INTRODUCTION
The island - discovered by Christopher COLUMBUS in 1494 - was settled by the Spanish 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
Queen ELIZABETH II
represented by Governor General Dr. 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)

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; prior to COVID-19 disruption, declining public debt and unemployment; environmentally fragile economy due to hurricanes and rising sea levels; persistently high crime, youth unemployment, and poverty
GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) $25.89 billion (2020 est.)
GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity) $8,700 (2020 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 $5.114 billion (2018 est.)
bauxite, refined petroleum, aluminum, rum, fruits, nuts (2019)
partners: US 32%, Netherlands 11%, Germany 9%, Canada 7%, Iceland 7% (2019)
Imports $7.314 billion (2018 est.)
refined petroleum, cars, crude petroleum, natural gas, packaged medicines (2019)
partners: US 43%, China 11% (2019)

PEOPLE & SOCIETY
Population
2.8 million (July 2021 est.)
Population Growth
0.06% (2021 est.)
Ethnicity
Black 92.1%, mixed 6.1%, East Indian 0.8%, other 0.4%, unspecified 0.7% (2011 est.)
Language
English, English 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: 56.7% of total population (2021)
rate of urbanization: 0.79% annual rate of change (2020-25 est.)