



# Jersey in brief

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## **Status of Jersey**

Jersey is a British Crown Dependency, a status also held by Guernsey and the Isle of Man. It is fully responsible for its own internal affairs and also has responsibility for international relations, within a framework agreed with the UK government. It is not part of the United Kingdom. However, Jersey has the same status as the UK in respect of qualification for British citizenship and the rights of Jersey people in the UK and abroad.

Jersey is the largest of the Channel Islands. In addition to the Island itself, two small groups of islands, the Écréhous and the Minquiers, also are part of Jersey. The other Channel Islands are Guernsey, Alderney, Sark and a number of smaller islands. The islands are geographically part of France, lying a short distance from the coast of Normandy, but are counted as being part of the British Isles, together with the UK and the Isle of Man. The “Channel Islands” is merely a geographical description and not a political unit. Jersey and Guernsey, which also has some responsibilities for the smaller islands, are separate nations, although they co-operate on many issues.

Jersey's flag is a red saltire on a white field. In the upper quadrant is the badge of Jersey surmounted by a yellow Plantagenet crown.



Jersey's official National Anthem is *Beautiful Jersey*, although it has only recently been designated as such as has little recognition among Jersey people.

## **Anglo-French history**

Jersey's status and its economic development have been strongly influenced by its physical location and relations between England and France. Little is known about Jersey's history for most of the first millennium. However, it is certain that Jersey was part of the enlarged Kingdom of Brittany from 867. In 933, the Channel Islands were annexed by the Duke of Normandy and became for all practical purposes part of Normandy.

In 1066 the Duke of Normandy defeated King Harold of England at the Battle of Hastings thus unifying Normandy and England. In 1204, the Norman barons defected and Normandy, with the exception of the Channel Islands, was separated from England. The Channel Islands therefore became English Crown possessions. The Norman influence continued in Jersey after 1204, with Norman churches and monasteries retaining substantial land holdings for many years as well as being the established church until 1569. Jersey's status in relation to the English Crown was defined in a series of charters beginning in 1341, which guaranteed in particular freedom from tariffs for goods exported to England and freedom for Jersey people to live and work in England.

## **Parliament and Government**

Jersey has a single chamber parliament, the States Assembly, comprising the connétables (constables) of each of the Island's 12 parishes and 37 deputies representing nine multi-member constituencies based on the parishes. With effect from the election to be held in June 2026, the number of deputies will be reduced to 29 and nine senators will be elected on an island-wide basis.

The most recent General Election in Jersey was held in June 2022. Of the 37 elected deputies, 10 were members of Reform Jersey, a Social Democrat party, three were members of two centre right parties and the remaining 24 were independents.

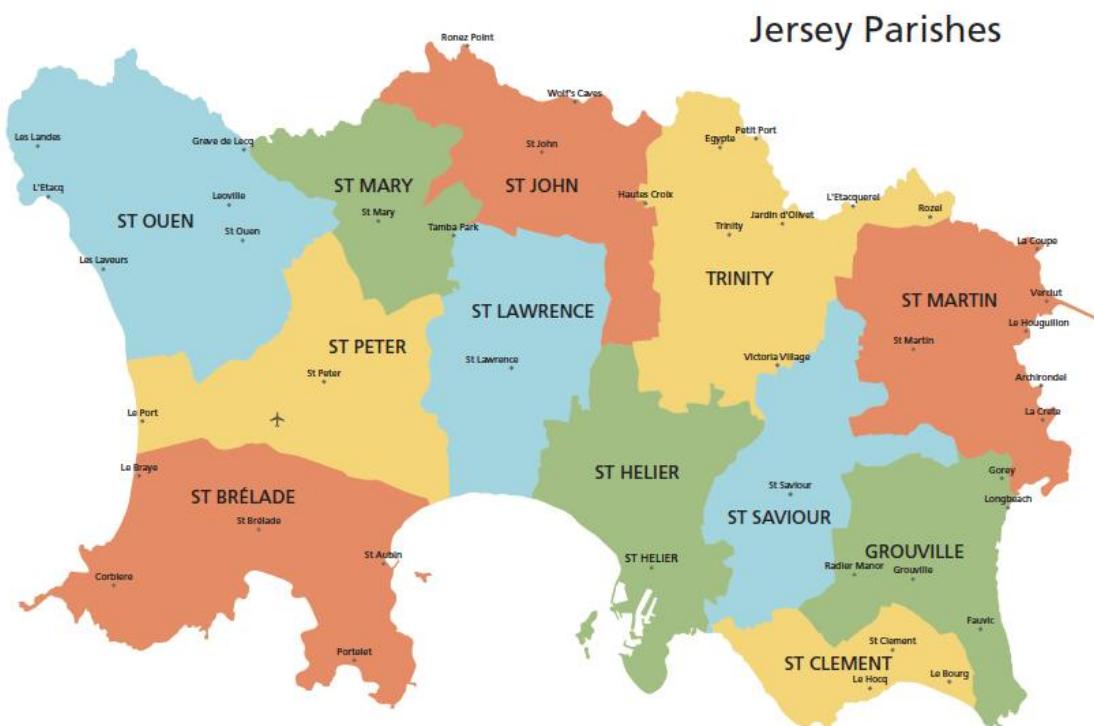
Following a General Election the members elect a Chief Minister (currently Deputy Lyndon Farnham) who in turn nominates other ministers who have to be approved by the States Assembly. With members being elected individually there is no formal party system but all members have an opportunity to participate in the making of legislation and also in scrutinising the actions of government through a number of scrutiny committees.

