

PRESS RELEASE
Preliminary Results Labour Force Survey
May 2019

Employment rose by 4,330 in May when compared to November 2018 and reached about 215,000 persons. On a year-over-year basis, employment grew by 6,635 or 3.2%. Meanwhile, the national unemployment rate dropped to 9.5%, down from 10.7% in November.

Hightlights

Two of the three most populated islands that were surveyed experienced decreases in their unemployment rates, and one experienced an increase. At the time of the survey, the rate in New Providence was 9.4%; and in Grand Bahama 10.9%. On the other hand, Abaco's unemployment rate increased from 7.7% May to 9.3%.

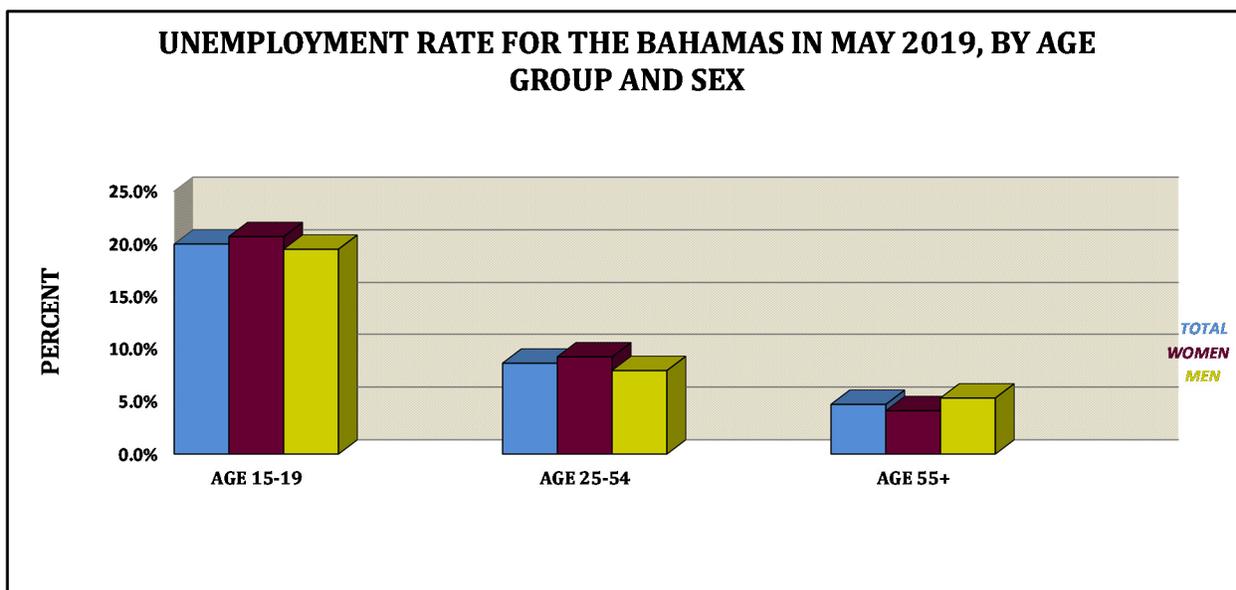
Employment gains were driven by private sector employees which increased by 1.8% to 137,605 persons when compared to November. Additionally, the number of self-employed persons remained unchanged 32,475 since November 2018.

The "Hotel and restaurant" sector experienced the greatest increase since May 2018 (24%) while 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 May 2019 and accounted for 35% of the workforce.

The vulnerable employment remain basically unchanged since May 2018 with no difference in its rate of 6.9% of total employment. Males (11,355) still dominate this category. These workers as defined by ILO are less likely to have formal work arrangements, and more likely to lack decent working conditions and are often characterized by inadequate earnings and benefits.

