

**Statistical Institute of Jamaica
Press Brief
The Labour Force in October 2006**

In October 2006 there were 1,249,100 persons in the Labour Force comprising 697,800 males and 551,300 females. There were 1,129,500 Employed persons of which 649,800 were males and 479,700 females. The employment rates for October 2006 were 90.4 percent for both sexes; 93.1 percent for males and 87.0 percent for females. The corresponding unemployment rates were 9.6, 6.9 and 13.0 percent respectively.

Employment increased by 37,800 persons or 3.5 percent in October 2006, when compared to October 2005. This movement was influenced by the increased activity in 'Wholesale & Retail Trades & Hotels & Restaurants Services'. Employment in 'Wholesale & Retail Trades & Hotels & Restaurants Services' moved from 260,800 in October 2005 to 272,400 in October 2006, an increase of 11,600 persons or 4.7 percent.

Increased employment in 'Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing' and 'Community, Social & Personal Services' also contributed to the overall rise in the employment. For the period October 2005 to October 2006 employment in 'Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing' grew by 8,900 persons or 4.5 percent, while employment in 'Community, Social & Personal Services' increased by 7,000 persons or 2.3 percent.

Increases in employment in October 2006 were also reflected in the occupation groups 'Service Workers & Shop & Market Sales Workers', 'Craft and Related Trades Workers' and 'Skilled Agricultural & Fisheries Workers'. Among the employed, the Occupation group with the largest growth over the October 2005 to October 2006 period was 'Service Workers & Shop & Market Sales Workers' which moved from 191,000 to 206,500 an increase of 15,500 persons or 8.1 percent. During the same period, 'Craft and Related Trades Workers' increased by 8,200 persons or 4.8 percent.

The unemployment rate in October 2006 of 9.6 percent decreased from 10.9 percent in October 2005. During the period October 2005 to October 2006, the unemployment rate was 12.1 percent in January 2006, 10.7 percent in April 2006 and 8.9 percent in July 2006.

The number of unemployed persons fluctuated between October 2005 and October 2006. There were 133,300 unemployed persons in October 2005 and 119,600 in October 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 October 2006 the unemployment rate for the '14 to 19 years' age group was 31.4 percent, down from 36.5 percent in October 2005. For persons aged '20 to 24 years' it was 20.2 percent, slightly down from 22.2 percent and for persons aged '25 to 34 years', it was 9.7 percent, down from 12.1 percent.

During the period October 2005 to October 2006, the number of persons outside the labour force increased marginally by 6,500 or 1.0 percent, moving from 684,200 to 690,700 persons. In October 2006, the age group with the largest number of persons outside the labour force was '14 - 19 years', with 272,800 persons or 39.5 percent, followed by '65 years and over' with 149,300 persons or 21.6 percent. Both age groups, combined, accounted for 61.1 percent of the persons outside the labour force. In October 2006, 63.8 percent of the persons outside the labour force were females and 36.2 percent were males.

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.*

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