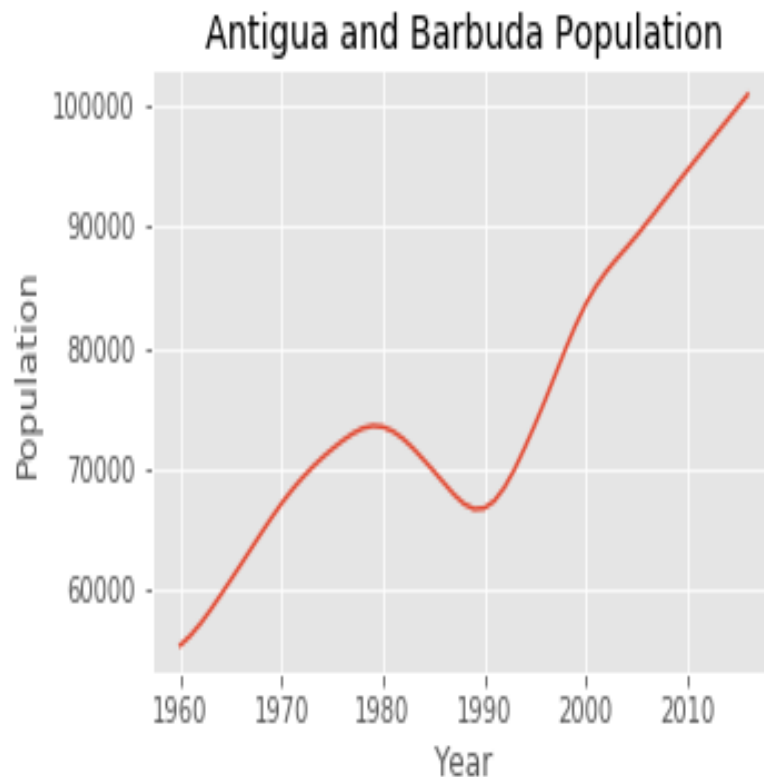


Antigua and Barbuda



Antigua and Barbuda ((listen); ann-TEE-g(w)■ ... bar-B(Y)OO-d■) is a sovereign state in the Americas, lying between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. It consists of two major islands, Antigua and Barbuda, and a number of smaller islands (including Great Bird, Green, Guiana, Long, Maiden and York Islands and further south, the island of Redonda). The permanent population numbers about 81,800 (at the 2011 Census) and the capital and largest port and city is St. John's, on Antigua. Lying near each other (the main Barbuda airport is less than 0.5° of latitude, or 30 nautical miles, north of the main Antigua airport), Antigua and Barbuda are in the middle of the Leeward Islands, part of the Lesser Antilles, roughly at 17°N of the equator. The country's name was given by Christopher Columbus in 1493 after discovering the island, in honor of the Virgin of La Antigua in the Seville Cathedral. The country is nicknamed "Land of 365 Beaches" due to the many beaches surrounding the islands. Its governance, language, and culture have all been strongly influenced by the British Empire, of which the country was formerly a part, gaining sovereignty on 1 November 1981. It remains a member of the Commonwealth and Queen Elizabeth II is the head of state. In September 2017, Hurricane Irma damaged or destroyed 95% of Barbuda's buildings and infrastructure. Everyone on the island was evacuated to Antigua. == Etymology == Antigua is Spanish for "ancient" and barbuda is Spanish for "bearded". The island of Antigua, originally called Wadadli by Arawaks, is today called Wadadli by locals; Caribs possibly called it Wa'omoni. Christopher Columbus, while sailing by in 1493 may have named it Santa Maria la Antigua, after an icon in the Spanish Seville Cathedral. == History == Antigua was first settled by archaic age hunter-gatherer Amerindians called the Siboney or Ciboney. Carbon dating has established the earliest settlements started around 3100 BC. They were succeeded by the ceramic age pre-Columbian Arawak-speaking Saladoid people who migrated from the lower Orinoco River. The Arawaks introduced agriculture, raising, among other crops, the famous Antigua black pineapple (Moris cultivar of *Ananas comosus*), corn, sweet potatoes, chiles, guava, tobacco, and cotton. The indigenous West Indians made excellent seagoing vessels which they used to sail around on the Atlantic and the Caribbean. As a result, Caribs and Arawaks were able to colonise much of

