

# Explore All Countries Bahrain

## Middle East

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Background**

In 1783, the Sunni AL-KHALIFA family took power in Bahrain. In order to secure these holdings, it entered into a series of treaties with the UK during the 19th century that made Bahrain a British protectorate. The archipelago attained its independence in 1971. A steady decline in oil production and reserves since 1970 prompted Bahrain to take steps to diversify its economy, in the process developing petroleum processing and refining, aluminum production, and hospitality and retail sectors. It has also endeavored to become a leading regional banking center, especially with respect to Islamic finance. Bahrain's small size, central location among Gulf countries, economic dependence on Saudi Arabia, and proximity to Iran require it to play a delicate balancing act in foreign affairs among its larger neighbors. Its foreign policy activities usually fall in line with Saudi Arabia and the UAE. In 2022, the United States designated Bahrain as a major non-NATO ally.

The Sunni royal family has long struggled to manage relations with its Shia-majority population. In 2011, amid Arab uprisings elsewhere in the region, the Bahraini Government responded to similar pro-democracy and reform protests at home with police and military action, including deploying Gulf Cooperation Council security forces. Ongoing dissatisfaction with the political status quo continues to factor into sporadic clashes between demonstrators and security forces. In 2020, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates signed the US-brokered Abraham Accords with Israel. In 2023, Bahrain and the United States signed the Comprehensive Security Integration and Prosperity Agreement to enhance cooperation across a wide range of areas, from defense and security to emerging technology, trade, and investment.

## GEOGRAPHY

### **Location**

Middle East, archipelago in the Persian Gulf, east of Saudi Arabia

**Geographic coordinates**

26 00 N, 50 33 E

**Map references**

Middle East

**Area**

**total** : 760 sq km

**land**: 760 sq km

**water**: 0 sq km

comparison ranking: total 187

**Area - comparative**

3.5 times the size of Washington, DC

**Area comparison map:****Land boundaries**

**total**: 0 km

**Coastline**

161 km

**Maritime claims**

**territorial sea**: 12 nm

**contiguous zone**: 24 nm

**continental shelf**: extending to boundaries to be determined

**Climate**

arid; mild, pleasant winters; very hot, humid summers

**Terrain**

mostly low desert plain rising gently to low central escarpment

**Elevation**

**highest point**: Jabal ad Dukhan 135 m

**lowest point**: Persian Gulf 0 m

**Natural resources**

oil, associated and nonassociated natural gas, fish, pearls

**Land use**

**agricultural land**: 11.3% (2018 est.)

arable land: 2.1% (2018 est.)

permanent crops: 3.9% (2018 est.)

permanent pasture: 5.3% (2018 est.)

**forest**: 0.7% (2018 est.)

**other**: 88% (2018 est.)

**Irrigated land**

40 sq km (2012)

**Major aquifers**

Arabian Aquifer System

**Population distribution**

smallest population of the Gulf States, but urbanization rate exceeds 90%; largest settlement concentration is found on the far northern end of the island in and around Manamah and Al Muharraq

**Natural hazards**

periodic droughts; dust storms

**Geography - note**

close to primary Middle Eastern petroleum sources; strategic location in Persian Gulf, through which much of the Western world's petroleum must transit to reach open ocean

**PEOPLE AND SOCIETY****Population****total:** 1,566,888**male:** 940,022**female:** 626,866 (2024 est.)

comparison rankings: female 159; male 154; total 155

**Nationality****noun:** Bahraini(s)**adjective:** Bahraini**Ethnic groups**

Bahraini 47.4%, Asian 43.4%, other Arab 4.9%, African 1.4%, North American 1.1%, Gulf Co-operative countries 0.9%, European 0.8%, other 0.1% (2020 est.)

**Languages**

Arabic (official), English, Farsi, Urdu

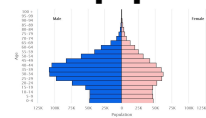
**major-language sample(s):**

(Arabic) كتاب حقائق العالم، المصدر الذي لا يمكن الاستغناء عنه للمعلومات الأساسية

The World Factbook, the indispensable source for basic information.

