CENTRAL BANK of BELIZE

MARCH 2024

QUARTERLY REVIEW

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

Acronyms:

BSI	Belize Sugar Industries Limited
BSSB	Belize Social Security Board
BTB	Belize Tourism Board
BTL	Belize Telemedia Limited
BWSL	Belize Water Services Limited
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBB	Central Bank of Belize
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CFZ	Commercial Free Zone
CGA	Citrus Growers Association
CIF	Cost, Insurance, and Freight
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPBL	Citrus Products of Belize Limited
CPI	Consumer Price Index
DFC	Development Finance Corporation
DOD	Disbursed Outstanding Debt
EU	European Union
FOB	Free On Board
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MOF	Ministry of Finance
OPEC	Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries
SDR	Special Drawing Rights
SIB	Statistical Institute of Belize
SITC	Standard International Trade Classification
T-bills	Treasury bills
T-notes	Treasury notes
US	United States
UK	United Kingdom
VPCA	Venezuelan Petrocaribe Agreement
WAY	Weighted Average Yield

Abbreviations and Conventions:

$	Belize dollar unless otherwise stated
bn	billion
bps	basis points
mn	million
ps	pound solids
Y-o-Y	year on year
YTD	year to date

Notes:

1. Since May of 1976, the Belize dollar has been fixed to the US dollar at the rate of US$1.00 = BZ$2.00.
2. The 2024 figures in this report are provisional and the figures for 2023 have been revised.
3. Unless otherwise indicated, the Central Bank of Belize is the source of all tables and charts.
4. Ratios to GDP for 2024 are based on the Central Bank's forecast.

Table of Contents

List of Charts and Tables

Charts

Tables

Summary of Economic Indicators

Money Supply

Broad Money Supply	Net Foreign Assets	Net Domestic Credit
March 2024	March 2024	March 2024
+5.4%	**+13.2%**	**+1.5%**
YTD change on December 2023	YTD change on December 2023	YTD change on December 2023

Liquidity and Interest Rates

Excess Cash	New Deposit Rates	New Lending Rates
March 2024	March 2024	March 2024
$476.5mn	**1.77%**	**8.93%**
-6.5% change on December 2023	**-17** bps change on March 2023	**+38** bps change on March 2023

Real and External Sectors

GDP	CPI	Tourist Arrivals
January - March 2024	January - March 2024	January - March 2024
+10.0%	**+3.8%**	**+28.4%**
Y-o-Y change on same period of the previous year	YTD change on the same period of the previous year	YTD change on the same period of the previous year

Current Account Surplus	Financial Account Balance (Net Lending)	Reserve Import Coverage
January - March 2024	January - March 2024	March 2024
$51.3mn	**$137.2mn**	**4.0**
-55.7% YTD change on same period of the previous year	**+56.9%** YTD change on the same period of the previous year	months equivalent of merchandise imports

Central Government Operations and Public Debt

Primary Deficit	Domestic Debt	External Debt
April 2023 - March 2024	January - March 2024	January - March 2024
-$10.2mn	**$0.0mn**	**+$14.3mn**
0.2% of GDP	**$1,507mn** at March-end, 22.8% of GDP	**$2,854.0mn** at March-end, 43.2% of GDP

Overview

International Overview

In the first quarter of 2024, the global economy remained resilient despite ongoing challenges arising from persistent inflation, tight labour markets, high global interest rates, and geopolitical tensions. However, the pace of growth varied across regions. While some advanced and emerging economies recorded solid growth as major central banks appeared on the verge of loosening monetary policy, others faced headwinds from numerous factors. Nevertheless, the Caribbean economies continued to recover with varied growth paths, as the tourism and energy sectors drove output in respective service-oriented and goods-oriented economies amid rising debt servicing costs and sustained cost-of-living pressures.

<u>Advanced Economies</u>

Growth in advanced economies exhibited a mixed performance, with the United States (US) leading the way. US real gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 2.9% in the first quarter of 2024 compared with the same quarter one year ago. The strong performance was due to heightened consumer spending, private investment, government spending, and net exports. Labour conditions remained tight but showed signs of cooling as the unemployment rate increased from 3.7% in January to 3.8% in March. Inflation persisted, with the 12-month consumer price index rising from 3.1% in January to a surprisingly larger 3.5% in March, reflecting higher prices for food, energy, and services. Given the elevated inflation level and solid growth pace, the target range for the federal funds rate was kept at 5.25% to 5.50% over the review period.

GDP in the United Kingdom (UK) expanded by 0.3% in the first quarter of 2024 compared with the corresponding quarter of the previous year. While the economy avoided a recession, economic growth remained constrained by tightened fiscal policy and

Chart 1.1: Quarterly GDP Growth Rates Over the Same Quarter of the Previous Year for Selected Advanced Economies

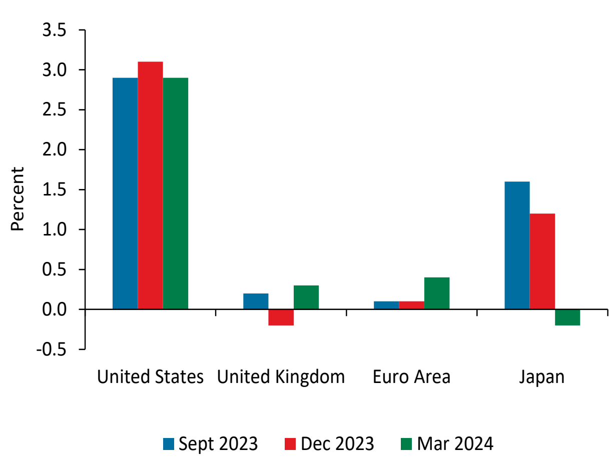
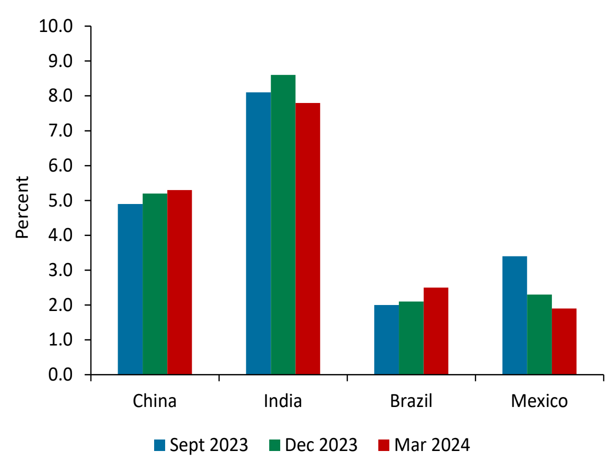


Chart 1.2: Quarterly GDP Growth Rates Over the Same Quarter of the Previous Year for Selected Emerging Economies



high interest rates, with its Bank Rate set at 5.25%. Growth was driven by marginal increases in the agriculture and fishing industries as well as mixed outcomes in the production and services sectors. Despite these gains, the UK's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic remains one of the slowest among major advanced economies. However, growth continued to be hampered by a surge in natural gas prices following Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022.

In the euro area, output grew by 0.4%, supported by increases in household expenditure, government expenditure, and exports, while gross capital formation and imports declined. Among the 19 members of the eurozone, growth was highest in Malta (1.3%) due to its tourism rebound and strong export performance, followed by Cyprus (1.2%) and Croatia (1.0%).

Meanwhile, Japan's output declined by 0.2% year on year for the first three months of 2024. On a positive note, the country's struggle with deflation ended amid a range of monetary, fiscal, trade, and industrial policies to lift productivity. The marginal dip in output was attributable to declines in private consumption and investment against increased government consumption and investment and net exports.

Emerging Economies

Major emerging market economies grew much faster than advanced economies. India's economy expanded by 7.8% quarter on quarter, significantly faster than any other major emerging market. Significant gains in manufacturing (8.9%) and construction (8.7%) underpinned this performance. Meanwhile, China's GDP grew by 5.3% in the first quarter of 2024, driven mainly by low-cost industrial production and the services sectors. Nevertheless, the world's second largest economy continued to face a protracted property crisis, with property investment declining year on year in the first quarter. Brazil saw a 2.5% increase in production, driven primarily by stronger domestic absorption, while faced with adverse weather conditions, which affected agricultural production. Closer to home, Mexico's GDP grew by an annualised 1.9%, as the peso continued to strengthen, and inflation remained elevated above the policy rate of 3.0%, occurring against a backdrop of uncertainty due to the upcoming elections.

Caribbean Economies

Caribbean economies continued to show resilience amid the challenging external environment. Tourism was a key driver in service-oriented economies. Barbados' economy grew by 4.1% compared to the previous year, driven by a 14.8% rise in stay-over arrivals. The surge in international visitors positively impacted tourism-related services such as restaurants and recreational activities. Meanwhile, Jamaica's output rose by 1.9% compared to the quarter of 2023, with contributions from the service (1.3%) and goods-producing (1.9%) sectors.

The performance of commodity-producing industries was also strong but varied widely. On the one hand, Trinidad and Tobago's economy is expected to grow by 2.2% in the first quarter of 2024, supported by higher output in the non-energy and energy sectors. On the other hand, Guyana's economy is projected to grow by one of the highest growth rates in the world this quarter at 28.9%, attributable to a surge in oil revenues, as the country became one of the largest oil producers in this hemisphere.

Domestic Overview

GDP and Consumer Prices

Belize's real GDP grew by 10.0% in the first quarter of 2024 relative to the same period of the previous year. The historical performance was driven by a 13.8% increase in output by the services sector, supported by contributions from tourism, wholesale and retail distribution activities, and government services. Additionally, secondary output grew by 3.5%, boosted by heightened electricity production, construction, and water supply activities. However, primary output contracted by 9.1%, depressed by declines in citrus fruit deliveries for processing and marine goods production for export markets.

Inflation retreated to an average of 3.8% for the first quarter of 2024 compared to the 4.8% increase recorded in the same period last year. While rising food and restaurant services costs were mainly responsible for the upswing in consumer prices, reduced costs for motor vehicle fuels and internet services contributed to the disinflationary trend.

Money and Credit

Broad money supply (M2) expanded by 5.4% or $241.7mn during the first quarter of 2024. Money growth was boosted by a surge in the net foreign assets of the banking system, which rose by 13.2% or $211.0mn to $1,810.9mn, mainly because of a sharp rise in seasonal tourism revenues. In addition, net domestic credit increased by 1.5% or $53.0mn to $3,663.4mn, with increased net lending to Central Government ($40.4mn) and, to a lesser extent, the private sector ($14.8mn), as outstanding advances to other public sector entities contracted slightly.

Propelled by the foreign asset expansion, domestic banks' excess liquid asset holdings rose by $74.5mn to $818.6mn or 96.9% above the legal requirements. However, a sizeable increase in domestic banks' Treasury bill (T-bill) purchases during the quarter contributed to a $33.3mn decline in aggregate excess cash reserves to $476.5mn. Notwithstanding, domestic banks' excess cash reserves stood robustly at 182.2% above the primary (cash) reserve requirement.

Credit conditions tightened somewhat as the 12-month rolling (weighted) average lending rate on new loans increased by 25 basis points during the quarter to 8.93%. At the same time, the corresponding rate on new deposits dipped by three basis points to 1.77%, widening the weighted average interest rate spread to 7.17% over the three-month period.

Open market operations resulted in a seven-basis-point increase in the weighted average yield (WAY) for T-bills to 0.6518%. Strategic bidding by domestic banks led to a $50.9mn increase in their holdings, while the T-bill portfolios of the Central Bank and other institutional holders declined by $50.5mn and $0.4mn, respectively.

International Trade and Payments

The external current account produced a surplus of $51.3mn (0.8% of GDP) for the first quarter of 2024, less than half the $115.9mn surplus generated during the same period of 2023. The balance narrowed due to a sharp increase in the trade deficit in goods, which was partially offset by an upsurge in seasonal tourism earnings. Furthermore, the surplus on the capital account nosedived to $0.8mn, owing to the absence of high-valued transfers in kind and the wound down of grant-aided infrastructural projects.

The overall balance on the financial account resulted in a $137.2mn increase in net lending, as the net acquisition of financial assets easily exceeded the net incurrence of liabilities. Whereas the former was driven by heightened tourism revenue, the latter reflected modest increases in net foreign investments and net public sector borrowings. The gross official international reserves also rose by $2.9mn to $949.4mn, the equivalent of 4.0 months of merchandise imports.

Government Operations and Public Debt

For the 2023-2024 fiscal year (FY2023/2024), Central Government's operations yielded an overall deficit of $150.4mn, equivalent to 2.4% of GDP. This outturn was significantly larger than the overall deficit of $32.3mn, 0.6% of GDP, recorded in the previous fiscal year. The deficit expanded, as the growth in expenditure overshadowed the increase in revenue. Total revenue and grants grew by $81.8mn (6.1%) to $1,426.7mn, attributed mainly to increased tax collections on goods and services. However, expenditures rose by a larger margin of $199.9mn (14.5%) due to heightened spending on interest payments, wages and salaries, and locally funded projects. In addition, Central Government made a sizeable one-off settlement payment to external parties when acquiring the Belize City Port in December 2023.

For the first quarter of 2024, the total public sector debt rose by $14.3mn to $4,361.9mn. Notwithstanding, the public sector's debt-to-GDP ratio declined by 4.5 percentage points to 66.1% at March end, as the growth in GDP outpaced the rise in debt accumulation. Over the three months, the public sector's external debt increased to $2,854.0mn (43.2% of GDP), while Central Government's domestic debt was unchanged at $1,507.9mn (22.8% of GDP).

