



# ATLAS

BY BNP PARIBAS

## CASH MANAGEMENT

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With a population of 71 million and a forecasted GDP of \$546bn in 2025, Thailand is a small to medium-sized open upper-middle-income economy, supported by its diversification in tourism, manufacturing and agriculture, and gradual recovery in external resilience. In 2024, the current account surplus reached 2.4% of GDP, up from 1.4% in 2023 and a deficit of –3.5% in 2022, reflecting stronger tourism earnings and agricultural exports. Its net international investment position remains modestly negative, a legacy of capital inflows over decades.

A structural fiscal vulnerability lies in rising public debt: government debt is projected to reach around 63–64% of GDP by 2024–25, up from lower levels, with a fiscal deficit widening to roughly 3.6% of GDP as stimulus and investment spending resume. While debt is moderate relative to peers, fiscal consolidation is needed to avoid future pressures. IMF assessments note that Thailand's fiscal credibility remains intact but weakens under persistent deficits.

Other challenges include demographic ageing, slowing productivity gains outside tourism and manufacturing, and climate-related vulnerabilities. Overall economic growth is expected to remain modest but positive through 2025, with growth of around 2.3% expected in 2025, similar to the 1.9% recorded in 2023, supported by tourism recovery and private consumption.

## Summary

## BNP Paribas presence

BNP Paribas has had a presence in Thailand since 1979, with a full branch license granted in 1997. The bank has a business centre located in Bangkok, and customers have access to over 145 branches. BNP Paribas provides comprehensive support for the domestic and cross-border cash management and international trade finance needs of both Thai companies operating internationally and foreign company doing business in Thailand.

## Currency

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- Thai Baht (THB).

## Exchange rates

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Exchange rate: THB per USD	35.296	33.940	32.310	31.048	31.29

Source: IMF, International Financial Statistics, June 2021.

## Central Bank

- The Thai central bank is the Bank of Thailand (BOT - [www.bot.or.th](http://www.bot.or.th)).

### Bank supervision

- Thai banks are supervised by the BOT.

## Bank accounts

## Resident / non-resident status

- A company incorporated in Thailand is considered a Thai resident.

## Bank accounts for resident entities

	Within THAILAND	Outside THAILAND
Local Currency	Permitted, fully convertible	Permitted with approval, fully convertible
Foreign Currency	Permitted, fully convertible	Permitted, fully convertible

## Bank accounts for non-resident entities

	Within THAILAND	Outside THAILAND
Local Currency	Permitted, fully convertible	Permitted, fully convertible
Foreign Currency	Permitted, fully convertible	Not applicable

## Lifting fees











- Few lifting fees are applied because of the difficulties of making payments between resident and non-resident bank accounts.

## BNP Paribas Cash Management Capabilities


## Collections

Cash collections	✓
Cheque collections	✓
Direct debit collections	●
Domestic incoming transfers	✓
Virtual IBAN	●
Virtual accounts	✓
International incoming transfers	✓
Card acquiring	✓

## Payments

Cash withdrawals	
Cheque payments	
Direct debit payments	
Domestic outgoing transfers	
Commercial cards	
Virtual cards	
International outgoing transfers	
SWIFT gpi	
Real-time international payments through BNP Paribas' network	
Card issuing	

## Channels

Local e-Banking	
Global e-Banking - Connexis	
SWIFT/ host to host	

Payments & collections

## Market overview



Thailand's use of cash remains strong, despite the increasing popularity of mobile wallets and card payments. According to a Global Survey of Saving and Investment Strategies by Nielsen, nearly 7 out of 10 people still prefer to use cash over credit cards for their daily shopping. However, the country's digital payments more than doubled via the PromptPay Platform in February 2021, on February 2020 figures, due, in large part, to the outbreak of Covid 19.

Electronic banking services are available from most banks. There is no national electronic banking standard in Thailand, so companies use banks' proprietary services. An Online Retail Funds Transfer (ORFT) system enables interbank retail funds transfers to be performed through an interbank network via ATMs, internet, mobile or bank counters.

Online and mobile banking services are provided by the country's leading banks. There were approximately 32.7 million and 68.8 million internet and mobile banking agreements in Thailand respectively at the end of February 2021. The volume and value of internet banking transactions at the end of 2020 totalled 727,810 thousand, with a value of THB 28,378 billion. The volume and value of mobile banking transactions in 2020 totalled 9,272,215 thousand, with a value of THB 34,233 billion, an increase on 2019 figures of 4,925,109 thousand transactions, with a value of THB 24,408 billion.

