



Ministry of Labour &
Social Security



Labour Market
Information System

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS & PROSPECTS FOR JOBS IN JAMAICA

VOLUME 3

SUMMARY

1.0 Introduction

The Labour Market Trends Report provides periodic updates on the movement in labour market indicators as well as emerging features of the labour market to students, jobseekers, policy makers, career developers and other stakeholders. This edition provides information on the performance of key labour market indicators within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on employment. The report provides information on potential growth industries, job opportunities identified locally and internationally, the drivers of the future of work and the implications for employment and job creation.

2.0 Report Findings

The Jamaican Economy and Employment

Data released from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) indicated that for the last quarter of 2020, the Jamaican economy declined by 10.7 per cent when compared to the similar quarter for 2019. This was due to declines in both the Services and Goods Producing Industries of 13.1 per cent and 3.5 per cent respectively.

During the pandemic the Employed Labour Force totalled 1,154,100 which is a decrease of 92,300 persons or 7.6 per cent compared to 1,248,400 in October 2019 (See Table 1). The pandemic had a major impact on industry groups as only three (3) industries recorded positive growth in employment for 2020. These include: *Real Estate and Other Business Services* (11%), *Information and Communication* (10.3%) and *Agriculture, Hunting and Fishing* (0.9%). Significant declines in employment were observed in the *Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Other Services* Industry (27.1%); *Accommodation and Food Service Activities* (21.7%) and the *Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles* (5.8%).

Table 1
Employed Labour Force by Industry

Industry	2019	2020	Percentage change
Agriculture Hunting Forestry and Fishing	188,000	189,600	0.9%
Mining and Quarrying	6,500	5,200	-20%
Manufacturing	75,200	70,000	-6.9%
Electricity Gas and Water Supply	12,400	8,900	-28.2%
Construction	104,300	100,400	-3.7%
Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles	238,700	224,900	-5.8%
Transport and Storage	64,200	60,600	-5.6%
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	105,800	82,800	-21.8%
Information and Communication	14,600	16,100	10.3%
Financial and Insurance Activities	28,000	26,300	-6.1%
Real Estate and Other Business Services	94,300	104,700	11.0%
Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	70,500	63,900	-9.4%
Education, Human Health and Social Work Activities	112,500	101,600	-9.7%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Other Services	132,200	96,400	-27.1%
Industry Not Specified (Incl. Extraterritorial Bodies)	1,200	2,700	
TOTAL EMPLOYED LABOUR FORCE	1,248,400	1,154,100	-7.6%

Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica

Analysis by sex indicated that females were more impacted by the job losses than males. The number of female labour force participants declined by 52,600 or 9.3 per cent in October 2020 compared to the previous year, recording 565,600 in October 2019 relative to 514,500 in October 2020. The number of employed males declined by 41,500 or 6.1 per cent, moving from 682,800 in October 2019 to 641,300 in October 2020.

In 2021 the Government began to ease most of the COVID-19 control measures to facilitate increased economic activity. Data from STATIN showed that total value added for the Jamaican economy increased by 5.8 per cent during the third quarter of 2021 when compared to the third quarter of 2020. This was attributable to growth in both the Services and Goods Producing Industries of 7.1 per cent and 2.4 per cent respectively. The growth in the Services Industries was due to improved performance in all eight (8) industries: *Hotels and Restaurants* (114.6%), *Transport, Storage and Communication* (8.8%), *Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repairs; Installation of Machinery and Equipment* (4.4%), *Other Services* (12.2%), *Finance and Insurance Services* (2.3%), *Real Estate, Renting and Business Activities* (0.7%), *Electricity and Water Supply* (0.6%) and *Producers of Government Services* (0.4%). The increase in the Goods Producing Industries was as a result of higher output levels in *Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing* (7.3%), *Manufacturing* (4.6%) and *Construction* (4.4%).

As it relates to employment, data released from STATIN showed that there were 1,234,800 persons employed in October 2021, an increase of 76,600 or 6.6 per cent compared to 1,158,200 persons in October 2020. When analyzed by sex the data indicated that females accounted for 57.0 per cent (43,700) of the increase in employment. The largest share of the increase in employment for females was in the occupation group 'Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers' and the industry group *Real Estate and Other Business Services*. The unemployment rate for October 2021 was 7.1 per cent, which is 3.7 percentage points lower than the 10.7 per cent recorded in October 2020. The male unemployment rate decreased to 5.5 per cent compared to 8.7 per cent reported in October 2020. The rate for females was 9.0 per cent in October 2021, a decline of 4.2 percentage points.

Youth unemployment is widely viewed as an important policy issue for many countries. Analysis of the data by age-group showed that the unemployment rate for youth aged 14-24 was 18.9 per cent in October 2021. This was a decline of 9.3 percentage points compared to October 2020. The unemployment rate for male youth decreased by 7.2 percentage points to 16.6 per cent, while the rate for female youth declined by 12.3 percentage points to 21.6 per cent.

