

Statistical Institute of Jamaica
Press Brief
The Labour Force in July 2006 (1)

In July 2006 there were 1,251,600 persons in the Labour Force comprising 697,900 males and 553,700 females. There were 1,139,600 Employed persons of which 658,900 were males and 480,700 females. The employment rates for July 2006 were 91.1 percent for both sexes; 94.4 percent for males and 86.8 percent for females. The corresponding unemployment rates were 8.9, 5.6 and 13.2 percent respectively.

In July 2006 employment increased by 47,200 persons or 4.3 percent when compared to July 2005. This movement was influenced by the increased activity in the 'Construction & Installation' industry. Despite decreases in the first two quarters of 2006, employment in the Construction industry moved from 105,700 in July 2005 to 122,000 in July 2006, an increase of 16,300 persons or 15.4 percent.

Increased employment in 'Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing' and 'Wholesale & Retail Trades & Hotels & Restaurants Services' also contributed to the overall rise in the employment. For the period April 2006 to July 2006 employment in 'Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing' grew by 4,700 persons or 2.3 percent, while employment in 'Wholesale & Retail Trades & Hotels & Restaurants Services' increased by 3,600 persons or 1.3 percent.

Increases in employment in July 2006 were also reflected in the occupation groups 'Clerks', 'Craft and Related Trades Workers', 'Skilled Agricultural & Fisheries Workers', 'Service Workers & Shop & Market Sales Workers' and 'Elementary Occupations' with all groups showing higher levels of employment over July 2005 and April 2006. Among the employed, the Occupation group with the largest growth over April to July 2006 period was 'Clerks' which moved from 82,800 to 97,500 an increase of 14,700 persons or 17.8 percent. During the same period, 'Craft and Related Trades Workers' increased by 13,400 persons or 7.8 percent.

The unemployment rate in July 2006 of 8.9 percent decreased from 11.2 percent in July 2005. During the period July 2005 to July 2006, the unemployment rate was 10.9 percent in October 2005, 12.1 percent in January 2006 and 10.7 percent in April 2006.

The number of unemployed persons fluctuated between July 2005 and July 2006. There were 137,400 unemployed persons in July 2005 and 112,000 in July 2006. During the twelve-month period the number of unemployed persons was highest in January 2006 (152,300) and lowest in July 2006 (112,000).

In July 2006 the unemployment rate for the '14 to 19 years' age group was 33.2 percent, slightly down from 34.6 percent in July 2005. For persons aged '20 to 24 years' it was 19.4 percent, down from 23.1 percent and for persons aged '25 to 34 years', it was 9.5 percent, down from 12.1 percent.

During the period July 2005 to July 2006, the number of persons outside the labour force increased marginally by 8,700 or 1.3 percent, moving from 677,200 to 685,900 persons. In July 2006, the age group with the largest number of persons outside the labour force was '14 - 19 years', with 273,200 persons or 39.8 percent, followed by '65 years and over' with 149,800 persons or 21.8 percent. Both age groups, combined, accounted for 61.6 percent of the persons outside the labour force. In July 2006, 63.8 percent of the persons outside the labour force were females and 36.2 percent were males.

1 Note: Data for July 2006 are preliminary; 2005 revised since publication in The Labour Force 2005

APPENDIX

The **unemployed** labour force comprises **not only** those persons who were 'looking for work' **but also** persons 'wanting work and available for work' **even if** they did not actively seek work during the reference period.

All persons 14 years and older who were not classified as employed or unemployed, are considered to be '**Outside the Labour Force**'. Included in this category are full time students; persons incapable of working; and persons not wanting to work or not available for work during the reference week.

Clerks include secretaries, data entry operators, cashiers, tellers, postal clerks and call centre representatives.

Craft & Related Trades Workers include builders, carpenters, plumbers, masons, electricians, painters, welders and machinery mechanics.