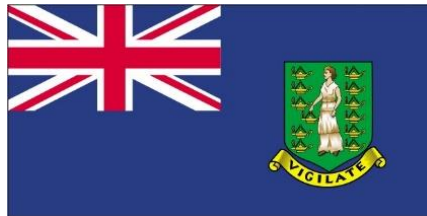


# BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS



## INTRODUCTION

First inhabited by Arawak and later by Carib Indians, the Virgin Islands were settled by the Dutch in 1648 and then annexed by the English in 1672. The islands were part of the British colony of the Leeward Islands from 1872-1960; they were granted autonomy in 1967. They maintain strong ties to the nearby US Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

## GOVERNMENT

### Chief of State

Queen ELIZABETH II  
represented by Governor John J. RANKIN

### Head of Government

Premier Andrew FAHIE

### Government Type

Overseas Territory of the UK with limited self-government; parliamentary democracy

### Capital

Road Town

### Legislature

unicameral House of Assembly (15 seats)

## GEOGRAPHY

### Area

Total: 151 sq km  
Land: 151 sq km  
Water: 0 sq km

### Climate

subtropical; humid; temperatures moderated by trade winds

### Natural Resources

negligible; pleasant climate, beaches foster tourism

## ECONOMY

### Economic Overview

British Caribbean island territorial economy; strong tourism and services industries; vulnerable to hurricanes; navigating public debt insolvency since 2008 Crisis; considered a tax haven; high electrification costs; major rum exporter

**GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$500 million (2017 est.)

**GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$34,200 (2017 est.)

**Industries** - tourism, light industry, construction, rum, concrete block, offshore banking center

**Agricultural products** - fruits, vegetables, livestock, poultry, fish

**Exports** \$23 million (2017 est.)

recreational boats, aircraft, diamonds, paintings, precious stones (2019)

**partners:** Malta 30%, Seychelles 29%, Switzerland 14% (2019)

**Imports** \$300 million (2017 est.)

recreational boats, aircraft, refined petroleum, cars, furniture (2019)

**partners:** Germany 32%, US 22%, Italy 9%, France 7%, Seychelles 7% (2019)

## PEOPLE & SOCIETY

### Population

37,890 (July 2021 est.)

### Population Growth

1.96% (2021 est.)

### Ethnicity

African/black 76.3%,  
Latino 5.5%,  
White 5.4%, mixed 5.3%, Indian 2.1%, East Indian 1.6%, other 3%, unspecified 0.8% (2010 est.)

### Language

English (official)

### Religion

Protestant 70.2%, Roman Catholic 8.9%, Jehovah's Witness 2.5%, Hindu 1.9%, other 6.2%, none 7.9%, unspecified 2.4% (2010 est.)

### Urbanization

urban population: 48.9% of total population (2021)  
rate of urbanization: 1.73% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

