



BELIZE



INTRODUCTION

Belize was the site of several Mayan city states until their decline at the end of the first millennium A.D. It formally became the colony of British Honduras in 1862. Territorial disputes between the UK and Guatemala delayed the independence of Belize until 1981.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

King Charles III represented by Governor General Froyla TZALAM

Head of Government

Prime Minister Juan Antonio BRICENO

Government Type

parliamentary democracy (National Assembly) under a constitutional monarchy; a Commonwealth realm

Capital

Belmopan

Legislature

bicameral National Assembly consists of the Senate (14 seats) and the House of Representatives (31 seats)

Ambassador to US

Ambassador Lynn Raymond YOUNG

US Ambassador

Ambassador Michelle KWAN

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 22,966 sq km
Land: 22,806 sq km
Water: 160 sq km

Climate

tropical; very hot and humid; rainy season (May to November); dry season (February to May)

Natural Resources

arable land potential, timber, fish, hydropower

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

tourism- and agriculture-driven economy; strong post-pandemic rebound; innovative and ecological bond restructuring that significantly lowered public debt and expanded marine protections; central bank offering USD-denominated treasury notes; high mobility across borders

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$3.51 billion (2021 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$8,800 (2021 est.)

Industries - garment production, food processing, tourism, construction, oil

Agricultural products - sugarcane, oranges, bananas, maize, poultry, rice, sorghum, papayas, grapefruit, soybeans

Exports \$1.04 billion (2021 est.)

raw sugar, bananas, fishing ships, lobsters and crawfish, beer (2021)

partners: US 16%, UK 16%, Guatemala 7%, Italy 6%, Spain 6% (2021)

Imports \$1.25 billion (2021 est.)

recreational boats, refined petroleum, cigarettes, ships, natural gas (2021)

partners: United States 29%, China 14%, Seychelles 13%, Guatemala 10%, Mexico 9% (2021)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

419,140 (2023 est.)

Population Growth

1.61% (2023 est.)

Ethnicity

Mestizo 52.9%, Creole 25.9%, Maya 11.3%, Garifuna 6.1%, East Indian 3.9%, Mennonite 3.6%, White 1.2%, Asian 1%, other 1.2%, unknown 0.3% (2010 est.)

Language

English 62.9% (official), Spanish 56.6%, Creole 44.6%, Maya 10.5%, German 3.2%, Garifuna 2.9%, other 1.8%, unknown 0.5% (2010 est.)

Religion

Roman Catholic 40.1%, Protestant 31.5%, Jehovah's Witness 1.7%, other 10.5%, unspecified 0.6%, none 15.5% (2010 est.)