

CIA World Factbook–Style Country Report

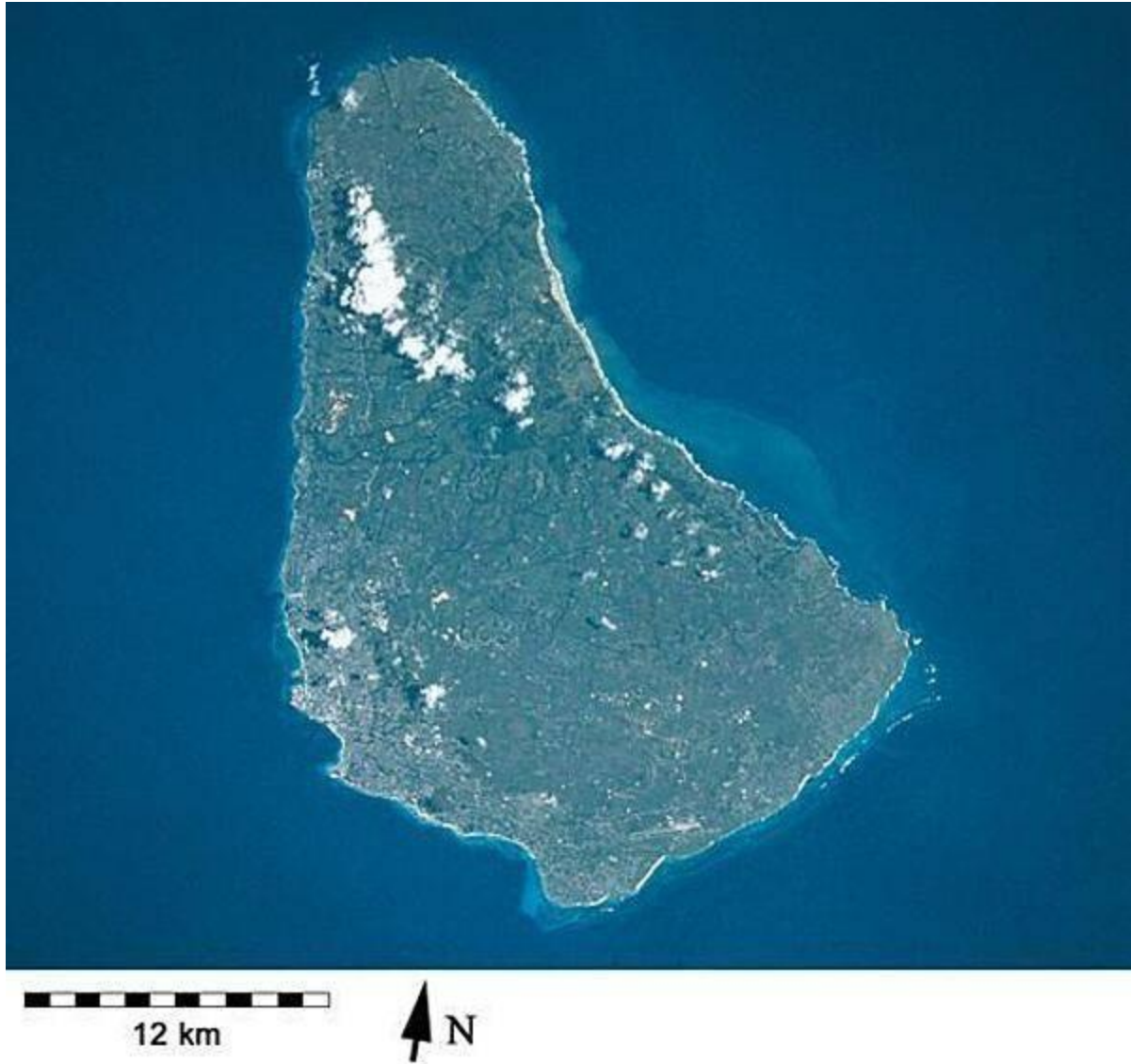
Barbados

ATLAS Intelligence Country Profile

Edition: 3 August 2026







Flag

National Flag: Three vertical bands of ultramarine, gold, and ultramarine with a black broken trident centered in the gold band.

