

Statistical Institute of Jamaica
Press Brief
The Labour Force in January 2007 (1)

In January 2007 there were 1,259,700 persons in the Labour Force comprising 700,800 males and 558,900 females. There were 1,123,500 Employed persons of which 651,600 were males and 471,900 females. The employment rates for January 2007 were 89.2 per cent for both sexes; 93.0 per cent for males and 84.4 per cent for females. The unemployment rates were 10.8 per cent for both sexes, 7.0 per cent for males and 15.6 per cent for females.

Employment increased by 15,600 persons or 1.4 per cent in January 2007, when compared to January 2006. This small upward movement was influenced by the increased activity in 'Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing' and 'Community, Social & Personal Services'; which over the twelve-month period increased by 11,800 (6.1%) and 7,900 (2.6%) respectively. Employment decreased however, in the same period in 'Manufacturing' and 'Wholesale and Retail Trades and Hotels and Restaurant Services' by 11,500 (14.7%) and 18,100 (6.6%) respectively.

Increases in employment in January 2007 over January 2006 were correspondingly reflected in the occupation groups 'Professionals, Senior Officials and Technicians' and 'Skilled Agricultural & Fisheries Workers'. These groups increased by 11,400 persons (5.5%) and 7,800 persons (4.2%) respectively. Employment however, decreased in 'Elementary Occupations' by 6,400 (3.6%).

The unemployment rate in January 2007 of 10.8 per cent decreased from 12.1 per cent in January 2006. During the period January 2006 to January 2007, the unemployment rate was 10.7 per cent in April 2006, 8.9 per cent in July 2006 and 9.6 per cent in October 2006.

The number of unemployed persons fluctuated between January 2006 and January 2007. There were 152,300 unemployed persons in January 2006 and 136,300 in January 2007. During the twelve-month period the number of unemployed persons was highest in January 2006 and lowest in July 2006 (112,000).

During the period January 2006 to January 2007, the number of persons outside the labour force increased by 10,100 or 1.5 per cent, moving from 672,700 to 682,800 persons. In January 2007, the age group with the largest number of persons outside the labour force was '14 - 19 years', with 263,600 persons (38.6%), followed by '65 years and over' with 152,900 persons (22.4%). Both age groups, combined, accounted for 61.0 per cent of the persons outside the labour force. In January 2007, 63.7 per cent of the persons outside the labour force were females and 36.3 per cent were males.

The Labour Force Bulletin for January 2007 provides detailed information and is available at our distribution centre located at 7 Cecelio Avenue, Kingston 10.

(1) Note: Data for January 2007 are preliminary.

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.*