

PRESS RELEASE

July 2026 Labour Force Survey (LFS) Findings

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Kingston, September 30, 2026: The Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), today, releases the key indicators from the July 2026 Labour Force Survey (LFS), for which the reference week was July 5–11, 2026. All comparisons are made with July 2025.

July 2026 is the first quarter since Hurricane Melissa in which the full LFS questionnaire was administered in all parishes, enabling comparisons of all standard indicators with the corresponding quarter of 2025. Additionally, this is the first official release of estimates on formal and informal employment; and employment in the formal, informal and household own-use and community (HOC) sectors from the revised LFS. The estimates have been produced in accordance with the latest international statistical standards for measuring informality.

The following are highlights from the July 2026 Labour Force Survey

In July 2026, the labour force totalled 1,468,500 persons, down by 21,800 when compared with July 2025. Employment declined by 21,900 to 1,419,200, while the number of persons outside the labour force increased by 21,800 to 687,300. The decrease in labour force participation was primarily driven by the reduction in employment, as many persons moved outside the labour force. As a result of these changes, the unemployment rate remained relatively unchanged at 3.4 per cent compared with 3.3 per cent in July 2025.

Lower Labour Force Participation

The overall labour force participation rate was 68.1 per cent relative to 69.1 per cent in July 2025. The labour force totalled 1,468,500, a decrease of 21,800 individuals. The male labour force fell by 6,700 to 787,700, while the female labour force declined by 15,100 to 680,800.

Decrease in Employment

In July 2026, the number of employed persons stood at 1,419,200, down by 21,900 (1.5%) compared with July 2025. The number of employed males decreased by 8,600 to 767,000, while the number of employed females decreased by 13,300 to 652,200. There were 169,500 employed youth, a decline of 6.4 per cent compared to July 2025.

Sector of Employment

Among the employed, 50.4 per cent (715,400) were in the formal sector, 47.3 per cent (671,700) in the informal sector and 2.3 per cent (32,100) in HOC activities. Compared with July 2025, 6,900 fewer persons were in the formal sector, 12,300 fewer persons were in the informal sector and employment in the HOC sector fell by 2,700.

Nature of Employment

In July 2026, an estimated 621,800 employed persons (43.8%) were in formal employment, representing a decrease of 24,000 compared with July 2025. Informal employment was 797,400, an increase of 2,100 persons. Consequently, the informal employment rate was 56.2 per cent compared to 55.2 per cent in July 2025. Among employed males, 63.1 per cent were in informal employment, compared with 48.0 per cent of employed females.

Most persons employed in the formal sector (86.9%) held formal jobs; however, 93,600 persons in the formal sector were engaged in informal employment.

Unemployment Rate

In July 2026, the unemployment rate was 3.4 per cent compared to 3.3 per cent in July 2025. The unemployment rate was 2.6 per cent for males and 4.2 per cent for females. Youth

unemployment decreased by 2,300, to 18,200, resulting in a youth unemployment rate of 9.7 per cent.

More Persons Outside the Labour Force

The number of persons outside the labour force was 687,300, an increase of 21,800 when compared with July 2025. Males outside the labour force increased by 6,700, while females increased by 15,100. The overall rise in the number of persons outside the labour force was largely due to an additional 14,800 youth exiting the labour force.

For more information about the July 2026 Labour Force Survey, please visit STATIN's website at <https://www.statinja.gov.jm> or contact the Institute's library at 876 630-1600 or via email at info@statinja.gov.jm.

About Us: The Statistical Institute of Jamaica is the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the leading provider of official statistics on the country's economic, social, demographic, and environmental conditions. The Institute periodically releases monthly, quarterly, and annual indicators/products such as the gross domestic product, inflation rate, international merchandise trade, social and population statistics. STATIN is dedicated to delivering accurate, comprehensive, and timely data that support informed decision-making and align with the Institute's mission.

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