

Trinidad & Tobago

Archetype **Stalled middle**

GDP / person **\$19k**

Population **1.37M**

10-yr trend **-1.8%**

Gradual **1.3%** · **#157**

Fast **2.4%** · **#151**

WHERE TRINIDAD & TOBAGO STARTS

Trinidad & Tobago is a stalled-middle economy: middling income, middling scores, and growth that has been going backwards. Ten-year trend growth is -1.8% a year, as ageing gas fields cut output. At about \$19,000 per person, it is among the region's richer economies, but the money comes from one source. Fuel is 28% of exports and petrochemicals most of the rest. Point Lisas turns gas into ammonia and methanol, and Atlantic LNG ships it abroad. Its clear strength is language: English inclusion scores 4.9, near the top, backed by an educated workforce and workable institutions. The constraints are physical. Compute and energy access scores just 1.1, physical build speed 1.6. The country has almost no data-center capacity and a slow record of building anything new.

THE THREE PATHS

These are simulations, not forecasts. The Modest path is the baseline; the two AGI scenarios fork from it. Under the Modest scenario, AI stays a normal technology. Trinidad's decline would continue: -1.8% growth a year, 156th of 157. Depleting gas and slow diversification set the pace. Under **Gradual** takeoff, growth would climb over two decades and reach 1.3% a year once AGI matures around 2045. That would rank the country 157th, last of all 157, because faster economies pull away while weak build and compute scores limit what Trinidad can capture. Under **Fast** takeoff, growth would reach 2.4% a year from the early 2030s, lifting the rank to 151st. Cheaper imported tools and services would help a little, but the country owns almost none of the machinery of an AI economy. None of these rates is high enough to double the economy within the horizon. Politics could slow or redirect any path. How Trinidadians and their government respond to transformative AI is a variable the model holds constant.

HOW YOU WOULD KNOW WHICH WORLD YOU ARE IN

The scenarios look almost alike until about 2030, and the late 2020s add only fractions of a point to growth. So watch leading indicators, not GDP, and check them live. Three global signals matter most. First, whether the METR task-horizon curve keeps doubling every four to five months through 2027-28; METR publishes it at metr.org. Second, whether frontier-lab revenue and capital spending keep compounding; Epoch AI tracks both at epoch.ai. Third, whether growth in the ten to twenty most-ready economies — the United States and China above all — breaks above trend in the early 2030s. Double-digit growth there within a couple of years of

2030 would signal a fast world; a point or two above trend by the mid-2030s, a gradual one; a fade back to trend, a modest one. Trinidad's own tells would come first: new gas deals such as the cross-border Dragon field, Atlantic LNG train activity, petrochemical order books, and how fast government services move online.

IF GROWTH GOES EXPLOSIVE

For Trinidad, explosive is the wrong word. Its rates stay modest even under Fast: 2.4% growth a year, while the frontier compounds at 39.2% and the regional median reaches 4.7%. The gap to both would widen, not close. This is relative decline dressed as mild recovery. The honest downside is people, not machines. Trinidad's workforce is English-speaking and mobile, with deep ties to the United States, Canada and Britain. If those economies boom while Trinidad stalls, the pull on skilled workers would strengthen, and the brain drain that already thins its talent pool could accelerate. Fast growth at home raises wages and eases that pressure; slow growth does the opposite. The hedge is to give skilled people reasons to stay, chiefly better-paid work in a diversifying economy. Even a mild lift would test the state: the energy ministry, the permitting bodies and the managers of the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund would have to steer diversification faster than they ever have.

WHAT TRINIDAD & TOBAGO CAN DO NOW

Three levers follow from the scores, and two pay off whether or not AGI arrives. The first is AI diffusion, at 2. Digital skills, deployment-permissive rules and online government carry weight even in the skeptic's world, so this is a no-regret move. It also builds on the country's real strength, its English-speaking workforce scoring 4.9, which should be protected as the leaders keep improving. The second no-regret lever is physical build speed, at 1.6. Statutory shot-clocks on permits, pre-zoned industrial land and transmission built ahead of demand would help the economy under every scenario. The third lever is the bet. Compute and energy access, at 1.1, barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary, but under a fast takeoff it becomes the single biggest lever. Closing it means packaging power and land to attract data-center investment. Trinidad can copy a working model from its own archetype: Brazil widened diffusion cheaply by digitizing public services through gov.br and the Pix payment system. A cautious government can act on the two no-regret levers today and lose nothing. Open the atlas's [policy editor](#) to see how moving these scores reshapes each path.

The three levers — and which pay off regardless

AI diffusion capacity

score 2 / 5 · weight 24 under skeptic → 13 under fast takeoff

Counts under the Modest scenario too (24→13). Closing this gap pays off whether or not AGI arrives.

