



INDUSTRIAL COURT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

TRENDS IN LABOUR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

MAY 2017, VOLUME 3



PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

Dear Stakeholders,

The Trends in Labour and Industrial Relations Bulletin is an annual publication of the Industrial Court of Trinidad and Tobago. The Bulletin seeks to review developments in the country's labour market against the backdrop of the current economic environment. This is the Court's third publication of the Bulletin, providing useful analyses to stakeholders and the wider working population on various statistics derived from the database of the Industrial Court.

The data and analyses in this Bulletin covers the period 2012 to 2016 together with a snapshot of the first two quarters of the fiscal year 2016-2017. The fiscal year is from October of one year to the end of September the following year.

This Bulletin introduces a new table which shows the number of collective agreements sent for registration by the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development.

Through this publication, the Court hopes to review and develop new data sets on trends in the labour market which we think would be useful for stakeholders. In this regard, the Court continues to welcome suggestions from stakeholders and from the public in general to enhance the usefulness of the information in our Bulletin.

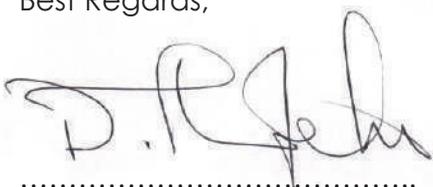
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My heartfelt thanks to Her Honour Judge Christopher-Nicholls, Mrs. Youland Robinson, Court Administrator, Mrs. Deedra Clapham, as well as the staff of the Office of the Economic and Industrial Research Department, and Communications Department for their input in the Bulletin.

Best Regards,



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Deborah Thomas-Felix
President
Industrial Court

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ACRONYMS

A	Application
CSO	Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago
ESD	Essential Services Division
Ex-Parte	Heard in the absence of one party of the dispute
FY	Fiscal Year
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSD	General Services Division
HH	His/Her Honour
ICA	Interpretation of Collective Agreement
IRA	Industrial Relations Act
IRO	Industrial Relations Offence
MPD	Maternity Protection Dispute
MWD	Minimum Wages Dispute
MWO	Minimum Wages Offence
O	Opinions
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Act
OSHD	Occupational Safety and Health Dispute
PF	Peremptory Fixture
POS	Port of Spain
Q	Quarter
QGDP	Quarterly Gross Domestic Product
R	Recognition
RC	Rescission of Contract
RSBD	Retrenchment and Severance Benefit Dispute
ST	Special Tribunal
TD	Trade Disputes
TGO	Tobago
TU	Trade Union
VAT	Value Added Tax
WOP	Want of Prosecution

Table 1: KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS

SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS	2013	2014	2015	2016
Real GDP Growth (%)	2.7	-0.6	-0.6	-2.3
GDP Per Capita (US\$ '000)	19.67	20.19	18.14	16.72
Headline Inflation (% end-of-period)	5.6	8.5	1.5	3.1
Government Revenue (TT\$Bn)	52.8	58.4	57.2	45.0
Government Expenditure (TT\$Bn)	57.7	62.8	59.9	52.2
Exchange Rates (end-of-period): (TT\$/US\$)	6.4426	6.4086	6.3776	6.6715
Net Official Reserves (US\$Mn)	10,175.9	11,497.1	9,933.0	9,465.8
Net Official Reserves (in months import cover)	12.2	12.9	11.2	10.5

Source: Central Bank of Trinidad & Tobago, Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago (CSO)

The domestic economy contracted further in 2016 as economic activity declined by 2.3% from -0.6% in 2015. The Central Bank's Index of Quarterly Gross Domestic Product (QGDP) revealed weakened economic activity in both the energy and non-energy sectors of the domestic economy. Depressed commodity prices and downtime for the maintenance of equipment by key energy companies have affected investment in the sector as well as oil exploration and production. The performance of the non-energy sector was also subdued with activity, contracting in *Distribution*, *Construction* and *Manufacturing* subsectors.

Notwithstanding increased fuel prices and the widening of the Value Added Tax (VAT) base in April 2016, the current depressed economic environment contained inflation in 2016. Headline inflation measured 3.1% in 2016 from 1.5% in 2015. The fiscal position also worsened in 2016 given the lower energy revenues as the overall fiscal deficit widened to TT\$ 7.3 billion (5% of GDP), compared with TT\$ 2.7 billion (1.8% of GDP) in fiscal year (FY) 2014/15.

During 2016, slower foreign currency inflows due to the lacklustre performance of the energy sector, saw the Country's net official reserves falling to US\$ 9,465.8 million or 10.5 months import cover from US\$ 9,933 million or 11.2 months import cover in 2015. At the end 2016, the weighted average TT\$/US\$ selling rate stood at TT\$ 6.6715 which represented a depreciation of 4.6% from the beginning of 2016.