**Arabic audio sample:****Religions**

Muslim 74.2%, other (includes Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Baha'i) 25.8% (2020 est.)

**Age structure****0-14 years:** 18.1% (male 143,399/female 139,667)**15-64 years:** 77.7% (male 762,190/female 454,616)**65 years and over:** 4.3% (2024 est.) (male 34,433/female 32,583)**2023 population pyramid:****Dependency ratios****total dependency ratio:** 31.3

**youth dependency ratio:** 26.8

**elderly dependency ratio:** 4.6

**potential support ratio:** 21.8 (2021 est.)

### **Median age**

**total:** 33.4 years (2024 est.)

**male:** 34.6 years

**female:** 31.2 years

comparison ranking: total 111

### **Population growth rate**

0.82% (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 109

### **Birth rate**

12.2 births/1,000 population (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 146

### **Death rate**

2.8 deaths/1,000 population (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 226

### **Net migration rate**

-1.2 migrant(s)/1,000 population (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 151

### **Population distribution**

smallest population of the Gulf States, but urbanization rate exceeds 90%; largest settlement concentration is found on the far northern end of the island in and around Manamah and Al Muharraq

### **Urbanization**

**urban population:** 89.9% of total population (2023)

**rate of urbanization:** 1.99% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

### **Major urban areas - population**

709,000 MANAMA (capital) (2023)

### **Sex ratio**

**at birth:** 1.03 male(s)/female

**0-14 years:** 1.03 male(s)/female

**15-64 years:** 1.68 male(s)/female

**65 years and over:** 1.06 male(s)/female

**total population:** 1.5 male(s)/female (2024 est.)

### **Maternal mortality ratio**

16 deaths/100,000 live births (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: 135

### **Infant mortality rate**

**total:** 9.7 deaths/1,000 live births (2024 est.)

**male:** 11.3 deaths/1,000 live births

**female:** 8 deaths/1,000 live births

comparison ranking: total 135

**Life expectancy at birth**

**total population:** 80.4 years (2024 est.)

**male:** 78.1 years

**female:** 82.7 years

comparison ranking: total population 52

**Total fertility rate**

1.65 children born/woman (2024 est.)

comparison ranking: 171

**Gross reproduction rate**

0.81 (2024 est.)

**Contraceptive prevalence rate**

NA

**Drinking water source**

**improved:** urban: NA

rural: NA

total: 100% of population

**unimproved:** urban: NA

rural: NA

total: 0% of population (2020 est.)

**Current health expenditure**

4.2% of GDP (2020)

**Physician density**

0.93 physicians/1,000 population (2015)

**Hospital bed density**

1.7 beds/1,000 population (2017)

**Sanitation facility access**

**improved:** urban: NA

rural: NA

total: 100% of population

**unimproved:** urban: NA

rural: NA

total: 0% of population (2020 est.)

**Obesity - adult prevalence rate**

29.8% (2016)

comparison ranking: 25

**Alcohol consumption per capita**

**total:** 1.18 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

**beer:** 0.4 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

**wine:** 0.11 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

**spirits:** 0.66 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

**other alcohols:** 0.01 liters of pure alcohol (2019 est.)

comparison ranking: total 148

#### **Tobacco use**

**total:** 14.9% (2020 est.)

**male:** 25.3% (2020 est.)

**female:** 4.5% (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: total 104

#### **Children under the age of 5 years underweight**

NA

#### **Currently married women (ages 15-49)**

43.8% (2023 est.)

