



Ministerial Statement

by:

The Hon. Jason P. Hayward, JP, MP

Minister of Economy and Labour

The November 2023 Labour Force Survey Report and Government Training Initiatives

Friday, 15 November 2024

Mr Speaker

I rise today to lay the November 2023 Labour Force Survey Report and highlight for Members of this Honourable House the key findings of the Survey.

The Labour Force Survey serves an economic tool measuring employment, unemployment, and the economically inactive population in the Bermudian economy.

The current Labour Force Survey results show that Bermuda's labour market remains robust, with increases in employment and relatively low unemployment. The data indicates unemployment was measured as 2.8 per cent, slightly below the 3.1% recorded in the same period of the previous year and a vast improvement from the 7.9% recorded during the pandemic.

Mr Speaker

The unemployment rate for Bermudians stood at 3.3 per cent, a decrease from the rate of unemployment reported a year ago. This is another positive indicator as economic and labour policies continue to support local employment. Youth unemployment (16-24) stood at 13.5 per cent, as this demographic group, globally, continues to experience the highest unemployment rates amongst all demographic groups.

Mr Speaker

Other relevant findings from the November 2023 Survey include the following:

- a. the labour force stood at 36,619,
- b. the working population comprised 35,591 persons, of which 3,157 persons were underemployed,
- c. the working population distribution showed that 76.4 per cent were Bermudian,
- d. the labour force participation rate was recorded at 82.4 per cent, and,
- e. the average hours worked per week in the main job was 41.2.

Mr Speaker

For members of the public, the November 2023 Labour Force Survey Report is available online at gov.bm/employment-statistics.

Mr Speaker

While the findings indicate progress in terms of a steady recovery and growth in the labour market, the Government will continue to press on with its effective policies and programmes that support Bermuda's workers.

Currently, the Department of Workforce Development is expanding opportunities for Bermudians in skilled trades and other essential careers.

Registration has just closed for the Department's Skilled Trades Apprenticeship Training Programme. This initiative offers Bermudians an excellent pathway into high-demand trades like Masonry, Plumbing, and Carpentry, providing participants with the certifications and hands-on experience needed to succeed in technical and vocational careers. This programme is designed not only to address the demand for skilled tradespeople but also to provide participants with a sustainable and rewarding career path.

In collaboration with Bermuda's industry stakeholders, this programme will offer a unique blend of classroom instruction and real-world, on-the-job training. Through partnerships with industry experts, we will be equipping participants with the critical skills required for fields like construction, facility management, and maintenance.

Mr Speaker

This Apprenticeship Training Programme cannot be successful without our partners – our employers in plumbing, masonry and carpentry. We are delighted to work with those who have already stepped forward to participate, and we invite more employers to support this programme by taking on an apprentice. By being involved, employers can help cultivate a skilled workforce and gain motivated new team members ready to contribute immediately while aiding Bermuda's economic future. I encourage employers in the skilled trades to attend an employer information session at the Department of Workforce Development on 2 December.

We look forward to seeing Bermudians embrace this chance to advance in the skilled trades!

Mr Speaker

Beyond this apprenticeship programme, the Department of Workforce Development is advancing several other initiatives. At present, there are twenty (20) individuals in the PACE Administrative Professionals Course; five (5) participants in the Small Appliances course who are currently in their second week attending Fred's Appliance Academy in Cleveland, Ohio; and thirty (30) individuals who have recently completed their heavy truck driver's licences who can now access better employment opportunities within the heavy trucking industry. The public can also visit dwd.bm to register for one of the monthly courses in Interview Prep, Money Management, and Job Search Strategies, among others.

Mr Speaker

Looking ahead, we encourage Bermudians to keep an eye out for registration for the Learn Through Experience Hospitality Training Programme and a Solar Installation Continuing Education opportunity for electricians. There is so much important work happening to equip Bermudians with the skills needed for successful careers.

Together, we can build a skillful, self-reliant Bermuda, ready to meet the demands of tomorrow's economy.

Thank you, **Mr Speaker**