## Payment Systems

BAHTNET	Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Real-time gross settlement.</li> </ul>
	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>61 participants.</li> </ul>
	Transaction types processed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High-value and urgent domestic THB-denominated credit transfers.</li> <li>Net obligations from Thailand's other payment systems.</li> </ul>
	Operating hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>08:30-17:30, daily except bank holidays.</li> </ul>
	Clearing cycle details (e.g. cut-off times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payments are cleared and settled in real time.</li> <li>Cut-off time = 17:30 ICT.</li> </ul>
	System holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BAHTNET is closed on all Thai bank holidays.</li> <li>Thailand's bank holidays are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2nd half 2021: 26, 28 July, 12 August, 13, 22 October, 6, 10, 31 December.</li> <li>2022: 3 January, 6, 13, 14, 15 April, 2, 4, 16* May, 3 June, 12, 28 July, 12 August, 13, 24 October, 5, 12, 31 December.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
BPS	Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multilateral deferred net settlement system.</li> </ul>

	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 32 direct participants of DC3 (credit next day).</li> <li>• 30 direct participants of DC2 (credit same day)</li> </ul>
	Transaction types processed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low-value (up to THB 2 million) and non-urgent THB-denominated electronic credit and debit payments.</li> </ul>
	Operating hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hours a day, Monday to Friday.</li> </ul>
	Clearing cycle details (e.g. cut-off times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments are cleared and settled on a same-day or next-day basis.</li> <li>• The BPS calculates net clearing positions.</li> <li>• Same-day settlement cut-off time = 12:00 ICT.</li> <li>• Next-day settlement cut-off time = 12:30 ICT.</li> <li>• Final settlement takes place via BAHTNET.</li> </ul>
	System holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BPS is closed on all Thai bank holidays. (Dates as above)</li> </ul>
ICAS	Type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multilateral deferred net settlement system.</li> </ul>
	Participants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 36 direct.</li> </ul>
	Transaction types processed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cheque</a> payments which are truncated into electronic items before being processed.</li> </ul>
	Operating hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hours a day, Monday to Friday.</li> </ul>
	Clearing cycle details (e.g. cut-off times)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Payments are cleared and settled on a same-day or next-day basis.</li> <li>• Cheques are sent to the BOT's Electronic Clearing House by member banks before being cleared in ICAS.</li> <li>• Cut-off time for same-day settlement = 14:30 ICT.</li> <li>• Cut-off time for next-day settlement = 15:30 ICT.</li> <li>• Funds are available from 12:00 ICT.</li> </ul>
	System holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICAS is closed on all Thai bank holidays. (Dates as above)</li> </ul>

## Credit transfers

- Credit transfers are used by companies to pay salaries and suppliers, and for treasury payments.
- High-value and urgent domestic THB-denominated credit transfers are settled in real time via BAHTNET.
- Low-value, non-urgent THB-denominated credit transfers are settled on a same-day/next day basis via the BPS.



- In 2020, 464,202 direct credit transactions were processed via the direct credit subsystem of the BPS (326,888 in 2019), with a value of THB 21,644 billion (THB 20,820 billion in 2019). In the same period 96,564 thousand transactions (60,484 in 2019) were processed via the SMART Credit service, with a value of THB 4,258 billion (THB 3,463 billion in 2019).
- High and low-value transfers can be processed via PromptPay (up to THB 2 million per transaction) in real time via BATHNET. PromptPay
  - enables payments to be made by individuals and companies online or via mobile using mobile or ID numbers. There are 29 bank participants in PromptPay.
- In the 12 months between February 2019 and February 2020, the volume of PromptPay transactions more than doubled from 308,343.43 thousand to 624,787.89 thousand. Value increased from THB 1,416.5 billion to THB 2,251 billion.
- Cross-border transfers can be made through BAHTNET via SWIFT. PromptPay is lined with PayNow in Singapore to enable cross-border transactions to be made.
- The BOT is currently implementing ISO 20022 international message standard in BAHTNET, to facilitate interoperability with important payment infrastructures and to support both domestic and cross-border payment transactions.

## Direct debits

- Direct debits are used for regular payments, such as utility bills.
- High-value direct debits are settled via BAHTNET.
- Low-value direct debits are settled on a next-day basis via the BPS Debit Next Day service.
- In 2020, THB 7,429 billion of direct debits were processed via the BPS.

## Cheques

- The cheque is a common cashless payment instrument used by both consumers and small companies. Its use is in slow decline however, as electronic payment methods become more popular.
- In 2020, the total volume of interbank cleared cheques was 47.72 million, with the total value of THB 27.65 trillion, a 16.95% fall on 2019. Value fell 18.44%.
- All cheques are truncated into electronic items before being settled on a next-day basis via ICAS.

## Card payments

- Card payments are increasingly popular, especially for retail transactions.
- There were approximately 64,305,201 debit and 24,626,610 million credit cards in circulation in February 2021. There were also 10,656,842 million ATM cards.