#### **Education expenditures**

2.2% of GDP (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: 183

#### **Literacy**

**definition:** age 15 and over can read and write

**total population:** 97.5%

**male:** 99.9%

**female:** 94.9% (2018)

#### **School life expectancy (primary to tertiary education)**

**total:** 16 years

**male:** 16 years

**female:** 17 years (2019)

### **ENVIRONMENT**

#### **Environment - current issues**

desertification resulting from the degradation of limited arable land, periods of drought, and dust storms; coastal degradation (damage to coastlines, coral reefs, and sea vegetation) resulting from oil spills and other discharges from large tankers, oil refineries, and distribution stations; lack of freshwater resources (groundwater and seawater are the only sources for all water needs); lowered water table leaves aquifers vulnerable to saline contamination; desalinization provides some 90% of the country's freshwater

#### **Environment - international agreements**

**party to:** Biodiversity, Climate Change, Climate Change-Kyoto Protocol, Climate Change-Paris Agreement, Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Law of the Sea, Ozone Layer Protection, Ship Pollution, Wetlands

**signed, but not ratified:** none of the selected agreements

#### **Climate**

arid; mild, pleasant winters; very hot, humid summers

#### **Land use**

**agricultural land:** 11.3% (2018 est.)

arable land: 2.1% (2018 est.)

permanent crops: 3.9% (2018 est.)

permanent pasture: 5.3% (2018 est.)

**forest:** 0.7% (2018 est.)

**other:** 88% (2018 est.)

### **Urbanization**

**urban population:** 89.9% of total population (2023)

**rate of urbanization:** 1.99% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)

### **Revenue from forest resources**

0% of GDP (2018 est.)

comparison ranking: 160

### **Revenue from coal**

0% of GDP (2018 est.)

comparison ranking: 69

### **Air pollutants**

**particulate matter emissions:** 51.82 micrograms per cubic meter (2019 est.)

**carbon dioxide emissions:** 31.69 megatons (2016 est.)

**methane emissions:** 15.47 megatons (2020 est.)

### **Waste and recycling**

**municipal solid waste generated annually:** 951,943 tons (2016 est.)

**municipal solid waste recycled annually:** 76,155 tons (2012 est.)

**percent of municipal solid waste recycled:** 8% (2012 est.)

### **Major aquifers**

Arabian Aquifer System

### **Total water withdrawal**

**municipal:** 280 million cubic meters (2020 est.)

**industrial:** 10 million cubic meters (2020 est.)

**agricultural:** 140 million cubic meters (2020 est.)

### **Total renewable water resources**

120 million cubic meters (2020 est.)

## **GOVERNMENT**

### **Country name**

**conventional long form:** Kingdom of Bahrain

**conventional short form:** Bahrain

**local long form:** Mamlakat al Bahrayn

**local short form:** Al Bahrayn

**former:** Dilmun, Tylos, Awal, Mishmahig, Bahrayn, State of Bahrain

**etymology:** the name means "the two seas" in Arabic and refers to the water bodies surrounding the archipelago

### **Government type**

constitutional monarchy

### **Capital**

**name:** Manama

**geographic coordinates:** 26 14 N, 50 34 E

**time difference:** UTC+3 (8 hours ahead of Washington, DC, during Standard Time)

**etymology:** name derives from the Arabic "al-manama" meaning "place of rest" or "place of dreams"

### Administrative divisions

4 governorates (muhafazat, singular - muhafazah); Asimah (Capital), Janubiyah (Southern), Muharraq, Shamaliyah (Northern)

**note:** each governorate administered by an appointed governor

### Independence

15 August 1971 (from the UK)

### National holiday

National Day, 16 December (1971); note - 15 August 1971 was the date of independence from the UK, 16 December 1971 was the date of independence from British protection

### Legal system

mixed legal system of Islamic (sharia) law, English common law, Egyptian civil, criminal, and commercial codes; customary law

### Constitution

**history:** previous 1973; latest adopted 14 February 2002, entry into force 14 February 2002

**amendments:** proposed by the king or by at least 15 members of either chamber of the National Assembly followed by submission to an Assembly committee for review and, if approved, submitted to the government for restatement as drafts; passage requires a two-thirds majority vote by the membership of both chambers and validation by the king; constitutional articles on the state religion (Islam), state language (Arabic), and the monarchy and "inherited rule" cannot be amended; amended 2012, 2017