Women were more likely than men to be unemployed

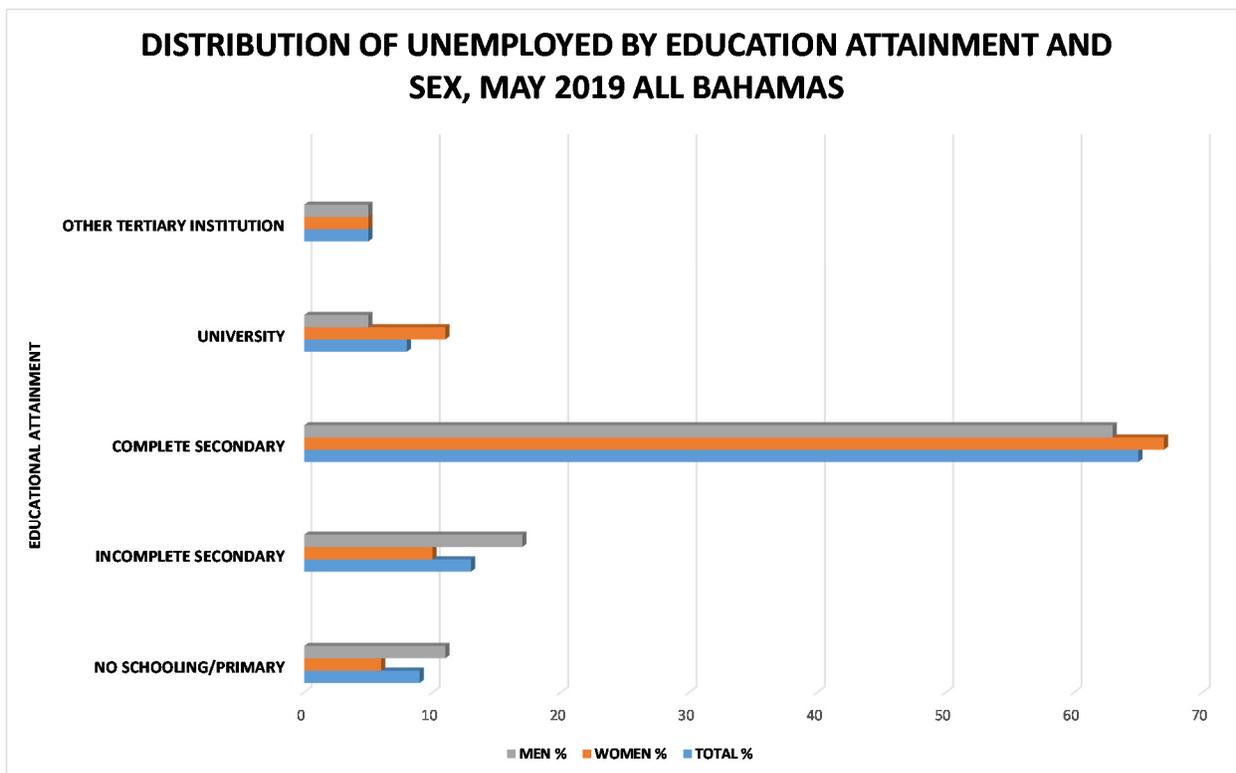
Overall, the unemployment rate for women dropped to 9.9% in May, compared to 9.2% for men. Young women, those aged 15-24 and core-aged women, those aged 25 to 54, were more likely to be unemployed than their male counterparts. By contrast, men aged 55 years and over were slightly more likely to be unemployed when compared with women in their same age cohort.



Young women were more likely to be unemployed than young men

According to The Caribbean Development Bank's (CDB) report, youth unemployment in the Caribbean is among the highest in the world, with the unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 24 reaching 42.7%. Similar patterns persist in the Bahamas, as youth unemployment for women was highest recorded for all age groups. The unemployment rate for young women reached 20.7%, compared with 19.5% for young men, 20.0% for both sexes.

Unemployment is higher for women than men despite higher education attainment



Nationwide, for the unemployed persons that had completed secondary school, there is a slight difference in the proportion of males (62.5%) and females (67.2%). However, a larger percentage of unemployed males (16.8%) than females (9.8%) had not completed secondary school. Conversely, a larger proportion of unemployed females (11.2%) than males (5.2%) had completed university.

Number of discouraged workers declined

In the six months from November 2018, the number of discouraged workers in the country declined by 2.0%. Notably, the number of discouraged workers fell by 1.0% in New Providence and 5.4% Grand Bahama. However, the number of discouraged workers in Abaco increased by 7.3%. Discouraged workers, according to the standard

definition of the International Labour Organization (ILO), “are persons without work and available for work, yet were not actively seeking work because they are not hopeful about their prospects of finding work.”

The Department of Statistics is the Government Agency in The Bahamas mandated by law to collect, process, analyze and disseminate statistics. Its mandate is to deliver timely official statistics. Please contact the Department of Statistics @ 242-604-4000 for questions and enquiries. This release, with accompanying tables, will be immediately available on the Department’s website www.bahamas.gov.bs/statistics.