



Botswana



Background In the early 1800s, multiple political entities in what is now Botswana were destabilized or destroyed by a series of conflicts and population movements in southern Africa. By the end of this period, the Tswana ethnic group, who also live across the border in South Africa, had become the most prominent group in the area. In 1852, Tswana forces halted the expansion of white Afrikaner settlers who were seeking to expand their territory northwards into what is now Botswana. In 1885, Great Britain claimed territory that roughly corresponds with modern day Botswana as a protectorate called Bechuanaland. Upon independence in 1966, the British protectorate of Bechuanaland adopted the new name of Botswana, which means "land of the Tswana."

More than five decades of uninterrupted civilian leadership, progressive social policies, and significant capital investment have created an enduring democracy and upper-middle-income economy. The ruling Botswana Democratic Party has won every national election since independence; President Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe MASISI assumed the presidency in 2018 after the retirement of former President Ian KHAMA due to constitutional term limits. MASISI won his first election as president in 2019, and he is Botswana's fifth president since independence. Mineral extraction, principally diamond mining, dominates economic activity, though tourism is a growing sector due to the country's conservation practices and extensive nature preserves. Botswana has one of the world's highest rates of HIV/AIDS infection but also one of Africa's most progressive and comprehensive programs for dealing with the disease.

Capital name: Gaborone

Government type parliamentary republic

Area
total : 581,730 sq km
land: 566,730 sq km
water: 15,000 sq km

Climate semiarid; warm winters and hot summers

Natural resources diamonds, copper, nickel, salt, soda ash, potash, coal, iron ore, silver

Population total: 2,450,668 (2024 est.)

Population growth rate 1.34% (2024 est.)

Ethnic groups Tswana (or Setswana) 79%, Kalanga 11%, Basarwa 3%, other, including Kgalagadi and people of European ancestry 7%

Religions Christian 79.1%, Badimo 4.1%, other 1.4% (includes Bahai, Hindu, Muslim, Rastafarian), none 15.2%, unspecified 0.3% (2011 est.)

Languages Setswana 77.3%, Sekalanga 7.4%, Shekgalagadi 3.4%, English (official) 2.8%, Zezuru/Shona 2%, Sesarwa 1.7%, Sembukushu 1.6%, Ndebele 1%, other 2.8% (2011 est.)

Executive branch	chief of state: President Duma BOKO (since 1 November 2024) head of government: President Duma BOKO (since 1 November 2024)
Legislative branch	legislature name: Parliament
Diplomatic representation in the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Mpho Churchill MOPHUTING (since 18 September 2024)
Diplomatic representation from the US	chief of mission: Ambassador Howard A. VAN VRANKEN (since 24 May 2023)
Economic overview	good economic governance and financial management; diamond-driven growth model declining; rapid poverty reductions; high unemployment, particularly among youth; COVID-19 sharply contracted the economy and recovery is slow; public sector wages have posed fiscal challenges
Real GDP (purchasing power parity)	\$45.553 billion (2024 est.) \$46.957 billion (2023 est.) \$45.498 billion (2022 est.)
Real GDP per capita	\$18,100 (2024 est.) \$18,900 (2023 est.) \$18,600 (2022 est.)
Exports	\$6.398 billion (2023 est.) \$8.914 billion (2022 est.) \$7.861 billion (2021 est.)
Exports - partners	UAE 27%, India 17%, Belgium 16%, South Africa 8%, USA 7% (2023)
Exports - commodities	diamonds, copper ore, insulated wire, carbonates, cattle (2023)
Imports	\$7.228 billion (2023 est.) \$8.826 billion (2022 est.) \$9.25 billion (2021 est.)
Imports - partners	South Africa 65%, Namibia 8%, Canada 5%, China 3%, India 3% (2023)
Imports - commodities	refined petroleum, diamonds, cars, flavored water, electricity (2023)

Population Pyramid

