BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

INTRODUCTION
First inhabited by Arawak and later by Carib Indians, the Virgin Islands were settled by the Dutch in 1648 and then annexed by the English in 1672. The islands were part of the British colony of the Leeward Islands from 1872-1960; they were granted autonomy in 1967. They maintain strong ties to the nearby US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

GOVERNMENT
Chief of State
Queen ELIZABETH II represented by Governor John J. RANKIN
Head of Government
Premier Andrew FAHIE
Government Type
Overseas Territory of the UK with limited self-government; parliamentary democracy
Capital
Road Town
Legislature
unicameral House of Assembly (15 seats)

ECONOMY
Economic Overview
British Caribbean island territorial economy; strong tourism and services industries; vulnerable to hurricanes; navigating public debt insolvency since 2008 Crisis; considered a tax haven; high electrification costs; major rum exporter
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $500 million (2017 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $34,200 (2017 est.)
Industries - tourism, light industry, construction, rum, concrete block, offshore banking center
Agricultural products - fruits, vegetables, livestock, poultry, fish
Exports $23 million (2017 est.)
recreational boats, aircraft, diamonds, paintings, precious stones (2019)
partners: Malta 30%, Seychelles 29%, Switzerland 14% (2019)
Imports $300 million (2017 est.)
recreational boats, aircraft, refined petroleum, cars, furniture (2019)
partners: Germany 32%, US 22%, Italy 9%, France 7%, Seychelles 7% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
37,890 (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
1.96% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
African/black 76.3%,
Latino 5.5%,
White 5.4%, mixed 5.3%, Indian 2.1%, East Indian 1.6%, other 3%, unspecified 0.8% (2010 est.)
Language
English (official)
Religion
Protestant 70.2%, Roman Catholic 8.9%, Jehovah’s Witness 2.5%, Hindu 1.9%, other 6.2%, none 7.9%, unspecified 2.4% (2010 est.)
Urbanization
urban population: 48.9% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 1.73% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

as of April 2022