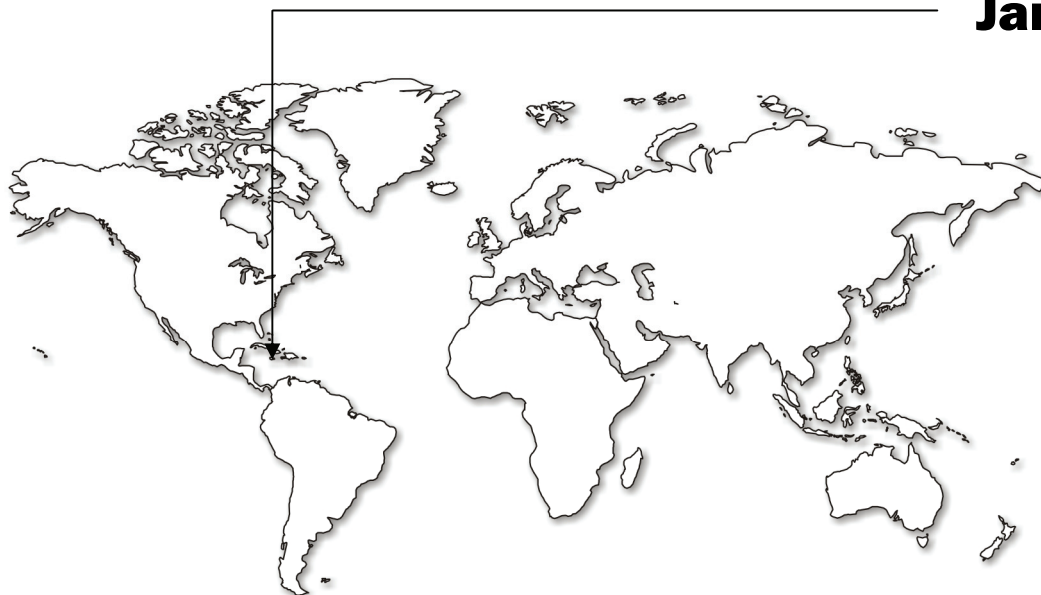


# Jamaica




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## Responding institution:

***National Library of Jamaica***

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Jamaica responded in 2001 and 2005, but not in 2003. This response relates to 636 public library service points, which are all part of a single public library system, and 1 national library. (This figure includes 495 bookmobile stops.) There are also 1 161 research libraries, including 3 university libraries, 927 school libraries and 231 government-funded research libraries. (The 2005 report indicated 656 public library service points, including 511 bookmobile stops, 4 research libraries, 925 school libraries, 4 community college libraries and 7 teacher's college libraries.)

Internet penetration for Jamaica is estimated at 39.4% (*CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition). Internet access in libraries is estimated at 81-100% for all public and university libraries, 61-80% for government-funded research libraries and less than 20% for school libraries. In the 2005 report it was mentioned that the bookmobile stops cannot offer Internet access.

There is average coverage of local content and very good coverage of local languages on the Internet. The literacy rate is estimated at 79.9 % (the 2007 *CIA World Factbook* indicates 87.9%). Access to the Internet is free of charge in all library types, except for public libraries. The state or other library authorities have in some cases made extra funding available for Internet access in the library system over the last two years. (This was not the case in the 2005 report.)

Similar to the 2005 response, the library association in Jamaica has taken no position on the filtering of information. There is no feedback on the use of filtering software in the country (the respondent has explained in an email that it experienced a technical problem in answering the questions concerning filtering).

Regarding special areas of focus, the respondent has indicated that libraries in Jamaica are still not troubled by anti-terror legislation. There also have been no violations of intellectual freedom. No information sources that might further explain the status of freedom of access to information in Jamaica have been suggested by the respondent.

Libraries have been involved in programmes to raise awareness of HIV/Aids, but not in programmes to provide HIV/Aids information to members of the community who are unable to read. Libraries have also not been involved in initiatives designed to promote women's literacy or women's access to information on specific topics such as social information, the economy, education, health and family planning.

The library association adopted a code of ethics in 2001, but has not adopted either the IFLA Internet Manifesto or the Glasgow Declaration.

### **User privacy and anti-terror legislation**

No anti-terror legislation has been passed in Jamaica. The respondent does not indicate whether, if passed, such legislation would impact on user privacy, but is of the opinion that the keeping of library user records

would affect the individual Internet library user's freedom of expression. No further explanation has been offered.

