

HIGHLIGHTS

Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago Annual Economic Survey, 2018



In Summary:

- In 2018, the Trinidad and Tobago economy improved on the strength of the energy sector. Overall, energy output grew, despite mixed performances within the sector, while several major non-energy sub-sectors improved, albeit modestly.
- Both crude oil and natural gas prices increased in 2018.
- Labour market conditions worsened in 2017.
- Headline inflation reached its lowest level on record in 2018, partly due to low food inflation.
- Central Government registered a lower fiscal deficit in fiscal year (FY) 2017/18 when compared to FY 2016/17, due to higher revenues and lower expenditure.
- The Repo rate ended the year at 5.00 per cent after the Central Bank increased it by 25 basis points in June 2018.

Global economic growth is expected to improve moderately in 2019 while the domestic economy should be boosted by the startup of the Angelin platform during the first quarter 2019.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS



Real GDP grew by **1.9%** in 2018, driven by the energy sector (2.4%).



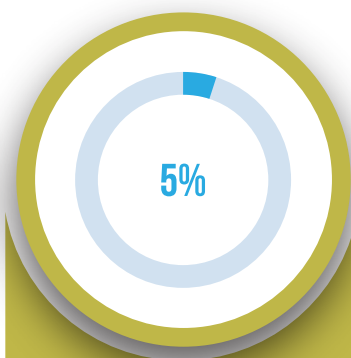
The unemployment rate averaged **4.8%** in 2017, compared with 4.0% in 2016.



Headline inflation averaged **1.0%** in 2018, the lowest level on record.



In FY 2017/18 the Central Government recorded overall a lower deficit of **3.4%** of GDP, compared with 9.1% in the previous period.



The Central Bank increased the Repo rate to **5.00%** in June 2018, after which it was kept constant to the end of the year.



Gross official reserves amounted to US\$7.6bn at the end 2018, representing **8.0 months** import cover.



Global economic growth slowed in 2018 to **3.6%**, compared with 3.8% in 2017.