South America and the Caribbean Islands. Their descendants still live there, notably in Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia. Most Arawaks left Antigua around 1100 AD; those who remained were later raided by the Caribs. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the Caribs' superior weapons and seafaring prowess allowed them to defeat most of the West Indian Arawak nations, enslaving some and possibly cannibalising others. The Catholic Encyclopedia makes it clear that the European invaders had difficulty differentiating between the various groups of the native peoples they encountered. As a result, the number and types of ethnic/tribal groups in existence at that time may have been much more varied and numerous than just the two mentioned in this article. European and African diseases, malnutrition, and slavery eventually killed most of the Caribbean's native population. Smallpox was probably the greatest killer. Some historians believe that the psychological stress of slavery may also have played a part in the massive number of deaths amongst enslaved natives. Others believe the reportedly abundant but starchy, low-protein diet may have contributed to their severe malnutrition as they were used to a diet fortified with protein from the sea. The Spaniards did not colonise Antigua because it lacked fresh water but not aggressive Caribs. The English settled on Antigua in 1632; Christopher Codrington settled on Barbuda in 1684. Slavery, established to run sugar plantations around 1684, was abolished in 1834. The British ruled from 1632 to 1981, with a brief French interlude in 1666. The islands became an independent state within the Commonwealth of Nations on 1 November 1981, with Elizabeth II as the first Queen of Antigua and Barbuda. Vere Cornwall Bird Sr became the first Prime Minister. Most of Barbuda was devastated in early September 2017 by Hurricane Irma, which brought winds with speeds reaching 295 km/h (185 mph). The storm damaged or destroyed 95% of the island's buildings and infrastructure, leaving Barbuda "barely habitable" according to Prime Minister Gaston Browne. Nearly everyone on the island was evacuated to Antigua.

== Geography == Antigua and Barbuda both are generally low-lying islands whose terrain has been influenced more by limestone formations than volcanic activity. The highest point on Antigua is Mount Obama (formerly Boggy Peak), the remnant of a volcanic crater rising 402 metres (1,319 feet). The shorelines of both islands are greatly indented with beaches, lagoons, and natural harbours. The islands are rimmed by reefs and shoals. There are few streams as rainfall is slight. Both islands lack adequate amounts of fresh groundwater.

=== Largest cities ===

=== Islands ===

=== Climate === Rainfall averages 990 mm (39 in) per year, with the amount varying widely from season to season. In general the wettest period is between September and November. The islands generally experience low humidity and recurrent droughts. Temperatures average 27 °C (80.6 °F), with a range from 23 °C (73.4 °F) to 29 °C (84.2 °F) in the winter to from 25 °C (77.0 °F) to 30 °C (86.0 °F) in the summer and autumn. The coolest period is between December and February. Hurricanes strike on an average of once a year, including the powerful Category 5 Hurricane Irma, on 6 September 2017, which damaged 95% of the structures on Barbuda. Some 1,800 people were evacuated to Antigua. An estimate published by Time indicated that over \$100 million would be required to rebuild homes and infrastructure. Philmore Mullin, Director of Barbuda's National Office of Disaster Services, said that "all critical infrastructure and utilities are non-existent – food supply, medicine, shelter, electricity, water, communications, waste management". He summarised the situation as follows: "Public utilities need to be rebuilt in their entirety... It is optimistic to think anything can be rebuilt in six months ... In my 25 years in disaster management, I have never seen something like this."

=== Ecology === The sandy soil on much of the islands has only scrub vegetation. Some parts of Antigua are more fertile—most notably the central plain—due to the volcanic ash in the soil. These areas support some tropical vegetation and agricultural uses. The planting of acacia, mahogany, and red and white cedar on Antigua has led to as much as 11% of the land becoming forested, helping to conserve the soil and water.