The evidenced decline in unemployment has been enhanced by growth in several sectors. The largest increase was evident *Real Estate and Other Business Services*, which had total employment of 130,500 persons in October 2021. This represented an increase of 24,500 persons or 23.1 per cent. This was followed by *Arts, Entertainment, Recreation and Other Services* which increased by 14,800 persons to 111,500.

Further analysis of employment trends in Jamaica was done by examining labour force data for the period 2019 to 2021 in order to ascertain the tenure of the employed labour force. For the period, an average of 5 per cent of males were employed for less than 3 months, compared to 3 per cent for females. This indicates that more men have entered the labour market or were finding new employment. Additionally, the average number of persons employed for less than 3 months increased to 53,015 in October 2021 when compared to pre-covid period which averaged 50,619 and October 2020 (48,034). As such, the data infers that more persons have been finding jobs in 2021, compared to the previous two years. This trend in employment corroborates with the above mentioned unemployment rate reported at 7.1 per cent for October 2021.

Analysis of the data also showed that almost two-thirds of the persons employed have been in their current job for 5 or more years. This indicates that while many persons are moving around in the labour market, most persons are maintaining employment with the same employer.

In October 2021, there were 766,500 persons classified as Outside the Labour Force. This was 29,000 or 3.6 per cent fewer persons than in October 2020. This may infer increased confidence in the labour market for job prospects based on growth in the economy. When analyzed by sex there were 313,300 males and 453,200 females outside the labour force. Further examination of the data showed that over the last two years, an average of 22 per cent of persons within the 20-34 age group were classified as outside the labour force.

Redundancy in Jamaica

The decline in employment due to the negative impact of COVID-19 was also apparent in the number of redundancies reported to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MLSS) for 2020. A total of 5,894 redundancies were reported to the MLSS in 2020 compared to 890¹ for 2019. Some of the occupations made redundant were in the Service and Sales workers occupational group and included Tour Guide, Waiter/Waitress, Café Attendant and Bartender. The Accommodations and Food Service Activities industry accounted for most of these jobs that were lost. In terms of Clerical Support Workers, the types of occupations that were made redundant included Administrative Assistant, Data Entry Clerk, Registry Clerk and Payroll Taxation Assistant (See Table 2).

Table 2
Reported redundancies disaggregated by occupational groups and types of jobs for the period
January– December 2020

No.	Occupational Group and Types of Jobs made Redundant
1.	Service and Sales Workers: Assistant Caretaker, Bartender, Bellhop, Butler, Café Attendant, Cashier, Colourist (Hairdresser), Commissary Assistant, Commissary Cashier, Cook, Counter Attendant, Food Service Representative, Life Guard, Makeup Artist, Merchandiser, Outlet Server, Retail Store Supervisor, Sales Account Officer, Sales Associate, Sales Coordinator, Security Officer, Server, Telesales Representative, Tour Guide, Waiter/Waitress
2.	Clerical Support Workers: Accounting Clerk, Administrative Assistant, Associate, Brand Inventory Control Clerk, Cashier, Clerical Officer, Client Relation Officer, Customer Care Agent, Customer Service Representative, Data Entry Clerk, Filing Clerk, Front Desk Clerk, Guest Relations Agent, Inventory Assistant, Inventory Clerk, Payroll Taxation Assistant, Payroll Officer, Productions Clerk, Personal Line Associates, Programme Assistant, Registry Clerk, Reconciliation Officer, Referral Officer, Reservation Agent, Shipping Clerk, Warehouse Assistant

¹ Preliminary figure

No.	Occupational Group and Types of Jobs made Redundant
3.	<p>Technicians and Associate Professionals: Accounting Officer, Acquisition Officer, Administrative Assistant, Administrator, Audio Engineer, Chef, Dental Laboratory Technician, Executive Assistant, Executive Chef, Group Recruitment Officer, Junior Recruiter, Laboratory Technician, Line Cook, Logistics Supervisor, Maintenance Technician, Medical Technician, Motor Underwriter, Photographer, Purchasing Officer, Quality Assurance Technician, Service Technician, Supervisors (Maintenance/Logistics), Technical Specialist, Technicians, Underwriter, Videographer, Wedding Planner</p>
4.	<p>Managers: Acquisition, Assistant, Business Development, Corporate Relations, Claims, Customer Experience, Department Coordinator, Editing, Employment and Career Services, Finance Director, Food and Beverage, Group Risk, Human Resource, Imports, Logistics and Trade Compliance Coordinator, Junior Operation, Project, Project Coordinator, Quality, Sales, Task Force, Technical Design, Trade Promotions, Training, Transport, Vice President, Vice President Business & Projects, Warehouse, Wedding</p>
5.	<p>Professionals: Accountant, Auditor, Banquet Administrator, Business Development Officer, Business Solutions Services Officer, Chemist, Communication Coordinator, Compliance Head, Custodial Officer, Database Administrator, Engineer, Environment Communication Officer, Human Resource Officer, Human Resource Operation Specialist, I.T. Support, Indemnity & Liability Advisor, Marketing Officer, Mediator, Modern Trade Auditor, Network Engineer, Nutritionist, Nurse, Production Worker, Promotion Producer, Quality Assurance Officer, Sales Account Officer, Senior Financial Operations, System Developer, System Engineer, Trade & Research Officer, Welfare and Training Officer</p>
6.	<p>Elementary Occupations: Cleaner, Delivery Truck Side Man, Domestic Helper, Gardener, Grounds Man, Handy Man, Household Helper, Housekeeper, Janitor, Kitchen Assistant, Kitchen Steward, Landscaper, Pantry Cook/Worker, Room Attendant, Runner, Sanitation Worker, Skilled Labourer, Unskilled Labourer</p>
7.	<p>Trade Related Workers: Baker, Butcher, Mechanic, Trimmer, Welder</p>
8.	<p>Plant and Machine Operators: Company Driver, Driver, Equipment Allocator, Fleet Officer, Forklift Operator, Hydrated Lime Operator, Machine Operator, Ride Operator, Print Operator, Truck Operator</p>