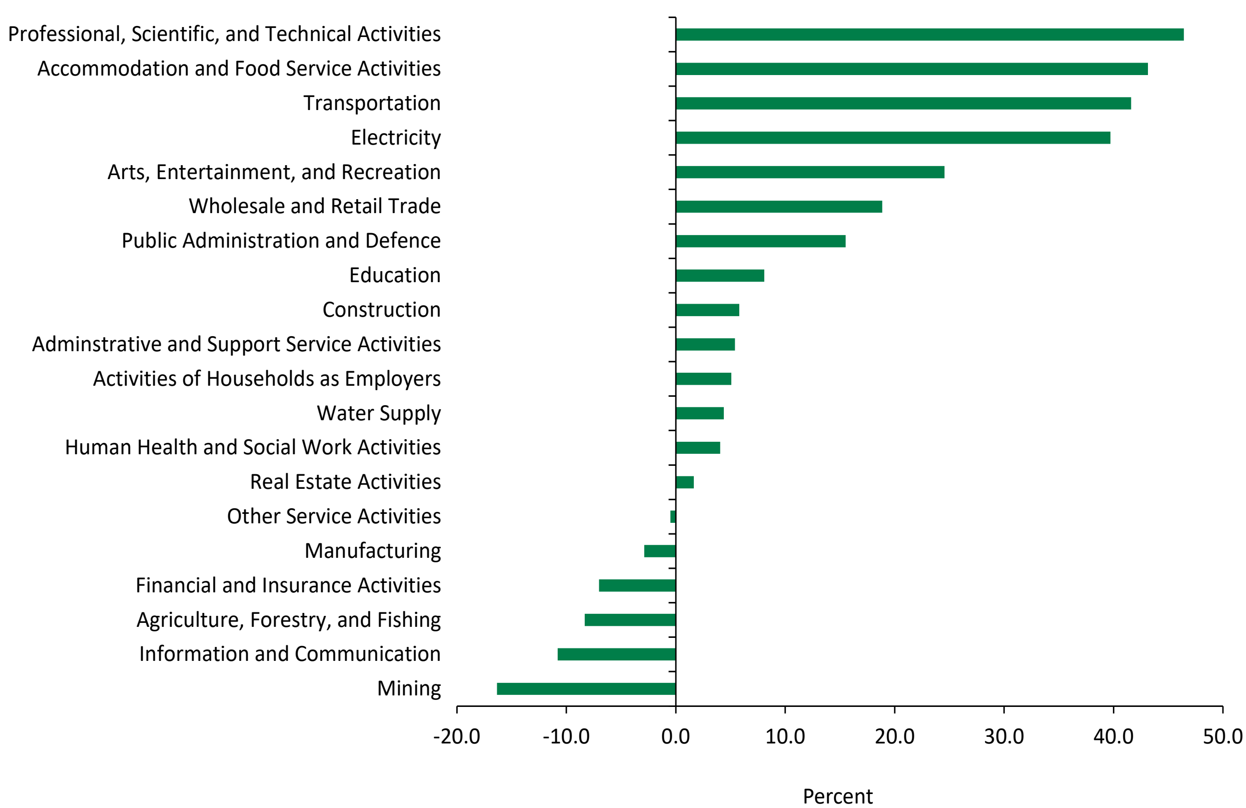
Domestic Production and Prices

Real GDP

Belize's real GDP grew by 10.0% in the first quarter of 2024 relative to the same period of the previous year. This outturn marked the largest first-quarter growth since 2003, exceeding the 6.3% expansion observed in the first quarter of 2023. The robust performance was driven mainly by heightened output in the tertiary (services) sector and, to a lesser extent, the secondary sector, as production in the primary sector declined.

Output in the service-based sector increased by 13.8%, supported by contributions from increases in tourism, wholesale and retail distribution, and government activities. The stellar growth in inbound tourism drove up output in the "*Accommodation and Food Service Activities*" and "*Transportation*" industries, which rose by 43.1% and 41.6%, respectively. Meanwhile, increased domestic consumption boosted the "*Wholesale and Retail Trade*" industry by 18.9%. Additionally, heightened government spending on public services drove output in the "*Public Administration and Defence*," "*Education*," and "*Human Health and Social Work Activities*" industries by 15.5%, 8.1%, and 4.1%, respectively.

Chart 2.1: Real GDP Growth Rates by Category at the First Quarter



However, the performance among industries within the tertiary sector was mixed. Value-added declines of 10.8%, 7.0%, and 0.5% were recorded in the "*Information and Communication*," "*Financial and Insurance Activities*," and "*Other Service Activities*" subcategories, respectively.

In the secondary sector, output rose by 3.5% on account of increases in electricity production, construction activities, and water supply. Within this sector, the "*Electricity*" industry grew by the most significant margin, up 39.7%, due to an upswing in domestic electricity generation from renewable (hydropower and biomass power plants) and non-renewable resources (diesel engines), as electricity imports from Mexico dipped and demand rose. "*Construction*" and "*Water Supply*" activities also grew modestly, rising by 5.8% and 4.4%, respectively. However, "*Manufacturing*" output declined by 2.9%, with lower outturns of citrus juices, soft drinks, and rum.

In contrast, primary sector output decreased by 9.1%, constrained by reductions in agriculture and mining activities. Production in the "*Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing*" industry declined by 8.3%, owing to reduced volumes of citrus fruit deliveries for processing juices and marine goods (farmed shrimp, lobster, and conch) for sale on external markets. However, these negative impacts were partly offset by contributions from a sharp rebound in banana harvests and more modest increases in sugarcane and cattle production. "*Mining*" also contracted, down 16.3% due to reduced extraction of various items, including oil.

Sugarcane and Sugar

Sugarcane deliveries for the 2023/2024 crop year to date (December 2023 to March 2024) rose by 4.2% to 883,394 long tons. However, lower sugar yields at the northern mill dampened the growth in sugar production to only 0.3%, equivalent to 77,308 long tons.

In the north, harvesting for the 2023/2024 crop year began on 28 December 2023, one day later than the previous period. Notwithstanding, sugarcane deliveries declined by 8.4% to 515,014 long tons due partly to difficulties finding field workers to harvest cane. Sugar yields were also adversely affected by low cane maturity and unfavourable weather, which resulted in reduced amounts of recoverable sugar. Therefore, sugar production decreased by 11.2% to 50,123 long tons, with the long-tons cane to long-ton sugar (TC/TS) ratio weakening by 3.1% to 10.3. At the same time, molasses output fell by 11.3% to 16,112 long tons.

The first price offered to farmers delivering sugarcane to the northern mill was $57.09 per ton of cane for the 2023/2024 crop year. This amount represented a 4.7% increase relative to the initial price announced in the previous crop year but was substantially lower than the record-high final price of $86.28 per ton paid for the 2023/2024 crop.

In the west, harvesting for the 2023/2024 crop year commenced on 8 January 2024, four days after the previous crop cycle. Over the three months, sugarcane deliveries surged 29.2% to a first-quarter high of 368,380 long tons. Sugar production also jumped, with yields up 31.7% to 27,184 long tons, reflecting a 1.9% strengthening in the TC/TS ratio to 13.6. Finally, molasses output grew by 24.0% to 12,023 long tons.

Citrus

The 2023/2024 citrus harvest commenced on 6 November 2023, 20 days later than the start of the 2022/2023 crop year on 17 October 2022. The late start, combined with the adverse impact of the citrus greening disease, caused citrus deliveries to nosedive 35.2% to 191,533 boxes over the crop year to date, which spanned from October 2023 to March 2024. In further detail, orange and grapefruit deliveries decreased by 32.5% to 157,808 80-pound boxes and 45.2% to 33,725 90-pound boxes, respectively.

Citrus juice production contracted by 32.4% to 0.9mn pound solids (ps), ameliorated somewhat by a 4.2% improvement in average juice yield to 4.9 ps. In line with deliveries, orange and grapefruit production decreased by 29.9% to 0.8mn ps and 44.5% to 0.1mn ps, respectively. Meanwhile, citrus oil and pulp output remained minimal.

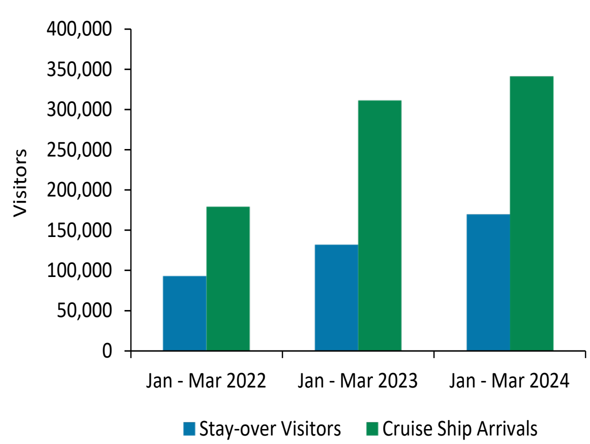
The first price paid for orange and grapefruit deliveries for this crop increased by 28.5% or $0.70 to $3.16 per ps and by 28.6% or $1.00 to $4.50 per ps. In terms of box equivalents, growers will be paid $18.00 per box for oranges based on an average yield of 5.7 ps per box and $18.00 per box of grapefruit based on an average yield of 4.0 ps per box. The new record-high prices resulted from a new pricing structure implemented for the 2023/2024 processing season.

Banana

Banana production more than doubled to 1.1mn boxes for the first quarter of 2024 relative to the same period of 2023. This marked expansion reflected gains from the industry's effort to manage and control the spread of the Black Sigatoka disease, which was supported by favourable weather-related growing and harvesting conditions.

Nevertheless, the total acreage of land under commercial banana production fell by 3.6% to 7,166.8 acres in January 2024 compared with the same month of 2023. As a result, the total acreage utilised for production declined by 1.7% to 6,824.5 acres, while the amount of land ready to be planted more than halved from 160.0 acres in 2023 to 70.0 acres in 2024. However, the acreage under rehabilitation increased by 20.5% to 135.0 acres, underscoring the industry's

Chart 2.2: Tourist Arrivals



Sources: BTB, CBB, and Immigration and Nationality Department.

efforts to limit yield losses from the Black Sigatoka disease.

Tourism

The World Tourism Organization reported that international tourist arrivals attained 97.0% of 2019's pre-pandemic level for the first quarter of 2024. This recovery was driven by strengthened international demand, the reopening of Asian markets, and enhanced air connectivity to major cities. The Middle East recorded the most robust performance among the regions, surpassing pre-pandemic arrivals by 36.0%. Meanwhile, Africa and Europe welcomed 5.0% and 1.0% more tourists than in quarter one of 2019, respectively, while Asia and the Pacific recovered 65.3%. The Americas reached 99.0% of 2019's trend in the western hemisphere, while Central America and the Caribbean rebounded by 15.0% and 7.0%, respectively.

In Belize, overnight arrivals remained robust, spurred by intensified marketing efforts and increased air connectivity. For the first quarter of 2024, stay-over arrivals increased by 28.4%, when compared to the same period of 2023, to a record-breaking quarterly high of 169,822 visitors. At the same time, this outturn exceeded 2019's pre-pandemic mark by 16.3%.

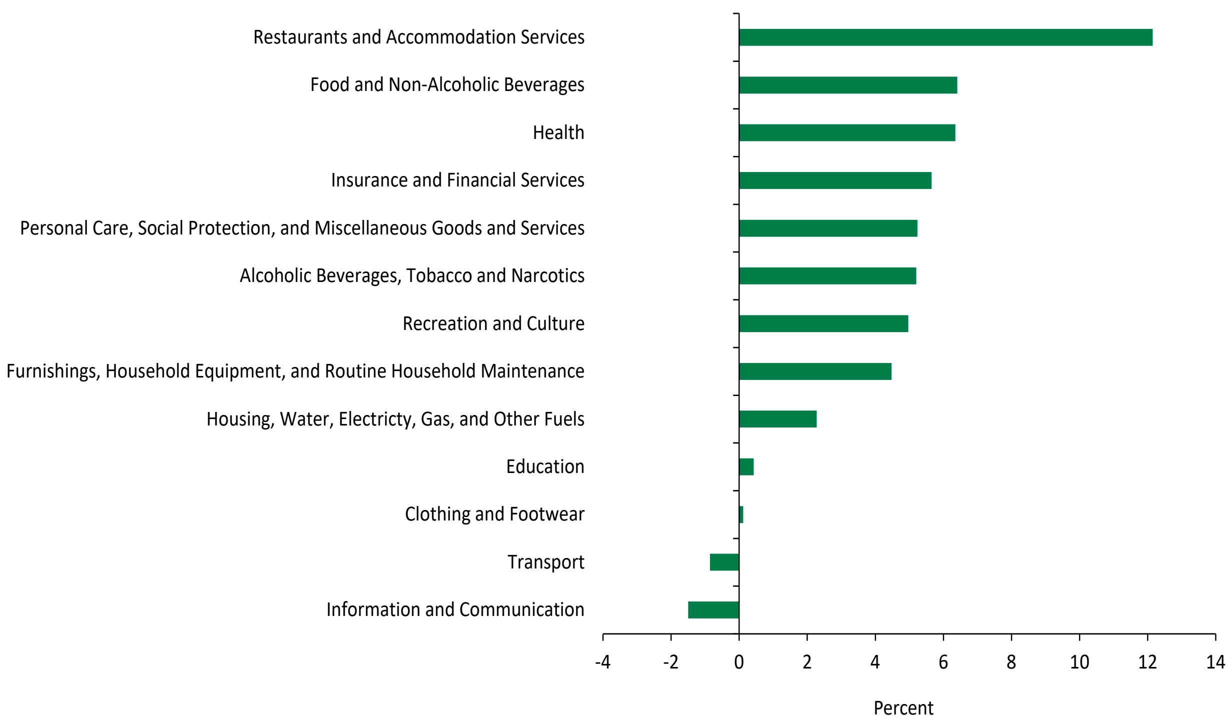
Inbound visitors rose across all modes of travel. Arrivals by air, sea, and land grew by 31.4%, 22.5%, and 13.6%, respectively. Meanwhile, overnight stays by source markets remained broadly stable, with the US remaining the primary market from where Belize's tourists originate. US visitors accounted for 73.1% of total stay-over arrivals, increasing by 2.1 percentage points relative to the first quarter of 2023. Canadian visitors made up 9.7% of the total after a 1.5 percentage-point increase relative to the same period of 2023. However, the shares of visitors from the European Union and "other" areas declined by 2.4 percentage points to 8.7% and 1.2 percentage points to 8.5%, respectively.

In comparison, the performance of the cruise tourism industry was strong but less stellar. Cruise ship disembarkations rose by 9.6% to 340,808 passengers for the first quarter of the year. Port calls climbed from 131 in the first quarter of 2023 to 140 in the first quarter of 2024, as 91 ships anchored at the Fort Street Cruise Port and 49 docked at Harvest Caye. Cruise ship disembarkations remained 17.1% behind the levels reported in the same quarter of 2019.

Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) averaged a 3.8% increase for the first quarter of 2024, slowing from a growth rate of 4.8% in the same period of 2023 but remaining well above the near 2.0% long-term trend. The rise in the consumer price level was driven by soaring food costs, which accounted for about two-fifths of the overall change in the all-items index. Accordingly, the "*Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages*" subindex rose by 6.4%, owing to increased prices for food items, particularly vegetables, dairy products, sugar, and fresh fruits. The "*Restaurant and Accommodation Services*" subindex followed, rising by 12.1% due to higher prices for restaurant and cafe services. Then, "*Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas, and Other Fuels*" grew by 2.3%, owing primarily to higher home rental costs. Smaller price increases of 5.2% and 4.5% were recorded for "*Personal Care, Social Protection, and Miscellaneous Goods and Services*" and "*Furnishings, Household Equipment, and Routine Household Maintenance*," respectively. In contrast, the "*Transport*" and "*Information and Communication*" subindices declined by 0.9% and 1.5%, respectively, contributing to the reduced rate of inflation. While the former declined due to lower prices of motor vehicle fuels, the latter reflected reduced prices for internet services.

Chart 2.3: Consumer Price Index



Money and Credit

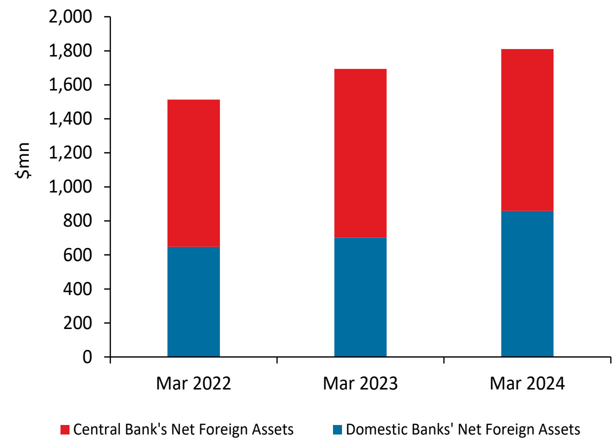
Money Supply

For the first quarter of 2024, M2 increased by $241.7mn (5.4%) to $4,688.3mn. Money growth was driven by a $181.9mn expansion in narrow money (M1) and a $59.8mn increase in quasi-money. M1 growth was led by a $159.4mn (6.8%) surge in demand deposits, followed by lesser increases of $21.9mn and $0.6mn in currency with the public and savings/chequing deposits. The upturn in demand deposits was attributable to increased demand deposit holdings by business enterprises, other financial institutions, and credit unions. Meanwhile, the 3.4% growth in quasi-money grew reflected upticks of $45.5mn and $14.3mn in savings and time deposits, respectively. On the asset side of domestic banks' balance sheet, M2 growth was driven by a substantial rise in foreign assets and, to a lesser extent, increased lending to the Central Government and private sector.

Net Foreign Assets

The banking system's net foreign assets expanded by $211.0mn (13.2%) for the first three months of 2024, $36.6mn more than the buildup in the same period of 2024. Most of this growth was attributable to domestic banks, whose aggregate holdings accounted for 98.4% of the overall increase. Domestic banks' foreign balances grew by 31.9% or $207.7mn to a record high of $858.8mn, fuelled mainly by an upsurge in tourism earnings. Additionally, the Central Bank's net foreign assets edged up by 0.3% or $3.3mn to $952.1mn, as foreign currency purchases exceeded sales. On the one hand,

Chart 3.1: Net Foreign Assets of the Banking System

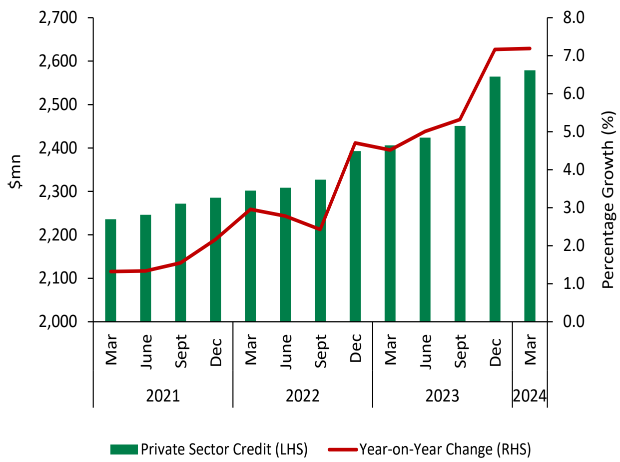


gross foreign currency inflows amounted to $70.5mn, $5.2mn lower than the previous period due to reduced sugar export receipts and international grants. On the other hand, gross foreign currency outflows skyrocketed by $19.6mn or 40.7% to $67.9mn due partly to heightened sales to the Central Government. Foreign currency sales to the Central Government increased by $11.1mn to $50.4mn, pressured by rising debt service costs.

Net Domestic Credit

Net domestic credit of the banking system climbed by $53.0mn (1.5%) over the quarter to $3,663.4mn, as net lending to the Central Government and the private sector rose, while credit to non-government public entities fell. Net credit to Central Government expanded by $40.4mn (4.4%) to $968.2mn, almost doubling the $23.1mn increase during the first quarter of 2023. This quarter's upturn was primarily due to a ramp-up in domestic banks' T-bill purchases during the period.

Chart 3.2: Domestic Banks' Private Sector Credit



Credit to the private sector rose by $14.8mn (0.6%) to $2,579.0mn, slowing relative to the $18.6mn increase registered for the first quarter of last year. Loan growth was concentrated in the real estate ($10.2mn), building and construction ($6.8mn), tourism ($3.5mn), and agricultural ($3.0mn) industries. Heightened lending among these categories outweighed reductions in distribution ($5.8mn), professional services ($1.2mn), transport ($1.0mn), and marine products ($1.0mn). Meanwhile, credit to other public sector entities contracted by $2.1mn (1.8%) to $116.2mn. The marginal decline reflected a $2.0mn reduction in domestic banks' holdings of a utility's debentures.

Chart 3.3: Net Credit to Central Government

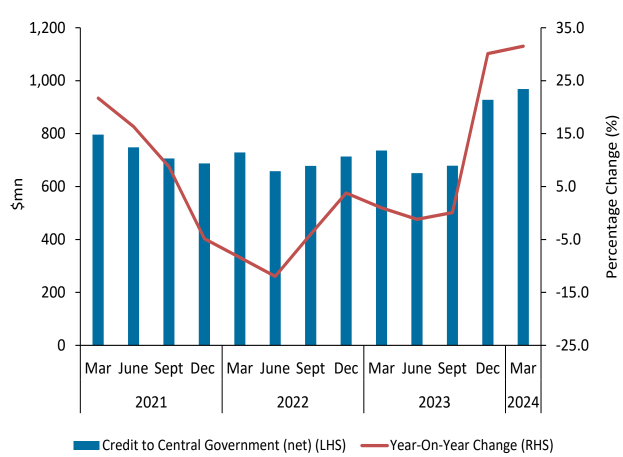
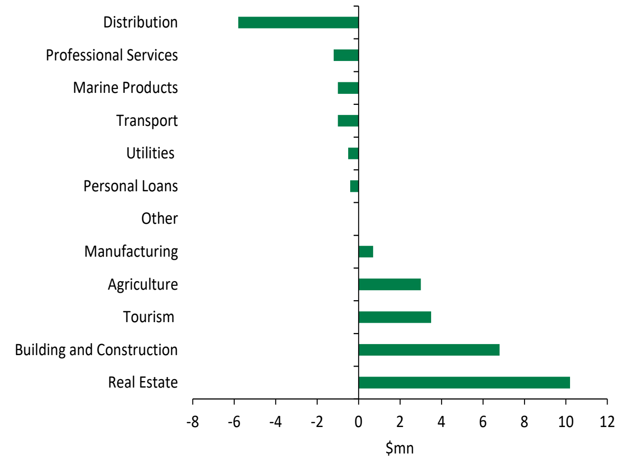


Chart 3.4: Change in Domestic Banks' Loans and Advances, Jan - Mar 2024



Key indicators of the health of the banking system also strengthened. Over the quarter, domestic banks' non-performing loans (net of specific provisions) ratio (NPL ratio) dipped by 0.1 percentage points to 2.4%, remaining well below the 5.0% benchmark. Domestic banks reduced their stock of non-performing loans as loan write-offs rose to $4.3mn this quarter, which was $1.8mn more than the comparable period of 2023. Write-offs were applied mainly to personal ($2.3mn), construction ($0.7mn), and manufacturing ($0.4mn) loans. Furthermore, domestic banks' return on asset (ROA) ratio inched up by 0.1 percentage point to 1.6%.

Bank Liquidity

Domestic banks' excess liquidity grew by $74.5mn (10.0%) over the quarter to $818.6mn, 96.9% above the secondary reserve requirement. This upswing in approved liquid assets was driven chiefly

Chart 3.5: Changes in Bank Liquidity

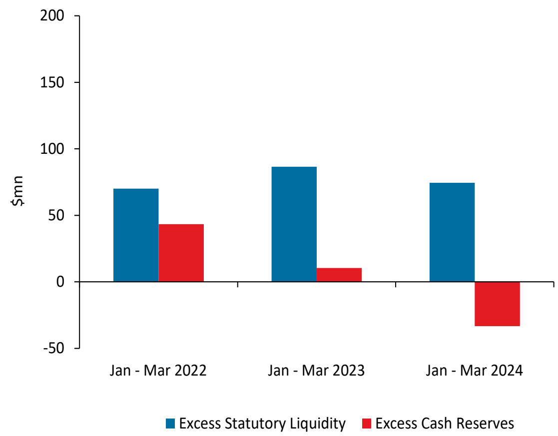
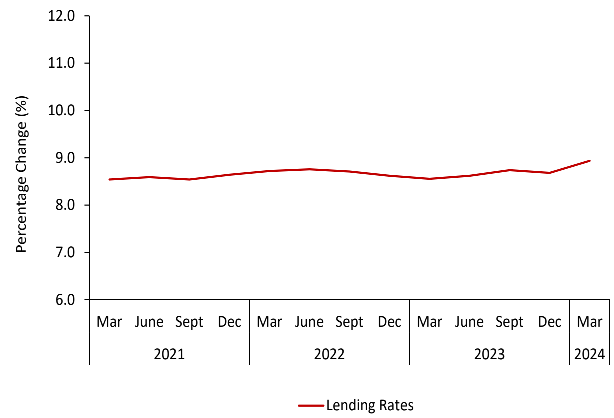


Chart 3.6: Weighted Average Interest Rates on New Loans



by the growth in domestic banks' foreign balances. However, domestic banks' excess primary (cash) reserves contracted by \$33.3mn (6.5%) to \$476.5mn. Aggregate cash reserves fell due to a sharp increase in domestic banks' T-bill purchases during roll-over auctions, which reduced their reserves as they paid for the securities. In addition, a \$10.1mn increase in primary (cash) reserve requirement contributed to the lower reserve balance. Nevertheless, domestic banks' holdings of excess cash reserves stood healthily at 182.2% above the cash reserve requirement at March end. However, the distribution of excess cash among domestic banks remained uneven, with one bank accounting for 75.5% of the total.

Interest Rates

The 12-month weighted (rolling) average interest rate on new loans climbed by 25 basis points for the first three months of 2024 and by 44 basis points for the last 12 months ending in March 2024 to 8.93%. The latter reflected weighted rate increases across all four loan categories. Mortgage rates rose by the largest margin, up 153 basis points. Increases in personal, commercial, and other miscellaneous loans followed, growing by 42, 24, and eight basis points, respectively.

In contrast, the 12-month weighted (rolling) average interest rate on new deposits dipped by three basis points for the first quarter and by 30 basis points for the last 12 months ending in March 2024 to 1.77%. The downward movement over the year was solely attributable to an 18-basis-point decline in time deposit rates, as rates on savings/chequing and saving deposits edged up by 12 and seven basis points, respectively. Demand

Chart 3.7: Weighted Average Interest Rates on New Deposits

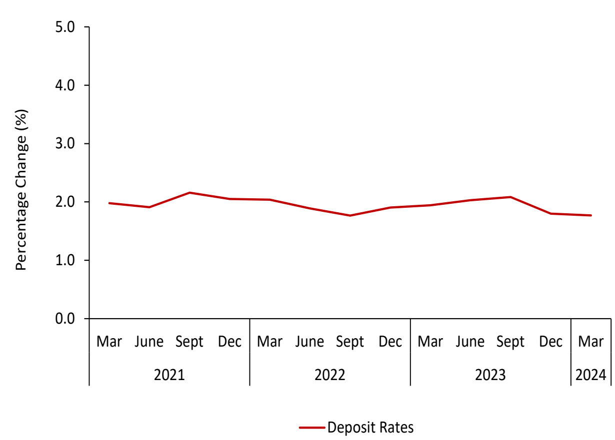
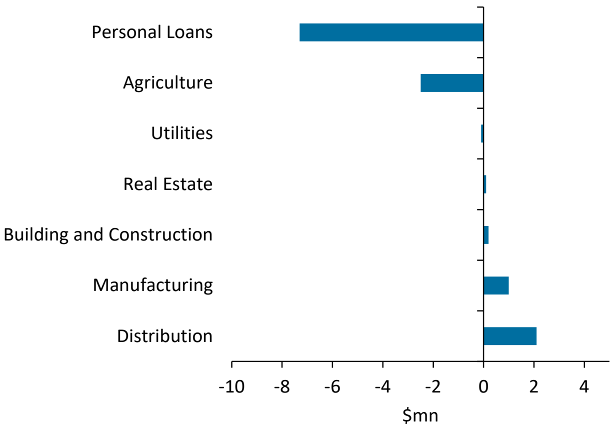


Chart 3.8: Change in Credit Unions' Loans and Advances, Jan - Mar 2024



deposits remained unchanged. As a result, the weighted (rolling) average spread widened by 74 basis points to 7.17%.

Credit Union Lending

The aggregate loan portfolio for all credit unions fell by $4.7mn (0.7%) for the first three months of 2024 to $688.1mn, reflecting a turnaround from the $10.4mn increase observed in the same period of 2023. This quarter's performance was due to a marked decline in personal loans ($7.3mn) as well as more minor contractions in agriculture ($2.5mn) and utilities ($0.1mn) balances, which was partly offset by an increase in outstanding loans for distribution ($2.1mn) and manufacturing ($1.0mn) industries.

