



# Falkland Islands (Islas Malvinas)



**Background** Although first sighted by an English navigator in 1592, the first landing (English) did not occur until almost a century later in 1690, and the first settlement (French) was not established until 1764. The colony was turned over to Spain two years later, and the islands have since been the subject of a territorial dispute, first between Britain and Spain, then between Britain and Argentina. The UK asserted its claim to the islands by establishing a naval garrison there in 1833. Argentina invaded the islands in 1982. The British responded with an expeditionary force and after fierce fighting forced an Argentine surrender on 14 June 1982. With hostilities ended and Argentine forces withdrawn, UK administration resumed. In response to renewed calls from Argentina for Britain to relinquish control of the islands, a referendum was held in 2013 that resulted in 99.8% of the population voting to remain a part of the UK.

**Capital** name: Stanley

**Government type** parliamentary democracy (Legislative Assembly); self-governing overseas territory of the UK

**Area** total : 12,173 sq km  
land: 12,173 sq km  
water: 0 sq km

**Climate** cold marine; strong westerly winds, cloudy, humid; rain occurs on more than half of days in year; average annual rainfall is 60 cm in Stanley; occasional snow all year, except in January and February, but typically does not accumulate

**Natural resources** fish, squid, wildlife, calcified seaweed, sphagnum moss

**Population** total: 3,142 (2021)

**Population growth rate** 0.01% (2014 est.)

**Ethnic groups** Falkland Islander 48.3%, British 23.1%, St. Helenian 7.5%, Chilean 4.6%, mixed 6%, other 8.5%, unspecified 2% (2016 est.)

**Religions** Christian 57.1%, other 1.6%, none 35.4%, unspecified 6% (2016 est.)

**Languages** English 89%, Spanish 7.7%, other 3.3% (2006 est.)

<b>Executive branch</b>	chief of state: King CHARLES III (since 8 September 2022); represented by Governor Alison BLAKE (since 23 July 2022) head of government: Chief Executive Andy KEELING (since April 2021)
<b>Legislative branch</b>	legislature name: Legislative Assembly
<b>Diplomatic representation from the US</b>	embassy: none (administered by the UK; claimed by Argentina)
<b>Economic overview</b>	British South American territorial economy; longstanding fishing industry; surging tourism prior to COVID-19 and Brexit; recent offshore hydrocarbon discoveries threaten ecotourism industries; no central bank and must have British approval on currency shifts
<b>Real GDP per capita</b>	\$70,800 (2015 est.) \$63,000 (2014 est.)
<b>Exports - partners</b>	Spain 68%, Morocco 10%, USA 8%, Namibia 3%, Germany 2% (2023)
<b>Exports - commodities</b>	shellfish, fish, wool, sheep and goat meat (2023)
<b>Imports - partners</b>	UK 68%, Greece 19%, Spain 11%, Netherlands 1%, NZ 0% (2023)
<b>Imports - commodities</b>	refined petroleum, aircraft parts, prefabricated buildings, plastic products, surveying equipment (2023)