### International law organization participation

has not submitted an ICJ jurisdiction declaration; non-party state to the ICCT

### Citizenship

**citizenship by birth:** no

**citizenship by descent only:** the father must be a citizen of Bahrain

**dual citizenship recognized:** no

**residency requirement for naturalization:** 25 years; 15 years for Arab nationals

### Suffrage

20 years of age; universal

### Executive branch

**chief of state:** King HAMAD bin Isa Al-Khalifa (since 6 March 1999)

**head of government:** Prime Minister Crown Prince SALMAN bin Hamad Al-Khalifa (since 11 November 2020)

**cabinet:** Cabinet appointed by the monarch

**elections/appointments:** the monarchy is hereditary; prime minister appointed by the monarch

### Legislative branch

**description:** bicameral National Assembly consists of:

Consultative Council or Majlis al-Shura (40 seats; members appointed by the king)

Council of Representatives or Majlis al-Nuwab (40 seats; members directly elected in single-seat constituencies by absolute majority vote in 2 rounds if needed; members serve 4-year renewable terms)

**elections:** Consultative Council - last appointments on 30 November 2022 (next appointments in 2026)

Council of Representatives - first round for 6 members held on 12 November 2022; second round for remaining 34 members held on 19 November 2022 (next to be held in November 2026)



**election results:** Consultative Council - all members appointed; composition - men 30, women 10, percentage women 25%

Council of Representatives - percent of vote by society - NA; seats by society - NA; composition - men 32, women 8, percentage women 20%; total National Assembly percentage women 23%

### **Judicial branch**

**highest court(s):** Court of Cassation (consists of the chairman and 3 judges); Supreme Court of Appeal (consists of the chairman and 3 judges); Constitutional Court (consists of the president and 6 members); High Sharia Court of Appeal (court sittings include the president and at least one judge)

**judge selection and term of office:** Court of Cassation judges appointed by royal decree and serve for a specified tenure; Constitutional Court president and members appointed by the Higher Judicial Council, a body chaired by the monarch and includes judges from the Court of Cassation, sharia law courts, and Civil High Courts of Appeal; members serve 9-year terms; High Sharia Court of Appeal member appointments by royal decree for a specified tenure

**subordinate courts:** Civil High Courts of Appeal; middle and lower civil courts; High Sharia Court of Appeal; Senior Sharia Court; Administrative Courts of Appeal; military courts

**note:** the judiciary of Bahrain is divided into civil law courts and sharia law courts; sharia courts (involving personal status and family law) are further divided into Sunni Muslim and Shia Muslim; the Courts are supervised by the Supreme Judicial Council.

### **Political parties**

**note:** political parties are prohibited, but political societies were legalized under a July 2005 law

### **International organization participation**

ABEDA, AFESD, AMF, CAEU, CICA, FAO, G-77, GCC, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC (national committees), ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFC, IFRCs, IHO, ILO, IMF, IMO, IMSO, Interpol, IOC, IOM (observer), IPU, ISO, ITSO, ITU, ITUC (NGOs), LAS, MIGA, NAM, OAPEC, OIC, OPCW, PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UNOOSA, UNWTO, UPU, WCO, WFTU (NGOs), WHO, WIPO, WMO, WTO

### **Diplomatic representation in the US**

**chief of mission:** Ambassador Abdulla bin Rashed AL KHALIFA (since 21 July 2017)

**chancery:** 3502 International Drive NW, Washington, DC 20008

**telephone:** [1] (202) 342-1111

**FAX:** [1] (202) 362-2192

#### **email address and website:**

ambsecretary@bahrainembassy.org

<https://www.mofa.gov.bh/Default.aspx?language=en-US&tabid=7702>

**consulate(s) general:** New York

### **Diplomatic representation from the US**

**chief of mission:** Ambassador Steven C. BONDY (since 9 February 2022)

**embassy:** Building 979, Road 3119 (next to Al-Ahli Sports Club), Block 331, Zinj District, P.O. Box 26431, Manama

**mailing address:** 6210 Manama Place, Washington DC 20521-6210

**telephone:** [973] 17-242700

**FAX:** [973] 17-272594

#### **email address and website:**

ManamaConsular@state.gov

<https://bh.usembassy.gov/>

### **Flag description**

red, the traditional color for flags of Persian Gulf states, with a white serrated band (five white points) on the hoist side; the five points represent the five pillars of Islam