No.	Occupational Group and Types of Jobs made Redundant
9.	Skilled Agricultural Workers: Farm Assistant, Landscape Gardener

For the year 2021, as signs of recovery in the Jamaican economy continued to be evident, a total of 113 establishments during reported cases of redundancy January-December 2021. This represented a significant reduction from the 225 companies that submitted redundancies for 2020. The total number of redundancies reported for the period January-December 2021 was 1,268². This figure represents redundancies from 13 of the 21 industries and is considerably less than the 5,894 persons reportedly made redundant in 2020. Similar to 2020, the Service and Sales workers occupational group had the highest number of occupations made redundant. Most of these jobs were within the Accommodations and Food Service Activities industry and included Bartenders, Butlers, Cashiers, Mixologists and Housekeepers.

Growth Sectors and potential employment

Digital Economy

The COVID-19 pandemic has fast-tracked the digital economy by causing much of the world to operate online. Methods of teaching involving face to face ceased, and children with at-home internet access began attending classes remotely.³ Similarly, many employees started working from home and many companies implemented digital business models to maintain operations.⁴ The increased use of these modes of operations and the demand for high speed internet has helped to create a demand for occupations such as Programme Analysts, Mobile App Developers, Networking Specialists, Software Developers and Information Systems Analysts.⁵

Reports in the Jamaica Gleaner have indicated plans for expansion within the Digital Economy through investment in telecom network. Rock Mobile plans to invest US\$90 million (\$13 billion)

²Given the irregularity in submission of redundancy data by employers, it is expected that additional redundancies will be reported at a later date for the period in review, particularly for the latest months. The total number of redundancies is therefore expected to increase for the review period.

³ OECD (2020) - Digital Transformation in the Age of COVID-19

⁴ Ibid

⁵ OECD (2018) - Skills and jobs in the digital economy

over the next few years to build out a network of a well-developed telecom service to compete with local service providers.⁶ The demand for internet access has increased with the onset of the pandemic, given the aforementioned new modes of learning for students and remote work for many employees. Rock Mobile also expects to increase its workforce to 250-300 in the next two years, comprising both employees and contractors.

The increased number of employees that work remotely globally, has led to increased exposure to criminal online activities or in cyber space. As such, during the COVID-19 pandemic, some companies have been focusing on safeguarding their operations. This has led to increased demand for workers such as Threat Intelligence Analysts, Cyber Security Analysts, System Security Configuration Analysts, Malware Analysts, Security Software Development Managers and Security Architects.

Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) – Knowledge Process Outsourcing

Jamaica is one of the highest ranked countries in the Caribbean in terms of BPO destinations. This is largely due to its advances in information and communication technology (ICT) which have facilitated development in the sector.⁷ The success of this Sector is closely tied to its continued investment in skills and modernization of telecommunications infrastructure which also allows for remote work within the COVID-19 climate. In Jamaica there are over 60 foreign and locally owned BPO companies that provide employment to upwards of forty-three thousand Jamaicans.⁸

The BPO sector has been expanding with the growth of Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO).⁹ Growth in KPO was highlighted in the by the President of the Business Process Industry Association of Jamaica who stated that there have been increases in higher value services, some of which have grown between 30-150 per cent in the last two years, especially in information technology (IT) outsourcing. Similarly, a report in the Jamaica Observer showed that IBEX has

⁶ The Jamaica Gleaner (2021) - **Investment in Telecom Network.** Retrieved from <<https://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/business/20211002/rock-mobile-investing-13b-telecom-network>

⁷ ILO (2019) - Working Conditions in the Business Process Outsourcing Sector in Jamaica: A Preliminary Examination

⁸ JAMPRO (2020) – Sectoral Performance 2020

⁹ Knowledge Processing Outsourcing (KPO) is a subset of Business Process Outsourcing which is a form of outsourcing where knowledge and information related work is carried out by a different company or subsidiary within the same organization.

recognized a growth in business services in both BPO and KPO during the novel coronavirus pandemic, and predicts that more business services will be digitized during and after the crisis.¹⁰ Major industry players believe that advancement into KPO has led to increased customer confidence, displaying adaptation to the needs of today's clients as they look forward to more expansion in Jamaica.¹¹ KPO businesses will require higher level skills as indicated in the figure 1 below.