Unlike domestic banks, credit unions' NPL ratio dipped during the quarter from 1.1% to 2.3% but remained significantly below the industry's threshold. This result occurred despite an increase in loan write-offs to $2.5mn in the first quarter of 2024 from $1.9mn in the same quarter of 2023. However, the industry's ROA ratio was stable at 3.1% over the quarter.

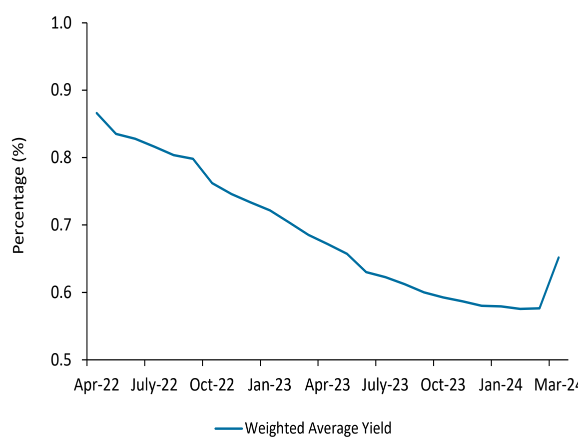
Development Bank Lending

Lending by the Development Finance Corporation increased by $2.0mn to $151.3mn for the first three months of 2024. This outturn was an improvement when compared with the $0.9mn contraction registered in the same period a year ago. Loan growth was recorded in the primary and secondary sectors, which increased by $2.0mn and $0.3mn, respectively. However, disbursements to the tertiary (services) sector declined by $0.4mn.

Open Market Operations

The results of open market operations this quarter led to an upward movement in yield, as domestic banks sought to increase their T-bill holdings in rollover auctions. After several rollover auctions in the first quarter of 2024, the Central Bank's holdings and share of T-bill issuances contracted by $50.8mn to $167.9mn and 15.2 percentage points to 50.1%, respectively. In contrast, domestic banks increased their T-bill purchases, raising their collective holdings and share of total issuances by $50.9mn to $158.0mn and 15.2 percentage points

Chart 3.9: Treasury Bill Yields



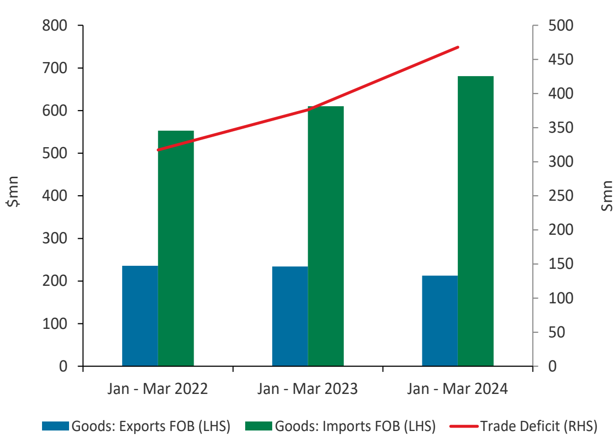
to 47.2%. Activities by non-bank entities were less significant, as their T-bill holdings decreased by $0.1mn to $9.1mn, resulting in a 0.1 percentage-point shave off their portion to 2.7%. Furthermore, the WAY rose to 0.652% in March from 0.580% in November 2023, the month of the last Dutch auction that year. This upward movement was influenced by the first rollover auction for the $90.0mn T-bill issuance that occurred in late 2023 to partially finance the nationalisation of the Port of Belize Limited.

International Trade and Payments

The external current account surplus narrowed to $51.3mn (0.8% of GDP) in the first quarter of 2024 relative to the $115.9mn (1.8% of GDP) recorded in the same period of 2023. The external position was weakened by a 24.4% expansion in the trade deficit in goods. The mounting trade imbalance was partially offset by a 13.7% growth in net travel inflows, arising from a boom in seasonal tourism revenue. Meanwhile, net capital inflows shrank to $0.8mn, as public investment grants slowed and high-valued capital transfers in kind shrank.

The balance on the financial account reflected a $137.2mn increase in net lending to the rest of the world. This outcome was driven by the rapid buildup in domestic banks' external assets, primarily from the surge in tourism revenue. The accumulation of net foreign assets exceeded the incurrence of net foreign liabilities, with the latter stemming mainly from increased net foreign direct investments and net public sector borrowings. As a result, the gross international reserves grew by $2.9mn to $949.4mn, equivalent to 4.0 months of merchandise import coverage.

Chart 4.1: Trade Deficit in Goods



Merchandise Trade

The merchandise trade deficit widened by 24.4% ($91.9mn) to $468.0mn for the first quarter of 2024, as imports rose and exports fell. Imports FOB expanded by 11.6% ($70.5mn) to $680.8mn, owing to a 15.5% ($81.9mn) expansion in domestic imports, as imports into the commercial free zone area contracted by 14.0% ($11.4mn). Meanwhile, exports FOB contracted by 9.1% ($21.4mn) to $212.7mn, owing to declines in CFZ gross sales and domestic exports by 15.3% ($17.8mn) and 14.3% ($14.1mn), respectively. However, a 55.7% ($10.5mn) hike in other re-exports partly offset the overall downturn in exports FOB.

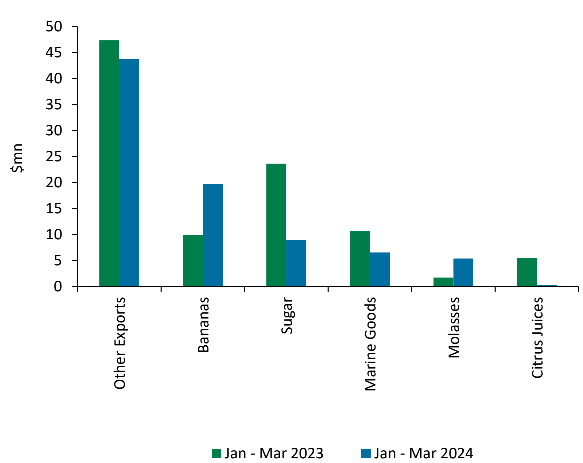
Gross Imports

Imports FOB climbed by 11.6% ($70.5mn) to $680.8mn for the first three months of the year. Import growth was led by a $76.5mn increase in the "*Machinery and Transport Equipment*" subcategory due mainly to the acquisition of an industrial generator and gas turbine for electricity generation. "*Mineral Fuels and Lubricants*" followed, rising by $9.6mn with heightened outlays on kerosene, diesel, premium, and regular fuels. Smaller increases were recorded in several other subcategories. For instance, "*Other Manufacturers*" edged up by $2.9mn because of higher outlays on books. "*Crude Materials*" rose by $2.3mn, owing to higher expenditure on pine lumber. "*Beverages and Tobacco*" inched up by $1.7mn due to additional spending on cigarettes, whiskies, and nutritional supplement drinks. "*Manufactured Goods*" registered a $1.2mn uptick on account of increased expenditure on metal structures, galvanised steel coils, and tyres. However, the upward trend was partially offset by a $13.0mn decline in "*Commercial Free Zone*," reflecting reduced purchases of cigarettes, handbags, and fans. "*Chemical Products*" decreased by $4.3mn due to lower spending on fertilisers, while "*Designated Processing Areas*" shrank by $3.7mn as outlays on steel drums and shrimp feed lessened. Lastly, lower imports of corn seeds, evaporated milk, and margarine resulted in a $1.9mn dip in "*Food and Live Animals*."

Domestic Exports

Domestic export revenues fell by 14.3% ($14.1mn) to $84.7mn between January and March relative to the same months of the previous year. Reduced earnings from sugar ($14.7mn), citrus juices ($5.2mn), marine products ($4.1mn), and other domestic goods ($3.6mn) caused the overall decline. However, marked increases in banana ($9.8mn) and molasses ($3.7mn) receipts softened the downward trend.

Chart 4.2: Domestic Exports



Sources: SIB and CBB

Sugar and Molasses

Sugar export receipts plummeted 62.2% ($14.7mn) to $8.9mn due to a 73.0% downturn in export volume to 5,303 long tons, explained largely by a timing change to ship raw bulk sugar later this year than in the previous period. The disproportionate decline in receipts reflected the favourable impact of a 40.1% price increase across international markets. Average prices strengthened, as the prospects of lower global sugar supplies pushed up international prices. In addition, only the higher-valued bagged sugar was shipped during this period, raising the average unit price received. As customary, Europe remained Belize's principal export destination, accounting for 65.4% of total sugar shipments (3,468 long tons). However, the revenue generated from the European region decreased by $15.2mn to $5.4mn, owing to an 80.4% nosedive in export volume that overshadowed a 34.0% price uptick. In contrast, sales to CARICOM, which comprised 33.9% of the remaining export mix (1,796 long tons), grew to $3.4mn. This growth was driven by a 23.1% rise in the average unit price for bagged sugar, which outstripped an 8.8% dip in export volume. Furthermore, molasses export receipts amounted to $5.4mn, as its export volume rose by 51.1% to 11,912 long tons, bolstered by a near-tenfold increase in the average unit price.

Citrus Juices and Pulp

Export earnings from citrus products plunged by 79.1% ($4.6mn) to $1.2mn, following an 87.3% drop in volume to merely 0.2mn ps. The revenue decline was driven by a marked downturn in orange concentrate earnings, overshadowing an uptick in grapefruit juice revenues. Orange concentrate receipts declined by $4.7mn to only $0.4mn, as its export volume dwindled to 0.1mn ps. Unfortunately, the sale volume of citrus juices was down amid a 40.6% rise in the average unit price in response to global supply shortages triggered by the adverse effects of citrus greening and unfavourable weather among leading citrus producers. Meanwhile, export receipts from grapefruit concentrates rose by $0.2mn to $0.7mn, as an uptick in export volume to about 0.1mn ps was amplified by a 7.2% price increase. All the orange and grapefruit concentrate sold were shipped to CARICOM. Not-from-concentrate and pulp exports were minuscule.

Marine Exports

Marine export earnings declined by 38.7% ($4.1mn) to $6.5mn, as a result of significant declines in the export volumes and prices of the major fishery and aquaculture products. Lobster revenue recorded the largest nominal decline, down 46.6% ($2.6mn) to $3.0mn, as a 32.0% fall in export volume to 0.1mn pounds was exacerbated by a 21.5% decline in the average unit price. Conch export earnings shrank by 21.6% ($0.9mn) to $3.2mn, constricted by decreases in both export volume and average unit price of 15.4% and 7.4%, respectively. Concurrently, shrimp receipts more than halved to $0.3mn after a 59.1% reduction in export volume was compounded by a 26.0% price collapse. Exports of other fish were negligible.

Banana

Banana export revenue grew by $9.8mn to $19.7mn over the review period, as its export volume more than doubled to 19,382 long tons, reflecting a solid rebound from the adverse effects of the Black Sigatoka disease. Nevertheless, the average unit price fell by 9.8%, dampening the momentum in revenue growth.

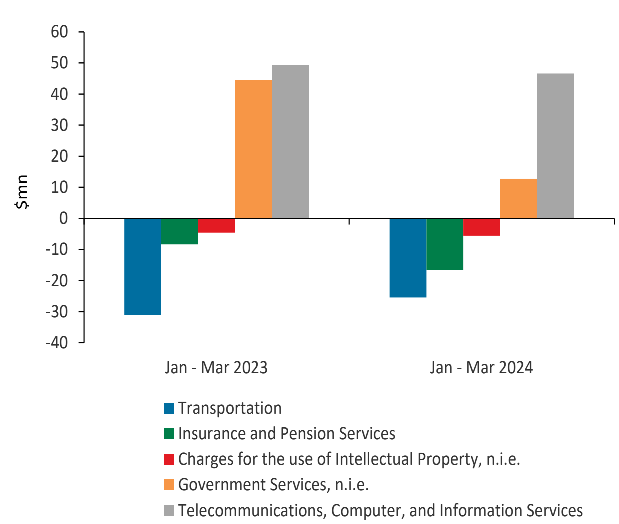
Other Domestic Exports

Receipts from other domestic exports dipped by $3.6mn (7.6%) to $43.8mn. This outturn was driven primarily by an $11.3mn reduction in earnings from animal feed, as corn production diminished amid an increase in domestic consumption. However, increased revenues from crude soybean oil ($1.1mn), pepper sauce ($0.7mn), and red kidney beans ($0.7mn) slowed the downward trend.

Services

Net inflows on the services account rose by 6.1% or $28.5mn to $493.2mn, driven by a surge in seasonal tourism receipts.

Chart 4.3: Sub-components of Services



Accordingly, net travel inflows soared by 13.7% ($57.1mn) to $473.9mn, spurred by the rapid increase in inbound visitors. However, the surplus for all other services plunged 59.7% ($28.7mn) to $19.4mn. The balance narrowed due to a marked decline in transfers to a regional organisation, which led to a $31.8mn reduction in net inflows for government services. Contributing to a lesser extent was an $8.3mn increase in net outflows for insurance and pension services, owing to heightened payments for insurance premiums. However, the overall decline in net inflows for all other services was moderated by a further decrease in international freight rates, as pandemic-related supply-chain bottlenecks subsided. As a result, net outflows on the transport subaccount contracted by $5.6mn.

Primary and Secondary Income

Net outflows on the primary income account fell by $4.0mn to $48.7mn for the first quarter of the year. The smaller deficit was attributable to reduced profit repatriation by foreign-owned entities alongside a marginal increase in the Central Bank's investment income. Profit repatriation fell by $6.6mn to $21.1mn, as lower outflows from the energy, insurance, and airline industries outweighed the pickup in outflows from tourism enterprises. Meanwhile, the Central Bank's investment income from its US securities and deposit holdings increased slightly by $0.4mn to $7.2mn, reflecting an improved rate of return due to elevated global interest rates. However, higher interest rates abroad also raised external borrowing costs, which increased the country's debt burden. The public sector's interest payments on its external debt rose by $4.6mn to $16.0mn, resulting from higher foreign rates on variable-rate loans along with a step-up in interest rate on the "Blue Loan".

