

WORLD RANK: **84** | REGIONAL RANK: **17**

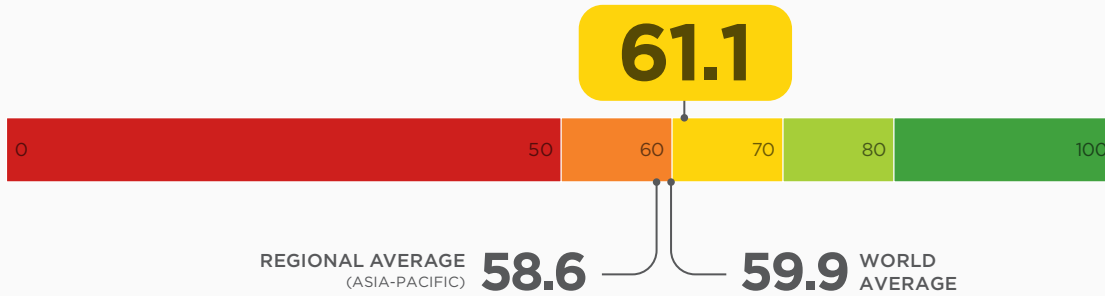
ECONOMIC FREEDOM STATUS: **MODERATELY FREE**

VANUATU

Vanuatu's economic freedom score is 61.1, making its economy the 84th freest in the 2026 *Index of Economic Freedom*. Its rating has decreased by 0.7 point from last year, and Vanuatu is ranked 17th out of 39 countries in the Asia-Pacific region. The country's economic freedom score is higher than the world and regional averages. Vanuatu's economy is considered "moderately free" according to the 2026 *Index*.

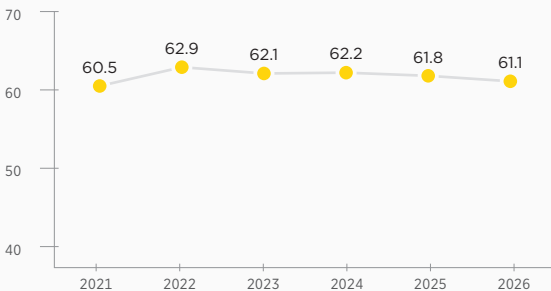
Vanuatu is trying to integrate its economy more thoroughly into the global marketplace, but an improved investment and business climate is needed to generate more broadly based economic expansion. Official reluctance to undertake institutional reforms continues to discourage dynamic private-sector development. Bureaucratic procedures are complex and nontransparent, and starting a business remains time-consuming. Labor codes are rigid and outmoded, and the formal labor market is not fully developed. Monetary stability has been relatively well maintained despite inflationary pressure.

ECONOMIC FREEDOM SCORE



HISTORICAL INDEX SCORE CHANGE (SINCE 2009): +2.7

RECENT FREEDOM TREND



QUICK FACTS

POPULATION:
0.3 million

GDP (PPP):
\$1.0 billion
1.7% growth in 2025
3-year average growth rate: 1.6%
\$2,996 per capita