No-regret

Compute & energy access

score 1.1 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 24 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 24 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

Physical build speed

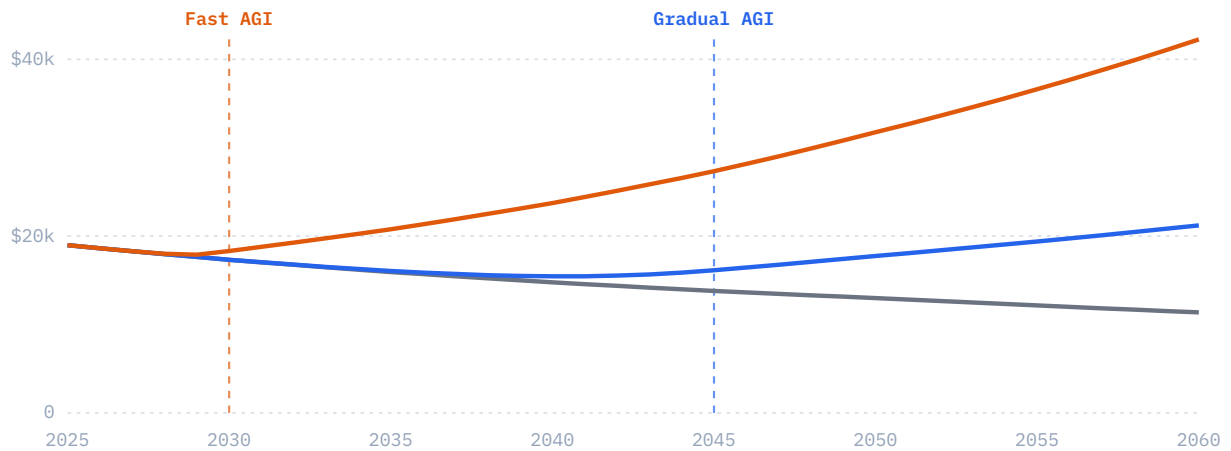
score 1.6 / 5 · weight 8 under skeptic → 17 under fast takeoff

Weight climbs from 8 to 17 as takeoff nears. It barely moves growth if AI stays ordinary — the lever that needs a view on the takeoff.

AGI bet

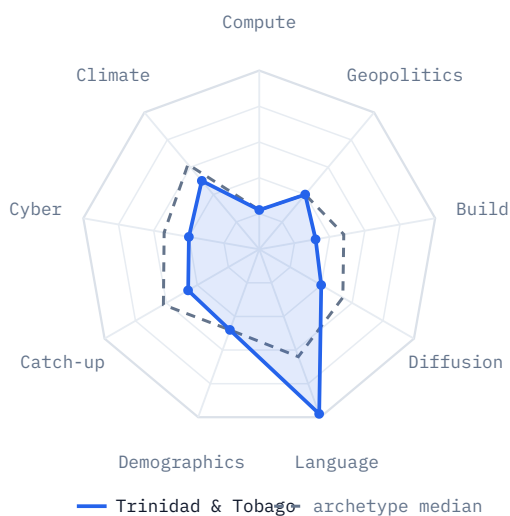
The no-regret levers pay off in every scenario, so a cautious government can act on them today. The AGI bets become decisive only if takeoff is real.

GDP per person to 2060, by scenario



Linear scale; solid lines are the three scenarios, dashed grey the no-AI baseline. Growth ramps from 2027 to each scenario's rate at its AGI year (Fast ~2030, Gradual ~2045), then holds. Timing and divergence are the point, not end levels; steep paths exit the top of the capped axis.

The nine factors



Solid: Trinidad & Tobago. Dashed: the median of its archetype. Scores are relative to the other 156 countries (3 = global median, 5 = leading today).

Outcomes under each scenario

SCENARIO	GROWTH / YR	WORLD RANK	INDEX	DOUBLING
Modest	-1.8%	156 / 157	44.7	—
Gradual	1.3%	157 / 157	42.5	—
Fast	2.4%	151 / 157	40.5	—

Post-AGI growth rate, rank among 157 countries, AGI Growth Index (0–100, scenario-weighted), and the implied economy doubling time. The Modest path is the baseline the AGI scenarios fork from.

THE THREE SCENARIOS

Modest the Acemoglu view

AI as a normal productivity tool

Intelligence was never the binding constraint on growth, so AI delivers real but ordinary gains. Each country gets a one-time boost of a couple of percent of GDP, phased in through 2035; growth then returns to trend. The mainstream-economics view.

