



THE BAHAMAS



INTRODUCTION

Lucayan Indians inhabited the islands when Christopher COLUMBUS first set foot in the New World on San Salvador island in 1492. British settlement of the islands began in 1647. The islands became a colony in 1783. Since attaining independence from the UK in 1973, The Bahamas has prospered through tourism, international banking, and investment management.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

King CHARLES III represented by Governor General Cornelius A. SMITH

Head of Government

Prime Minister Philip DAVIS

Government Type

parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarchy; a Commonwealth realm

Capital

Nassau

Legislature

bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate (16 seats) and the House of Assembly (39 seats)

Ambassador to US

Ambassador Wendall K. JONES

US Ambassador

Chargé d'Affaires Usha E. PITTS

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 13,880 sq km

Land: 10,010 sq km

Water: 3,870 sq km

Climate

tropical marine; moderated by warm waters of Gulf Stream

Natural Resources

salt, aragonite, timber, arable land

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

high-income tourism and financial services economy; major income inequality; strong US bilateral relations; several tax relief programs; targeted investment in agriculture, energy, light manufacturing, and technology industries

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$12.32 billion (2021 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$30,200 (2021 est.)

Industries - tourism, banking, oil bunkering, maritime industries, transshipment and logistics, salt, aragonite, pharmaceuticals

Agricultural products - sugarcane, grapefruit, vegetables, bananas, tomatoes, poultry, tropical fruit, oranges, coconuts, mangoes/guavas

Exports \$3.2 billion (2021 est.)

refined petroleum, ships, aluminum, lobsters and crawfish, styrene polymers (2021)

partners: US 26%, Germany 16%, Singapore 13%, Poland 13%, Thailand 9% (2021)

Imports \$4.92 billion (2021 est.)

refined petroleum, ships, aircraft, crude petroleum, floating docks (2021)

partners: US 37%, South Korea 12%, Germany 9%, China 7%, Russia 6% (2021)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

358,510 (2023 est.)

Population Growth

0.8% (2023 est.)

Ethnicity

African descent 90.6%, White 4.7%, mixed 2.1%, other 1.9%, unspecified 0.7% (2010 est.)

Language

English (official), Creole (among Haitian immigrants)

Religion

Protestant 69.9%, Roman Catholic 12%, other Christian 13%, other 0.6%, none 1.9%, unspecified 2.6% (2010 est.)

Urbanization

urban population: 83.6% of total population (2023)

rate of urbanization: 1.02% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)