

Freedom of Movement in CARICOM

Comparing the Concerns of
Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica

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What is 'Full Freedom of Movement'?

- Part of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).
- Allows CARICOM nationals to live, work, and do business in any member state without work permits.
- Aims to deepen regional integration and economic opportunity.
- However, not all members are ready.

Who's On Board So Far

- Barbados, Belize, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, and Dominica have implemented it (2025).
- Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica are still reviewing and consulting before committing fully.

Trinidad & Tobago's Main Concerns

- Public Consultation & Readiness – Citizens must be consulted before changes.
- Protecting Nationals' Interests – Fear of job loss and strain on benefits.
- Legal & Administrative Adjustments – Immigration and labour laws need updates.
- Pressure on Public Services – Risk of

Jamaica's Main Concerns

- Implementation Capacity – Systems and laws not yet ready.
- Need for Orderly Rollout – Leaders want gradual, sustainable change.
- Labour Market Impact – Fear of job competition and wage pressure.
- National Identity & Consensus – Questions about Caribbean unity.
- Transparency & Public Awareness –

Side-by-Side Comparison

- Both countries share similar legal and readiness issues.
- T&T emphasizes national security and services capacity.
- Jamaica focuses more on identity, transparency, and administrative order.
- Both want to ensure public trust before implementation.

Common Ground

- Both support regional integration in principle.
- Agree that implementation must be careful and coordinated.
- Domestic systems and laws must be upgraded first.
- Public education is essential before rollout.

Underlying Issue

- Freedom of movement is not just about crossing borders—it's about readiness, trust, and fairness.
- Both T&T and Jamaica want to avoid social tension or political backlash.

Conclusion

- Trinidad & Tobago: cautious, citizen-focused, security-conscious.
- Jamaica: deliberate, system-focused, mindful of national identity.
- Both are saying: 'Let's walk before we run.'

Discussion / Q&A

- Do you think the Caribbean is ready for full freedom of movement?
- What benefits could outweigh these concerns?