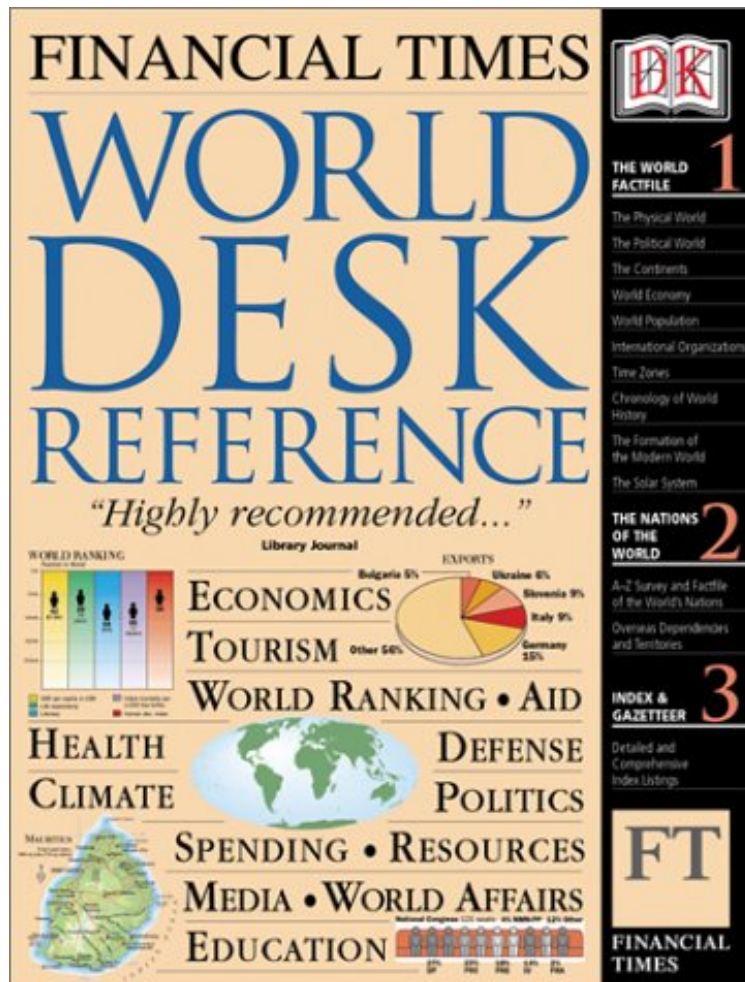


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From Booklist This desk reference contains three sections: "World Factfile," "The Nations of the World," and an index and gazetteer. Serving as part almanac, part statistical abstract, part atlas, and part encyclopedia, it provides thousands of facts, statistics, maps, charts, photographs, and illustrations in a colorful and user-friendly format. Financial Times became part of the title in 2002; previously editions were called the Dorling Kindersley World Reference Atlas. According to the publisher, it will be updated every one to two years. "World Factfile" is a 60-page overview of the physical, political, historical, and economic characteristics of the modern world. It provides topographic maps with brief descriptive paragraphs for each continent or geographic region as well as thematic maps depicting major historical "ages" ("The Age of Discovery," "The Age of Revolution"), the global climate, the world economy, time zones, and more. There is also a chronology of world history with major events highlighted as far back as 400,000 B.C. "The Nations of the World" profiles 193 nations, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, and briefly describes 33 territories and dependencies. Each country profile is two to eight pages long and includes the nation's official name, capital, flag, population, currency, and a map. Summaries accompanied by charts and relying heavily on symbols and icons address climate, transportation, tourism, people, politics, defense, environment, crime, education, and more. A twentieth-century chronology of events related to the nation is added as a sidebar. Statistics come from authoritative sources such as the World Bank and the World Health Organization. The final section of the guide, the "Index-Gazetteer," provides the reader with a glossary of geographical terms and a detailed alphabetic index (including alternative spellings and recent place-name changes). In contrast to resources such as The Statesman's Yearbook (Palgrave Macmillan, annual), this volume relies less on text and more on graphics to convey information. Compact and cleanly designed, it would make an excellent addition to any library collection in need of another ready-reference tool on countries. RBBCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved