

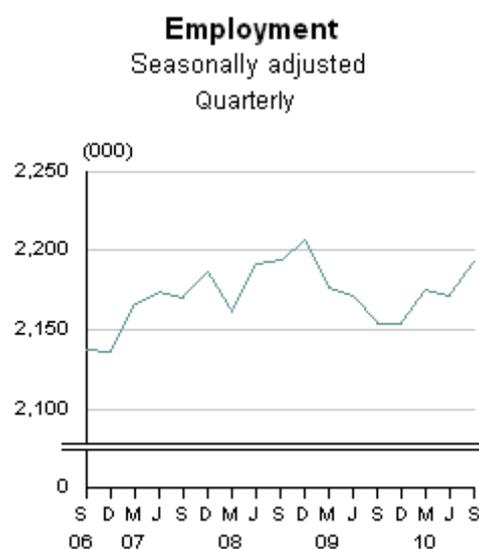
Embargoed until 10:45am – 04 November 2010

Household Labour Force Survey: September 2010 quarter

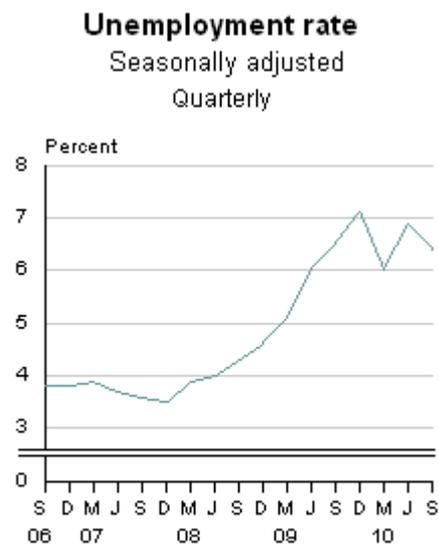
Highlights – seasonally adjusted

- The unemployment rate fell to 6.4 percent.
- Unemployment decreased by 10,000 to 150,000.
- Employment increased by 23,000 to 2,193,000.

Seasonally adjusted	September 2010 quarter	Quarterly change	Annual change
Unemployment rate	6.4%	-0.5	-0.1
Unemployed	150,000	-6.1%	+0.3%
Employed	2,193,000	+1.0%	+1.8%
Not in the labour force	1,089,000	-0.5%	+0.6%
Labour force participation rate	68.3%	+0.2	+0.3



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Geoff Bascand
Government Statistician

4 November 2010
ISSN 1178-0487

Commentary

Labour market overview – seasonally adjusted

During the September 2010 quarter, the unemployment rate fell to 6.4 percent. This fall was the result of employment increasing and unemployment decreasing.

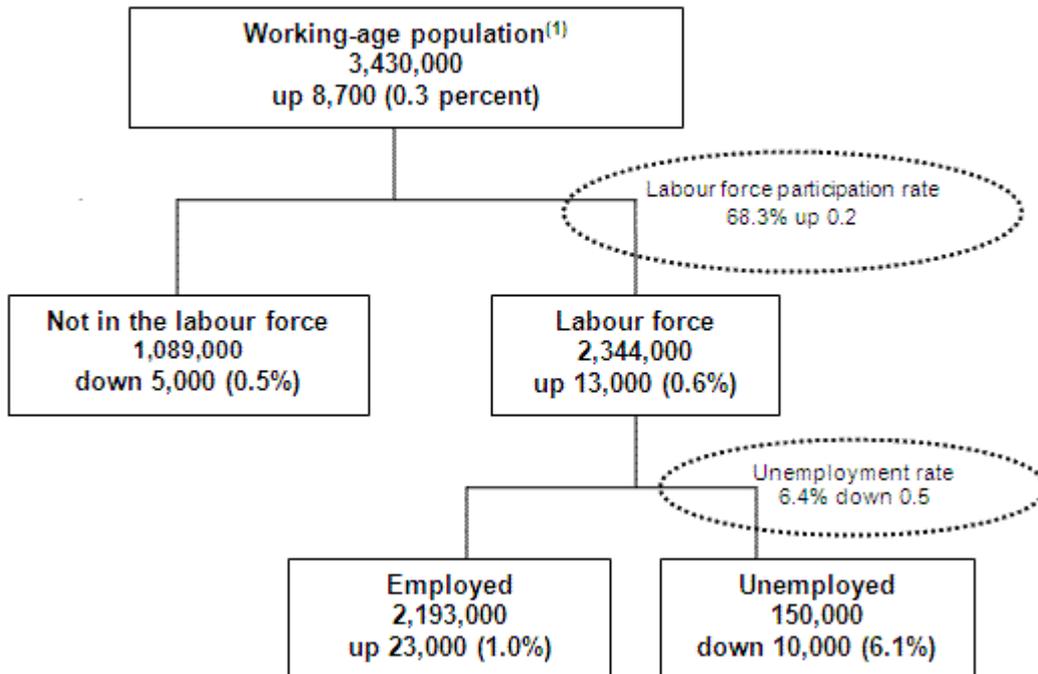
The decrease in the unemployment rate this quarter marks a divergence in labour market outcomes for males and females. Female unemployment increased during the quarter, with the female unemployment rate rising to 7.2 percent, up from 6.8 percent. Conversely, the male unemployment rate fell to 5.7 percent during the September 2010 quarter, down from 6.9 percent in the June 2010 quarter.

Employment increased by 23,000 during the quarter, with a larger increase for males (1.9 percent) than for females (0.1 percent). Actual hours worked per week increased by 0.8 percent.

The labour force participation rate increased to 68.3 percent in the September 2010 quarter. Male labour force participation increased by 0.4 percentage points, while female participation increased by 0.2 percentage points.

The Labour Market September 2010 Quarter *Seasonally adjusted figures*

Quarterly Change



(1) The working-age population is not seasonally adjusted

Unemployment – seasonally adjusted

During the September 2010 quarter, unemployment decreased by 10,000 people (6.1 percent) to 150,000. Male unemployment fell by 15,000 (17.7 percent) to 71,000, while female unemployment rose by 5,000 (7.4 percent) to 80,000.

Annually, unemployment has remained flat, though there have been compositional changes underneath. Male unemployment has fallen by 11.4 percent, while female unemployment has risen by 13.6 percent.

The unemployment rate fell by 0.5 percentage points to 6.4 percent during the September 2010 quarter. The male unemployment rate fell by 1.2 percentage points, down to 5.7 percent, while the female unemployment rate increased by 0.4 percentage points, up to 7.2 percent during the quarter.

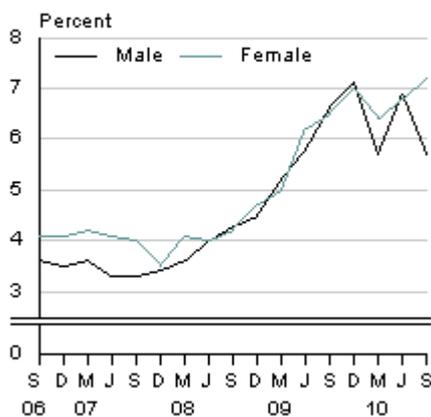
Since the September 2009 quarter, the unemployment rate has fallen by 0.1 percentage points, down from 6.5 percent.

The trend series

As well as adjusting for seasonal effects, the trend series removes the irregular component from a series. This can help reveal the underlying movement of the series.

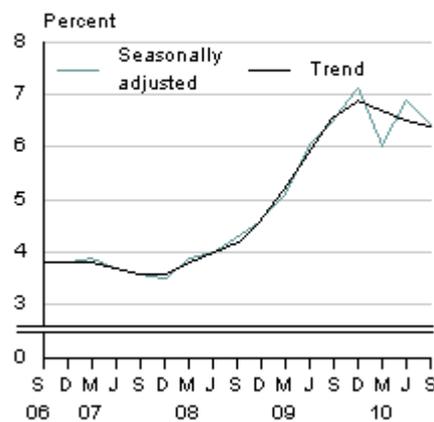
The trend shows unemployment flat at 151,000. The trend unemployment rate fell by 0.1 percentage points during the quarter, down to 6.4 percent.

Unemployment rate by sex
Seasonally adjusted
Quarterly



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Unemployment rate
Seasonally adjusted and trend
Quarterly



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Unadjusted annual movements

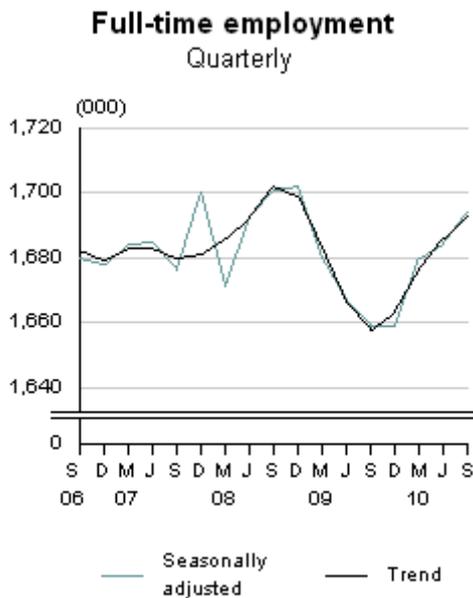
Notable unadjusted annual movements are as follows. The number of unemployed people aged 15–19 years decreased significantly during the September 2010 year, down 5,700 (14.5 percent) to 33,400. By region, the number of people unemployed decreased notably in Gisborne/Hawke’s Bay (down 3,700) and Canterbury (down 4,100).

Employment – seasonally adjusted

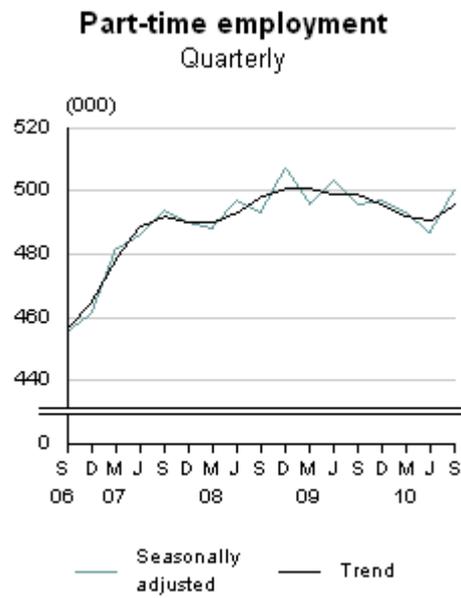
Employment increased by 23,000 (1.0 percent) during the September 2010 quarter. Annually, employment increased by 39,000 (1.8 percent).

The rise in employment comprised an increase of 13,000 (2.7 percent) in part-time employment and an increase of 10,000 (0.6 percent) in full-time employment. Annually, part-time employment increased by 0.8 percent, while full-time employment increased by 2.1 percent.

Both male and female employment increased during the quarter. Male employment increased by 21,000 (1.9 percent), with part-time employment increasing by 6.2 percent and full-time increasing by 1.4 percent. Female employment increased by 1,000 (0.1 percent), with part-time employment increasing by 1.8 percent and full-time decreasing by 0.6 percent.



Source: Statistics New Zealand



Source: Statistics New Zealand

The trend series

The trend series shows that employment grew by 11,000 (0.5 percent) during the quarter, reaching 2,188,000. Male employment grew by 11,000 (0.9 percent) to 1,171,000, while female employment remained at 1,018,000.

Unadjusted annual movements

Notable unadjusted annual movements are as follows. During the September 2010 year, employment increased by 11,900 for those aged 65 years and older. The number of people employed in the Otago region increased by 19,300.

By industry, employment rose in agriculture, forestry, and fishing (up 13,200) and electricity, gas, water, and waste services (up 4,600) since the September 2009 quarter. Employment in the financial and insurance services industry fell by 8,600 during the same period.

Working-age population – unadjusted

The working-age population grew by 8,700 (0.3 percent) during the September 2010 quarter, and by 46,000 (1.4 percent) in the year to the September 2010 quarter, to reach 3,430,000. There was a 4,400 gain from net permanent and long-term migration. (See [International Travel and Migration: September 2010](#) for more information.)

In the year to the September 2010 quarter, the working-age population increased significantly in Waikato (up 4.5 percent), Bay of Plenty (up 6.8 percent), and Otago (up 10.2 percent).

Labour force participation – seasonally adjusted

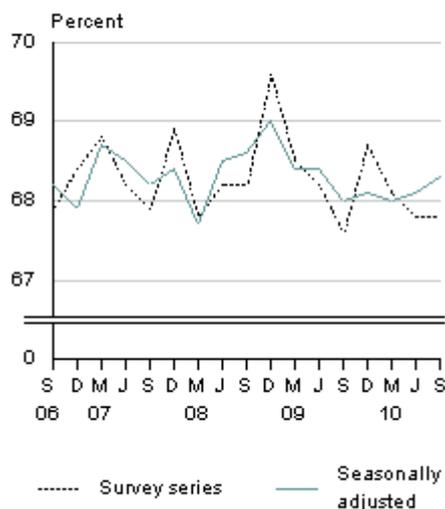
The labour force participation rate increased to 68.3 percent during the September 2010 quarter. This is a quarterly increase of 0.2 percentage points and an annual increase of 0.3 percentage points.

During the quarter, the male labour force participation rate increased by 0.4 percentage points, while the female participation rate increased by 0.2 percentage points. In the year to the September 2010 quarter, male labour force participation rose by 0.6 percentage points, while female participation remained steady.

The total labour force increased by 13,000 people (0.6 percent) during the quarter. Annually, the labour force has risen by 40,000 (1.7 percent).

Labour force participation rate

Quarterly

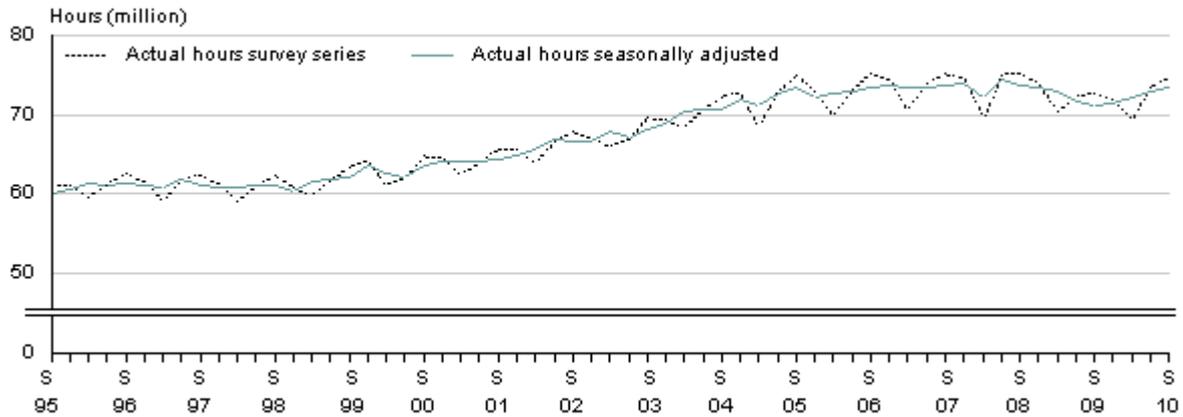


Source: Statistics New Zealand

Total hours worked – seasonally adjusted

The total number of actual hours worked per week rose by 0.8 percent during the September 2010 quarter. During the same period, the number of usual hours worked fell by 0.2 percent. Annually, the total number of actual hours worked per week rose by 3.0 percent and usual hours worked rose by 1.0 percent.

Total hours worked each week Quarterly



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Jobless – unadjusted

The jobless are defined as those people who are either officially unemployed, available but not actively seeking work, or actively seeking but not available for work. Since the September 2009 quarter, the number of jobless people has fallen by 10,500 (4.1 percent), down to 243,500. The decrease was driven by a decrease in the number of people who are available but not actively seeking work, or actively seeking but not available for work. Annually, the number of people unemployed remained flat.

Underemployment – unadjusted

The number of underemployed people (people employed part-time who would prefer to work more hours) may serve as a measure of labour under-utilisation in the economy. Of the 503,700 people employed part-time in the September 2010 quarter, 21.8 percent (110,000) would prefer to work more hours. This compares with 20.6 percent in the June 2010 quarter and 24.4 percent in the September 2009 quarter.

During the September 2010 quarter, 29.0 percent of males working part-time would have preferred to work more hours, compared with 18.9 percent of females.

Duration of unemployment – unadjusted

Annually, short-term unemployment (those unemployed for 26 weeks or less) fell by 1,600 (1.7 percent) to 95,100. During the same period, the number of long-term unemployed (those unemployed for longer than 26 weeks) rose by 2,900 (8.1 percent) to 38,300. Of the total number of unemployed people in the September 2010 quarter, 65.8 percent had been so for 26 weeks or less, while 26.5 percent had been unemployed for longer than 26 weeks.

Duration of unemployment (unadjusted)		
	September 2009 quarter (000)	September 2010 quarter (000)
Short-term unemployment 26 weeks or less	96.7	95.1
Long-term unemployment Over 26 weeks, but not over one year	25.9	28.0
Over one year, but not over two years	6.5	7.0
Over two years	3.0	3.4
Total long-term unemployment	35.5	38.3
Not specified	12.3	11.0
Total unemployment	144.5	144.5

Participation in formal study – unadjusted

During the September 2010 quarter, 317,900 people were participating in formal study, a 1.2 percent annual increase. Unemployed people were the most likely to be involved in formal study, with 14.5 percent participating. This compares with 11.1 percent of those not in the labour force and 8.0 percent of those who were employed.

Ethnic group statistics – unadjusted

Annually, unemployment rates increased significantly for the Māori only and MELAA only ethnic groups.

Single/combination unemployment rate (unadjusted) by ethnic group		
	September 2009 quarter (percent)	September 2010 quarter (percent)
European only	4.5	4.3
Māori only	14.2	16.2
Pacific peoples only	12.3	13.5
Asian only	8.5	8.0
MELAA only	8.0	11.1
'Other ethnicity' only	3.7	2.7
European/Māori	10.4	9.4
Two or more groups not elsewhere included	14.5	13.4

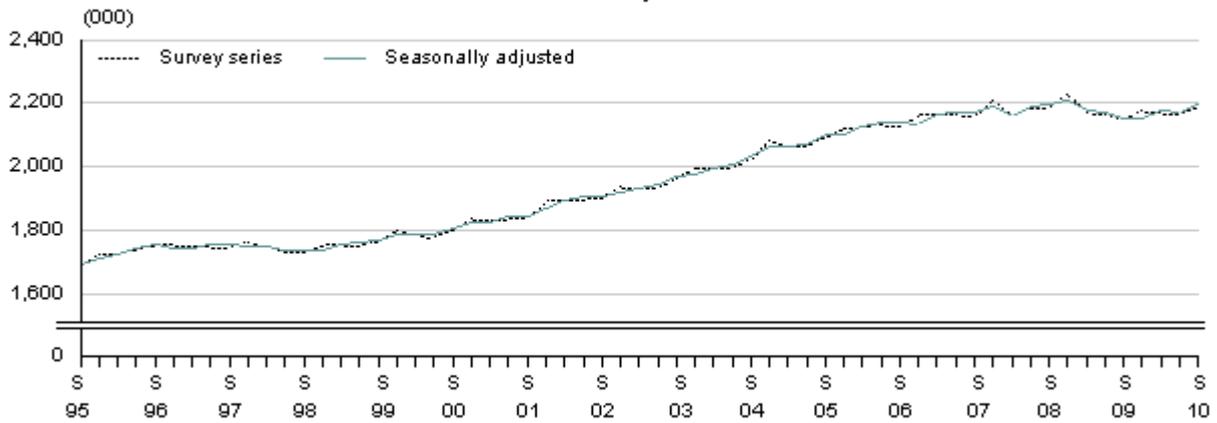
Note: MELAA = Middle Eastern/Latin American/African

