



Statistical Institute of Jamaica
Press Brief
The Labour Force in January 2018¹

Highlights.

Unemployment continued to trend downwards in January 2018. In January 2018, unemployment rate was 9.6 per cent. Females continued to make gains in employment for the period mostly in the occupation group ‘**Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers**’ and the industry groups ‘**Real Estate, Renting & Business Activities**’ and ‘**Wholesale & Retail, Repair of Motor Vehicle & Equipment**’. The unemployment rate for youth continued to decline during the review period. A decline in the total number of persons in the labour force and a simultaneous increase in employment has impacted the unemployment rate.

Larger increase in female employment.

The 1,206,600 persons employed in January 2018 represented an increase of 22,600 (1.9%) when compared with 1,184,000 employed in January 2017. For males, employment increased by 1,900 (0.3%) over the twelve month period to 664,200 in January 2018 while female employment increased by 20,700 (4.0%) to 542,400.

By occupation groups, more persons (mostly females) employed as “Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers”.

The occupation group ‘**Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers**’ was responsible for the greater portion (70.8%) of the increase in the **Employed Labour Force**, (16,000 persons or 6.2%), moving from 257,500 in January 2017 to 273,500 in January 2018.

‘**Elementary Occupations**’ accounted for the largest increase in male employment of 3,700 (4.7%) over the period, moving from 79,400 in January 2017 to 83,100 in January 2018. The largest gain in female employment (16,200 or 10.0%), was in the occupation group ‘**Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers**’ increasing from 161,700 in January 2017 to 177,900 in January 2018.

By industry groups, more persons employed in “Wholesale & Retail Trade, Repair of Motor Vehicle & Equipment”.

The industry group ‘**Wholesale & Retail Trade and, Repair of Motor Vehicle & Equipment**’ had the largest increase of 7,900 persons (3.3%) in the employed labour force moving from 238,800 in January 2017 to 246,700 in January 2018. Over the same period, ‘**Construction**’

¹¹ This report presents the key findings of the January 2018 Labour Force Survey which was conducted during the period January – March 2018 with the reference week being December 17 -23, 2017.

followed closely, increasing by 7,300 persons (7.3%) from 100,200 to 107,500.

The largest increase in the number of males employed (6,700 or 6.9%), was in the industry group '**Construction**' which moved from 97,100 to 103,800. Among employed females, '**Real Estate, Renting & Business Activities**' accounted for the largest increase of 5,700 (15.2%) moving from 37,600 in January 2017 to 43,300 in January 2018. '**Wholesale & Retail, Repair of Motor Vehicle & Equipment**' followed closely with an increase of 5,200 over the same period.

There was a larger decline in the female unemployment rate.

The **Unemployment Rate** of 9.6 per cent in January 2018 was a decrease of 3.1 percentage points when compared with 12.7 per cent in January 2017. In the same period, the unemployment rate for males decreased by 1.5 percentage points, from 9.0 per cent to 7.5 per cent while the rate for females had a larger decline (4.9 percentage points), from 17.0 per cent to 12.1 per cent.

Youth unemployment rate declined.

The unemployment rate for youth 14-24 years was 23.8 per cent in January 2018, representing a decrease of 7.4 percentage points, when compared to the rate of 31.2 per cent in January 2017. Similarly, the unemployment rate for male youth declined by 4.7 percentage points to 20.4 per cent while the rate for female youth declined by 10.5 percentage points to 27.9 per cent.

The number of males and females in the labour force decreased.

Total **Labour Force** in January 2018, was 1,335,100 persons comprising 718,000 males and 617,100 females. This was a decline of 21,200 (1.6%) when compared with 1,356,300 persons in January 2017. Over the same period, the number of persons in the male labour force showed a decline of 9,600 (1.3%) however, a larger decline occurred in the female labour force (11,600 or 1.9%).

Males and females in the working age population who were outside the labour force increased.

The number of persons classified as being Outside the Labour Force increased by 22,300 (3.0%) to 755,700 in January 2018. The number of males Outside the Labour Force increased by 3.5 per cent moving from 297,600 to 308,000, while females increased by 11,900 (2.7%), from 435,800 to 447,700.

See website (www.statinja.gov.jm) for more information on the January 2018 Labour Force Survey.