Occupations in Knowledge Process Outsourcing

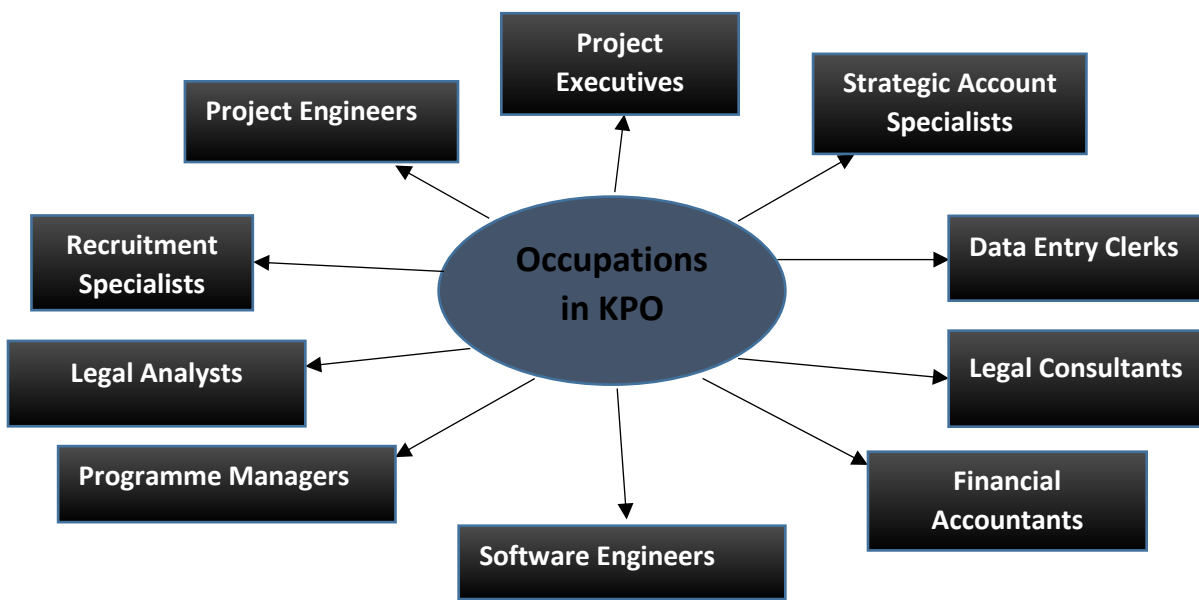


Figure 1

¹⁰ Jamaica Observer (2021) – BPO sector resilient as investments continue despite pandemic. Retrieved from <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business-observer/bpo-sector-resilient-as-investments-continue-despite-pandemic-sector-positions-to-tap-higher-value-outsourcing-services_228396>

¹¹ Jamaica Observer (2021) – BPO sector resilient as investments continue despite pandemic. Retrieved from <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business-observer/bpo-sector-resilient-as-investments-continue-despite-pandemic-sector-positions-to-tap-higher-value-outsourcing-services_228396>

Tourism¹²

The Tourism industry was the hardest hit in Jamaica due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the latter half of 2020, the Government of Jamaica implemented several initiatives to aid in the recovery of the Sector. One of which was to facilitate certification of tourism establishments that have undergone infrastructural changes to ensure that they are compliant with COVID-19 regulations. Travel restrictions were reduced, which led to increases in tourist arrivals and coincided with the reopening of the sector in 2021. Data from Port Authority (PAJ) Jamaica showed that between August 2021 and the end of October 2021, 16,237 cruise ship passengers visited across 10 different cruise calls.¹³ In addition, data from STATIN showed an uptick in employment in the *Accommodation and Food Service Activities* industry which grew to 95,600 persons in October 2021 compared to 83,400 persons in October 2020. Over the next 5 years there are several hotels investments on the horizon which will give opportunities for jobs within the Tourism sector.

Investment in Medical Tourism is expected as well and is being examined in many Caribbean territories to improve their position as a destination for visitors. The Government of Jamaica is promoting the country as a medical tourism destination. Furthermore, plans for the growth of Medical Tourism was evidenced through a signed Memorandum of Understanding in May 2021 between Bioprist Group and The University of the West Indies, in order to boost medical education and tourism.¹⁴ This MOU is designed to facilitate training of health care practitioners and the development of medical tourism related activities. Potential jobs from Medical Tourism include Medical Doctors, Healthcare Receptionists, Surgical and Registered Nurses and Specialized Medical Consultants.

