

News Release
Labour Force
July 2008

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The Jamaican labour force comprised 1,296,200 persons in July 2008, 718,500 were males and 577,700 were females. This represented an increase of 23,200 or 1.8 per cent when compared with the July 2007 figure of 1,273,000. The working age population increased by 18,500 over the same period moving from 1,976,400 to 1,994,900. The labour force as a percentage of the population 14 years and over was 65.0 up from 64.4 in July 2007.

In July 2008 there were 1,163,200 employed persons, an increase of 11,500 or 1.0 per cent when compared with 1,151,700 in July 2007. The employment rate was 89.7 per cent, down from 90.5 per cent in July 2007. Between July 2007 and July 2008 employment was highest in January 2008 (1,167,400) and lowest in April 2008 (1,134,600). The employment rate for males was 93.2 in July 2008 down from 94.3 per cent in July 2007. The female unemployment rate was 85.4 per cent in July 2008, a marginal decline from 85.8 per cent in July 2007. The industry groups with the largest number of employed persons in July 2008 were 'Community, Social and Personal Services' (313,800) and 'Wholesale and Retail Trades and Hotels and Restaurants Services' (272,200). Among males however, the largest industry group was 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' (179,000). In July 2008, 19.2 per cent of the employed were in the occupation group 'Professionals, Senior officials and Technicians', 18.7 per cent were 'Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Workers' and 18.3 per cent were 'Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers'. Employment among youths aged 14-24 years remained unchanged when comparing July 2007 and July 2008. The age groups 25-34 and 35-44 years experienced marginal declines for the same period while there was increased employment for age groups 45 years and over. The number of unemployed persons increased by 11,700 or 9.6 per cent between July 2007 and July 2008. The unemployment rate of 10.3 per cent in July 2008 was 9.5 per cent in July 2007. The unemployment rate for youths 14-19 years was 36.9 per cent in July 2008 and 20.4 per cent for youths aged 20-24 years. The 268,600 persons outside the labour force in July 2008 represented a decline of 4,700 or 0.7 per cent compared with 703,400 in July 2007. The 14-19 and 65 years and over age groups accounted for 38.4 and 22.3 per cent of persons outside the labour force in July 2008. Approximately 63 per cent of the persons outside the labour force in July 2008 were females while 37 per cent were males.

The **Labour Force Bulletin July 2008** further outlines additional information and may be obtained from the Distribution Office of the Statistical Institute of Jamaica 7 Cecelio Avenue, Kingston 10. Data is also available on the STATIN website at www.statinja.com.