



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)

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; 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.)