## **Governor and Bailiff**

The Queen's representative in Jersey is the Lieutenant Governor (currently Vice Admiral Sir Jerry Kyd) who exercises a number of responsibilities on behalf of the Crown and who plays a very full part in the social and charitable aspects of Jersey's life.

Jersey is sometimes formally described as a Bailiwick, deriving from the very ancient office of Bailiff. Today, the position of Bailiff (currently Robert MacRae KC) combines being the Island's chief judge and speaker of the States Assembly. The Bailiff is supported by a Deputy Bailiff and together with an Attorney General and Solicitor General comprise the Crown Officers, formally appointed by the Crown on the advice of the Government of Jersey.

## The parishes



Jersey is divided into 12 parishes: Grouville, St Brelade, St Clement, St Helier, St John, St Lawrence, St Martin, St Mary, St Ouen, St Peter, St Saviour and Trinity. The parishes have existed in their current form for around 1,000 years. They were originally created so each had part of the coastline and they had broadly similar levels of population. Now, the parishes range in size from the capital, St Helier, with around one third of the population to St Mary with under 2% of the population.

The parishes each have the same structure headed by the Connétable, who also is a member of States Assembly. The Connétable is supported by two "Procureurs du Bien Public", who have responsibility for overseeing the finances of the parish. The parishes are divided into Vingtaines, each with two vingteniers, two roads inspectors and three constable's officers. The Connétable heads the honorary police comprising also centeniers, vingteniers and constable's officers.

All ratepayers and electors are entitled to attend parish assemblies which elect the various officers – although not the Connétable who is elected by secret ballot of the electors of the parish in the same way as other States Assembly members. The assemblies set the annual domestic rate and have other functions in relation to roads, liquor licensing and the issue of driving, firearms and dog licences. A key feature of the parish system is that all the officers serve in an honorary capacity – although the Connétables are paid in their capacity as States Assembly members.

## Legal system

One of the remaining legacies of the links with Normandy is Jersey's own legal system and structure, based on Norman customary law rather than English common law. Qualified lawyers entitled to appear before the court are known as advocates. They are invariably English or Scottish qualified solicitors or barristers who have then passed a series of exams in Jersey law administered by the Island's Institute of Law.

Major cases are tried by the Royal Court, presided over by the Bailiff or his deputy, with professional jurats sitting rather than lay juries as is the case in the UK. There is also a magistrate's court, a juvenile court and a petty debts court. Each of the 12 parishes also has a limited judicial role. There is a Jersey Court of Appeal, comprising the Bailiff and Deputy Bailiff, and a number of King's Counsel from the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man.

Jersey has an extensive legal profession, some lawyers mainly being concerned with domestic matters while others provide services to the financial services industry. Most of the major law firms have affiliates in other jurisdictions, particularly Guernsey, Bermuda and the Cayman Islands.

## People

Jersey currently has a population of around 104,000, about half of whom were born in the Island. The Island has traditionally welcomed immigrants including Huguenot refugees from France and people seeking work from other parts of the British Isles and Europe. Today, there are particularly large Madeiran, Polish, Romanian and Kenyan communities who play a major role in the hospitality industry.

There is a high degree of civic engagement in Jersey. The Island has more than 500 voluntary and community organisations and 11,000 islanders volunteer their time. The parish system has traditionally been an honorary one, each parish holding regular assemblies open to all parishioners and having a small number of honorary police, headed by the Connétable.

## Economy

Jersey's economic history includes a wide variety of industries. From around 1600 cider and knitting were major industries. Jersey has traditionally been a maritime nation including developing an extensive cod fishing industry in what is now Canada in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This industry led to the development of related shipping and shipbuilding industries in the Island. Agriculture has played a major role in the Jersey economy, with the Jersey cow and the Jersey new potato, the "Jersey Royal", not only being important exports from the Island but also, in the case of the Jersey cow, having a worldwide reputation.

In the post-War period tourism developed as the major industry, accounting for nearly half of economic activity. More recently, financial services has become the main industry.

The following table shows the structure of the economy, which is measured by “gross value added” (GVA), which is the value of the output less the value of inputs to produce that output.

