Barbados

**GEOGRAPHY**

Known as both 'the land of the flying fish' and the 'jewel of the Caribbean', Barbados is the easternmost island in the Caribbean island chain, otherwise known as the Lesser Antilles in the West Indies. Unlike many Caribbean islands, Barbados is non-volcanic and composed mainly of coral limestone. It has a varied landscape including flatlands, highlands, terraces and rugged cliffs, caves and tropical rainforests. The island’s name means 'the bearded ones', after the indigenous bearded fig trees once found in abundance on the island.

**CLIMATE**

Barbados, lying just north of the equator, enjoys a hot and humid, moderately tropical, oceanic climate all year round. However, the heat is tempered by northeast trade winds. Temperatures do not vary by much throughout the year, with monthly average temperatures ranging from 26 to 27°C; humidity usually stays between 70 and 76 per cent. Sea temperatures average around 25°C. The average annual rainfall is about 2 200 mm, with November as the wettest month. Barbados lies along the southern edge of the Caribbean hurricane zone. Hurricanes have caused great devastation in the past. The Atlantic hurricane season coincides with the wet season, which lasts from June to November. (World Bank, 2020)

**ECONOMY**

Barbados has an open, market-oriented economy. The Barbados economy, formerly solely dependent on sugar, has diversified over the past 30 years into services (tourism and financial services) and light industry and agriculture (sugar). According to the items attribute is mandatory, almost 30 per cent of men work in industry, and nearly 10 per cent for women. Relatively few are employed in agriculture. Services account for over 80 per cent of GDP (UNCTAD, 2021), and almost the same proportion of employment. In 2018, almost 1.4 million tourists arrived in the country and inbound tourism expenditure reached 22 per cent over GDP (UNWTO, 2021).

As a small and open economy, Barbados is vulnerable to global economic downturns and those of its trade partners. A significant amount of income is received in the form of remittances from Barbadians overseas. Barbados' best-known export is Mount Gay Rum, one of the oldest and most famous brands of fine rum in the world and produced in Barbados since 1703. Given this history, it is not surprising that the export of beverages constitutes well over 10 per cent of the value of commodity exports in Barbados. The main export partners include, for instance the United States of America, Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica.

**CULTURE**

Barbados has the third oldest parliament in the world, with uninterrupted parliamentary governance since 1639. The capital of Barbados, Bridgetown, has been an important port town for many centuries. This colourful and well-preserved historic town is a UNESCO heritage site.

Barbados is also known for its small wooden chattel houses. Chattel, meaning movable property, arose in the past as homeowners were not necessarily landowners. Thus, chattel houses were constructed on blocks, so if an owner had to move, they could take the house with them. Over time, a distinct and ornate design of Barbadian chattel house evolved, making them unique and traditionally Barbadian in style.

Barbadian cuisine includes a unique blend of foods with African, Indian and British influences. The national dish of Barbados is Cou-Cou and Flying Fish. Cou-Cou is made with yellow cornmeal and okras, in much the same way that it has been made in Africa for centuries. Flying Fish is prepared and stewed in an aromatic sauce of tomato, onion, chives, thyme, fresh pepper, garlic and other local herbs. Other popular dishes include fried fish cakes, souce (a pickled pork dish), black pudding, macaroni pie, and sweet desserts such as tamarind balls and baked custard.

Music plays an important role in the country's culture, blending calypso, local spouge, jazz, reggae and soca. Perhaps their best known musical exports are Rihanna and Grandmaster Flash.

Cricket is considered the national sport. One of the greatest cricket all-rounders, Sir Garfield St. Aubyn Sobers, was born in 1936 in Barbados.

Before the Concorde supersonic jet was decommissioned in 2003, Barbados was one of only four countries with regular Concorde service from London.