Concurrently, the secondary income account surplus fell by $5.2mn over the three months to $74.9mn. The balance contracted mainly due to a $4.5mn decline in net remittances to $50.2mn, as inflationary pressures adversely affected the diaspora's disposable income in major source markets. Additionally, transfers to religious and other non-profit organisations

Chart 4.4: FDI Breakdown by Sector

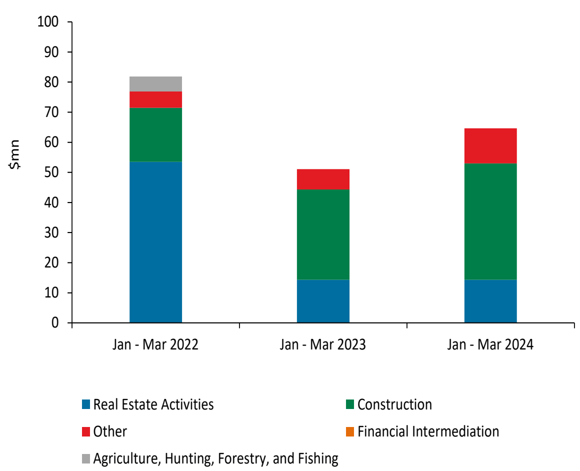
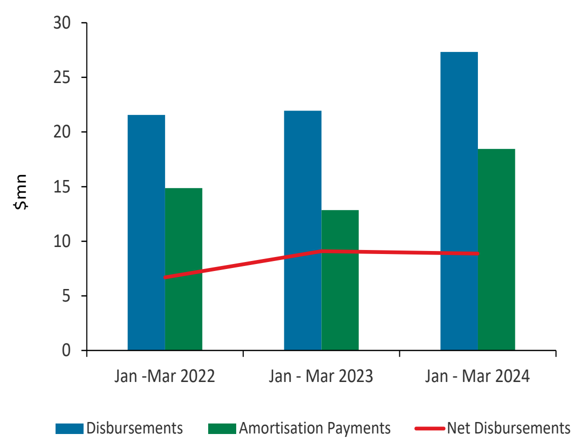


Chart 4.5: Central Government Net External Loan Disbursements



contracted by $0.6mn, further eroding the surplus.

Capital and Financial Account

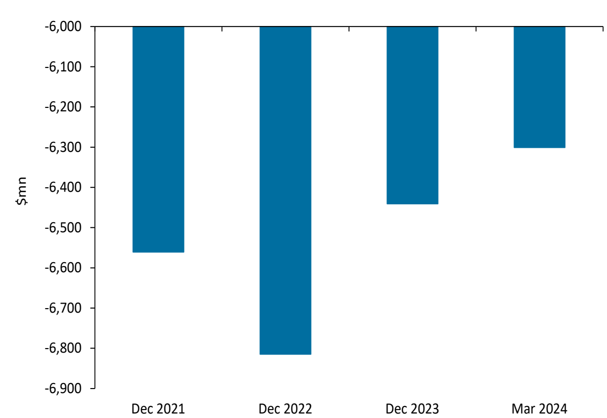
The capital account surplus plummeted by $25.8mn to $0.8mn over the review period. The falloff in capital transfer receipts was due to the absence of a one-off donation of a Cessna caravan aircraft alongside a sharp decline in investment grants to fund infrastructural projects. In particular, the latter reflected a $7.9mn decrease in investment grants from the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) under the UK's Infrastructure Fund to $0.1mn, as most of the grant-funded road projects had been completed.

Net financial flows resulted in a $49.8mn growth in the net acquisition of financial assets to $137.2mn for the first quarter of 2024 compared to the same period last year. This outcome was driven by the $207.7mn buildup in domestic banks' net foreign assets, fuelled by increased tourism revenues, inward transfers, and financial inflows. The acquisition of net financial assets outpaced the rise in net liabilities, which included increases in both net direct investments and net borrowings from abroad. During this period, net direct investments rose by $6.2mn to $64.4mn, as a $13.5mn increase in inflows to $92.7mn surpassed a $7.3mn rise in outflows to $28.3mn. Inward foreign direct investments were mainly directed towards tourism-related construction ($38.7mn) and real estate activities ($14.3mn), while outward investments were primarily related to land or property sales. Additionally, transactions in other investment liabilities were dominated by a $6.9mn increase in the public sector's net external borrowings, which more than offset a $0.4mn reduction in net external liabilities for other sectors combined.

International Investment Position

Belize's net international investment position improved by $140.1mn in the first quarter of 2024, reducing the deficit to $6,340.4mn. This improvement was driven by the growth in net financial assets, which eclipsed the rise in net financial liabilities. The net foreign asset position increased by $213.7mn to $2,144.0mn, reflecting the strengthening of the domestic banks' holdings during the review period. At the same time, net foreign liabilities rose by $73.6mn to $8,484.4mn due to increases in net foreign direct investments by private entities and, to a lesser extent, net borrowings by the public sector.

Chart 4.6: Net International Investment Position

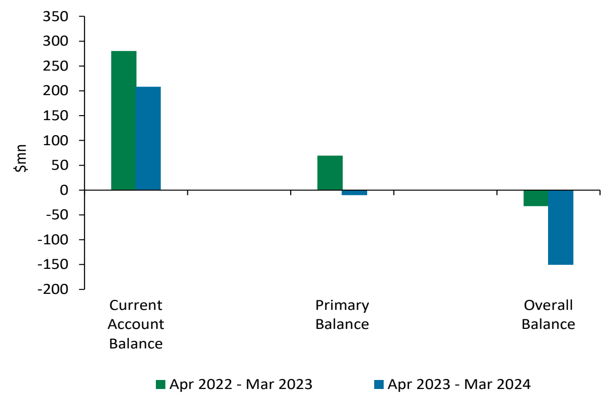


Government Operations and Public Debt

Central Government Operations

The Central Government's overall fiscal deficit increased to $150.4mn (2.4% of GDP) in FY2023/2024, up from $32.3mn (0.6% of GDP) in FY2022/2023. The actual outturn exceeded the budgeted amount by $62.4mn. Additionally, the primary balance shifted from a surplus of $69.4mn (1.2% of GDP) in the previous fiscal year to a marginal deficit of $10.2mn (0.2% of GDP) this period. The fiscal deficit was mainly financed through external borrowings, with domestic sources, particularly the issuance of government securities and the drawdown of deposits, playing a lesser role. Payment for the nationalisation of the Belize City Port in December 2023 was recorded below the line and financed from the issuance of Treasury securities.

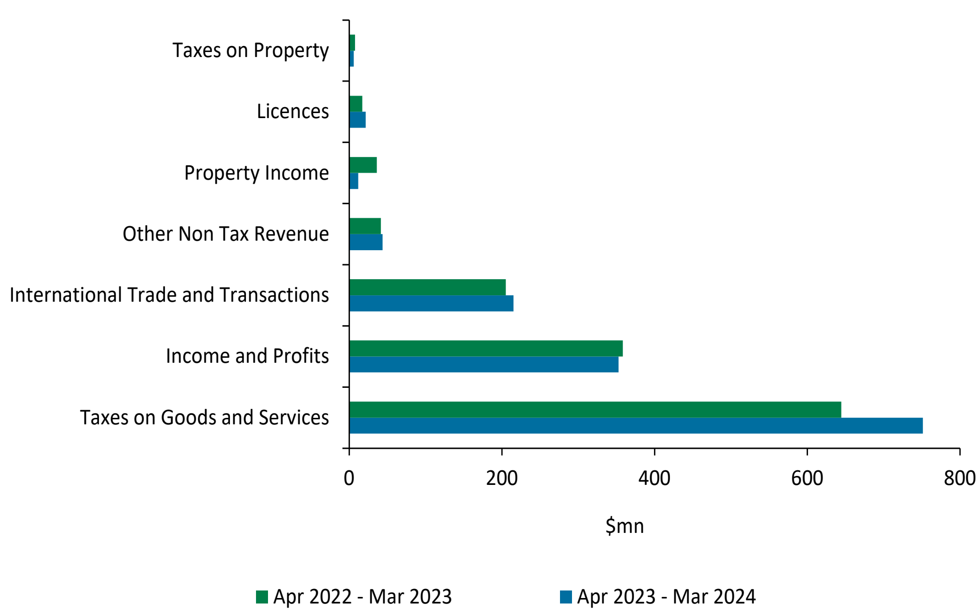
Chart 5.1: Central Government's Operations



Sources: MOF and CBB

When compared with the previous period, the growth in expenditure outpaced revenues. Over the fiscal year, total revenue and grants increased by $81.8mn (6.1%) to $1,426.7mn, $18.4mn higher than the budgeted amount. However, spending pressures mounted from rising external debt service costs and public officers' wages, alongside the settlement of outstanding arbitral awards tied to the acquisition

Chart 5.2: Central Government's Revenue



Source: MOF

of the Belize City Port. As a result, total expenditure grew by $199.9mn (14.5%) to $1,577.1mn, exceeding projected spending by $80.9mn.

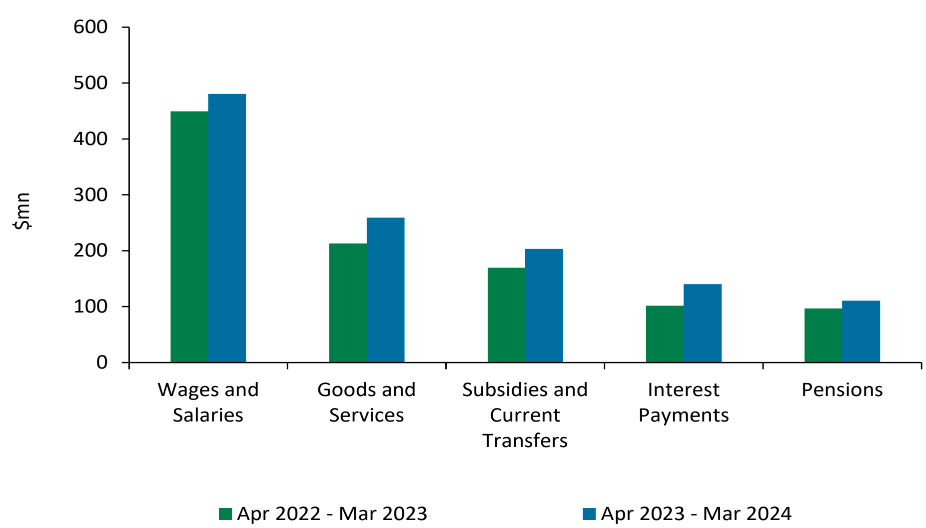
Tax receipts grew by $109.4mn (9.0%) to $1,325.1mn for the fiscal year, surpassing the budgeted amount by $64.7mn (5.1%). Two of four tax revenue headings recorded higher intakes. "*Taxes on Goods and Services*" accounted for 97.7% of the overall increase in tax receipts. Within this subcategory, excise duties rose by the largest margin of $55.5mn, as receipts normalised after the tax subsidies on fuel, implemented to temper inflationary pressures, ended in late 2022. This revenue item was followed by increases of $33.3mn and $17.2mn from general sales tax and stamp duty levies, respectively, driven by heightened private consumption and investment. Then, "*International Trade and Transactions*" rose by $10.0mn, reflecting higher collections of import duties and environmental taxes. Conversely, "*Taxes on Income and Profits*" fell by $5.7mn to $352.8mn, mainly owing to lower business tax receipts, while "*Taxes on Property*" dipped by $1.7mn to $6.0mn.

In contrast, non-tax revenues fell by $17.7mn to $77.2mn, 31.3% below the budgeted amount. This shortfall was mainly due to lower property income remitted from quasi-institutions, as licences and fees collected from Government departments rose marginally.

Furthermore, capital revenue dipped by $0.7mn to $5.5mn. Grants fell more steeply, down $9.2mn to $18.8mn, as transfers from international organisations contracted with the winding of major grant-aided capital projects.

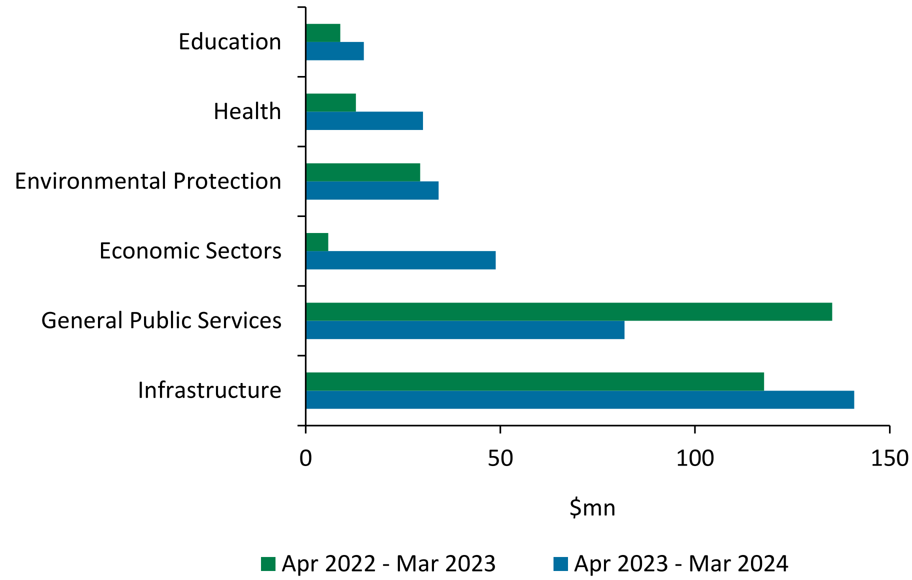
Current expenditure grew by $163.5mn to $1,194.0mn, which was $81.1mn (7.3%) above the budgeted allocation. All five subcategories of current expenditure

Chart 5.3: Central Government's Current Expenditures



Source: MOF

Chart 5.4: Central Government's Development Expenditure



Source: MOF

reflected an increase in spending. The largest change was in "*Goods and Services,*" which rose by $46.4mn due to higher spending on food, training, medical supplies, and travel. "*Interest Payments on Public Debt*" grew by $38.5mn, in response to elevated global interest rates that increased the Government's debt service costs on variable interest loans with external creditors. "*Subsidies and Current Transfers*" expanded by $33.6mn, owing to negotiated settlements under the Belize City Port Acquisition and Settlement Deeds Act. Meanwhile, spending on "*Wages and Salaries*" increased by $31.2mn, following the restoration of public officers' emoluments and allowances in July 2022 and increments in April 2023.