The unemployment rate for all people who identified with the Māori ethnic group (including those who also identified with other groups) was 13.4 percent in the September 2010 quarter. This figure is known as the total response Māori unemployment rate. This rate has increased by 0.4 percentage points since the September 2009 quarter, when it was 13.0 percent.

Longer time series

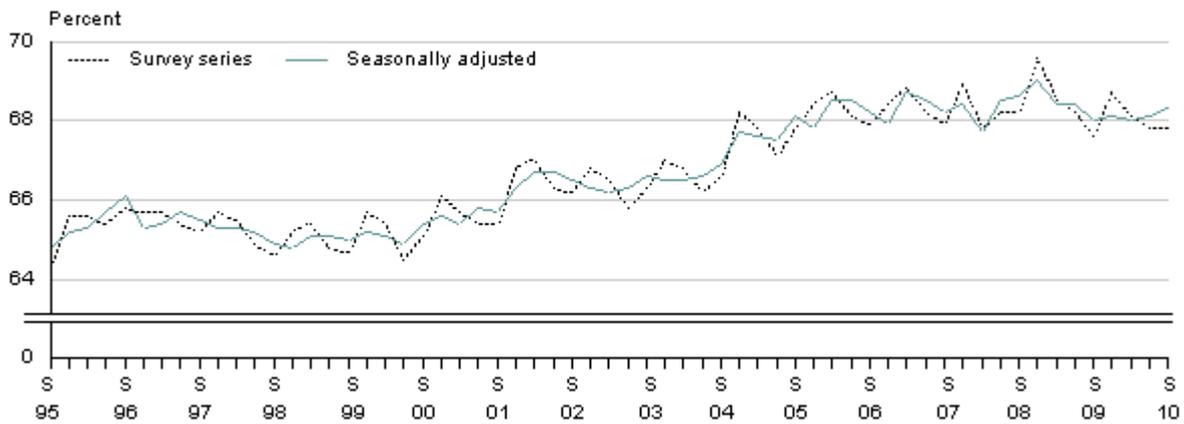
The following graphs show the HLFS series for the number of people employed, the labour force participation rate, and the unemployment rate over a 15-year period. A complete time series from March 1986 onwards is available on request.

Employment Quarterly



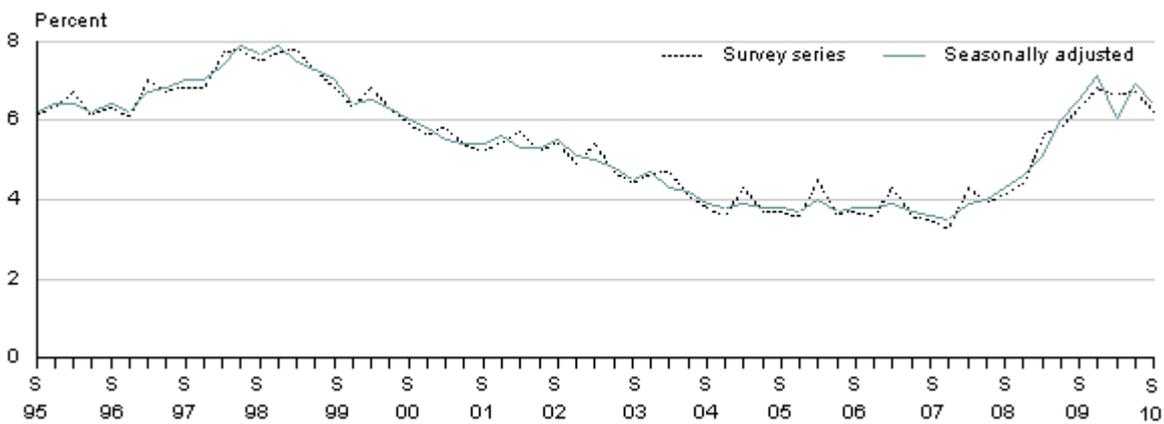
Source: Statistics New Zealand

Labour force participation rate Quarterly



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Unemployment rate Quarterly



Source: Statistics New Zealand

Impact of Canterbury earthquake on the survey results

The earthquake that struck the Canterbury region on 4 September 2010 caused some disruption to interviewing. For a two-week period following the earthquake, Statistics New Zealand suspended interviewing in Christchurch city and in the Waimakariri and Selwyn districts. This resulted in the loss of 300 households from the survey sample.