**note:** until 2002, the flag had eight white points, but this was reduced to five to avoid confusion with the Qatari flag

### **National symbol(s)**

a red field surmounted by a white serrated band with five white points; national colors: red, white

### **National anthem**

**name:** "Bahrainona" (Our Bahrain)

**lyrics/music:** unknown

**note:** adopted 1971; although Mohamed Sudqi AYYASH wrote the original lyrics, they were changed in 2002 following the transformation of Bahrain from an emirate to a kingdom

### **National heritage**

**total World Heritage Sites:** 3 (all cultural)

**selected World Heritage Site locales:** Dilmun Burial Mounds; Qal'at al-Bahrain – Ancient Harbor and Capital of Dilmun; Bahrain Pearling Path

## **ECONOMY**

### **Economic overview**

growing, economically diverse Middle Eastern island economy; major recovery and balancing efforts to fulfill Economic Vision 2030; regional finance hub; increasing openness; high youth unemployment; water scarcity amid reservoir depletion

### **Real GDP (purchasing power parity)**

\$85.491 billion (2023 est.)

\$83.421 billion (2022 est.)

\$79.531 billion (2021 est.)

**note:** data in 2021 dollars

comparison ranking: 101

### **Real GDP growth rate**

2.48% (2023 est.)

4.89% (2022 est.)

2.59% (2021 est.)

**note:** annual GDP % growth based on constant local currency

comparison ranking: 126

### **Real GDP per capita**

\$57,600 (2023 est.)

\$56,700 (2022 est.)

\$54,400 (2021 est.)

**note:** data in 2021 dollars

comparison ranking: 30

### **GDP (official exchange rate)**

\$43.205 billion (2023 est.)

**note:** data in current dollars at official exchange rate

### **Inflation rate (consumer prices)**

0.07% (2023 est.)

3.63% (2022 est.)

-0.61% (2021 est.)

**note:** annual % change based on consumer prices

comparison ranking: 7

**Credit ratings****Fitch rating:** B+ (2020)**Moody's rating:** B2 (2018)**Standard & Poors rating:** B+ (2017)**note:** The year refers to the year in which the current credit rating was first obtained.**GDP - composition, by sector of origin****agriculture:** 0.3% (2017 est.)**industry:** 39.3% (2017 est.)**services:** 60.4% (2017 est.)

comparison rankings: services 122; industry 33; agriculture 216

**GDP - composition, by end use****household consumption:** 45.8% (2017 est.)**government consumption:** 15.5% (2017 est.)**investment in fixed capital:** 26.1% (2017 est.)**investment in inventories:** 0.4% (2017 est.)**exports of goods and services:** 80.2% (2017 est.)**imports of goods and services:** -67.9% (2017 est.)**Agricultural products**

lamb/mutton, dates, milk, chicken, tomatoes, fruits, sheep offal, eggs, sheepskins, cucumbers/gherkins (2022)

**note:** top ten agricultural products based on tonnage**Industries**

petroleum processing and refining, aluminum smelting, iron pelletization, fertilizers, Islamic and offshore banking, insurance, ship repairing, tourism

**Industrial production growth rate**

-1.1% (2023 est.)

**note:** annual % change in industrial value added based on constant local currency

comparison ranking: 167

**Labor force**

855,000 (2023 est.)

**note:** number of people ages 15 or older who are employed or seeking work

comparison ranking: 150

**Unemployment rate**

1.16% (2023 est.)

1.33% (2022 est.)

1.55% (2021 est.)