¹² Information on the Tourism Sector was provided by the Ministry of Tourism and its associated bodies – Jamaica Tourist Board and the Jamaica Centre for Tourism Innovation

¹³ Jamaica Information Service (2021) – Upswing in Cruise Shipping. Retrieved from <<https://jis.gov.jm/upswing-in-cruise-shipping/>>

¹⁴ Jampro Website- retrieved from <https://dobusinessjamaica.com/news/2021/05/10464/>

Health Sector

The COVID-19 outbreak highlighted the inadequacies within the local hospitals and other health related facilities both in terms of infrastructure as well as workers.¹⁵ Jamaica’s Health sector has also been crippled by attrition of Nurses due to migration. Data from the North –East Regional Health Authority indicated that for the period 2019-2021 a total of 148 Nurses resigned from this region. The types of Nurses that were lost included Critical Care, Mental Health, Psychiatric, Trauma, Specialist and Nurse Anesthesia.

Health workers are not only needed to provide care for the population in the pandemic, but for the elderly as well, given that Jamaica is experiencing a growing ageing population. These factors have resulted in the demand for workers as highlighted in the table 3 below on the types of health workers in demand.

Table 3
The types of health workers in demand

OCCUPATIONS
Generalist Medical Practitioners
Specialist Medical Practitioners
Midwifery Professionals
Dentists
Dental Assistants
Pharmacists
Pharmaceutical Technicians and Assistants
Environmental and Occupational Health and Hygiene Professionals
Environmental and Occupational Health Inspectors and Associates
Physiotherapists
Nurse Anesthesia
Dieticians and Nutritionists
Audiologists and Speech Therapists
Optometrists and Ophthalmic Opticians
Paramedical Practitioners
Medical Imaging and Therapeutic Equipment Technicians
Medical and Pathology Laboratory Technicians
Medical and Dental Prosthetic Technicians
Medical Records and Health Information Technicians

¹⁵ ILO (2020) - COVID-19 and the Health Sector

OCCUPATIONS
Community Health Workers (Community Health Aides)
Ambulance Workers
Health Care Assistants/ Patient Care Assistants
Health Management and Support workers
Mental Health Nurses
Operating Theatre Nurses
Critical Care Nurses
Emergency Medical Technicians
Chiropractors
Social Workers
Gerontologists
Geriatric Nurses
Practical Nurses
Trauma Nurses
Registered Nurses
Support Workers

Source: Ministry of Health and Wellness

Renewable Energy

The Government’s commitment to maximize on the country’s energy resource potential is being advanced by the National Energy Policy, Vision 2030 – Jamaica’s National Development Plan, and the National Renewable Energy Policy.¹⁶ The primary objective of the Government is to diversify the national energy supply into a variety of energy sources that includes any combination of petroleum coke (petcoke), coal, natural gas and renewables. Information gathered indicate that the Renewable Energy sector is poised for growth as the Jamaica Public Service Limited (JPS) has begun transitioning to increase the use of renewable energy.¹⁷ The company stated that this transition forms an important part of the organization’s strategy for the future, especially as the Government pushes to diversify the Energy sector. Investment in Renewable Energy has the potential to provide employment for jobs such as Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Technicians, Geothermal Engineers, Electricians, Transportation Workers, Machinists and Heavy Machinery Operators.¹⁸

¹⁶ JAMPRO (2019) report that was provided to the MLSS based on discussion with the institution

¹⁷ Jamaica observer (2021) - JPS plots renewables as a path to the future. Retrieved from <https://www.jamaicaobserver.com/business-report/jps-plots-renewables-as-a-path-to-the-future_233681?profile=1056

¹⁸ International Labour organization (2015) – Skills and Occupational needs in Renewable Energy

Cannabis Industry

The Cannabis industry has both economic and employment potential for Jamaica. The global Marijuana market was reported to be valued at USD 42.20 Billion in 2017 and is projected to reach USD 466.81 Billion by 2025.¹⁹ In terms of employment, there is potential for entrepreneurship. In addition, the Cannabis Licensing Authority reported that within the first quarter of 2020, over Four Hundred and ninety-seven (497) jobs have been created through the issuing of cannabis licenses. The types of occupations in the Cannabis industry include Site Inspectors, Cannabis Retailers, Cannabis Farmers and Chemists.

The Cannabis industry is currently poised for growth through an investment of US\$15 million to Jamaican company Medicanja from US investor Noble Capital Fund in 2021.²⁰ The investment in Medicanja is expected to create over 200 jobs in the short term and will deliver over US\$10 million in annual exports.²¹

Entrepreneurship

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a shift in consumer behaviour with fewer persons opting to engage in face to face methods of doing business. In addition, with the Jamaican Government implementing measures to curtail the spread of the virus, has resulted in the creation of E-commerce National Delivery Solution (ENDS).²² ENDS is a partnership between the Government of Jamaica and the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica (PSOJ). It allows for the quick service industry and delivery operators registered on the ENDS platform to operate during the hours of the curfew until midnight. There are over 2,000 entrepreneurs who have benefitted from the programme.