The loss of these households was handled via the survey's usual adjustment methods for non-response. This ensured that the final published population estimate for Canterbury is consistent with the established time series. Without this, the region's working-age population would have been underestimated.

Analysis shows that the loss of these households did not introduce any bias into the survey. Any inconsistencies were well within sampling error bounds.

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Next release ...

Household Labour Force Survey: December 2010 quarter will be released on
3 February 2011.

Technical notes

Background to the survey

The Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) started in October 1985, and the first results published were for the March 1986 quarter. The survey provides a regular, timely, and comprehensive portrayal of New Zealand's labour force. Each quarter, a range of statistics relating to employment, unemployment, and people not in the labour force is published.

In this release

This release contains seasonally adjusted, trend, and survey statistics for the June 2010 quarter. These statistics are averages for the three-month period and do not apply to any specific point in time. Data sourced from the seasonally adjusted series and trend series are identified as such in the table or section headings. All other data, in the commentary or in tables, are sourced from the original survey series and are unadjusted.

Figures presented in this release are rounded. Because each table contains rounded figures, there may be some small inconsistencies between the totals and individual cells. Unrounded figures are used in the calculation of unemployment rates and labour force participation rates. Cells with estimates of less than 1,000 are suppressed and appear as 'S' in the tables. These estimates are subject to sampling errors too great for most practical purposes.

Seasonal adjustment

Seasonal adjustment aims to eliminate the impact of regular seasonal events on a time series. In the labour market, cyclical events that affect labour supply and demand occur around the same time each year. For example, in summertime a large pool of student labour is both available for, and actively seeking, work. Demand for labour in the retail sector and in many primary production industries also increases.

Seasonal adjustment makes data for adjacent quarters more comparable by smoothing out the effect on the time series of any regular seasonal events. This ensures that the underlying movements in the time series are more visible. Each quarter, the seasonal adjustment process is applied to the latest and all previous quarters. This means that seasonally adjusted estimates for any of the previously published quarters may change slightly.

Each series is adjusted separately. For this reason, the sum of the seasonally adjusted estimates for employment, unemployment, and people not in the labour force will usually not add up to the working-age population estimates. All seasonally adjusted and trend series are produced using the X-12-ARIMA Version 0.2.10 package developed by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Trend series

For any series, the survey estimate can be broken down into three components: trend, seasonal, and irregular. Trend series have had both the seasonal and irregular components removed, and reveal the underlying direction of movement in a series. Revisions to the trend series can be particularly large, especially if any estimates were considered to be outliers, but turn out to be part of the underlying trend. Typically, only the last two or three estimates will be subject to substantial revisions.

Survey scope

The target population for the HLFS is the civilian, usually resident, non-institutionalised population aged 15 years and over. This means that the statistics in this release *do not* cover:

- long-term residents of homes for older people, hospitals, and psychiatric institutions
- inmates of penal institutions
- members of the permanent armed forces
- members of the non-New Zealand armed forces
- overseas diplomats
- overseas visitors who expect to be resident in New Zealand for less than 12 months
- those aged under 15 years.

Reliability of survey estimates

The HLFS sample contains about 15,000 private households and about 30,000 individuals each quarter. Households are sampled on a statistically representative basis from rural and urban areas throughout New Zealand, and information is obtained for each member of the household.

Each quarter, one-eighth of the households in the sample are rotated out and replaced by a new set of households. Therefore, the overlap between two adjacent quarters can be as high as seven-eighths. This overlap improves the reliability of quarterly estimates of change.

Two types of error are possible in estimates based on a sample survey: sampling error and non-sampling error.

Sampling error can be measured, and quantifies the variability that occurs by chance because a sample rather than an entire population is surveyed. A non-sampling error is very difficult to measure, and if present can lead to biased estimates. Statistics New Zealand endeavours to minimise the impact of these errors by applying best survey practices and monitoring known indicators (eg non-response).

Sampling errors are calculated for each cell in the published tables and for estimates of change between adjacent quarters. For example, the estimated total number of people employed in the September 2010 quarter is 2,181,900 before seasonal adjustment. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 21,700, or 1.0 percent (measured at the 95 percent confidence level). This means that there is a 95 percent chance that the true number of employed people lies between 2,160,200 and 2,203,600.

Smaller estimates, such as the number of people unemployed, are subject to larger relative sampling errors than larger estimates. For example, the estimated total number of people unemployed in the September 2010 quarter is 144,500 before seasonal adjustment. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 9,200 or 6.4 percent (measured at the 95 percent confidence level). This means that there is a 95 percent chance that the true number of unemployed people lies between 135,300 and 153,700.

