

PRESS RELEASE

2015 LABOR FORCE SURVEY- MAY

The Department of Statistics releases the results of its Labour Force and Household Income Survey which was conducted in May of this year. The survey provides information on the labour force as it existed during the reference period of **April 27 – May 3, 2015**.

The results of the survey which covered a six months period indicate that the labour force increased slightly, 1.4, since the last survey conducted in November 2014. The labour force now totals 208,895 persons. There was an increase in the number of employed persons and a decrease in the number of unemployed persons resulting in an unemployment rate of 12.0%, indicating a significant decline over the rate recorded last November. The three major islands New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco all experienced decreases in their unemployment level. At the time of the survey the rate in New Providence was 12.0%; in Grand Bahama, 12.9% and in Abaco 12.2%.

It should be noted that the reference period which occurred shortly before the Carnival would therefore have captured preparatory work and additional employment related to this event in both New Providence and Grand Bahama. It also captured additional employees to Baha-mar and it's associated out sourcing companies in their efforts to meet their spring opening. Likewise in some of the islands, temporary employment associated with homecomings was also recorded.

In New Providence and Grand Bahama, while the number of persons in both the labour force and employed labour force was almost equally distributed by sex, there were more employed men than women and the men were also fewer in numbers among the unemployed.

The unemployment among youths (15-24 years) in the country continued to be considerably higher than any other age group which is common to most countries. However, there was a noticeable decline in the rate from 31% recorded in November 2014 to 25.3%

Discouraged workers in the country declined by 13% over the six month period. New Providence, Grand Bahama and Abaco experienced declines in the number of discouraged workers - 14%, 13% and 11% respectively. These persons, according to the standard definition of the International Labour Organization (ILO), adhered to by The Bahamas and most countries including those of the Caribbean, United States and Canada, are not considered unemployed as they did not meet the three criteria of unemployment namely i) seeking work, ii) willing to work, and iii) able to work.

Additionally, the data show that:

- ✓ Twenty-three percent of the Labour Force was made up of persons between the ages of 25 - 34 years.
- ✓ Twenty-two percent of unemployed persons were between the ages of 20-25.
- ✓ Sixty-five percent of the Employed Labour Force was engaged by the private sector.
- ✓ Approximately 13% of the Employed Labour Force was Non-Bahamian.
- ✓ Apart from “Community, Social and Personal Services” which increased by 24%, job creation was fastest in the “Manufacturing” sector where employment increased by 21%. This sector accounts for 4% of total employment.

- ✓ The “Community, Social and Personal Service” industry which includes the civil service, police service and domestic service continued to be the country’s largest employer in 2015 and accounted for 37% of the workforce.
- ✓ Workers employed in the “Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Other Business Service” sector experienced the greatest job loss (36%).

This release, with accompanying tables, will be immediately available on the department’s website, statistics.bahamas.gov.bs. Further details will be available by October, 2015.