**note:** % of labor force seeking employment

comparison ranking: 11

**Youth unemployment rate (ages 15-24)****total:** 5.8% (2023 est.)**male:** 2.9% (2023 est.)**female:** 12.5% (2023 est.)

**note:** % of labor force ages 15-24 seeking employment

comparison ranking: total 170

### **Average household expenditures**

**on food:** 13.1% of household expenditures (2021 est.)

**on alcohol and tobacco:** 0.4% of household expenditures (2021 est.)

### **Remittances**

0% of GDP (2023 est.)

0% of GDP (2022 est.)

0% of GDP (2021 est.)

### **Budget**

**revenues:** \$9.168 billion (2019 est.)

**expenditures:** \$12.63 billion (2019 est.)

### **Public debt**

115.52% of GDP (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: 13

### **Taxes and other revenues**

2.92% (of GDP) (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: 205

### **Current account balance**

\$2.699 billion (2023 est.)

\$6.839 billion (2022 est.)

\$2.602 billion (2021 est.)

**note:** balance of payments - net trade and primary/secondary income in current dollars

comparison ranking: 45

### **Exports**

\$40.344 billion (2023 est.)

\$44.58 billion (2022 est.)

\$35.653 billion (2021 est.)

**note:** balance of payments - exports of goods and services in current dollars

comparison ranking: 71

### **Exports - partners**

Saudi Arabia 15%, UAE 10%, US 9%, Japan 5%, India 4% (2022)

**note:** top five export partners based on percentage share of exports

### **Exports - commodities**

aluminum, refined petroleum, iron ore, aluminum wire, iron blocks (2022)

**note:** top five export commodities based on value in dollars

### **Imports**

\$32.374 billion (2023 est.)

\$33.066 billion (2022 est.)

\$27.996 billion (2021 est.)

**note:** balance of payments - imports of goods and services in current dollars

comparison ranking: 77

### **Imports - partners**

China 15%, UAE 12%, Brazil 9%, Australia 8%, India 7% (2022)

**note:** top five import partners based on percentage share of imports

**Imports - commodities**

iron ore, aluminum oxide, cars, gold, ships (2022)

**note:** top five import commodities based on value in dollars

**Reserves of foreign exchange and gold**

\$5.118 billion (2023 est.)

\$4.775 billion (2022 est.)

\$4.993 billion (2021 est.)

**note:** holdings of gold (year-end prices)/foreign exchange/special drawing rights in current dollars  
comparison ranking: 103

**Debt - external**

\$52.15 billion (31 December 2017 est.)

\$42.55 billion (31 December 2016 est.)

comparison ranking: 66

**Exchange rates**

Bahraini dinars (BHD) per US dollar -

**Exchange rates:**

0.376 (2023 est.)

0.376 (2022 est.)

0.376 (2021 est.)

0.376 (2020 est.)

0.376 (2019 est.)

**ENERGY****Electricity access**

**electrification - total population:** 100% (2022 est.)

**Electricity**

**installed generating capacity:** 6.983 million kW (2022 est.)

**consumption:** 34.515 billion kWh (2022 est.)

**exports:** 447.711 million kWh (2022 est.)

**imports:** 484.596 million kWh (2022 est.)

**transmission/distribution losses:** 1.063 billion kWh (2022 est.)

comparison rankings: transmission/distribution losses 100; imports 92; exports 79; consumption 63; installed generating capacity 78

**Electricity generation sources**

**fossil fuels:** 100% of total installed capacity (2022 est.)

**Coal**

**exports:** 2,000 metric tons (2022 est.)

**imports:** 94.7 metric tons (2022 est.)

**Petroleum**

**total petroleum production:** 189,000 bbl/day (2023 est.)

**refined petroleum consumption:** 72,000 bbl/day (2022 est.)

**crude oil estimated reserves:** 186.5 million barrels (2021 est.)

**Natural gas**

**production:** 18.005 billion cubic meters (2022 est.)

**consumption:** 17.924 billion cubic meters (2022 est.)

**imports:** 81.98 million cubic meters (2020 est.)

**proven reserves:** 81.383 billion cubic meters (2021 est.)

### **Carbon dioxide emissions**

43.343 million metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

**from petroleum and other liquids:** 8.185 million metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

**from consumed natural gas:** 35.163 million metric tonnes of CO2 (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: total emissions 61