Estimates of change are also subject to sampling error. For example, the survey estimate of change in total employment from the June 2010 quarter to the September 2010 quarter is an increase of 16,300. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 18,600 (at the 95 percent confidence level). Therefore, the true value of the change in surveyed employment from the June 2010 quarter to the September 2010 quarter has a 95 percent chance of lying between -2,300 and 34,900.

A change in an estimate, either from one adjacent quarter to the next, or between quarters a year apart, is said to be statistically significant if it is larger than the associated sampling error. Therefore, the example quoted above does not represent a significant movement.

In general, the sampling errors associated with subnational estimates (eg breakdowns by regional council area or ethnic group) are larger than those associated with national estimates.

Response rates

The target response rate for the HLFS is 90 percent. The response rate is calculated by determining the number of eligible households who responded to the survey, as a proportion of the estimated number of total eligible households in the sample. The following table shows the HLFS response rates for the last five quarters.

HLFS response rates	
Quarter	Response rate (%)
Sep 2009	87.9
Dec 2009	86.4
Mar 2010	88.3
Jun 2010	87.3
Sep 2010	86.1

Definitions of labour force category

The labour force category to which a person is assigned depends on their actual activity during a survey reference week. The following definitions, which conform closely to the international standard definitions specified by the International Labour Organization, are used for the HLFS:

Working-age population: The usually resident, non-institutionalised, civilian population of New Zealand aged 15 years and over.

Labour force: Members of the working-age population who during their survey reference week were classified as 'employed' or 'unemployed'.

Employed: All persons in the working-age population who during the reference week:

- worked for one hour or more for pay or profit in the context of an employee/employer relationship or self-employment; or
- worked without pay for one hour or more in work which contributed directly to the operation of a farm, business, or professional practice owned or operated by a relative; or
- had a job but were not at work due to: own illness or injury, personal or family responsibilities, bad weather or mechanical breakdown, direct involvement in an industrial dispute, or leave or holiday.

Unemployed: All persons in the working-age population who during the reference week were without a paid job, available for work, and had either actively sought work in the past four weeks ending with the reference week, or had a new job to start within the next four weeks.

Not in the labour force: Any person in the working-age population who is neither employed nor unemployed. For example, this residual category includes persons who:

- are retired

- have personal or family responsibilities such as unpaid housework and childcare
- attend educational institutions
- are permanently unable to work due to physical or mental disabilities
- were temporarily unavailable for work in the survey reference week
- are not actively seeking work.

Unemployment rate: The number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

Labour force participation rate: The total labour force expressed as a percentage of the working-age population.

This definition of labour force participation includes all those aged 15 years and over in the numerator (the total labour force) and the denominator (the working-age population). This definition is the most appropriate for the New Zealand labour market, as New Zealand does not have a compulsory retirement age, and many workers stay in the labour force beyond the age of 65. Using this definition also means that the measure will reflect changes in labour market demographics, in particular the increasing number of employees working beyond 65 years.

Several alternative definitions of labour force participation rate are in use by other organisations; they differ in regard to age of the working-age population and the inclusion of military personnel. A common definition is to restrict the labour force and working-age population to the 15–64-year age group, particularly in countries with a compulsory retirement age. Generally, this definition leads to a higher figure. Using this definition for the New Zealand HLFS in the September 2010 quarter gives a surveyed figure of 77.2 percent.

Industry statistics

Since the September 2009 quarter, the industry statistics are based on the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 2006 (ANZSIC06), the latest edition of the classification. The 1996 version (ANZSIC96), used in industry outputs in previous releases, has been updated to the 2006 edition. Note that industry outputs defined using ANZSIC06 are not comparable with those based on ANZSIC96.

The release of ANZSIC06 followed a review that involved consultation with government agencies responsible for policy formulation and administration, non-government analysts of industry structure and performance, and industry experts. The changes to ANZSIC ensure the classification is current and relevant, reflects changes in the structure and composition of industry since the previous edition, and recognises changing user requirements for industry data.

In the HLFS, data has been collected using both ANZSIC06 and ANZSIC96 from the March 2009 quarter, and will continue to be collected using both classifications until December 2011. A back-cast series for 'total people employed by industry and sex' has been created for ANZSIC06. The series has been created at the 1-digit divisional level and has been back-cast from the December 2008 quarter to the March 2003 quarter.

With the introduction of ANZSIC06, Statistics NZ also developed the New Zealand Standard Industrial Output Categories (NZSIOC), which will assist in standardising outputs. HLFS industry statistics are published at NZSIOC level one. Under NZSIOC level one, industries are published at the 1-digit divisional level, apart from three categories which are combined ANZSIC06 divisions. The category titled 'retail trade and accommodation' is the combined 'retail trade' and 'accommodation and food services' divisions. The 'professional, scientific, technical, administrative, and support services' category is the combined 'professional, scientific, and technical services' division and the 'administrative and support services' division. The 'arts and

recreation services' division has been combined with the 'other services' division to form the 'arts, recreation, and other services' category.

