



Brunei



Background The Sultanate of Brunei's influence peaked between the 15th and 17th centuries, when its control extended over coastal areas of northwest Borneo and the southern Philippines. Internal strife over royal succession, colonial expansion of European powers, and piracy subsequently brought on a period of decline. In 1888, Brunei became a British protectorate; independence was achieved in 1984. The same family has ruled Brunei for over six centuries, and in 2017, the country celebrated the 50th anniversary of Sultan Hassanal BOLKIAH's accession to the throne. Brunei has one of the highest per-capita GDPs in the world, thanks to extensive petroleum and natural gas fields.

Capital name: Bandar Seri Begawan

Government type absolute monarchy or sultanate

Area total : 5,765 sq km
land: 5,265 sq km
water: 500 sq km

Climate tropical; hot, humid, rainy

Natural resources petroleum, natural gas, timber

Population total: 491,900 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate 1.4% (2024 est.)

Ethnic groups Malay 67.4%, Chinese 9.6%, other 23% (2021 est.)

Religions Muslim (official) 82.1%, Christian 6.7%, Buddhist 6.3%, other 4.9% (2021 est.)

Languages Malay (Bahasa Melayu) (official), English, Chinese dialects

Executive branch chief of state: Sultan and Prime Minister Sir HASSANAL Bolkiah (since 5 October 1967)
head of government: Sultan and Prime Minister Sir HASSANAL Bolkiah (since 5 October 1967)

Legislative branch legislature name: Legislative Council (Majlis Mesyuarat Negara)

Diplomatic representation in the US chief of mission: Ambassador (vacant); Chargé d'Affaires IZZATI Baharuddin (since 6 May 2025)

Diplomatic representation from the US chief of mission: Ambassador Caryn R. McCLELLAND (since December 2021)

Economic overview almost exclusively an oil and gas economy; high income country; expansive and robust welfare system; the majority of the population works for the government; promulgating a nationalized halal brand; considering establishment of a bond market and stock exchange

Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$36.64 billion (2024 est.) \$35.163 billion (2023 est.) \$34.771 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$79,200 (2024 est.) \$76,600 (2023 est.) \$76,400 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$11.483 billion (2024 est.) \$11.573 billion (2023 est.) \$14.405 billion (2022 est.)
Exports - partners	Australia 21%, Japan 17%, China 17%, Singapore 16%, Malaysia 6% (2023)
Exports - commodities	refined petroleum, natural gas, crude petroleum, hydrocarbons, fertilizers (2023)
Imports	\$9.11 billion (2024 est.) \$9.077 billion (2023 est.) \$10.099 billion (2022 est.)
Imports - partners	Malaysia 23%, UAE 10%, China 10%, UK 10%, Australia 6% (2023)
Imports - commodities	crude petroleum, gold, refined petroleum, coal, cars (2023)

Population Pyramid