¹⁹ EverBlu Capital Research (2017) – Cannabis Industry Report

²⁰ T&T Newsday (2021). Jamaica Cannabis industry gets US\$15m boost. Retrieved from <<https://newsday.co.tt/2021/10/27/jamaica-cannabis-industry-gets-us15m-boost/>>

²¹ T&T Newsday (2021). Jamaica Cannabis industry gets US\$15m boost. Retrieved from <<https://newsday.co.tt/2021/10/27/jamaica-cannabis-industry-gets-us15m-boost/>>

²² Jamaica Information Service (2021) – E-commerce National Delivery System (ENDS)

Farming was also highlighted as an opportunity for entrepreneurship. Some of the potential farming areas include bee keeping, agro-processing and crop cultivation.

Future of Work

The Future of Work is being driven by factors such as digitization, climate change and change in population structure.²³ COVID-19 has forced many businesses to adapt to technology and be more innovative in advertising and delivering services. With the need to embrace the digital age, the future of work points to the need for employers to have employees with skills-set such as tech savviness, creativity and adaptability.²⁴ In addition, it has opened opportunities for emerging jobs related to computer and technology innovation such as Risk Management Specialists, Database and Network Professionals, Big Data Specialists, Digital Marketing and Strategy Specialists and Business Development Professionals (See Table 4).²⁵

Table 4
Impact of the future of work on occupations

Increase Demand	Decrease Demand
Data Analysts and Scientists	Data Entry Clerks
Big Data Specialists	Administrative and Executive Secretaries
Digital Marketing and Strategy Specialists	Assembly and Factory Workers
Information Security Analysts	Postal Service Clerks
Software and Applications Developers	Bank Tellers and Related Clerks
Database and Network Professionals	
Mechanics and Machinery Repairers	
Risk Management Specialists	
Database and Network Professionals	
Business Development Professionals	

²³ Anderson, S. etal (2019) – What is the future of work?

²⁴ OECD (2019) – The Future of Work – Employment Outlook

²⁵ Ibid

Increase Demand	Decrease Demand
Business Services and Administration Managers	

Job Vacancies

Job vacancies in the Public Sector

A total of 398 jobs in Central Government were submitted to the MLSS in 2020. Over 90 per cent of these jobs were in Kingston and St. Andrew. In terms of occupational group, 63.3 per cent of the vacancies were for “Professionals”. For January to June 2021, a total of 315 jobs were submitted. Similarly to 2020, most of the vacancies were in Kingston and St. Andrew and for “Professionals.”

The data on vacancies in Public Sector was analysed to ascertain the salary range of the positions submitted to the MLSS in 2020. Figure 2 below shows that 23 per cent of the vacancies had starting salary scales ranging from \$2.0million JMD to \$2.49million JMD. Additionally, 88 per cent had starting salary below \$3million JMD. Approximately 1/3 of the upper salary scale was below \$1.49million JMD and is comparable to the to the \$1.5million JMD income threshold.