== Demographics ==

=== Ethnic groups === Antigua has a population of 100,963, mostly made up of people of West African, British, and Madeiran descent. The ethnic distribution consists of 91% Black & Mulatto, 4.4% mixed race, 1.7% White, and 2.9% other (primarily East Indian and other Asian). Most Whites are of Irish or British descent. Christian Levantine Arabs, and a small number of Asians and Sephardic Jews make up the remainder of the population. An increasingly large percentage of the population lives abroad, most notably in the United Kingdom (Antiguan Britons), United States and Canada. A minority of Antiguan residents are immigrants from other countries, particularly from Dominica, Guyana and Jamaica, and, increasing, from the Dominican Republic, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Nigeria. An estimated 4,500 American citizens also make their home in Antigua and Barbuda, making their numbers one of the largest American populations in the English-speaking Eastern Caribbean.

=== Languages === English is the official language. The Barbudan accent is slightly different from the Antiguan. In the years before Antigua and Barbuda's independence, Standard English was widely

spoken in preference to Antiguan Creole. Generally, the upper and middle classes shun Antiguan Creole. The educational system dissuades the use of Antiguan Creole and instruction is done in Standard (British) English. Many of the words used in the Antiguan dialect are derived from British as well as African languages. This can be easily seen in phrases such as: "Ent it?" meaning "Ain't it?" which is itself dialectal and means "Isn't it?". Common island proverbs can often be traced to Africa. Spanish is spoken by around 10,000 inhabitants. === Religion === A majority of 77% of Antiguanians are Christians, with the Anglicans (17,6%) being the largest single denomination. Other Christian denominations present are Seventh-day Adventist Church (12,4%), Pentecostalism (12,2%), Moravian Church (8,3%), Roman Catholics (8,2%), Methodist Church (5,6%), Wesleyan Holiness Church (4,5%), Church of God (4,1%), Baptists (3,6%), Mormons (<1,0%), and Jehovah's Witnesses. Non-Christian religions practised in the islands include the Rastafari, Islam, and Bahá'í Faith. == Governance ==