Capital expenditure and net lending expanded by $36.4mn to $383.2mn but was $0.3mn less than budgeted estimates. As a share of GDP, capital spending remained relatively stable over the previous period at 6.1% of GDP. Outlays on locally funded projects increased by 19.1% or $49.4mn, while spending on externally funded projects fell by 15.0% or $13.2mn. Spending on infrastructural projects accounted for the largest share of total capital outlays (36.8%). Other significant spending shares were allocated to public services (21.4%), economic sectors (12.8%), environmental protection and land management (8.9%), and health (7.9%).

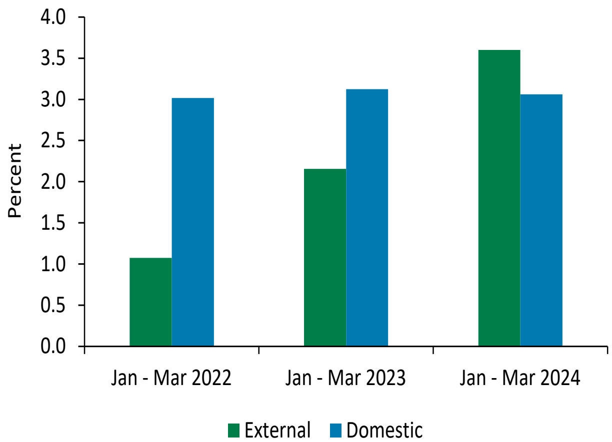
Public Sector Debt

For the first quarter of 2024, the total public sector debt stock grew by $14.3mn to $4,361.9mn (66.1% of GDP). This increase was solely due to a rise in external liabilities, as the Central Government's domestic debt remained unchanged since December 2023.

Government Domestic Debt

Central Government's outstanding domestic debt for the first quarter of 2024 remained

Chart 5.5: Average Interest Rate on Central Government Domestic Debt and Public Sector External Debt



unchanged relative to 2023's end-of-year position at $1,507.9mn (22.8% of GDP). This outcome resulted from the absence of new borrowings or amortisation payments over the review period.

However, due to the rollover of Treasury securities, there were shifts in the distribution of the Central Government's domestic debt. The Central Bank reduced its holdings of T-bills by $50.8mn to $167.9mn, while domestic banks increased their holdings by $50.9mn to $158.0mn. Non-bank entities lowered their holdings by $0.1mn, to $9.1mn. In addition, the Central Bank acquired $2.4mn in Treasury notes (T-notes) previously held by an institutional entity on the secondary market.

Interest payments amounted to $8.8mn, reflecting a $0.2mn reduction compared to the amount paid in the first quarter of 2023, as the annual effective interest rate (from April 2023 to March 2024) declined by six basis points to 3.06%. The Central Bank, Central Government's largest creditor, was paid the most significant sum of $4.9mn. Non-bank entities followed, receiving $2.8mn, while domestic banks got $1.0mn on their portfolio of Treasury securities.

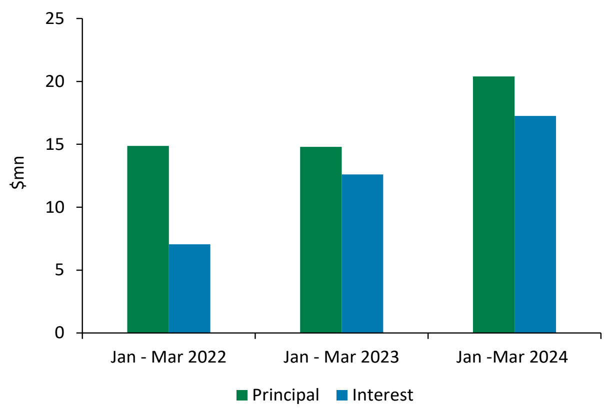
Although the Central Bank maintained its position as the Central Government's main creditor during the review period, its share of domestic debt decreased by 3.3 percentage points to 48.7% relative to the end of December 2023. Meanwhile, domestic banks' portion rose by 3.4 percentage points to 32.3%, and non-bank entities' share dipped by 0.1 percentage points to 19.0%.

Public Sector External Debt

During the first three months of the year, the public sector external debt rose by $14.3mn to $2,854.0mn, as loan disbursements of $36.4mn outpaced amortisation payments of $20.4mn. Nevertheless, the public debt-to-GDP ratio inched down from 70.6% of GDP at the end of December to 66.1% of GDP at the end of March, as the pace of economic growth exceeded the accumulation of the public sector's net borrowings.

Central Government was the largest recipient of new disbursements this quarter, receiving $24.5mn or 67.2% of total disbursements. Of this amount, bilateral creditors provided $6.3mn. Fresh disbursements from these partners included $4.7mn from the Republic of China/Taiwan to finance the Sarteneja Road Project and $1.6mn from the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development for the Caracol Road Project. Concurrently, multilateral institutions disbursed $18.2mn to fund several major projects, including:

Chart 5.6: External Debt Service



- the Integral Security Programme ($8.4mn),
- the Philip Goldson Highway and Remate Bypass Upgrading Project ($5.2mn),
- the Program for Digital Innovation to Boost Economic Development in Belize ($1.8mn), and
- the Climate Resilient and Sustainable Agriculture Project ($1.6mn).

Furthermore, multilateral creditors disbursed $11.9mn to the Development Finance Corporation, a public financial sector entity, to strengthen its consolidated lines of credit and support lending to the productive sector.

The Central Government's amortisation payments totalled $16.0mn, 78.5% of the public sector's principal repayments. This amount was split between bilateral and multilateral creditors, who received $8.4mn and $7.7mn, respectively. In addition, the public non-financial and financial sectors repaid $3.3mn and $1.1mn, respectively, on their loans.

Interest and other payments totalled $17.3mn, $4.6mn higher than the amount paid in the same quarter of the previous year. The hike in debt service costs reflected a marked step up in the year-on-year effective interest rate to 3.60% from 2.15% in the same period last year. The Central Government accounted for $14.8mn or 86.0% of total interest costs, paying $8.6mn and $6.2mn to bilateral and multilateral lenders, respectively. The public financial and non-financial sectors paid $2.4mn to cover their interest expenses.

Central Government held 90.7% of the public sector's external debt at the end of the first quarter. In turn, the portions carried by the public financial and non-financial sectors were significantly lower, at 7.2% and 2.0%, respectively.

ANNEX I

Table A.1: Gross Domestic Product Growth Rates of Selected Countries

Percent

	Sept 2023	Dec 2023	Mar 2024
Advanced Economies			
US	2.9	3.1	2.9
UK	0.2	-0.2	0.3
Euro Area	0.1	0.1	0.4
Japan	1.6	1.2	-0.2
Emerging Economies			
China	4.9	5.2	5.3
India[(1)]	8.1	8.6	7.8
Brazil	2.0	2.1	2.5
Mexico	3.4	2.3	1.9
Caribbean Economies			
Barbados	4.4	4.4	4.1
Jamaica	2.1	1.7	1.9

Sources: Respective Statistical Bureaus and Central Banks.
[(1)] Quarter-on-Quarter percentage change.

Table A.2: Real Gross Domestic Product Growth Rates

	Year-on-Year Growth (%)	
	Jan - Mar 2023 over Jan - Mar 2022[R]	Jan - Mar 2024 over Jan - Mar 2023[R]
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	-15.7	-8.3
Mining	-5.0	-16.3
Manufacturing	4.8	-2.9
Electricity	-14.5	39.7
Water Supply	8.3	4.4
Construction	21.2	5.8
Wholesale and Retail Trade	6.4	18.9
Transportation	19.2	41.6
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	40.7	43.1
Information and Communication	-9.1	-10.8
Financial and Insurance Activities	15.5	-7.0
Real Estate Activities	2.0	1.6
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Activities	-6.7	46.4
Administrative and Support Service Activities	23.3	5.4
Public Administration and Defence	2.9	15.5
Education	1.6	8.1
Human Health and Social Work Activities	9.4	4.1
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	39.0	24.6
Other Service Activities	24.4	-0.5
Activities of Households as Employers	5.3	5.1
Taxes and Subsidies	3.8	14.5
GDP at Constant 2014 Prices	6.3	10.0

Source: SIB
[R] - Revised

Table A.3: Gross Domestic Product by Activity at Constant 2014 Prices

$mn

	Jan - Mar 2023[R]	Jan - Mar 2024[R]
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	126.3	115.8
Mining	15.3	12.8
Manufacturing	103.9	100.9
Electricity	13.6	19.0
Water Supply	9.1	9.5
Construction	69.1	73.1
Wholesale and Retail Trade	180.8	214.9
Transportation	60.9	86.2
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	83.0	118.8
Information and Communication	40.8	36.4
Financial and Insurance Activities	119.9	111.5
Real Estate Activities	61.0	62.0
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Activities	11.2	16.4
Administrative and Support Service Activities	62.9	66.3
Public Administration and Defence	90.2	104.2
Education	71.8	77.6
Human Health and Social Work Activities	19.7	20.5
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	17.1	21.3
Other Service Activities	20.4	20.3
Activities of Households as Employers	7.9	8.3
Taxes and Subsidies	173.0	198.0
GDP at Constant 2014 Prices	1,357.8	1,493.9

Source: SIB

[R] - Revised

Table A.4: Deliveries of Sugarcane and Production of Sugar and Molasses

	Dec - Mar 2022/2023	**Dec - Mar 2023/2024**
Deliveries of Sugarcane to BSI and Santander (long tons)	847,514	883,394
Sugar Processed by BSI and Santander (long tons)	77,083	77,308
Molasses processed by BSI and Santander (long tons)	27,867	28,135
Performance		
Factory Time Efficiency (%)	72.13	72.72
Cane Purity	62.30	61.98
Cane/Sugar	11.0	11.4

Sources: BSI and Santander

Table A.5: Output of Citrus Products

	Oct - Mar 2022/2023	Oct - Mar 2023/2024
Deliveries (boxes)		
Orange	233,883	157,808
Grapefruit	61,553	33,725
Total	**295,436**	**191,533**
Concentrate Produced (ps)		
Orange	1,090,060	810,611
Grapefruit	232,237	111,344
Total	**1,322,297**	**921,955**
Not from Concentrate (ps)		
Orange	66,403	0
Grapefruit	7,914	21,912
Total	**74,317**	**21,912**
Pulp (pounds)		
Orange	76,320	10,176
Grapefruit	0	0
Total	**76,320**	**10,176**
Oil Produced (pounds)		
Orange	71,229	64,409
Grapefruit	9,055	5,748
Total	**80,284**	**70,157**

Source: CPBL

Table A.6: Banana Production

40-pound boxes

	Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024
January	143,373	366,123
February	145,952	349,056
March	195,257	353,121
Total	484,582	1,068,300

Source: BGA

Table A.7: Bona Fide Tourist Arrivals

	Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024
Stay-Over Arrivals		
Air	108,107	142,019
Land	19,893	22,590
Sea	4,256	5,213
Total	132,256	169,822
Cruise Ship Disembarkations	310,865	340,808

Sources: BTB, CBB, and Immigration Department

Table A.8: Consumer Price Index Commodity Group

Major Commodity	Weights	Jan 2024	Feb 2024	Mar 2024	Mar 2024 over Feb 2024	YTD-2024 over YTD-2023
Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages	258	131.5	130.6	129.3	-1.0	6.4
Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco, and Narcotics	35	106.8	107.3	107.3	0.0	5.2
Clothing and Footwear	44	100.9	101.9	101.9	0.0	0.1
Housing, Water, Electricity, Gas, and Other Fuels	195	104.9	106.4	106.7	0.3	2.3
Furnishing, Household Equipment, and Routine Household Maintenance	51	111.4	112.2	112.2	0.0	4.5
Health	26	110.7	111.7	111.7	0.0	6.4
Transport	153	127.1	129.3	131.6	1.8	-0.9
Information and Communication	46	96.1	95.7	95.7	0.0	-1.5
Recreation and Culture	43	114.7	115.6	115.6	0.0	5.0
Education Services	25	100.6	100.6	100.6	0.0	0.4
Restaurants and Accommodation Services	65	129.1	130.6	130.6	0.0	12.1
Insurance and Financial Services	8	105.8	105.8	105.8	0.0	5.7
Personal Care, Social Protection, and Miscellaneous Goods and Services	51	108.1	108.7	108.7	0.0	5.2
All Items	1,000	117.3	117.9	118.0	0.1	3.8

Source: SIB

Table A.9: Factors Responsible for Money Supply Movements[1]

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
Net Foreign Assets	1,810.9	211.0	174.4
Central Bank	952.1	3.3	25.6
Domestic Banks	858.8	207.7	148.7
Net Domestic Credit	3,663.4	53.0	41.9
Central Government (Net)	968.2	40.4	23.1
Other Public Sector	116.2	-2.1	0.2
Private Sector	2,579.0	14.8	18.6
Central Bank Foreign Liabilities (Long-term)	115.1	-1.6	1.2
Other Items (Net)	670.9	23.8	14.4
Money Supply (M2)	4,688.3	241.7	200.6

(1) Transactions associated with the Universal Health Services loan with the Belize Bank Limited are not included in this table.