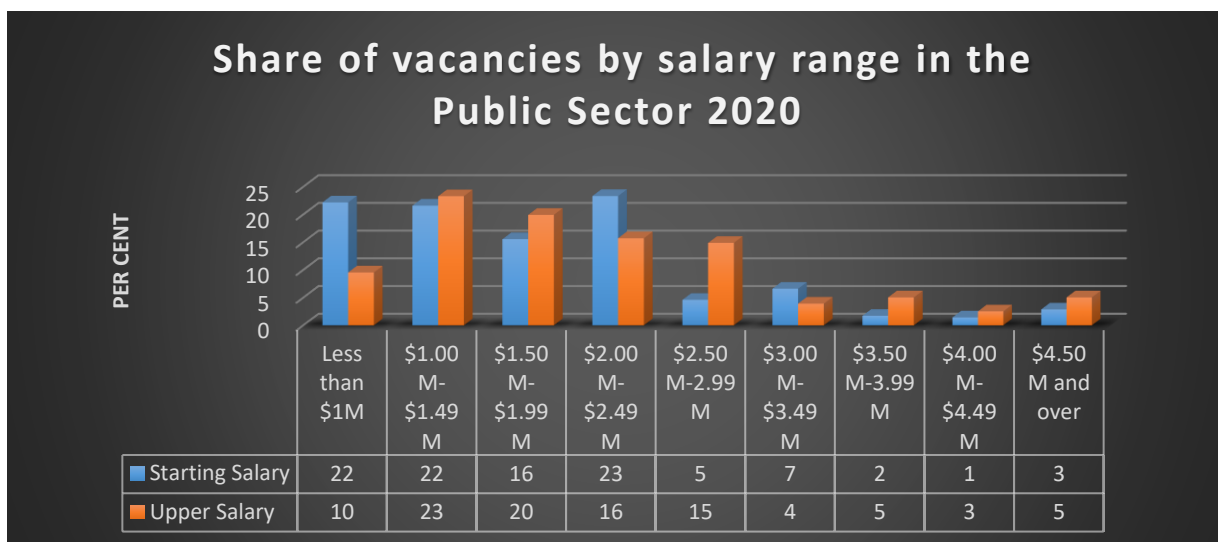


Figure 2

Salary range of vacancies advertised in the public sector for January to June 2021 was also analysed in this Report. The data appears similar to the trends for the 2020 vacancies reported above. Figure 3 shows that 25.8 per cent of the vacancies had starting salary ranging from \$2million JMD to \$2.49million JMD. Additionally, 91.9 per cent had starting salary below \$3million JMD. Just over a third of the upper salary scale was below \$1.49million JMD.

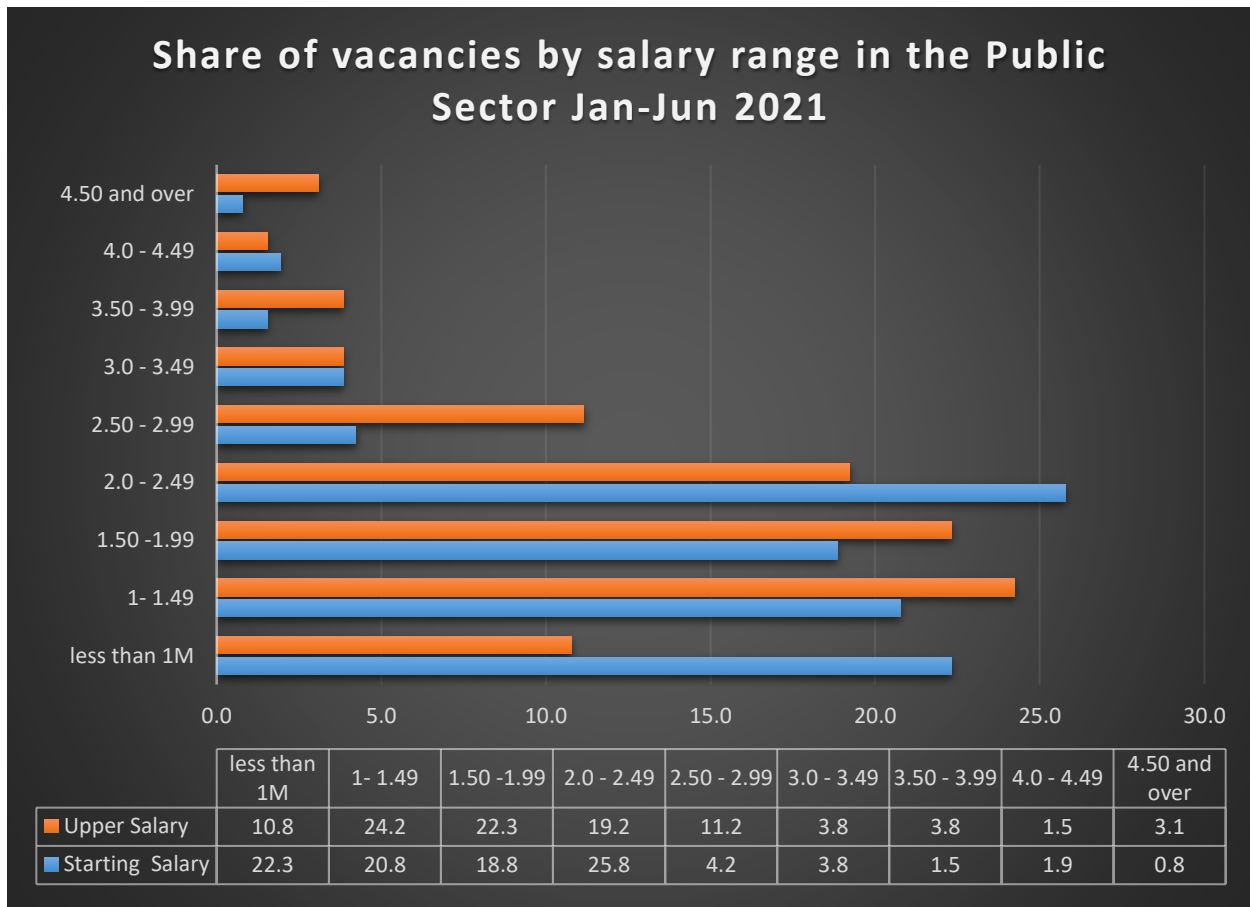


Figure 3

Vacancies through the local newspapers

Vacancies through the local newspapers were analysed for the periods April to June 2021 and April to June 2020. The data showed that there was an increase of 67.6 per cent in the number of vacancies posted in the newspaper for April to June 2021 when compared to same period in 2020. Managers/Directors/Principals was the leading vacancies over the two periods.