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**Barbados**

- **Capital**: Bridgetown (13° 6´N, 59° 37´W)
- **International airport(s)**: Grantley Adams Airport, Bridgetown
- **Official language(s)**: English
- **Currency**: Barbados Dollar
- **Time**: UTC -4
- **Region**: Caribbean
**ECONOMIC TRENDS**

**Gross domestic product**
US dollars at constant prices (2015) in millions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>4500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**GDP per capita**
2019
US$18,149

**Productive Capacity Index**
2018
38.4

**Economic and environmental vulnerability index**
2019
16

**Consumer Price Index growth**
2019
2.5%

**Unemployment rate**
2016
Total 9.7%
Female 10%, Male 9.3%

**Main economic sectors, 2019**
Percentage of GDP

- **Services**
- **Industry**
- **Agriculture, hunting, forestry, fishing**

**Tourist arrivals**
Thousands of tourists, percentage of GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of tourists</th>
<th>Percent of GDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**External financial resources**
Percentage of GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>ODA</th>
<th>Remittances</th>
<th>FDI inflows</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Public debt as % of GDP**
2018
126.3%
MARITIME TRANSPORT

**Fleet size**
Number of ships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship type</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total fleet</td>
<td>1,407</td>
<td>1,407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil tankers</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulk carriers</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General cargo</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Container ships</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other types of ships</td>
<td>619</td>
<td>682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Port performance**
Ranked by 2019 data within SIDS group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>SIDS Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of port calls</td>
<td>1,305</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median time in port (days)</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average age of vessels</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average size (GT) of vessels</td>
<td>33,198</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Container port throughput**

2019

82,204 TEU

**Bilateral connectivity index, 2019**
Top 5 partners

- Trinidad and Tobago
- Dominican Republic
- United States of America
- Jamaica
- Saint Kitts and Nevis

**Liner shipping connectivity index**
Maximum China Q1 2006=100

- Q1 2006: 6
- Q1 2008: 8
- Q1 2010: 10
- Q1 2012: 12
- Q1 2014: 14
- Q1 2016: 12
- Q1 2018: 10
- Q1 2020: 8
POPULATION

Total population
Thousands of people, share of urban population

Population development indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poverty headcount (% of population)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human development index</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human assets index</td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult literacy rate (15+ years, both sexes %)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender inequality index</td>
<td>2019</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Life expectancy at birth 2019: 79 years
Population density 2019: 667 persons per km²
Dependency ratio 2019:
- Child: 25.6
- Old-age: 24.3

Age structure by gender, 2019
Percentage of total population
# INTERNATIONAL TRADE

## Merchandise and services trade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2019 (% of GDP)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise exports</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>429</td>
<td>483</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise imports</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services exports</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>1332</td>
<td>1419</td>
<td>1498</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services imports</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>713</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Trade openness

- **Goods and services**
  - 2019: 39% of GDP

## Export concentration index

- 2019: 0.15

## Food import dependency

- Average 2015-2019: 13.86

## Top 5 partners in merchandise trade, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exports in millions US dollars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Merchandise exports by product group, 2019

- Agricultural raw materials
- All food items
- Fuels
- Manufactured goods
- Ores, metals, precious stones and non-monetary gold

## Services exports by category, 2019

- Travel
- Other
ENVIRONMENT

**CO₂ emissions per capita**
Kg per capita

**CO₂ emissions per GDP**
Kg per 2010 US$ of GDP

Renewable energy share in total energy consumption, 2017
Percentage of total energy consumption

Material footprint per capita
Terrestrial protected area
Marine protected area

Disasters indicators
Data not available

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade in ICT goods</th>
<th>Trade in ICT services</th>
<th>Share of internet users</th>
<th>Fixed broadband vs Mobile broadband subscriptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports: 0.3%</td>
<td>Exports: 0.7%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imports: 3.1%</td>
<td>Imports: 8.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exports: 0.7%</td>
<td>Exports: 8.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sources

Source of data: UNCTAD (2021) except indicators listed below.

- Adult literacy rate: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2021)
- Distance to nearest neighbour: [NO_PRINTED_FORM] (Package “cshapes,” 2016) https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/cshapes/index.html
- Economic losses due to disasters: United Nations (2021) https://www.sdg.org/datasets/e3adb2406c2e452b81c3654e276fc5ca_0
- Material footprint: UNEP (2021) https://environmentlive.unep.org/indicator/index/12_2_1
- Number of people affected by disasters: United Nations (2021) https://www.sdg.org/datasets/1beb260e9ca14674b391b815e4874990_0

References

- UNEP (2019). 12.2.1 Material footprint, material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP. Available at https://environmentlive.unep.org/indicator/index/12_2_1 (accessed 13 January 2021).