- In 2020, 710,264 thousand credit card transactions were processed (648,801 thousand in 2019). Credit card payments totalled THB 1,309 billion in 2020 (THB 1,882 billion in 2019). In the same period, 2,135,853 thousand debit card transactions (166,821 thousand in 2019) were processed. Direct debit card transactions totalled THB 7,956 billion (THB 253 billion in 2019).
- Visa and Mastercard-branded payment cards are the most widely issued.
- American Express and Diners Club credit cards are also available.
- Visa and MasterCard card payments are cleared and settled by their respective international card schemes.
- Debit card payments are settled via the National ITMX switching system.
- The Thai Payment Network (TPN), in partnership with UnionPay International and Bangkok Bank, operates a local-card network for processing electronic payments.

## ATM/POS

- There are approximately 113 ATMs per 100,000 adults in Thailand.
- There were approximately 890,764 EFTPOS terminals in Thailand at the end of February 2021.
- Most ATM payments are settled via the National ITMX (14 bank participants), which connects to the international ASEANPay network.
- Internationally branded cards can be settled via their individual schemes.

## Electronic wallet

- The dominant electronic money schemes in Thailand are low-value, stored value cards.
- There were 111.2 million stored value e-money cards in Thailand at the end of February 2021.
- Payments are settled via individual schemes.
- Mobile wallet schemes have been widely adopted. Leading e-wallets include TrueMoney, Line Pay and AirPay.
- In 2019, MyPromptQR was launched. Thai QR is the country's standardised QR code.
- E-money transactions totalled THB 29,042.79 million in 2020 (THB 282 billion in 2019 ).

Short term investments

## Market overview

### **Interest payable on credit balances**

- Interest-bearing current accounts are not available.

### **Demand deposits**

- Demand deposits are not widely available.

### **Time deposits**

- Time deposits are available in THB or major foreign currencies for terms of three, six and 12 months.

### **Treasury (government) bills**

- The BOT auctions treasury bills on a weekly basis with maturities of one and three. The BOT has discontinued the issuance of new six-month bills. The Public Debt Management Office will auction the bills on a regular basis instead.
- Government bonds are issued weekly with terms ranging from one month to two years.

### **Commercial paper**

- Domestic commercial paper is available, although few domestic companies are able to issue unsecured paper. Most commercial paper is issued by financial institutions.
- When available, commercial paper is issued with terms up to 270 days, although terms between four and 12 weeks are most common.

### **Money market funds**

- Money market funds are available.

### **Repurchase agreements**

- Bilateral repurchase agreements with maturities ranging from one week to six months are available.

### **Banker's acceptances**

- Banker's acceptances are not commonly used in Thailand.

## BNP Paribas Trade Finance Capabilities

### Trade payments

Documentary credits	✓
Documentary collections	✓

### Guarantees

Bank guarantees	✓
Standby letters of credit	✓

### Supply chain management

Receivables	✓
Payables	✓
Inventory	●

### Trade channels

Connexis Trade	✓
Connexis Supply Chain	✓
SWIFTNet Trade for Corporates	✓
Connexis Connect	✓

Connexis Guarantee	●
SWIFTnet Supply Chain	●

- BNP Paribas' Global Trade Solutions (GTS) team in Thailand offers dedicated trade finance support with two senior trade managers. The local GTS team provides corporate clients with high-quality services from sales process through to documentation and daily operations. It offers traditional trade finance and supply chain management solutions in line with the needs of corporations headquartered in, or operating in Thailand, in compliance with local regulations.

## International trade

### General trade rules

- As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Thailand has entered into the ASEAN Trade in Goods Agreement (ATIGA) between member states (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam). Thailand is also a member of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) and is committed to reducing and eliminating tariffs between members.
- As a member of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, Thailand has agreed to liberalise trade and investment rules between members.

### Trade agreements

- Thailand has signed free trade agreements (FTAs) with Bahrain, Australia, Chile, China, Peru and South Korea and economic partnership agreements with Japan and New Zealand.
- Thailand has a preferential trading arrangement with Laos.
- Thailand has agreed in principle an FTA with Bangladesh.
- Thailand is a signatory of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The country ratified the agreement in February 2021.
- ASEAN has signed FTAs with Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, India, New Zealand and South Korea.
- Thailand is in FTA negotiations with a number of states, including EFTA and the EU, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Turkey and the USA.

### Imports / exports

Imports	Crude petroleum	Integrated circuits	Natural gas	Vehicle parts	Gold
Primary Import sources	China (22.0%)	Japan (14.0%)	USA (7.0%)	Malaysia (6.0%)	
Exports	Office machinery	Integrated circuits	Automobiles and parts	Delivery trucks	Gold
Export markets	USA (13.0%)	China (12.0%)	Japan (10.0%)	Vietnam (5.0%)	

## Import / export volumes

		2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Exports	- goods USD m	214,251	233,688	251,108	242,701	226,716
	- services USD m	67,793	70,964	77,474	81,178	31,703
Imports	- goods USD m	177,711	201,107	228,721	215,976	186,896
	- services USD m	43,511	46,668	54,939	56,855	46,868
Current account as % GDP		+ 11.9	+ 9.6	+ 5.6	+ 7.0	+ 3.3

Source: IMF, International Financial Statistics, June 2021.





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