Vacancies through Private Employment Agencies

The data submitted by PEAs to the MLSS for the period January to December 2020 was used to ascertain the types of positions that were in demand in Jamaica. The number of vacancies submitted for both overseas and local employment totalled 9, 603. Of this number, 2, 133 were vacancies locally. A little less than 30 per cent of the local vacancies were for Clerical/Front Desk workers. There was a decline of 9.4 per cent in the number of vacancies submitted to the MLSS for both overseas and local employment for January to December 2021 compared to the previous year. Local vacancies submitted declined by 12.3 per cent and approximately 38 per cent of these vacancies were for Domestic Helpers.

Work Permit

For the period January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020, data showed that the number of work permit approvals granted for the 2020 calendar year declined by 43.3 per cent. However, in terms of occupations, 56 per cent were granted for “Professionals” such as Highway Construction Engineers, Registered Nurses, Senior Managers and Building Architects.

In Table 2, the aforementioned groups included persons made redundant. However work permits were also granted in these occupational groups. Plans are afoot within the MLSS to link work permit with the Labour Market Information System (LMIS) to enable a search for local talent to fill vacancies from investors.

For the year 2021, the total number of work permits approvals granted increased by 23.6 per cent when compared to 2020. A little over a third of the work permits granted were for Managers in areas such as Communication, Wholesale, Food Processing, Construction and Marketing. When analysed by industry, it was evident that 45.2 per cent were approved in the *Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motor Cycles*.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic had a major impact on the Jamaica as evidenced by decline in the reported for 2020. Data retrieved from STATIN showed double digit decline in the economy for July 2020. Declines were also observed in the employed labour force as close to 6,000 jobs were reported to have been made redundant for the 2020 calendar year. Of significance was the fact that business operations, especially those that relied heavily on face to face interactions such as the Tourism – to include *Accommodation and Food Service Activities*, were forced to cease operations. Challenges were also apparent in the Health sector as the demand for health care workers grew.

Despite these challenges, the Government of Jamaica remained resolute in its plans for economic recovery. In 2021, the Government sought to implement strategies for recovery, which ultimately led to increased economic activities in Jamaica. Data from STATIN corroborated these efforts as total value added for the Jamaican economy increased by 5.8 per cent in the third quarter of 2021, when compared to the said period in 2020. This was largely due to growth in both the Goods Producing and Services industries by 2.4 per cent and 7.1 per cent respectively. The positive economic performance of Jamaica in 2021 was also evident by the single digit unemployment rate reported for October 2021. In addition, the total number of redundancies reported to the MLSS for 2021 declined by 4,626. This is also indicative of businesses being able to sustain themselves and retain staff.

As the report highlights positive trends in the labour market for 2021, with unemployment decreasing, it is important to highlight that the unemployment rate for youth aged 14-24 declined by 9.3 percentage points compared to October 2020. This is very important for Jamaica as widespread youth unemployment can result in increased crime rate and possible social unrest. These issues can prevent the country from innovating and developing competitive advantages based on human capital investment and cripple prospects for future development.

The evidence of decline in unemployment was further bolstered by growth in sectors such as the Digital Economy, BPO and the recovery of the Tourism sector. The pandemic helped to fast track

the growth of the Digital economy with the increased use of online platforms for remote learning and job functions in order to minimize the level of face to face interactions. As such, there were increased need for workers such as IT User Support Technicians, Mobile App Developers, and Networking Specialists. The future of work coincides with the digital economy and likewise it facilitates increased use of technology, which may replace some low level positions. Sectors such as Banking and Finance, with the increased use of automated systems maybe affected in terms of the types of workers needed. Table 4 above cited the decreased demand for Bank Tellers and Related Clerks. In order to cope with the increasing labour dynamics, investment to improve skill-set will allow workers to function effectively with technology instead of competing with it, thus making workers more marketable.

The Global Services Sector (Business Process Outsourcing -BPOs) continued on its upward trend in terms of employment. The success of this sector is closely tied to its continued investment in skills and modernization of telecommunications infrastructure which is critical in the digital age. The sector is poised for growth with investment in Knowledge Process Outsourcing.

Information gathered has indicated that the Tourism industry experienced many challenges and was badly impacted by COVID-19 in 2020. However, the Sector remains critical for the economic recovery of Jamaica. As such, the Government of Jamaica in 2021 implemented several measures to aid the reopening and recovery of the Tourism sector. Signs of recovery in the sector was evident in growth in employment in *Accommodation and Food Service Activities* which increased by 14.6 per cent in October 2021 compared to 2020. The Government is also focused on developing the Medical Tourism industry in order to improve Jamaica's economic and employment potential. Medical Tourism has the potential to bolster the demand for occupations such as Specialized Medical Consultants, Surgical Nurses, Medical Doctors and Medical Receptionists.