Symbolism

- **Blue:** Sea and sky
- **Gold:** Sand beaches
- **Broken Trident:** Independence from the United Kingdom and democratic governance

Map

Region: Eastern Caribbean

- Coordinates: 13°10'N, 59°33'W
- Caribbean island located east of the Lesser Antilles island chain
- Approximately 160 km east of Saint Vincent
- Total coastline: 97 km

Quick Facts

Category	Information
Official Name	Barbados
Capital	Bridgetown
Population	~282,000
Area	430 km ²
Official Language	English
Currency	Barbadian Dollar (BBD)
Exchange Rate	2 BBD = 1 USD (fixed peg)
Government	Parliamentary Republic
Independence	30 November 1966
Republic Declared	30 November 2021
Time Zone	UTC-4

Geography

Barbados is one of the easternmost Caribbean islands and differs geologically from many neighboring volcanic islands. It consists primarily of uplifted coral limestone, producing relatively flat terrain with gently rolling hills.

Highest point:

- Mount Hillaby (340 m)

Climate:

- Tropical maritime
- Dry season: December–May
- Wet season: June–November
- Hurricane exposure exists but is lower than many western Caribbean islands.

Natural hazards include:

- Tropical storms
 - Coastal erosion
 - Water shortages during drought
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Population

Population is relatively stable with low growth.

Ethnic composition:

- African descent (majority)
- Mixed heritage
- European
- South Asian
- Other minorities

Urbanization exceeds 30%, with Bridgetown serving as the political, commercial, and cultural center.

Literacy approaches universal levels.

Life expectancy exceeds 79 years.

Government

Government Type

Parliamentary republic.

Head of State:

President

Head of Government:

Prime Minister

Legislature:

- Senate
- House of Assembly

Judiciary remains independent and follows common law traditions inherited from Britain.

Barbados replaced the British monarch as head of state in 2021 while remaining within the Commonwealth.

Economy

Barbados possesses one of the Caribbean's more diversified economies.

Major sectors include:

- Tourism
- International business services
- Financial services
- Information technology
- Rum production
- Agriculture

Principal agricultural exports:

- Sugar
- Rum
- Specialty foods

GDP relies heavily upon tourism receipts and financial services.

The Barbadian dollar's fixed exchange rate with the U.S. dollar contributes to monetary stability.

Key challenges include:

- Public debt
 - Climate adaptation costs
 - Dependence on imported fuel
 - Exposure to global tourism fluctuations
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Energy

Barbados imports most petroleum products.

National strategy emphasizes:

- Solar power
- Wind energy
- Renewable electricity
- Energy independence

Barbados has long been a regional leader in residential solar water heating technology.

Infrastructure

Road network:

- Well developed

Ports:

- Bridgetown Deep Water Harbour

International Airport:

- Grantley Adams International Airport

Telecommunications:

- Modern fiber network
 - High internet penetration
 - Expanding digital economy
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Military and Security

Barbados maintains limited military capabilities.

Security forces include:

- Barbados Defence Force
- Barbados Coast Guard

Primary missions:

- Maritime security
- Disaster response
- Drug interdiction
- Search and rescue
- Fisheries protection

The country cooperates closely with:

- Regional Security System (RSS)
 - CARICOM security initiatives
 - United States
 - United Kingdom
 - Canada
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Foreign Relations

Member organizations include:

- United Nations
- Commonwealth
- CARICOM
- Organization of American States
- Caribbean Development Bank

Foreign policy priorities:

- Climate diplomacy
 - Sustainable development
 - Caribbean regional integration
 - Maritime security
 - Financial transparency
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Intelligence Assessment

Strategic Importance

Although geographically small, Barbados occupies an important position in the eastern Caribbean.

Its significance stems from:

- Political stability
 - Financial services
 - Air and maritime transportation
 - Disaster response coordination
 - Regional diplomacy
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Security Assessment

Threat Level:

Low

Primary concerns:

- Transnational organized crime
- Narcotics trafficking through Caribbean maritime routes
- Cybersecurity
- Climate change
- Hurricane resilience

No significant domestic insurgent or terrorist threats currently exist.

Economic Outlook

Overall Outlook:

Stable

Strengths:

- Strong institutions
- Educated workforce
- Tourism reputation
- Stable currency

Risks:

- External economic shocks
 - Tourism dependence
 - Rising sea levels
 - Extreme weather events
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ATLAS Strategic Outlook

Barbados remains among the Caribbean's most politically stable and institutionally resilient states. Its transition to a republic was accomplished peacefully, reinforcing its reputation for democratic governance and rule of law. While lacking major military or

economic power, Barbados exerts influence through diplomacy, regional leadership, and financial services. Climate resilience, sustainable energy development, and continued diversification away from tourism will shape its long-term strategic trajectory. From an intelligence perspective, Barbados is assessed as a **low-risk, high-stability partner** whose principal vulnerabilities arise from external economic conditions and environmental pressures rather than internal political or security instability.