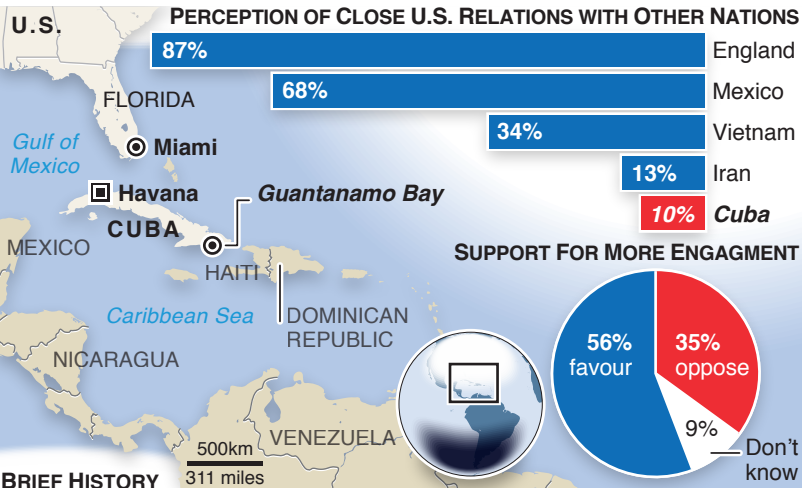


Americans want improved relations with Cuba

A strong majority of Americans support normalising relations with Cuba, the Cold War-era foe that remains subject to a 50-year economic embargo



BRIEF HISTORY

- **1898: Spanish-American War** ushers in period of U.S. dominance in Cuba
- **1953: Fidel Castro** fails to overthrow U.S.-backed government of **Fulgencio Batista**
- **1959:** Castro and **Che Guevara** overthrow Batista and form new government
- **1960:** Castro seizes U.S.-owned businesses in Cuba. U.S. severs diplomatic relations and imposes trade embargo

- **1961:** U.S. backs failed **Bay of Pigs** plan to invade Cuba. Cuba turns to communism and Soviet Union
- **1962: Cuban Missile Crisis** leads to nuclear stand-off between U.S. and Soviet Union
- **1980:** Castro relaxes emigration law. 125,000 Cubans flee to Florida in **Mariel Boatlift**
- **1996:** Cuba shoots down two civilian planes piloted by anti-Castro Cubans in exile

- **2001:** U.S. food exports to Cuba allowed as part of recovery from **Hurricane Michelle**
- **2002:** U.S. military base at **Guantanamo Bay** used as prison for terrorist suspects
- **2006:** Castro suffers serious health problems and hands day-to-day power to his brother, **Raul** – who becomes president in 2008
- **2013: Barack Obama** shakes hands with Raul at Nelson Mandela's funeral