### **Jersey, Gross Value Added by sector, 2024**

<b>Sector</b>	<b>Gross value added</b> £m	<b>Percentage</b>
Financial and insurance activities	2,638	38.5
Real estate activities	744	10.8
Public administration, defence, compulsory social security	684	10.0
Professional, scientific and technical	612	8.9
Construction, mining and quarrying	512	7.5
Wholesale and retail	416	6.1
Accommodation and food services	216	3.1
Human health and social work	206	3.0
Information and communication	176	2.6
Transportation and storage	149	2.2
Administrative and support services	142	2.1
Utilities	93	1.4
Manufacturing	57	0.8
Education	56	0.8
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	54	0.8
Arts, entertainment and recreation	36	0.5
Activities of households as employers	19	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,858</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Statistics Jersey: [Measuring Jersey's Economy GDP and GVA – 2024](#).

The figure for real estate activities needs some explanation. It is largely accounted for by a notional figure for the amount that owner-occupiers would pay themselves if they rented their homes. The concept enables meaningful international comparisons to be made.

Jersey is one of a number of international financial centres (IFCs), an expression that is best defined as a physical area from which financial services are provided for people and activities in other countries. A successful IFC has to be attractive to businesses not operating in the jurisdiction. Jersey's finance industry consists of over 13,500 professionals specialising in various disciplines such as banking, holding companies,

trust and company administration, legal services, accountancy, compliance and fund administration.

### **Public services**

Jersey has its own education, health, police, taxation, social security, postal and other public services. These differ in material respects from those of the UK but are run in such a way as to be compatible. For example, there is a specific Jersey curriculum in schools but this is such that students take the English examinations so they can easily go on to British universities. Similarly, Jersey has an arrangement with the National Health Service whereby its residents who need treatment that cannot be provided in the Island can be treated by the NHS with Jersey meeting the cost. And the Jersey Police Force, with the assistance of each parish's honorary police officers, is run on similar lines to UK police forces and co-operates with them on law enforcement, training and exchange of information.

### **Heritage and environment**

Jersey is proud of its natural environment and built heritage. It is a beautiful island with many attractive beaches. A special feature is the huge tidal range up to 12 metres, which means that the size of the Island can increase by 25% twice a day.

Jersey has a number of prominent archaeological sites, particularly the La Cotte cave which has some of the best remains of human occupation in the Neanderthal period, dating back about 50,000 years.

The coastal areas are dotted with castles, particularly Mont Orgueil Castle at Gorey and Elizabeth Castle built on an islet close to St Helier, together with a number of forts, Conway Towers and Martello Towers, all constructed as a result of the periodic wars between England and France in the second millennium.

Part of Jersey's heritage is its own language, Jèrriais, a Norman language which was the traditional language of Jersey. It is no longer in everyday use but has been kept alive and is used alongside English in some official documents.

### **International links**

Jersey has always been an outward looking nation, heavily influenced by being an island situated between two countries which for centuries were either at war or near to war. It is claimed that Jersey fishermen were in North American waters at around the same time as Columbus discovered America. What is not in doubt is that Jersey fishermen played a major part in the development of the Gaspé peninsula in Quebec and Newfoundland.

The state of New Jersey, as its name suggests, is named after the Island of Jersey, having been granted to a prominent Jerseyman, Sir George Carteret, in exchange for the support that he gave King Charles II of England in the English Civil War in the 1660s. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century people from Jersey settled in a number of areas in the American state of Massachusetts. Today, Jersey has a large diaspora, mainly in the UK but with significant numbers also in Canada, Australia, South Africa and New Zealand.

Jersey has not only given its name to the Jersey cow, one of the leading dairy breeds in the world, but also to the item of clothing, the original jersey being a heavy woollen pullover worn by fishermen. Knitting was in fact a major industry for much of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, stockings being the main speciality.

Jersey competes in international sports in a variety of different ways. Jersey competes as a nation in international cricket. Jersey's rugby team that competes in the English leagues. A football team, Jersey Bulls, is in the English leagues and competes in the FA Cup. Jersey competes as a team in the Commonwealth Games and the Island Games, but Jerseymen and women compete as part of Team GB at the Olympics.

Jersey participates in a significant number of international bodies including the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and the Assemblée Parlementaire de la Francophonie. The Jersey Government maintains direct links with a number of foreign countries through outward visits and hosting visits to the Island by Ambassadors to the UK. A number of embassies have appointed Honorary Consuls in the Island.

In the financial sector, Jersey is a member of the International Organisation of Securities Commissions, the Group of International Financial Centre Supervisors, the International Association of Insurance Supervisors and the Committee of Experts on the Evaluation of Anti-Money Laundering Measures. Jersey has negotiated a full range of double tax arrangements and tax information exchange agreements.

Jersey runs its own international aid programme run by the Jersey Overseas Aid Commission, which focusses on dairy, conservation and financial inclusion, reflecting Jersey's existing strengths.

Jersey is the home of the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, an international charity with a mission of "saving species from extinction", especially those animal species that are under-threat and overlooked.

Jersey has a strong network of air links with the UK and a number of European cities and also regular ferry services with both England and France. Jersey is part of the "common travel area", comprising the British

Isles and the Republic of Ireland. This provides for free movement between these territories with no need for passports.