Table A.10: Money Supply

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
Money Supply (M2)	4,688.3	241.7	200.6
Narrow Money (M1)	2,849.6	181.9	199.9
Currency with the Public	609.6	21.9	12.0
Demand Deposits	2,238.7	159.4	187.9
Savings/Chequing Deposits	1.3	0.6	0.0
Quasi-Money	1,838.7	59.8	0.7
Savings Deposits	1,100.1	45.5	40.4
Time Deposits	738.7	14.3	-39.7

Table A.11: Net Foreign Assets of the Banking System

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
Net Foreign Assets of Banking System	1,810.9	211.0	174.4
Net Foreign Assets of Central Bank	952.1	3.3	25.6
Central Bank Foreign Assets	954.3	2.9	27.5
Central Bank Foreign Liabilities (Demand)	2.3	-0.4	1.9
Net Foreign Assets of Domestic Banks	858.8	207.7	148.8
Domestic Bank Foreign Assets	921.4	211.3	148.1
Domestic Bank Foreign Liabilities (Short-term)	62.6	3.6	-0.6

Table A.12: Central Bank's Foreign Asset Flows

$mn

	Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024
Total Inflows	75.7	70.5
Loan Disbursements	16.2	27.7
Grants	10.6	0.8
Sugar Exports Receipts	29.6	27.9
Banks	0.0	1.2
Other	19.2	13.0
Total Outflows	48.2	67.9
Central Government	39.3	50.4
Statutory Bodies	6.2	13.2
Other	2.8	4.2

Table A.13: Net Domestic Credit

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
Total Credit to Central Government	1,131.3	2.8	-1.9
From Central Bank	734.8	-48.1	-15.1
Loans and Advances	0.0	0.0	0.0
Government Securities[1]	734.8	-48.1	-15.1
From Domestic Banks	396.5	50.9	13.1
Loans and Advances	0.0	0.0	0.0
Government Securities	396.5	50.9	13.1
Of which: Treasury Bills	158.0	50.9	13.1
Treasury Notes	238.5	0.0	0.0
Other	0.0	0.0	0.0
Less Central Government Deposits	163.0	-37.6	-25.1
With Central Bank	91.1	-49.1	-49.2
With Domestic Banks	71.9	11.5	24.1
Net Credit to Central Government	968.2	40.4	23.1
Credit to Other Public Sector	116.2	-2.1	0.1
From Central Bank	0.0	0.0	0.0
From Domestic Banks	116.2	-2.1	0.2
Of which: Local Government	16.0	0.0	-0.1
Public Financial Institutions	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public Utilities	25.0	0.0	0.0
Other Statutory Bodies	0.7	-0.1	-0.1
Securities	74.5	-2.0	0.4
Plus Credit to the Private Sector	2,579.0	14.8	18.6
From Central Bank	8.7	0.4	0.2
Loans and Advances	8.7	0.4	0.2
From Domestic Banks	2,570.3	14.4	18.5
Loans and Advances	2,544.8	14.5	13.2
Securities	25.5	-0.1	5.3
Net Domestic Credit of the Banking System[2]	3,663.4	53.0	41.9

[1] Includes the Central Bank's holdings of Government Treasury bills and Treasury notes.
[2] Treasury bill holdings reported by domestic banks reflect a mix of par and market values.

Table A.14: Sectoral Composition of Domestic Banks' Loans and Advances

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
PRIMARY SECTOR	265.9	1.8	-0.3
Agriculture	240.9	3.0	3.1
Sugar	93.2	-1.0	-0.3
Citrus	11.6	-0.3	-2.2
Bananas	56.6	-0.1	2.3
Other	79.5	4.4	3.3
Marine Products	20.0	-1.0	-3.2
Forestry	1.3	-0.1	-0.2
Mining and Exploration	3.7	-0.1	0.0
SECONDARY SECTOR	855.4	7.0	12.5
Manufacturing	75.9	0.7	12.7
Building and Construction[1]	742.3	6.8	4.7
Utilities	37.2	-0.5	-4.9
TERTIARY SECTOR	1,035.3	5.9	7.2
Transport	66.9	-1.0	-2.0
Tourism	302.0	3.5	-8.1
Distribution	196.3	-5.8	-4.6
Real Estate	382.7	10.2	21.1
Professional Services	67.7	-1.2	1.1
Other	19.7	0.2	-0.3
Personal Loans	429.9	-0.4	-6.4
TOTAL	2,586.5	14.3	13.0

Table A.15: Sectoral Composition of Credit Unions' Loans and Advances

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
PRIMARY SECTOR	71.9	-2.3	-0.4
Agriculture	63.8	-2.5	-0.3
Sugar	4.5	-0.7	-0.6
Citrus	1.2	0.0	-0.1
Bananas	2.0	0.0	1.0
Other	56.1	-1.8	-0.6
Marine Products	7.7	0.0	-0.1
Forestry	0.3	0.2	0.0
Mining and Exploration	0.1	0.0	0.0
SECONDARY SECTOR	241.1	1.1	4.6
Manufacturing	36.5	1.0	3.3
Building and Construction	197.1	0.2	1.4
Residential	111.0	1.3	1.9
Home Improvement	71.6	-0.8	-0.2
Commercial	11.5	-0.4	-0.4
Infrastructure	2.9	0.0	0.0
Utilities	7.5	-0.1	-0.1
TERTIARY SECTOR	136.4	3.9	2.7
Transport	4.9	0.1	0.0
Tourism	3.7	0.0	0.1
Distribution	22.6	2.1	-1.6
Real Estate	86.3	0.1	1.8
Residential	2.3	-0.2	-0.2
Commercial	41.8	0.1	-2.5
Land Acquisition	42.3	0.4	4.5
Other[1]	18.9	1.6	2.4
Personal Loans	238.7	-7.3	-9.7
TOTAL	688.1	-4.7	-2.8

[1] Includes Government Services, Financial Institutions, Professional Services, and Entertainment.

Table A.16: Sectoral Composition of Development Finance Corporation Loans and Advances

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
PRIMARY SECTOR	45.2	2.0	-1.1
Agriculture	34.4	2.1	-1.1
Marine Products	10.5	-0.1	0.0
Other[1]	0.3	0.0	0.0
SECONDARY SECTOR	46.7	0.3	-0.7
Manufacturing	5.7	0.0	-1.3
Building and Construction	41.0	0.3	0.6
TERTIARY SECTOR	42.6	-0.4	0.8
Tourism	17.9	-0.4	-0.4
Professional Services	18.8	-0.1	-0.8
Other[2]	5.9	0.1	2.0
Student Loans	16.2	0.1	0.0
Personal Loans	0.6	0.1	0.0
TOTAL	151.3	2.0	-0.9

[1] Includes Mining and Forestry.
[2] Includes Distribution, Financial Institutions, Real Estate, Transport, and Entertainment.

Table A.17: Domestic Banks' Liquidity Position and Cash Reserves

$mn

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
Holdings of Approved Liquid Assets	1,663.3	107.1	114.6
Notes and Coins	124.4	4.9	14.8
Balances with Central Bank	738.6	-27.1	13.1
Money at Call and Foreign Balances (due in 90 days)	566.3	112.0	106.6
Treasury Bills maturing in not more than 90 days	152.7	27.0	-17.9
Other Approved Assets	81.4	-9.7	-2.0
Required Liquid Assets	844.7	32.6	28.1
Excess/(Deficiency) Liquid Assets	818.6	74.5	86.5
Daily Average Holdings of Cash Reserves	738.0	-23.2	19.1
Required Cash Reserves	261.5	10.1	8.7
Excess/(Deficiency) Cash Reserves	476.5	-33.3	10.4
Actual Securities Balances	144.0	36.9	-2.7
Excess/(Deficiency) Securities	144.0	36.9	-2.7

Table A.18: Domestic Banks' Weighted Average Interest Rates

Percent

	Position as at Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2023 to Mar 2024	Changes During Dec 2022 to Mar 2023
Weighted Lending Rates			
Personal Loans	11.26	-0.19	0.00
Commercial Loans	7.87	-0.02	-0.02
Residential Construction	7.14	0.08	0.06
Other	7.19	0.01	-0.01
Weighted Average	8.38	-0.03	0.00
Weighted Deposit Rates			
Demand	0.13	0.01	0.00
Savings/Chequing	2.57	-0.05	-0.02
Savings	2.65	0.00	-0.01
Time	2.06	-0.05	-0.14
Weighted Average	1.15	-0.03	-0.08
Weighted Average Spread	7.23	-0.01	0.08

Table A.19: Domestic Banks' Weighted Average Interest Rates on New Loans and Deposits

Percent

	Twelve Month Rolling Averages At			Changes	
	Mar 2024	Dec 2023	Mar 2023	Mar 2024 over Dec 2023	Mar 2024 over Mar 2023
Weighted Lending Rates					
Personal Loans	10.35	10.00	9.92	0.34	0.42
Commercial Loans	8.24	8.14	8.01	0.10	0.24
Residential Construction	9.75	9.07	8.22	0.68	1.53
Other	6.29	5.89	6.21	0.40	0.08
Weighted Average	8.93	8.68	8.50	0.25	0.44
Weighted Deposit Rates					
Demand	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Savings/Chequing	1.37	1.54	1.25	-0.18	0.12
Savings	2.48	2.48	2.41	0.00	0.07
Time	2.19	2.17	2.37	0.01	-0.18
Weighted Average	1.77	1.80	2.07	-0.03	-0.30
Weighted Average Spread	7.17	6.88	6.43	0.28	0.74

Table A.20: Balance of Payments Summary

$mn

	Jan - Mar 2023R	Jan - Mar 2024P
A. CURRENT ACCOUNT (I+II+III+IV)	115.9	51.3
I. Goods (Trade Balance)	-376.1	-468.0
Exports, Free on Board (FOB)	234.1	212.7
Domestic Exports	98.9	84.7
CFZ Gross sales	116.4	98.7
Other Re-exports	18.9	29.4
Imports, FOB	610.3	680.8
Domestic Imports	528.7	610.6
CFZ Imports	81.6	70.2
II. Services	464.8	493.2
Transportation	-31.1	-25.4
Travel	416.8	473.9
Other Services	79.1	44.8
III. Primary Income	-52.7	-48.7
Compensation of Employees	-1.1	-0.4
Investment Income	-51.6	-48.4
IV. Secondary Income	80.0	74.9
Government	-1.3	-1.8
Private	81.3	76.7
B. Capital Account	26.6	0.8
C. Financial Account	87.4	137.2
D. NET ERRORS AND OMISSIONS	-27.8	88.0
E. RESERVE ASSETS	27.2	2.9

R - Revised
P - Provisional

Table A.21: Capital and Financial Accounts

$mn

		Jan - Mar 2023[R]	Jan - Mar 2024[P]
A.	CAPITAL ACCOUNT	26.6	0.8
B.	FINANCIAL ACCOUNT (1+2+3+4)	87.4	137.2
	1. Direct Investment in Belize	-58.2	-64.4
	2. Portfolio Investment	0.0	0.0
	Monetary Authorities	0.0	0.0
	General Government	0.0	0.0
	Banks	0.0	0.0
	Other Sectors	0.0	0.0
	3. Financial Derivatives	0.0	0.0
	4. Other Investments	145.6	201.6
	Monetary Authorities	-1.9	0.4
	General Government	-5.5	-6.9
	Banks	148.8	207.7
	Other Sectors	4.2	0.4
	Special Drawing Rights	0.0	0.0
C.	NET ERRORS AND OMISSIONS	-27.8	88.0
D.	OVERALL BALANCE	27.2	2.9
E.	RESERVE ASSETS	27.2	2.9

[R] - Revised
[P] - Provisional

Table A.22: Balance of Payments

	Jan - Mar 2023[R]	Jan - Mar 2024[P]
		$mn
CURRENT ACCOUNT	115.9	51.3
Goods: Exports FOB	234.1	212.7
Goods: Imports FOB	610.3	680.8
Trade Balance	-376.1	-468.0
Services: Credit	599.0	644.7
Transportation	22.5	29.3
Travel	443.1	510.9
Other Goods and Services	76.2	83.8
Government Goods and Services	57.2	20.7
Services: Debit	134.2	151.4
Transportation	53.5	54.7
Travel	26.3	37.1
Other Goods and Services	41.7	51.8
Government Goods and Services	12.6	7.9
Balance on Goods and Services	88.6	25.2
Primary Income: Credit	9.1	9.4
Compensation of Employees	1.2	1.2
Investment Income	7.9	8.2
Primary Income: Debit	61.8	58.1
Compensation of Employees	2.3	1.5
Investment Income	59.5	56.6
Balance on Goods, Services and Primary Income	35.9	-23.5
Secondary Income: Credit	100.7	96.7
Secondary Income: Debit	20.6	21.9
CAPITAL ACCOUNT	26.6	0.8
Capital Account: Credit	26.6	0.8
Capital Account: Debit	0.0	0.0
FINANCIAL ACCOUNT	87.4	137.2
Direct Investment Abroad	0.0	0.0
Direct Investment in Reporting Economy	58.2	64.4
Portfolio Investment Assets	0.0	0.0
Portfolio Investment Liabilities	0.0	0.0
Financial Derivatives	0.0	0.0
Other Investment Assets	147.6	210.9
Other Investment Liabilities	2.0	9.3
NET ERRORS AND OMISSIONS	-27.8	88.0
OVERALL BALANCE	27.2	2.9
RESERVE ASSETS	27.2	2.9

Source: CBB

[R] - Revised

[P] - Provisional

Table A.23: Gross Imports at Cost, Insurance and Freight (CIF) by Standard International Trade Classification (SITC)

$'000

SITC Section	Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024	$ Change	% Change
0. Food and Live Animals	76,057	74,189	-1,869	-2.5
1. Beverages and Tobacco	11,089	12,799	1,711	15.4
2. Crude Materials	11,239	13,528	2,289	20.4
3. Mineral Fuels and Lubricants	114,359	123,931	9,572	8.4
of which Electricity	16,189	17,768	1,579	9.8
4. Oils and Fats	7,934	8,841	907	11.4
5. Chemical Products	65,973	61,649	-4,324	-6.6
6. Manufactured Goods	92,553	93,761	1,208	1.3
7. Machinery and Transport Equipment	135,849	212,335	76,486	56.3
8. Other Manufactures	49,213	52,068	2,854	5.8
9. Commodities not elsewhere specified	0	0	0	0.0
10. Designated Processing Areas	12,403	8,701	-3,702	-29.8
11. Commercial Free Zone	88,959	75,961	-12,998	-14.6
12. Personal Goods	721	448	-273	-37.9
Total	666,349	738,210	71,861	10.8

Sources: CBB and SIB

Table A.24: Exports of Sugar and Molasses

	Jan - Mar 2023		Jan - Mar 2024	
	Volume (long tons)	Value ($'000)	Volume (long tons)	Value ($'000)
Sugar	19,652	23,652	5,303	8,941
Europe	17,664	20,566	3,468	5,411
US	20	25	0	0
CARICOM	1,969	3,062	1,796	3,440
Other	0	0	39	90
Molasses	7,886	1,723	11,912	5,407

Sources: BSI and Santander Group

Table A.25: Citrus Product Exports

	Jan - Mar 2023		Jan - Mar 2024	
	Pound Solid ('000)	Value ($'000)	Pound Solid ('000)	Value ($'000)
Citrus Concentrates				
US				
Orange	0.0	0	0.0	0
Grapefruit	0.0	0	0.0	0
CARICOM				
Orange	1,181.4	5,124	70.9	433
Grapefruit	74.6	527	92.9	704
Europe				
Orange	0.0	0	0.0	0
Grapefruit	0.0	0	0.0	0
Other				
Orange	12.7	55	0.0	0
Grapefruit	0.0	0	0.0	0
Sub-Total(1)	1,268.7	5,707	163.9	1,137
Orange	1,194.2	5,179	70.9	433
Grapefruit	74.6	527	92.9	704
Not-From-Concentrate				
Sub-Total	5.6	30.6	10.0	81.9
Orange	5.1	27	0.0	0
Grapefruit	0.5	3	10.0	82
Total Citrus Juices	1,274.4	5,737	173.9	1,219
Pulp (pounds '000)				
Total(1)	98.4	98	0.0	0
Orange	98.4	98	0.0	0
Grapefruit	0.0	0	0.0	0

Source: CPBL

(1) Values may not be equal to total due to rounding.