### **Energy consumption per capita**

514.32 million Btu/person (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: 3

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Telephones - fixed lines**

**total subscriptions:** 253,000 (2022 est.)

**subscriptions per 100 inhabitants:** 17 (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: total subscriptions 116

### **Telephones - mobile cellular**

**total subscriptions:** 2.141 million (2022 est.)

**subscriptions per 100 inhabitants:** 145 (2022 est.)

comparison ranking: total subscriptions 148

### **Telecommunication systems**

**general assessment:** Bahrain continues to develop its telecoms sector in a bid to develop its long-term Economic Vision 2030 strategy; this is a multi-faceted strategy aimed at developing a digital transformation across numerous sectors, including e-government, e-health, e-commerce, and e-banking; 5G services have become widely available since they were launched in 2020; Bahrain's telecom sector by the Fourth National Telecommunications Plan (initiated in 2016) which focuses on fiber optic infrastructure deployment and establishing affordable prices for high-speed access (2022)

**domestic:** approximately 18 per 100 fixed-line and 131 per 100 mobile-cellular; modern fiber-optic integrated services; digital network with rapidly expanding mobile-cellular telephones (2021)

**international:** country code - 973; Bahrain's Telecommunications Regulatory Authority (TRA) has made part of the C-band spectrum available for 5G private networks, in line with the goals outlined in its Workplan for the 2022-23 period (2023)

### **Broadcast media**

state-run Bahrain Radio and Television Corporation (BRTC) operates 5 terrestrial TV networks and several radio stations; satellite TV systems provide access to international broadcasts; 1 private FM station directs broadcasts to Indian listeners; radio and TV broadcasts from countries in the region are available (2019)

### **Internet country code**

.bh

### **Internet users**

**total:** 1.5 million (2021 est.)

**percent of population:** 100% (2021 est.)

comparison ranking: total 144

### **Broadband - fixed subscriptions**

**total:** 148,928 (2020 est.)

**subscriptions per 100 inhabitants:** 9 (2020 est.)

comparison ranking: total 123

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **National air transport system**

**number of registered air carriers:** 6 (2020)

**inventory of registered aircraft operated by air carriers:** 42

**annual passenger traffic on registered air carriers:** 5,877,003 (2018)

**annual freight traffic on registered air carriers:** 420.98 million (2018) mt-km

### **Civil aircraft registration country code prefix**

A9C

### **Airports**

3 (2024)

comparison ranking: 190

### **Heliports**

8 (2024)

### **Pipelines**

20 km gas, 54 km oil (2013)

### **Roadways**

**total:** 4,122 km

**paved:** 3,392 km

**unpaved:** 730 km (2010)

comparison ranking: total 155

### **Merchant marine**

**total:** 184 (2023)

**by type:** general cargo 12, oil tanker 3, other 169

comparison ranking: total 71

### **Ports**

**total ports:** 4 (2024)

**large:** 0

**medium:** 3

**small:** 1

**very small:** 0

**ports with oil terminals:** 1

**key ports:** Al Manamah, Khalifa Bin Salman, Mina Salman, Sitrah

## **MILITARY AND SECURITY**

### **Military and security forces**

Bahrain Defense Force (BDF): Royal Bahraini Army (includes the Royal Guard), Royal Bahraini Navy, Royal Bahraini Air Force

Ministry of Interior: National Guard, Special Security Forces Command (SSFC), Coast Guard (2024)

**note 1:** the Royal Guard is officially under the command of the Army, but exercises considerable autonomy

**note 2:** the Ministry of Interior is responsible for internal security and oversees police and specialized security units

responsible for maintaining internal order; the National Guard's primary mission is to guard critical infrastructure such as the airport and oil fields and is a back-up to the police; the Guard is under the Ministry of Interior but reports directly to the king

