



JAMAICA



INTRODUCTION

Native Taino inhabited Jamaica for centuries before Spanish settlement that began early in the 16th century. England seized the island in 1655 and established a plantation economy based on sugar, cocoa, and coffee. Jamaica gained full independence in 1962.

GOVERNMENT

Chief of State

King CHARLES III represented by Governor General Sir Patrick L. ALLEN

Head of Government

Prime Minister Andrew HOLNESS

Government Type

parliamentary democracy (Parliament) under a constitutional monarchy; a Commonwealth realm

Capital

Kingston

Legislature

bicameral Parliament consists of the Senate (21 seats) and the House of Representatives (63 seats)

Ambassador to US

Ambassador Audrey Patrice MARKS

US Ambassador

Ambassador N. Nick PERRY

GEOGRAPHY

Area

Total: 10,991 sq km

Land: 10,831 sq km

Water: 160 sq km

Climate

tropical; hot, humid; temperate interior

Natural Resources

bauxite, alumina, gypsum, limestone

ECONOMY

Economic Overview

upper middle-income Caribbean island economy; ongoing debt restructuring; hurricane-vulnerable economy; high crime, youth unemployment, and poverty; susceptible to commodity shocks from ongoing Russia invasion of Ukraine

GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) \$27.14 billion (2021 est.)

GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) \$9,600 (2021 est.)

Industries - agriculture, mining, manufacture, construction, financial and insurance services, tourism, telecommunications

Agricultural products - sugarcane, goat milk, yams, poultry, coconuts, oranges, bananas, gourds, plantains, grapefruit

Exports \$4.39 billion (2021 est.)

aluminum oxide, refined petroleum, aluminum, rums, fruits, nuts, natural gas, sauces and seasonings (2021)

partners: US 46%, Netherlands 9%, Canada 6%, UK 4%, Russia 3% (2021)

Imports \$7.41 billion (2021 est.)

refined petroleum, natural gas, cars, crude petroleum, iron bars, steel bars (2021)

partners: US 35%, China 13%, Turkey 5%, Trinidad and Tobago 3%, Japan 3% (2021)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY

Population

2.8 million (2023 est.)

Population Growth

0.09% (2023 est.)

Ethnicity

Black 92.1%, mixed 6.1%, East Indian 0.8%, other 0.4%, unspecified 0.7% (2011 est.)

Language

English, Jamaican patois

Religion

Protestant 64.8%, Roman Catholic 2.2%, Jehovah's Witness 1.9%, Rastafarian 1.1%, other 6.5%, none 21.3%, unspecified 2.3% (2011 est.)

Urbanization

urban population: 57.4% of total population (2023)

rate of urbanization: 0.79% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)