

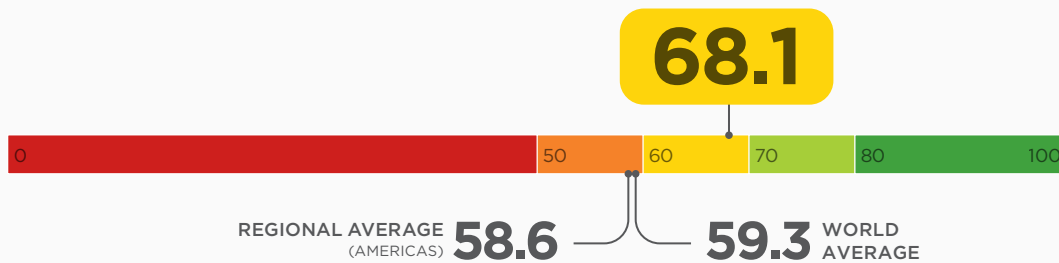
# JAMAICA



Jamaica's economic freedom score is 68.1, making its economy the 39th freest in the 2023 *Index*. Its score is 0.7 point lower than last year. Jamaica ranks 6th out of 32 countries in the Americas region, and its overall score is above the world and regional averages.

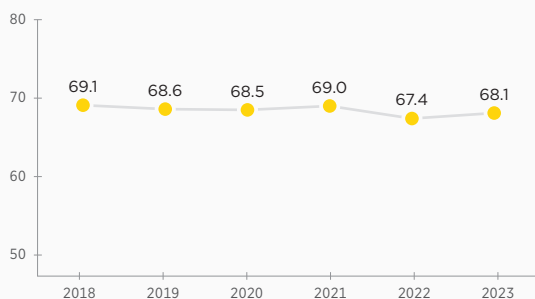
Jamaica has taken steps to enhance regulatory efficiency and better integrate its economy into the global marketplace. The economy performs relatively well in investment freedom and business freedom, but persistent corruption, relatively high government spending, the country's bloated public sector, and the need to enforce expenditure restraint remain critical challenges.

## ECONOMIC FREEDOM SCORE



HISTORICAL *INDEX* SCORE CHANGE (SINCE 1995): +3.7

## RECENT FREEDOM TREND



## QUICK FACTS

**POPULATION:**  
3.0 million

**GDP (PPP):**  
\$29.7 billion  
4.4% growth in 2021  
5-year compound annual growth -0.4%  
\$10,850 per capita

**UNEMPLOYMENT:**  
6.5%

**INFLATION (CPI):**  
5.9%

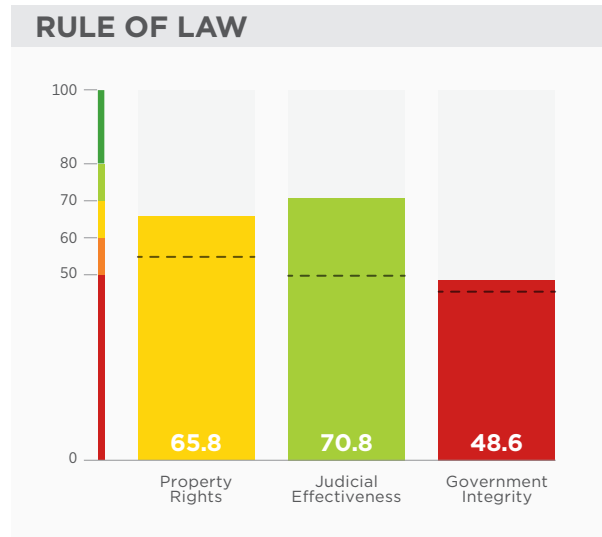
**FDI INFLOW:**  
\$320.5 million

**PUBLIC DEBT:**  
92.3% of GDP

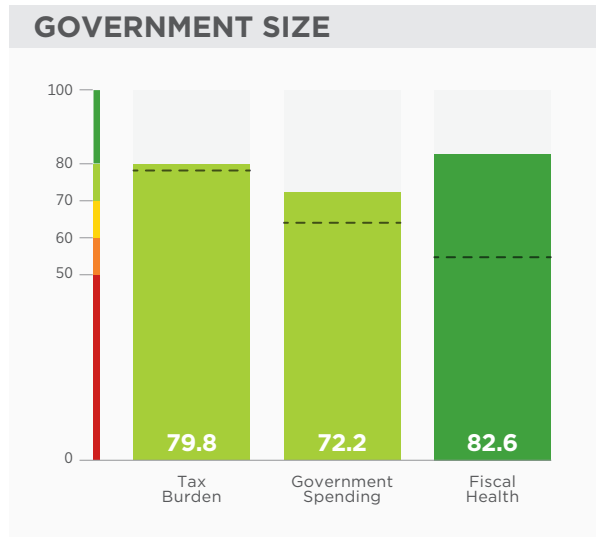
2021 data unless otherwise noted. Data compiled as of September 2022

