

Regions of Chile

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Chile is divided into 15 regions (in Spanish, *regiones*; singular *región*), which are the country's first-level administrative division. Each region is headed by an intendant (*intendente*), appointed by the President, and an indirectly-elected body known as regional board (*consejo regional*).

Regions are divided into provinces (second-level administrative division), each headed by a governor (*gobernador*), appointed by the President. There are 54 provinces, in total. Provinces are further divided into communes (third and lowest level administrative division), which are governed by municipalities.

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Naming

Each region is given a Roman numeral, followed by a name (e.g. *IV Región de Coquimbo*, read as "fourth region of Coquimbo" in Spanish). When the regional structure was created, Roman numerals were assigned in ascending order from north to south, with the northernmost region designated as I (first) and the southernmost region as XII (twelfth). The Santiago Metropolitan Region, located in the center of the country and home to the country's capital Santiago, was excluded from this naming scheme and given instead the initials RM, standing for *Región Metropolitana* ("Metropolitan Region" in Spanish). With the creation of regions XIV in the south and XV in the north (XIII is not used) in 2007, the north-south Roman numeral order was broken.

History of the regional structure

The current administrative divisions of Chile were created in 1974 and limited to 13 regions (this limitation was eliminated in 2005 via a constitutional reform). Previously, Chile was divided into 25 provinces, which were further divided into departments, and then into communes. The new territorial organization was implemented in phases with some initial "pilot regions" beginning to operate in 1974, extending the process on January 1, 1976 to

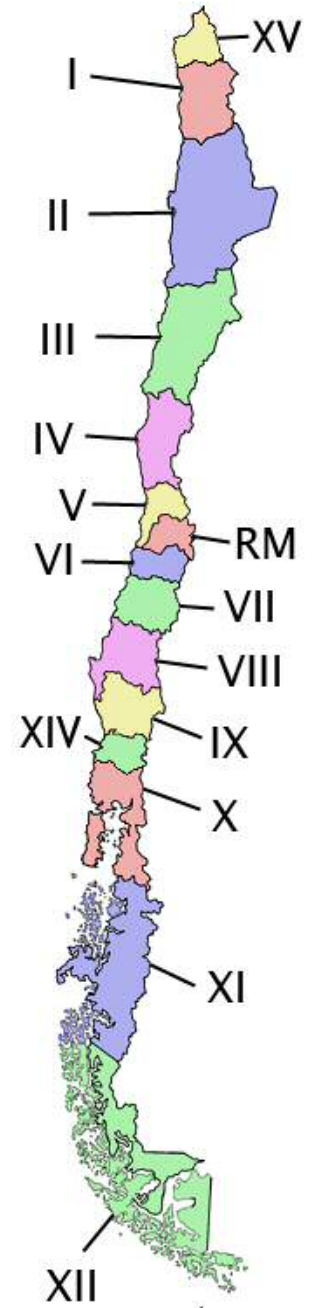
the rest of the country. The Santiago Metropolitan Region began to operate in April 1980.

In December 2006 two new regions were created: the northern Arica and Parinacota Region, by taking out the two northernmost provinces from the Tarapacá Region; and Los Ríos Region in the south, encompassing the provinces of Valdivia, formerly part of the Los Lagos Region, and Ranco, formerly part of Valdivia.^[1] Both regions became operative in October 2007.

List of regions

Main article: Ranked list of Chilean regions

Key ◆	Name (English/Spanish) ◆	Capital ◆	Area (km ²) ◆	Population ◆
XV	Arica y Parinacota Región de Arica y Parinacota	Arica	16,898.6	189,644
I	Tarapacá Región de Tarapacá	Iquique	41,799.5	238,950
II	Antofagasta Región de Antofagasta	Antofagasta	126,049.1	493,984
III	Atacama Región de Atacama	Copiapó	75,176.2	254,336
IV	Coquimbo Región de Coquimbo	La Serena	40,579.9	603,210
V	Valparaíso Región de Valparaíso	Valparaíso	16,396.1	1,539,852
VI	Libertador General Bernardo O'Higgins Región del Libertador General Bernardo O'Higgins	Rancagua	16,387	780,627
VII	Maule Región del Maule	Talca	30,296.1	908,097
VIII	Bío Bío Región del Bío Bío	Concepción	37,062.6	1,861,562
IX	La Araucanía Región de la Araucanía	Temuco	31,842.3	869,535
XIV	Los Ríos Región de Los Ríos	Valdivia	18,429.5	356,396
X	Los Lagos Región de Los Lagos	Puerto Montt	48,584.5	716,739
XI	Aysén del General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo Región Aisén del General Carlos Ibáñez del Campo	Coihaique	108,494.4	91,492
XII	Magallanes y la Antártica Chilena Región de Magallanes y de la Antártica Chilena	Punta Arenas	132,297.2	150,826
RM	Santiago Metropolitan Región Metropolitana de Santiago	Santiago	15,403.2	6,061,185



Note: Populations are from the 2002 Census.^[2]

See also

- ISO 3166-2:CL
- Provinces of Chile
- Communes of Chile

References

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2. ^ "About Chile" (<http://www.cinver.cl/english/chile/chile.asp>) . Government of Chile Foreign Investment Committee. <http://www.cinver.cl/english/chile/chile.asp>. Retrieved 13 March 2010.

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