#### **Reported incidents/violations of intellectual freedom in the past two years**

According to the respondent there have been no reported violations of intellectual freedom. No information sources that might further explain the status of freedom of access to information in Jamaica have been indicated by the respondent. Third-party resources, such as World Press Freedom Review (via IFEX), have reported that the media in Jamaica is largely free to express critical views without significant restrictions. Some media outlets, however, continue to complain that existing libel and defamation laws are hindering freedom of expression ([http://www.free.media.at/cms/ipi/freedom\\_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0202/KW0041/](http://www.free.media.at/cms/ipi/freedom_detail.html?country=/KW0001/KW0202/KW0041/)).

According to the 2005 report, it was mentioned in the 2001 response that a Freedom of Information Act was under development. Although the issue has not been raised again in subsequent responses, a third-party source (see <http://www.freedominfo.org/countries/jamaica.htm>) reported in March 2006 on Senator Trevor Monroe's concern about gaps in the Access to Information (ATI) Act during a hearing of the Joint Select committee of Parliament reviewing the success of the Act. According to the source, critics also argued that violation of the Act should be dealt with through disciplinary measures (e.g. loss of job or promotion), rather than as a criminal offence.

#### **HIV/Aids awareness**

Libraries in Jamaica have been involved in programmes promoting HIV/Aids awareness. This is done through exhibits, lectures, print and web-based information

from special libraries, in particular the library of the Ministry of Health. Libraries, however, have not been involved in programmes for providing HIV/Aids information to members of the community who cannot read. (This is similar to the 2005 response.)

#### **Women and freedom of access to information**

Libraries in Jamaica have not been involved in initiatives designed to promote women's literacy or women's access to topics such as social information, the economy, education, health and family planning. (This is similar to the 2005 response.) According to the respondent, women are considered more literate than men. Programmes for promoting access to such information are therefore targeted at both genders.

#### **IFLA Internet Manifesto**

The IFLA Internet Manifesto has not been adopted and no indication has been given as to whether it would be adopted within the next two years. (The 2005 report indicated that it was planned to adopt the Manifesto within two years' time.)

#### **IFLA Glasgow Declaration on Libraries, Information Services and Intellectual Freedom**

The IFLA Glasgow Declaration has not been adopted and there is no indication of whether or not it would be adopted within the next two years. (In the 2005 report it was indicated that the Declaration would be adopted within the next two years.)

#### **Ethics**

The Jamaican library association adopted a code of ethics in 2001. According to the respondent it has not been widely disseminated. (There appears to be no URL available.)

### Main indicators

Country name:	Jamaica
Population:	2 780 132 (July 2007 est.)
Main language:	English, English patois
Literacy:	87.9%
Literacy reported by respondent:	79.9%

Population figures, language and literacy are from the  
*CIA World Factbook*, 2007 edition  
(<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>).



### Libraries and Internet access

Jamaica contributed to the World Report series in 2005 and 2001. The following section compares data and answers from 2007 with the 2005 IFLA/FAIFE World Report and adds context from the respondent's estimates, where possible.

#### Library services

Estimated number of public libraries*:	636 (all part of a single public library system) and 1 national library (2005: 656, including 511 bookmobile stops)
Estimated number of school libraries:	927
Estimated number of university libraries:	3
Estimated number of government-funded research libraries:	231
Source of these numbers:	Public library's website; Directory of Information Units in Jamaica; <a href="http://www.jamlibs.org.jm">http://www.jamlibs.org.jm</a> ; Number of CDS/ISIS users

#### Internet access

Population online**:	1 067 000 users as of Sept. 2005 (39.4%) (2005: 22.6%)
Percentage of public libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100% (2005: 81-100%)
Percentage of school libraries offering Internet access to users:	Less than 20%
Percentage of university libraries offering Internet access to users:	81-100%
Percentage of government-funded research libraries offering Internet access to users:	61-80%
In your estimate, how much local content*** is available on the Internet:	Average
To what degree is content on the Internet available in local languages:	Very much
Is the library association in favour of filtering information on library Internet terminals:	No data provided – the library association has not taken a position either way (2005: The Jamaican library association has not taken any position on the issue)
Is the use of filtering software widespread in your country's libraries:	No data provided (2005: N/A)
Is it free of charge for library users to access the Internet on library computers:	Yes, in university libraries, school libraries and statutory research council libraries (2005: Yes, in research libraries only)
Has the state or other library authorities made any extra funding available for Internet access in the library system of your country in the last two years:	Yes, in some cases (2005: No)

\* Public library service points, including branch libraries.

\*\* Online population numbers are from Internet World Stats ([www.Internetworldstats.com](http://www.Internetworldstats.com)).

\*\*\* Local content is defined as content that originates in the country.