**BACKGROUND:** Jamaica gained independence from the United Kingdom in 1962. Prime Minister Andrew Holness was elected to a third (nonconsecutive) term in 2020 on a pro-market, reformist platform. His Jamaica Labour Party holds 49 of 63 parliamentary seats. Jamaica is on a small list of Financial Action Task Force countries that are required to fix weaknesses in their institutional safeguards against money-laundering of criminal proceeds. Recurring violence among organized crime networks that are involved in illicit drug and arms trafficking (and often affiliated with political parties) is a long-standing problem. Jamaica is heavily dependent on remittances, tourism, and exports of bauxite.

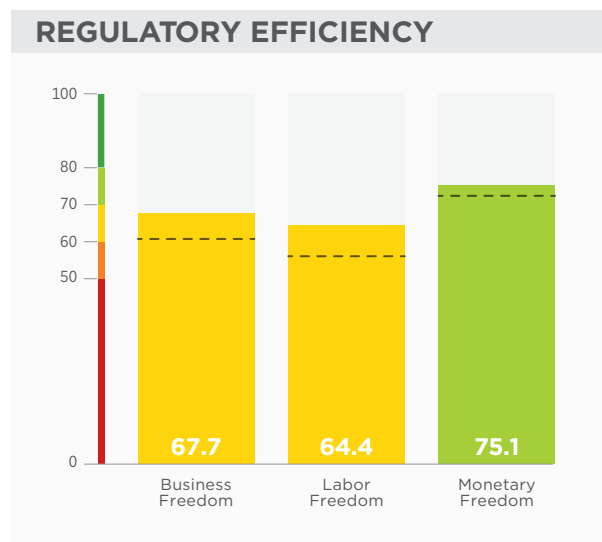
## 12 ECONOMIC FREEDOMS | JAMAICA



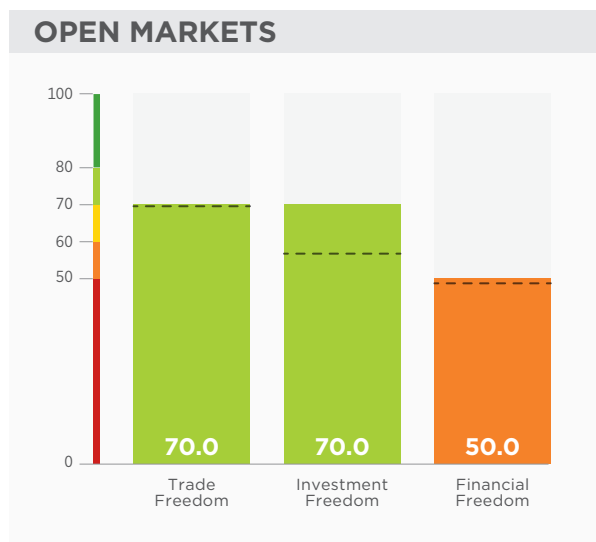
The overall rule of law is relatively well respected in Jamaica. The country's property rights score is above the world average; its judicial effectiveness score is above the world average; and its government integrity score is above the world average.



The top individual and corporate tax rates are 25 percent. The tax burden equals 27.7 percent of GDP. Three-year government spending and budget balance averages are, respectively, 30.5 percent and -0.5 percent of GDP. Public debt equals 92.3 percent of GDP.



The overall process for starting a business has been streamlined, but licensing requirements remain burdensome. Although the labor market remains underdeveloped and relatively constraining, restrictions on work hours are flexible. The most recent available inflation rate is 5.9 percent.



The trade-weighted average tariff rate is 10.0 percent. Jamaica is relatively open to foreign investment, but state-owned enterprises distort the economy. High financing costs deter private-sector growth. Approximately 80 percent of adult Jamaicans have an account with a formal banking institution.