≤0.66% TFP over a decade — a one-time gain

Trinidad & Tobago: -1.8% growth a year · #156 of 157

Gradual Erdil & Besiroglu, base case

Broad automation, on a long timeline

Broad automation of remote work arrives around 2045, with gains building slowly from the late 2020s. Growth then reaches up to ~20% a year for the best-positioned countries — ten times today's frontier trend. A slow arrival gives countries time to adapt, so the gains are wide but uneven.

up to ~20%/yr after 2045 — 10× the frontier trend

Trinidad & Tobago: 1.3% growth a year · #157 of 157

Fast Erdil & Besiroglu, fast takeoff

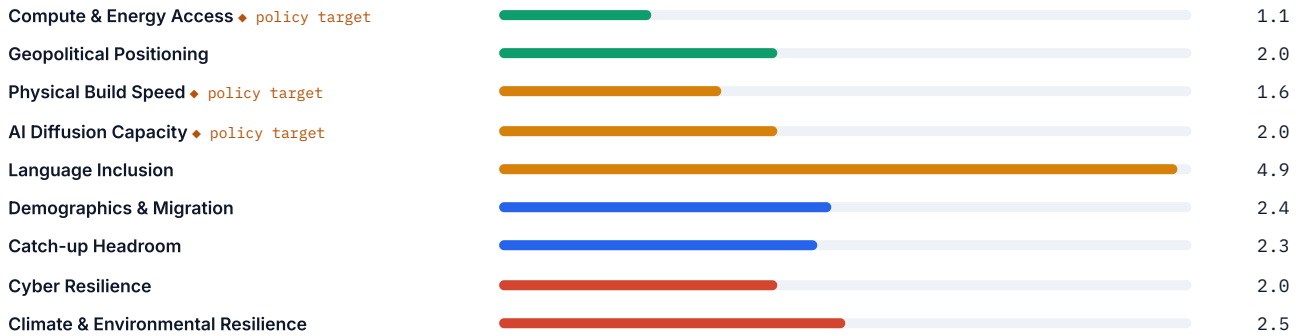
Fast takeoff — today's infrastructure decides

Transformation lands around 2030, before countries can adjust. Whoever already owns compute, capital and the ability to build wins; the gap between countries widens dramatically — and some are left growing slower than they would have without AGI.

up to ~40%/yr from 2030

Trinidad & Tobago: 2.4% growth a year · #151 of 157

Factor scores — and where policy bites



♦ marks this country's highest-leverage policy targets: the weakest factors carrying the most weight under the AGI scenarios. The atlas's interactive policy editor (agigrowth.org/#editor) simulates how raising any score changes growth under each scenario.

Archetype: Stalled middle

Neither frontier nor fragile: middling income, middling scores, slow growth — at every size, from micro-states to Brazil.

Wins: No clean window — gains arrive imported, and late.

Watch: Drift: the gap to every faster group compounds year by year.

Jordan 11.8% · #37

Brazil 11% · #43

Mexico 10.4% · #48

Ecuador 10% · #54

Thailand 10% · #55

Slovakia 9.6% · #59

Argentina 9.5% · #61

Lithuania 9.3% · #63

Cabo Verde 9.3% · #64

Croatia 9.1% · #67

The regional picture — Small, open, service-led — exposed at both ends.

The Caribbean's economies are small, open and service-led: tourism and offshore finance in the Bahamas and Barbados, gas and petrochemicals in Trinidad & Tobago, services and diaspora ties in Jamaica. English proficiency and workable institutions help absorption, and an AGI-era boom in rich-country incomes would, if it comes, lift the tourism these economies sell. But nothing here changes the arithmetic of scale: no build story, hurricane exposure that climate change worsens, and gains that arrive as cheaper imported services rather than owned capability. Haiti is the region's hardest case and sits in the high-risk tier — state fragility, not technology, will decide its next twenty years. For the rest, the plausible path is steady, imported improvement: better tools, cheaper services, little leverage.

Method, in brief

Each country is scored 1–5 on nine factors from public data (World Bank, Epoch AI, ITU, IMF and national sources). A scenario-weighted average forms the AGI Growth Index (0–100), which maps to a post-AGI growth rate inside ceilings derived from Erdil & Besiroglu (2023): ~20% growth a year for the best-positioned country under Gradual takeoff (AGI ~2045), ~40% under Fast (AGI ~2030); growth ramps convexly from 2027. The scenario sets the growth rates on offer; the index only decides where each country sits within them. The Modest scenario is the skeptics' baseline — a small uplift on each country's own ten-year trend. These are simulations for structured thinking, not forecasts; no probabilities are attached to any scenario.

Watch the global signals live: the METR task-horizon curve at metr.org/time-horizons · frontier-lab revenue at epoch.ai/ai-companies · AI-chip spending at epoch.ai/ai-chip-sales.

Explore further: full methodology agigrowth.org/#methodology · map & rankings agigrowth.org/#explore · country profiles agigrowth.org/#countries · policy editor agigrowth.org/#editor