UNEMPLOYMENT:
5.1%

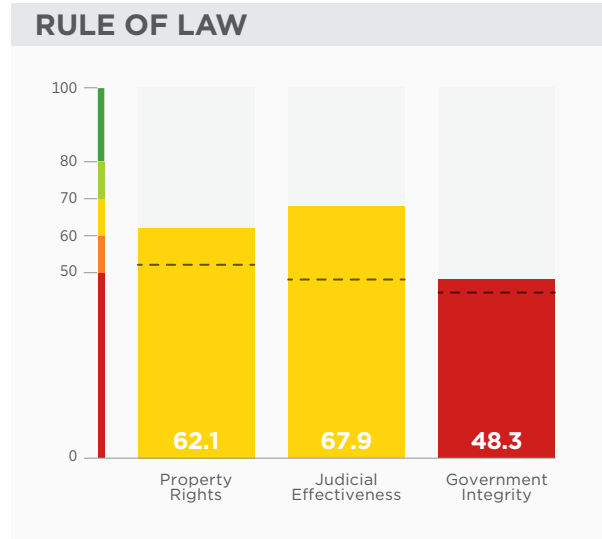
INFLATION (CPI):
1.2%

TRADE AS % OF GDP: 64.0%

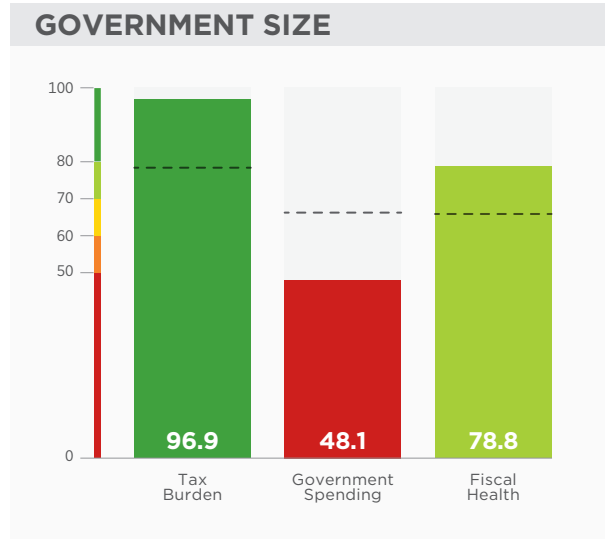
PUBLIC DEBT:
45.3% of GDP

2025 data unless otherwise noted. Data compiled as of January 2026.

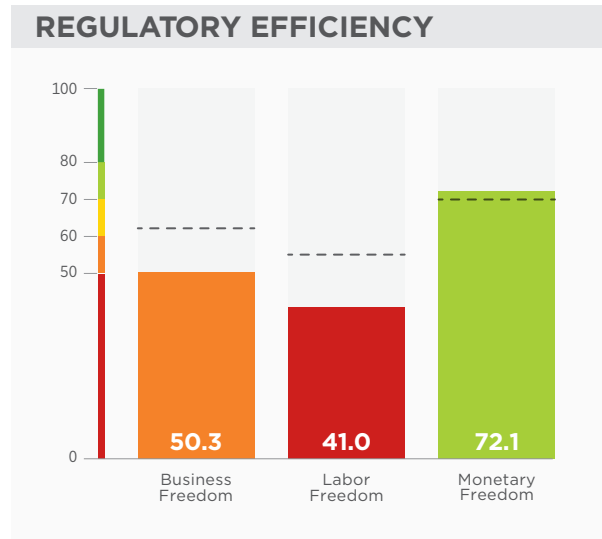
12 ECONOMIC FREEDOMS | VANUATU



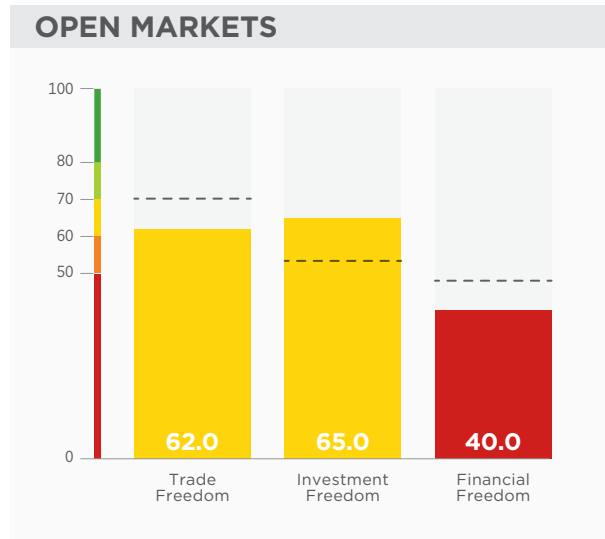
The overall rule of law is relatively well respected in Vanuatu. The country's property rights score is above the world average; its judicial effectiveness score is above the world average; and its government integrity score is above the world average.



The top individual income tax rate is 0 percent, and the top corporate tax rate is 0 percent. The tax burden equals 17.8 percent of GDP. Three-year government spending and budget balance averages are, respectively, 41.6 percent and -3.3 percent of GDP. Public debt amounts to 45.3 percent of GDP.



Vanuatu's overall regulatory environment is poorly institutionalized and inefficient. The country's business freedom score is below the world average; its labor freedom score is below the world average; and its monetary freedom score is above the world average.



The trade-weighted average tariff rate is 11.5 percent, and extensive nontariff barriers distort trade flows. Inadequate infrastructure and heavy state involvement deter long-term investment. Access to financing remains poor with formal banking services available to a limited number of rural adults.