Political system === The politics of Antigua and Barbuda take place within a framework of a unitary, parliamentary, representative democratic monarchy, in which the Head of State is the Monarch who appoints the Governor General as vice-regal representative. Elizabeth II is the present Queen of Antigua and Barbuda, having served in that position since the islands' independence from the United Kingdom in 1981. The Queen is currently represented by Governor General Sir Rodney Williams. A Council of Ministers is appointed by the Governor General on the advice of the Prime Minister, currently Gaston Browne (2014–). The Prime Minister is the Head of Government. Executive power is exercised by the government while legislative power is vested in both the government and the two Chambers of Parliament. The bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate (17 members appointed by members of the government and the opposition party, and approved by the Governor-General), and the House of Representatives (17 members elected by first past the post) to serve five-year terms. The current Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition is the United Progressive Party Member of Parliament (MP), the Honourable Baldwin Spencer. === Elections === The last elections held were on 12 June 2014, during which the Antigua Labour Party won 14 seats, and the United Progressive Party 3 seats. Since 1949, elections have been won by the populist Antigua Labour Party. However, in the Antigua and Barbuda legislative election of 2004 saw the defeat of the longest-serving elected government in the Caribbean. Prime Minister Lester Bryant Bird, who had succeeded his father Vere Cornwall Bird Sr., and Deputy Robin Yearwood had been in office since 1976. The elder Bird was Prime Minister from 1981 to 1994 and Chief Minister of Antigua from 1960 to 1981, except for the 1971–1976 period when the Progressive Labour Movement (PLM) defeated his party. Vere Cornwall Bird, the nation's first Prime Minister, is credited with having brought Antigua and Barbuda and the Caribbean into a new era of independence. ===== Party elections ===== Gaston Browne defeated his predecessor Lester Bryant Bird at the Antigua Labour Party's biennial convention in November 2012 held to elect a political leader and other officers. The party then altered its name from the Antigua Labour Party (ALP) to the Antigua and Barbuda Labour Party (ABLP). This was done to officially include the party's presence on the sister island of Barbuda in its organisation, the only political party on the mainland to have a physical branch in Barbuda. === Judiciary === The Judicial branch is the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (based in Saint Lucia; one judge of the Supreme Court is a resident of the islands and presides over the High Court of Justice). Antigua is also a member of the Caribbean Court of Justice. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council serves as its Supreme Court of Appeal. === Foreign relations === Antigua and Barbuda is a member of the United Nations, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas, the Commonwealth of Nations, the Caribbean Community, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, the Organization of American States, the World Trade Organization and the Eastern Caribbean's Regional Security System. Antigua and Barbuda is also a member of the International Criminal Court (with a Bilateral Immunity Agreement of Protection for the US military as covered under Article 98 of the Rome Statute). In 2013, Antigua and Barbuda called for reparations for slavery at the United Nations. Prime Minister Baldwin Spencer said "We have recently seen a number of leaders apologising", and that they should now "match their words with concrete and material benefits". === Military === The Royal Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force has around 260 members dispersed between the line infantry regiment, service and support unit and coast guard. There is also the Antigua and Barbuda Cadet Corps made up of 200 teenagers between the ages of 12 to 18. === Administrative divisions === Antigua and Barbuda is divided into six parishes and two dependencies: Note: Though Barbuda and Redonda are called dependencies they are integral parts of the state, making them essentially administrative divisions. Dependency is simply a title. == Economy == Tourism dominates the economy, accounting for more than half of the gross domestic product (GDP). Antigua is famous for its many luxury resorts. Weak tourist activity since early 2000 has slowed the economy, however, and