### **Military expenditures**

3.1% of GDP (2023 est.)  
 3.2% of GDP (2022 est.)  
 3.6% of GDP (2021 est.)  
 4.2% of GDP (2020 est.)  
 4% of GDP (2019 est.)

comparison ranking: 29

### **Military and security service personnel strengths**

information varies; approximately 10,000 active personnel (7,500 Army; 1,000 Navy; 1,500 Air Force); approximately 3,000 National Guard (2023)

### **Military equipment inventories and acquisitions**

the military's inventory consists of a mix of equipment acquired from a wide variety of suppliers; in recent years, the US has been the leading supplier of arms to Bahrain (2023)

### **Military service age and obligation**

18 years of age for voluntary military service; 15 years of age for non-commissioned officers, technicians, and cadets; no conscription (2022)

**note:** the BDF hires foreign nationals, Sunni Muslims primarily from Arabic countries and Pakistan, to serve under contract; as of 2020, foreigners were estimated to comprise as much as 80% of the military; the policy has become a controversial issue with the primarily Shia population; during the 2011, the BDF reportedly deployed mostly foreign personnel against protesters

### **Military - note**

the BDF is a small, but well-equipped military focused on territorial defense and support to internal security; its primary concern is Iran, both the conventional military threat and Tehran's support to regional terrorist groups; the BDF participates in multinational exercises and has conducted small deployments outside of the country; in 2015, for example, Bahrain joined the Saudi Arabia-led military intervention in Yemen, supplying a few hundred troops and combat aircraft

Bahrain's closest security partners are the US and Saudi Arabia; it hosts the US Naval Forces Central Command (USNAVCENT; established 1983), which includes the US 5<sup>th</sup> Fleet, several subordinate naval task forces, and the Combined Maritime Forces (established 2002), a coalition of more than 30 nations providing maritime security for regional shipping lanes; in 2003, the US granted Bahrain Major Non-NATO Ally status, a designation under US law that provides foreign partners with certain benefits in the areas of defense trade and security cooperation; Bahraini leaders have said that the security of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are "indivisible"; Saudi Arabia sent forces to Bahrain to assist with internal security following the 2011 uprising; Bahrain also has close security ties to other Gulf Cooperation Council countries, particularly Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, as well as the UK (2024)

## **SPACE**

### **Space agency/agencies**

Bahrain National Space Science Agency (NSSA; established 2014) (2024)

### **Space program overview**

space program in nascent stages and is focused on developing the capabilities to build and operate satellites; the NSSA's mission includes promoting space science, technology, and research, building capacity in the fields of satellite manufacturing, tracking, control, data processing and analysis, and remote sensing, developing space-related programs and space policy, and facilitating international cooperation; cooperates with a variety of foreign agencies and commercial entities, including those of India, Italy, Japan, Saudi Arabia, the UK, the UAE, and the US; also a member of the Arab Space Coordination Group, established by the UAE in 2019 (2024)

**note:** further details about the key activities, programs, and milestones of the country's space program, as well as government spending estimates on the space sector, appear in the Space Programs reference guide

## **TERRORISM**

### **Terrorist group(s)**

**Terrorist group(s):** al-Ashtar Brigades; Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps/Qods Force

**note 1:** details about the history, aims, leadership, organization, areas of operation, tactics, targets, weapons, size, and sources of support of the group(s) appear(s) in the Terrorism reference guide



**note 2:** in addition to the al-Ashtar Brigades and the IRGC/Qods Force, Saraya al-Mukhtar (aka The Mukhtar Brigade) is an Iran-backed terrorist organization based in Bahrain, reportedly receiving financial and logistic support from the IRGC; Saraya al-Mukhtar's self-described goal is to depose the Bahraini Government with the intention of paving the way for Iran to exert greater influence in Bahrain; the group was designated by the US as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist in Dec 2020