Table A.26: Marine Product Exports

	Jan - Mar 2023		Jan - Mar 2024	
	Volume ('000 pounds)	Value ($'000)	Volume ('000 pounds)	Value ($'000)
Lobster	168	5,663	115	3,022
Shrimp	157	909	64	275
Conch	277	4,108	234	3,221
Other Fish	1	8	1	29
Total	603	10,687	414	6,547

Source: SIB

Table A.27: Banana Exports

	Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024
Volume (metric tons)	8,792	19,382
Value ($'000)	9,910	19,699

Source: BGA

Table A.28: Other Miscellaneous Exports

	Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024
Other Miscellaneous Exports ($'000)	47,401	43,786
of which:		
Pepper Sauce	1,842	2,567
Red Kidney Beans	2,286	2,936
Orange Oil	741	50
Grapefruit Oil	93	110
Animal Feed	15,422	4,092
Crude Soybean Oil	1,383	2,490
Pre-Fabricated Houses	926	478
Petroleum	283	0

Source: SIB

Table A.29: Long-Term Private Sector External Debt by Economic Sector[1,2]

Economic Sectors	DOD as at 31/12/2023	Transactions (Jan - Mar 2024) Disbursements	Principal Payments	Interest Payments	DOD as at 31/03/2024
Agriculture	35,411	0	0	0	35,411
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	1,051	0	0	0	1,051
Economic Diversification	0	0	0	0	0
Education	0	0	0	0	0
Electricity and Gas	13,037	0	18	462	13,020
Financial and Insurance Activities	111	0	0	0	111
Fishing	9,355	0	0	0	9,355
Information and Communication	0	0	0	0	0
Real Estate Activities	0	0	0	0	0
Tourism Activities	83,939	0	26	0	83,913
Transportation	31,182	0	1,447	517	29,735
Wholesale and Retail Trade	2,153	0	144	37	2,009
Other	1,500	0	0	0	1,500
Total	177,740	0	1,635	1,016	176,104

(1) The loans only cover that portion of the private sector debt that is reported to the Central Bank.
(2) At the time of reporting, not all companies have submitted their balance sheets to the Central Bank.

Table A.30: Extended Balance of Payment Services Classifications (EBOPS)

		Jan - Mar 2023	Jan - Mar 2024
			$mn
Total Services	Net	464.8	493.2
	Credits	599.0	644.7
	Debits	134.2	151.4
Manufacturing Services	Net	0.0	0.0
	Credits	0.0	0.0
	Debits	0.0	0.0
Maintenance and Repair Services	Net	0.2	0.0
	Credits	0.2	0.0
	Debits	0.0	0.0
Transportation	Net	-31.1	-25.4
	Credits	22.5	29.3
	Debits	53.5	54.7
Travel	Net	416.8	473.9
	Credits	443.1	510.9
	Debits	26.3	37.1
Telecommunications, Computer, and Information Services	Net	49.2	47.1
	Credits	53.2	53.0
	Debits	3.9	5.9
Construction Services	Net	0.0	0.0
	Credits	0.0	0.0
	Debits	0.0	0.0
Insurance and Pension Services	Net	-8.3	-16.6
	Credits	0.3	0.2
	Debits	8.6	16.9
Financial Services	Net	-0.7	4.7
	Credits	3.2	7.3
	Debits	3.9	2.6
Charges for the use of Intellectual Property, n.i.e.	Net	-4.6	-5.6
	Credits	0.0	0.0
	Debits	4.6	5.6
Other Business Services	Net	-3.2	-0.4
	Credits	17.0	19.7
	Debits	20.1	20.1
Personal, Cultural, and Recreational Services	Net	1.9	2.9
	Credits	2.5	3.5
	Debits	0.6	0.7
Government Services, n.i.e.	Net	44.5	12.7
	Credits	57.2	20.7
	Debits	12.6	7.9

Table A.31: International Investment Position

$mn

	Position as at Dec 2023	Financial Account Transactions Jan - Mar 2024	Position as at Mar 2024	Quarterly Change
Net position	-6,480.5	140.1	-6,340.4	140.1
A. Assets	1,930.3	213.7	2,144.0	213.7
1. Direct Investment Abroad	156.3	0.0	156.3	0.0
2. Portfolio Investment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2.1 Equity Securities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2.2 Debt Securities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3. Other Investment	827.4	210.9	1,038.3	210.9
3.1 Trade Credits	-2.2	-0.2	-2.3	-0.2
3.2 Loans	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3.3 Currency and Deposits	829.6	211.0	1,040.6	211.0
3.4 Other Assets	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
4 . Reserve Assets	946.5	2.9	949.4	2.9
4.1 Monetary Gold	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
4.2 Special Drawing Rights	100.2	-1.4	98.8	-1.4
4.3 Reserve Position in the Fund	17.4	-0.3	17.2	-0.3
4.4 Foreign Exchange	810.12	4.5	814.6	4.5
4.5 Other Claims	18.9	0.0	18.9	0.0
B. Liabilities	8,410.8	73.6	8,484.4	73.6
1. Direct Investment	5,389.9	64.4	5,454.3	64.4
2. Portfolio Investment	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2.1 Equity Securities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
2.2 Debt Securities	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
3. Other Investment	3,020.8	9.3	3,030.1	9.3
3.1 Trade Credits	36.8	9.0	45.8	9.0
3.2 Loans	2,904.7	9.2	2,913.8	9.2
3.3 Currency and Deposits	78.3	-2.5	75.8	-2.5
3.4 Other Liabilities	1.1	-6.4	-5.4	-6.4

Table A.32: Central Government's Revenue and Expenditure

$'000

	Approved Budget 2023/2024	Jan 2023 to Mar 2023	Jan 2024 to Mar 2024P	Apr 2022 to Mar 2023	Apr 2023 to Mar 2024P	Fiscal YTD as % of Budget
TOTAL REVENUE & GRANTS (1+2+3)	1,408,268	326,907	361,409	1,344,914	1,426,701	101.3%
1). Current Revenue	1,372,743	323,567	350,903	1,310,660	1,402,341	102.2%
Tax Revenue	1,260,400	307,234	331,605	1,215,726	1,325,128	105.1%
Taxes on Income and Profits	360,756	100,683	91,687	358,479	352,781	97.8%
Taxes on Property	6,764	2,513	1,813	7,754	6,044	89.4%
Taxes on Goods and Services	667,492	165,825	185,413	644,354	751,192	112.5%
Taxes on International Trade and Transactions	225,388	38,213	52,692	205,139	215,110	95.4%
Non-Tax Revenue	112,344	16,333	19,298	94,934	77,213	68.7%
Property Income	51,263	1,765	1,249	36,229	11,731	22.9%
Licences	17,652	3,940	8,322	17,280	21,775	123.4%
Other	43,429	10,628	9,728	41,425	43,708	100.6%
2). Capital Revenue	5,525	1,509	779	6,246	5,537	100.2%
3). Grants	30,000	1,831	9,728	28,007	18,823	62.7%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE (1+2)	1,496,282	327,200	408,234	1,377,246	1,577,141	105.4%
1). Current Expenditure	1,112,855	237,880	283,228	1,030,448	1,193,978	107.3%
Wages and Salaries	466,547	115,452	122,473	449,355	480,571	103.0%
Pensions	100,000	23,461	30,620	96,758	110,560	110.6%
Goods and Services	230,743	51,146	65,370	212,930	259,308	112.4%
Interest Payments on Public Debt	109,195	19,527	23,218	101,729	140,215	128.5%
Subsidies and Current Transfers	206,370	28,293	41,546	169,676	203,323	98.5%
2). Capital Expenditure	383,427	89,320	125,006	346,798	383,163	99.9%
Capital II (Local Sources)	218,125	62,708	110,295	258,174	307,574	141.0%
Capital III (Foreign Sources)	158,004	26,416	14,519	88,031	74,813	47.3%
Capital Transfer and Net Lending	7,299	196	192	593	775	10.6%
CURRENT BALANCE	259,888	85,687	67,674	280,183	208,363	80.2%
PRIMARY BALANCE	21,181	19,234	-23,607	69,397	-10,225	-48.3%
OVERALL BALANCE	-88,013	-293	-46,825	-32,332	-150,440	170.9%
Primary Balance less grants	-8,819	17,403	-33,334	41,390	-29,048	329.4%
Overall Balance less grants	-118,013	-2,124	-56,553	-60,368	-169,263	143.4%
FINANCING	88,013	293	46,825	32,332	150,440	
Nationalisation					-166,737	
Domestic Financing		24,806	37,715	19,717	224,373	
Central Bank		34,190	1,046	31,980	99,122	
Net Borrowing		-14,961	-48,154	20,225	72,279	
Change in Deposits		49,151	49,200	11,755	26,843	
Commercial Banks		-11,052	39,412	-23,710	132,836	
Net Borrowing		13,082	50,897	-31,674	129,759	
Change in Deposits		-24,134	-11,485	7,964	3,077	
Other Domestic Financing		1,668	-2,743	11,447	-7,585	
Financing Abroad		8,892	1,978	54,345	89,404	
Disbursements		19,549	17,976	124,782	194,746	
Amortisation		-10,657	-16,012	-70,437	-105,342	
Other		-33,405	7,131	-41,730	3,402	

Source: MOF

P - Provisional

Table A.33: Central Government's Domestic Debt by Creditor

$'000

	Disbursed Outstanding Debt 31/12/23R	*TRANSACTIONS THROUGH MARCH 2024* Disbursement/ New Issue of Securities	Amortisation/ Reduction in Securities	Interest	Net Change in Overdraft/ Securities	Disbursed Outstanding Debt 31/03/24P
Overdraft/Loans(1)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Treasury Bills	335,000	0	0	612	0	335,000
Central Bank	218,764	0	0	296	-50,840	167,924
Domestic Banks	107,015	0	0	285	50,943	157,958
Other	9,221	0	0	31	-103	9,118
Treasury Notes	1,081,146	0	16,294	8,222	0	1,081,146
Central Bank	564,504	0	6,000	4,642	2,350	566,854
Domestic Banks	238,552	0	8,000	760	0	238,552
Other	278,090	0	2,294	2,819	-2,350	275,740
Belize Bank Limited(2)	91,000	0	0	0	0	91,000
Belize Social Security Board(3)	0	0	35	0	0	0
Fort Street Tourism Village	0	0	574	0	0	0
Debt for Nature Swap	789	0	105	0	0	789
Total	1,507,936	0	17,008	8,833	0	1,507,936

R - Revised

P - Provisional

(1) The Central Bank may make direct advances to the Government by way of an overdraft facility. The total outstanding amount of such direct advances shall not exceed 12.0% of the current revenues of the Government collected during the preceding financial year.

(2) Caribbean Court of Justice award in November 2017 against the Government of Belize in favour of Belize Bank relating to the loan guarantee. Since the first quarter of 2018, the Belize Bank has been offsetting its business tax against the Universal Health Services (UHS) debt. At March 2024-end, the Belize Bank set-off approximately $84.6mn in taxes against the debt, split between principal payments ($58.2mn) and interest payments ($26.4mn).

(3) Government has outstanding loan with BSSB for Hopeville Housing Project.

Table A.34: Public Sector External Debt by Creditor

$'000

	Disbursed Outstanding Debt 31/12/23[R]	*TRANSACTIONS THROUGH MARCH 2024*				Disbursed Outstanding Debt 31/03/24[P]
		Disbursements	*Principal Payments*	*Interest & Other Payments*	*Parity Change*	
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT	2,580,892	24,478	16,012	14,842	-86	2,589,272
Government of Venezuela[(1)]	429,692	0	0	0	0	429,692
Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development	36,037	1,618	618	391	-72	36,965
Mega International Commercial Bank Company Ltd.	45,714	0	0	1,908	0	45,714
Republic of China/Taiwan	379,085	4,660	7,735	6,316	0	376,011
Caribbean Development Bank	356,214	5,682	5,647	3,163	0	356,249
CARICOM Development Fund	5,708	0	148	43	0	5,560
European Economic Community	3,562	0	0	0	-2	3,560
Inter-American Development Bank	284,501	2,347	900	2,354	0	285,947
International Fund for Agriculture Development	6,832	0	0	9	-13	6,819
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development	72,837	1,587	0	0	0	74,424
OPEC Fund for International Development	186,930	225	785	653	0	186,370
Central American Bank for Economic Integration	21,014	8,359	179	5	0	29,195
Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre	1,700	0	0	0	0	1,700
Belize Blue Investment Company LLC	728,000	0	0	0	0	728,000
US$30.0mn Fixed-Rate Notes	23,067	0	0	0	0	23,067
NON-FINANCIAL PUBLIC SECTOR	61,630	0	3,298	1,106	0	58,332
Caribbean Development Bank	36,352	0	1,354	400	0	34,998
International Cooperation and Development Fund	25,278	0	1,944	707	0	23,333
FINANCIAL PUBLIC SECTOR	197,128	11,925	1,082	1,304	-1,586	206,384
Caribbean Development Bank	61,075	1,925	916	602	0	62,084
European Investment Bank	1,668	0	167	14	0	1,501
Inter-American Development Bank	15,600	6,500	0	659	0	22,100
International Cooperation and Development Bank	2,100	3,500	0	29	0	5,600
International Monetary Fund	116,685	0	0	0	-1,586	115,099
GRAND TOTAL	2,839,650	36,403	20,392	17,253	-1,673	2,853,988

[R] - Revised
[P] - Provisional
[(1)] Since September 2017, debt service payments for oil imports have been suspended due to U.S. sanctions on Petroleos de Venezuela, S.A. Unpaid debt service payments up to the end of March 2024 amounted to principal of $116.2mn and interest of $23.9mn.