squeezed the government into a tight fiscal corner. Investment banking and financial services also make up an important part of the economy. Major world banks with offices in Antigua include the Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) and Scotiabank. Financial-services corporations with offices in Antigua include PriceWaterhouseCoopers. The US Securities and Exchange Commission has accused the Antigua-based Stanford International Bank, owned by Texas billionaire Allen Stanford, of orchestrating a huge fraud which may have bilked investors of some \$8 billion. (check status 20100312) The twin-island nation's agricultural production is focused on its domestic market and constrained by a limited water supply and a labour shortage stemming from the lure of higher wages in tourism and construction work. Manufacturing is made up of enclave-type assembly for export, the major products being bedding, handicrafts and electronic components. Prospects for economic growth in the medium term will continue to depend on income growth in the industrialised world, especially in the United States, from which about one-third of all tourists come. Following the opening of the American University of Antigua College of Medicine by investor and attorney Neil Simon in 2003, a new source of revenue was established. The university employs many local Antiguanans and the approximate 1000 students consume a large amount of the goods and services. Antigua and Barbuda also utilizes an economic citizenship program to spur investment into the country. == Education == Antigua & Barbuda has a greater than 90% literacy rate. In 1998, Antigua and Barbuda adopted a national mandate to become the pre-eminent provider of medical services in the Caribbean. As part of this mission, Antigua and Barbuda built the most technologically advanced hospital in the Caribbean, the Mt. St. John Medical Centre. The island of Antigua currently has two foreign-owned for-profit offshore medical schools, the American University of Antigua (AUA), founded in 2004, and The University of Health Sciences Antigua (UHSA), founded in 1982. The island's medical schools cater mostly to foreign students but contribute to the local economy and health care. There is also a government owned state college in Antigua as well as the Antigua and Barbuda Institute of Information Technology (ABIIT) and the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Training Institute (ABHTI). The University of the West Indies has a branch in Antigua for local students to continue university studies. Antigua has two international primary/secondary schools: CCSET International, which offers the Ontario Secondary School Diploma, and Island Academy, which offers the International Baccalaureate. There are also many other private schools but these institutions tend to follow the same local curriculum (CXC's) as government schools. == Culture == The culture is predominantly a mixture of West African and British cultural influences. Cricket is the national sport. Other popular sports include football, boat racing and surfing. (Antigua Sailing Week attracts locals and visitors from all over the world). Calypso and soca music, both originating primarily out of Trinidad, are important in Antigua and Barbuda. === Festivals === The national Carnival held each August commemorates the abolition of slavery in the British West Indies, although on some islands, Carnival may celebrate the coming of Lent. Its festive pageants, shows, contests and other activities are a major tourist attraction. === Cuisine === Corn and sweet potatoes play an important role in Antiguan cuisine. For example, a popular Antiguan dish, Dukuna is a sweet, steamed dumpling made from grated sweet potatoes, flour and spices. One of the Antiguan staple foods, fungi, is a cooked paste made of cornmeal and water. === Media === There are two daily newspapers: the "Daily Observer" and "Caribbean Times". The local channel ABS TV 10 is available (it is the only station which shows exclusively local programs). There are also several local and regional radio stations, such as V2C-AM 620, ZDK-AM 1100, VYBZ-FM 92.9, ZDK-FM 97.1, Observer Radio 91.1 FM, DNECA Radio 90.1 FM, Second Advent Radio 101.5 FM, Abundant Life Radio 103.9 FM, Crusader Radio 107.3 FM, Nice FM 104.3 === Local literature === Jamaica Kincaid, has published over 20 pieces of literature. == Sports == The Antigua and Barbuda national cricket team represented the country at the 1998 Commonwealth Games, but Antiguan cricketers otherwise play for the Leeward Islands cricket team in domestic matches and the West Indies cricket team internationally. The 2007 Cricket World Cup was hosted in the West Indies from 11 March to 28 April 2007. Antigua hosted eight matches at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium, which was completed on 11 February 2007 and can hold up to 20,000 people. Antigua is a Host of Stanford Twenty20 – Twenty20 Cricket, a version started by Allen Stanford in 2006 as a regional cricket game with almost all Caribbean islands taking part. Rugby and netball are popular as well. Association football, or soccer, is also a very popular sport. Antigua has a national football team which entered World Cup qualification for the 1974 tournament and for 1986 and onwards. A professional team was formed in 2011, Antigua Barracuda FC, which played in the USL Pro, a lower professional league in the USA. The nation's team had a major achievement in 2012, getting out of its preliminary group for the 2014 World Cup, notably due to a victory over powerful Haiti. In its first game in the next CONCACAF group play on 8 June 2012 in Tampa, FL, Antigua and

Barbuda, comprising 17 Barracuda players and 7 from the lower English professional leagues, scored a goal against the United States. However, the team lost 3:1 to the US. == Notables == Runners Sonia Williams and Heather Samuel represented Antigua and Barbuda at the Olympic Games. Brendan Christian, runner (100 m, 200 m) Daniel Bailey runner (100 m, 200 m) James Grayman high jumper Viv Richards, cricketeer, scored the fastest Test Century Brian Lara, cricketeer, twice scored the World Test Record at the Antigua Recreation Ground. Cricketeers Sir Vivian Richards, Andy Roberts, and Richie Richardson == Symbols == The national bird is the frigate bird, and the national tree is the Talipariti elatum(Blue Mahoe tree) == See also == Outline of Antigua and Barbuda Index of Antigua and Barbuda-related articles Bibliography of Antigua and Barbuda Antigua and Barbuda – Wikipedia book == References == == External links == The Official Website of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda Wikimedia Atlas of Antigua and Barbuda Antigua and Barbuda, United States Library of Congress "Antigua and Barbuda". The World Factbook. Central Intelligence Agency. Antigua and Barbuda from UCB Libraries GovPubs Antigua and Barbuda at Curlie (based on DMOZ) Antigua and Barbuda from the BBC News World Bank's country data profile for Antigua and Barbuda ArchaeologyAntigua.org – 2010March13 source of archaeological information for Antigua and Barbuda