhouse, including top producers of key commodities like oil, gas, grains, meat, and minerals.

At the [BRICS summit in Kazan, Russia in October 2024](#), 13 countries were invited to become BRICS partners, meaning they are on the path to full membership in the near future.

Nine of these 13 nations accepted the invitation. The remaining four did not give a formal response as of the end of 2024. These were Algeria, Nigeria, Turkey/Türkiye, Vietnam.

The [Russian government](#), which in December announced the admission of the nine new partners, emphasized that “we expect that in the near future responses will come from” the other four.

BRICS: 9 members and 9 partners

Initially founded in 2009 as BRIC – by Brazil, Russia, India, and China – the

organization grew in 2010 with the addition of South Africa.

At the [2023 summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, BRICS expanded](#) again, inviting six more countries: Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE accepted the invitation and officially became BRICS members in January 2024.

Saudi Arabia still had not made a formal decision as of the end of 2024.

Argentina initially agreed to join, when it had a center-left government led by President Alberto Fernández and Vice President Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. However, [far-right pro-US leader Javier Milei](#) came to power in December 2023, and he overturned the decision, blocking Argentina from joining BRICS in January 2024.

BRICS comprises roughly half of world population

With the addition of the partner states, nine of the 20 most populous countries on Earth are now part of BRICS.

Their combined population is approximately 4 billion, or roughly half of the world population.

India is the most populous country on Earth, followed by China in second. Each country has more than 1.4 billion inhabitants.

With nearly 290,000 citizens, Indonesia is the fourth-most populous nation.

Brazil is the seventh-most populous country, followed by Russia in ninth and Ethiopia in tenth.

Egypt is the 14th-most populous nation; Iran is the 17th; and Thailand is the 20th.

The sixth-most populous nation, Nigeria, was invited to join BRICS as a partner, but did not give a formal answer in 2024.

BRICS makes up 41% of global GDP (PPP)

Together, the nine BRICS members and additional nine BRICS partners represent more than 41% of global GDP (when measured at purchasing power parity).

The original five BRICS members made up 33.76% of world GDP (PPP) in October 2024, according to IMF data.

This means that the five founding BRICS members comprise a larger share of the global economy than the G7, which only represented 29.08% of world GDP (PPP) in 2024.

This is a massive decline from 1990, when the G7 economies made up nearly 52% of world GDP (PPP).

The main reason for this historic shift is the enormous economic growth in China, which has become the world's only industrial superpower, responsible for 35% of global gross

manufacturing production (nearly three times that of the United States).

China overtook the US to become the largest economy on Earth in 2016, according to [IMF data](#).

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As of October 2024, China made up 19% of global GDP (PPP), compared to just 15% for the US.

When the four new BRICS members that were admitted in 2024 are added, the share of global GDP comprised by BRICS' nine members rises to 36.44%.

The addition of nine new partner states increases BRICS' share of world GDP further, to 41.41% (and this does not include Cuba, as the IMF does not have data on the country's economy).

What these statistics demonstrate is that BRICS has become one of the most important organizations on Earth, bringing together nations with massive populations, enormous economies, and incredible productive capacities.

If BRICS countries can successfully coordinate and take collective action, they will change the world.

Twenty countries with the largest population in 2024

(in millions)

BRICS countries

