THE BAHAMAS

INTRODUCTION
Lucayan Indians inhabited the islands when Christopher COLUMBUS first set foot in the New World on San Salvador 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
Queen ELIZABETH II represented by Governor General Cornelius A. SMITH
Head of Government
Prime Minister Hubert MINNIS
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)

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
high-income tourism and financial services economy; strong US bilateral relations; US supplies the vast majority of imports; struggling to recover from Hurricane Dorian and COVID-19 disruptions; recently introduced special economic recovery zones
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $12.1 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $30,800 (2020 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 $1.69 billion (2020 est.)
ships, refined petroleum, nitrogen compounds, crustaceans, styrene polymers (2019)
partners: Poland 32%, US 17%, Ecuador 9%, China 6%, Japan 5% (2019)
Imports $3.64 billion (2020 est.)
ships, refined and crude petroleum, recreational boats, cars (2019)
partners: US 31%, South Korea 29%, Japan 14% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
352,660 (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
0.84% (2021 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: 83.4% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 1.02% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

as of October 2021