
[Jamaica Summed Up](#)

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Jamaica has a long history of census taking with the first modern census being conducted in 1943. The [Statistical Institute of Jamaica \(STATIN\)](#) recently compiled its findings for the 2011 Census and provided the following summary:

Population Size and Growth

- The count of the population based on the 2011 Population and Housing Census is 2,697,983. This total comprises 2,678,629 persons in private dwellings, 18,420 in institutions and 934 persons enumerated on the streets.
- The total represents a 3.5 per cent increase in nine and a half years since the 2001 census over the count of 2,607,632 at that census. This increase represents an average annual rate of growth of only 0.36 per cent since 2001 and continues the reduction in annual rates of growth observed since the 1970s.
- In numerical terms the addition to the population between 2001 and 2011 was less than 100,000. Average annual absolute increase over the period was about 9,500 compared to the 21,800 between 1991 and 2001.
- Population change must be interpreted within the context of the three components of population change: births, deaths and migration, events which add or take away from the population.
- The components of change between 2001 and 2011 were additions of 438,818 due to births and losses amounting to 347,967, the results of deaths and migration.
- Birth rates have fallen from an average of 24.2 per 1000 between 1991 and 2001 to 17.4 per 1000 between 2001 and 2011. At the same time there has been a small upturn in death rates from 6.4 between 1991 and 2001 to 7.1 in the most recent period. While additions to the population from natural increase (the difference between births and deaths) amounted to approximately 259,000 between 2001 and 2011, migration levels have remained high. Net migration of 168,700 over the period reduced the natural increment by approximately 65 per cent.

Sex Composition

- The 2011 census results show that of the total population of 2,697,983, females numbered 1,363,450 and males 1,334,533. Between 2001 and 2011 the male population grew faster (4 per cent) than the female population (3 per cent). The excess of women over men dropped quite considerably from 40,538 in 2001 to 28,917 in 2011. The result was an increase in the sex ratio (the number of males

per 100 females) from 96.9 per 100 in 2001 to 97.9 in 2011.

- The parish data show that the number of parishes where the number of men exceed the number of women increased from seven in 2001 to ten in 2011. The traditional male dominated parishes of St Ann, Trelawny, Hanover, Westmoreland, St Elizabeth, Manchester and Clarendon have now been joined by St Mary, Portland and Kingston. In St Thomas, men and women are almost equally numbered. The increase in the sex ratio for Kingston may be attributed to the large institutional male population. The female dominated parishes were St Andrew with the lowest sex ratio of 91.7, St Catherine (96.7) and St James (96.9).

Age Structure

- The census shows that the process of 'population ageing' has continued. Population ageing refers most simply to increasing proportions of older people within a population structure. The process of ageing is primarily determined by fertility (birth) rates and secondarily by mortality (death) rates. Populations with high fertility tend to have low proportions of older people and vice versa. Generally populations begin to age when fertility declines and adult mortality rates improve.
- The data from the 2011 Census of Jamaica reflect not only the fertility declines, with the declining proportions in the youngest age groups, but also the ageing of the population as reflected in the increased proportions at the oldest ages.
- In 1960, the population less than 15 years old accounted for 41% of the total population. By 2011 the share had declined to 26%. During the same period the 65 years and over group moved up from 4.35 to 8.1%.
- Further evidence of ageing can be assessed in terms of changing average age. In relation to average age, the median age is generally used as a more reliable indicator than the mean age. The median age is that age which divides a population into numerically equal parts of younger and older persons. In 1970 the median age for men was 16 years and for women, 18 years. By 2011 the median age for men had risen to 27 years and the median age for women had moved to 28 years.

Parish Distribution

- Between 2001 and 2011 St Catherine was the fastest growing parish. St Catherine grew by 7 per cent, doubling the national growth. St Catherine was followed by St James (5 per cent). The slowest growing parishes were St Thomas and Portland which saw population increases of only 2 per cent each. The parish of Kingston remained the only one which declined. In terms of absolute numbers it was also St Catherine which had the largest increase, 33,910. St Catherine was followed by St Andrew (17,541), St James (8,684), Clarendon (8,079) St Ann (5,600) and Westmoreland (5,155). These six parishes which were the only parishes to gain over 5,000 people during the period accounted for more than three quarters (87 per cent) of the overall increase for the country.

Urbanisation

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- A place is considered to be urban if it has a population of 2,000 or more persons and provides a number of amenities and facilities which in Jamaica indicate modern living. Census 2011 shows that over one half (54 per cent) of the population of Jamaica lived in areas classified as urban at the time of the census. This represents an increase of 1.9 percentage points since 2001.
 - Approximately 39 per cent of the population lived in parish capitals. The total population of the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA) and all parish capitals was 1,041,084. This compares with 993,581 in 2001 and reflects a 5 per cent increase. The population of the KMA alone was 584,627 representing 88 per cent of the parishes of Kingston and St Andrew.
 - Outside the KMA, the largest capital town was Spanish Town in St Catherine with 147,152 followed by Montego Bay (110,115), May Pen (61,548) and Mandeville (49,695). Other parish capitals with populations in excess of 10,000 but less than 40,000 were Savanna La Mar (22,633), Port Antonio (14,816), Morant Bay (11,052) and St Ann's Bay (11,173). All remaining parish capitals had populations of between 5,000 and 10,000 (Falmouth (8,686), Port Maria (7,463), Lucea (7,131) and Black River (5,352).
 - In terms of growth the largest percentage increases are seen for the smaller capitals of Black River (31 per cent) and Lucea (14 per cent). The population of Black River moved from 4,095 to 5,352 and Lucea from 6,062 to 7,131. Of the larger capitals Spanish Town increased by 12 per cent from 131,515 to 147,152 and Montego Bay rose by 14 per cent from 96,477 to 110,207. Of note also is the 14 per cent increase in the population of Savanna La Mar from 19,893 to 22,633. Large capitals with comparatively small increase in population between 2001 and 2011 are May Pen by 7 per cent from 57,334 to 61,548 and Mandeville by 5 per cent from 47,467 to 49,695.

Source: [statistical Institute of Jamaica](#)

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