More information can be found at [Implementing ANZSIC06 in the Household Labour Force Survey](#).

Occupation statistics

Since September 2009 quarter, the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) is the basis of occupation data in the HLFS. ANZSCO is a harmonised classification which has been developed by Statistics NZ, the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and the Australian Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, for use in both Australia and New Zealand. Occupation data was previously based on the New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations 1999 (NZSCO99). The occupation data is available on Infoshare.

Occupation data has also been collected using both NZSCO99 and ANZSCO from the March 2009 quarter, and will continue to be collected using both classifications until December 2011. A back-cast series for 'total people employed by occupation and sex' has been created for ANZSCO. The series has been created at the 1-digit divisional level and has been back-cast from the December 2008 quarter to the March 2003 quarter.

More information can be found at [Implementing ANZSCO in the Household Labour Force Survey](#).

Formal study statistics

To be participating in formal study, an individual must be working towards a qualification that takes three or more months of full-time study to complete. Full-time study is defined as 20 or more hours per week.

Māori benchmarks

Before April 2009, the Māori working-age population was not benchmarked to population estimates. This, along with other sample design restrictions, caused a high degree of volatility in Māori statistics of the HLFS. Movements in the working-age population estimates of certain ethnic groups, such as Māori, may reflect this volatility rather than a real change in the estimated ethnic demographic.

Including Māori benchmarks in the working-age population mitigates the known undercount of Māori in the HLFS and also results in smoother time series for Māori. However, introducing the Māori population benchmarks does not necessarily translate to improved estimates for non-Māori ethnic groups.

Ethnic statistics

In the September 2008 quarter, the HLFS started publishing ethnicity data using the single/combination output method. This created a complete break in the ethnicity series, as the prioritisation of ethnic groups was no longer produced. Using the single/combination ethnicity output, people are counted just once according to the ethnic group or combination of ethnic groups they have reported. This means that the total number of responses equals the total number of people who stated an ethnicity.

In the December 2007 quarter, the HLFS began collecting ethnicity data using the 2005 New Zealand standard classification of ethnicity. The 2005 classification of ethnicity enables the HLFS to collect and output more detailed ethnicity data, especially for the Asian ethnic group, which was not previously collected.

Using the total response ethnicity output, people who reported more than one ethnic group are counted once in each group reported. This means that the total number of responses for all ethnic groups can be greater than the total number of people who stated their ethnicities. The table below shows total response for the June 2010 and September 2010 quarters of the HLFS.

Total response HLFS ethnicity data for working-age population⁽¹⁾		
Ethnic group	June 2010 quarter	September 2010 quarter
European	2,566,500	2,568,300
Māori	430,000	431,600
Pacific peoples	183,600	187,900
Asian	360,600	355,700
MELAA ⁽²⁾	35,400	38,800
Other	67,200	74,600

(1) The sum of ethnic groups will not equal the total working-age population as the total response method of grouping ethnicity data counts each response given by an individual.

(2) MELAA = Middle Eastern/Latin American/African.

To read about the 2005 New Zealand standard classification of ethnicity, please go to the Statistics NZ website: www.stats.govt.nz.

Household statistics

A household's labour force status is derived by looking at the labour force status of members in the household aged 18–64 years. For example, if a couple is living by themselves and one is aged 64 years and the other is aged 65 years, this couple will be assigned to the 'All employed' or 'None employed' category, depending on the labour force status of the 64-year-old. Households that have no members aged 18–64 years are excluded from this analysis.

The household categories incorporate the concept of dependent children rather than just children. A child is a person of any age who usually resides with at least one parent (natural, step, adopted, or foster) and who does not usually reside with a partner or child(ren) of his or her own. Statistics NZ defines a dependent child as a child aged under 18 years and not in full-time employment.

More information

For more information, follow the link from the technical notes of this release on the Statistics NZ website.

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Timed statistical releases are delivered using postal and electronic services provided by third parties. Delivery of these releases may be delayed by circumstances outside the control of Statistics NZ. Statistics NZ accepts no responsibility for any such delays.

Tables

The following tables are printed with this Hot Off The Press and can also be downloaded from the Statistics New Zealand website in Excel format. If you do not have access to Excel, you may use the [Excel file viewer](#) to view, print and export the contents of the file.

1. People employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by sex, seasonally adjusted series
2. People employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by sex, trend series
3. People employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by sex
4. Total people employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by age group
5. Total people employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by ethnic group
6. Total people employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by regional council area
7. People employed, by industry and sex
8. The jobless: those without a job and wanting a job, by sex
9. Total actual hours worked
10. Household composition, by household labour force status
11. Underemployment, by sex
12. People employed, unemployed, not in the labour force, and total actual hours worked, seasonally adjusted series
13. Harmonised unemployment rates in OECD countries, latest available
14. Total people employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, by sex and formal study status