

Statistical Institute of Jamaica
Press Brief
The Labour Force in April 2007

In April 2007 there were 1,260,600 persons in the Labour Force comprising 700,500 males and 560,100 females. There were 1,140,400 Employed persons of which, 656,600 were males and 483,800 females. The employment rates for April 2007 were 90.5 per cent for both sexes; 93.7 per cent for males and 86.4 per cent for females. The unemployment rates were 9.5 per cent for both sexes, 6.3 per cent for males and 13.6 per cent for females.

The Labour Force increased by 9,200 persons (0.7%) between April 2006 and April 2007; there was an associated increase of 9,600 persons (0.5%) in the working age population, ie. the population aged 14 years and over, during the same period.

Employment increased by 22,700 persons or 2.0 per cent in April 2007, when compared to April 2006. This upward movement was influenced by the increased activity in 'Construction & Installation' and 'Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing', which over the twelve-month period increased by 15,300 (14.6%) and 10,800 (5.4%) respectively. Employment decreased however, for the same period in 'Manufacturing' by 11,300 (14.1%).

Increases in employment in April 2007 over April 2006 were correspondingly reflected in the occupation groups 'Craft and Related Trades Workers' and 'Skilled Agricultural & Fisheries Workers'. Among males, these groups increased by 7,000 persons (4.6%) and 5,000 persons (3.1%) respectively.

Employment among youths (14 - 24 years) increased from 157,900 in April 2006 to 170,300 in April 2007 an increase of 12,400 or 7.9 per cent. Females accounted for approximately 68 per cent (8,400) of the increase in youth employment. Employment in the age group 25 - 34 years increased by 5,000 or 1.7 per cent over the same period.

The unemployment rate in April 2007 of 9.5 per cent decreased from 10.7 per cent in April 2006. During the period April 2006 to April 2007, the unemployment rate was lowest in July 2006, with a rate of 8.9 per cent and highest in January 2007 at 10.8 per cent.

During the period April 2006 to April 2007, the number of persons outside the labour force showed little change moving by 400 or 0.1 per cent. In April 2007, the age group with the largest number of persons outside the labour force was '14 - 19 years', with 262,800 persons (38.4%), followed by '65 years and over' with 147,100 persons (21.5%). Both age groups, combined, accounted for 59.9 per cent of the persons outside the labour force. In April 2007, 63.5 per cent of the persons outside the labour force were females and 36.5 per cent were males.

¹ Note: Data for April 2007 are preliminary