Household Labour Force Survey: September 2011 quarter

Embargoed until 10:45am – 03 November 2011

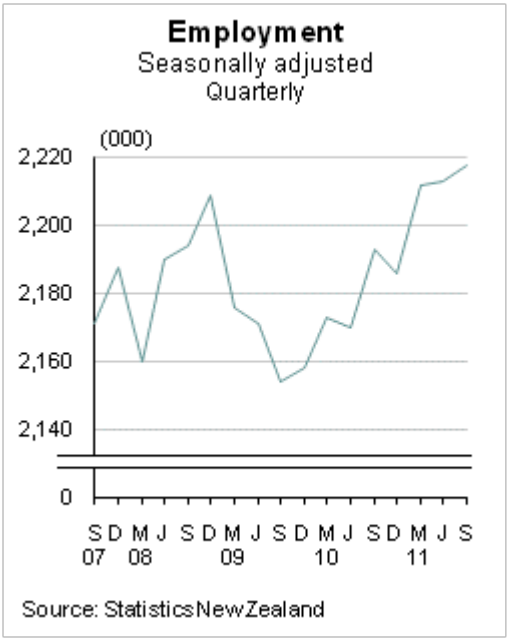
Key facts

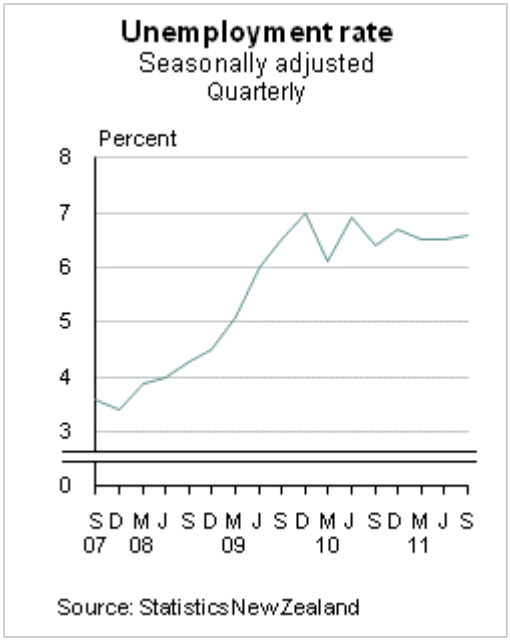
In the September 2011 quarter compared with the June 2011 quarter:

- The unemployment rate rose 0.1 percentage points to 6.6 percent.
- Unemployment rose by 3,000 people.
- The number of people employed increased by 5,000.
- The employment rate was flat at 63.9 percent.

All figures have been seasonally adjusted.

Seasonally adjusted	September 2011 quarter	Quarterly change	Annual change
Unemployment rate	6.6%	+0.1	+0.2
Unemployed	157,000	+1.7%	+4.6%
Employed	2,218,000	+0.2%	+1.1%
Not in the labour force	1,095,000	-0.2%	+0.5%
Employment rate	63.9%	0.0	0.0
Labour force participation rate	68.4%	+0.1	+0.1





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Commentary

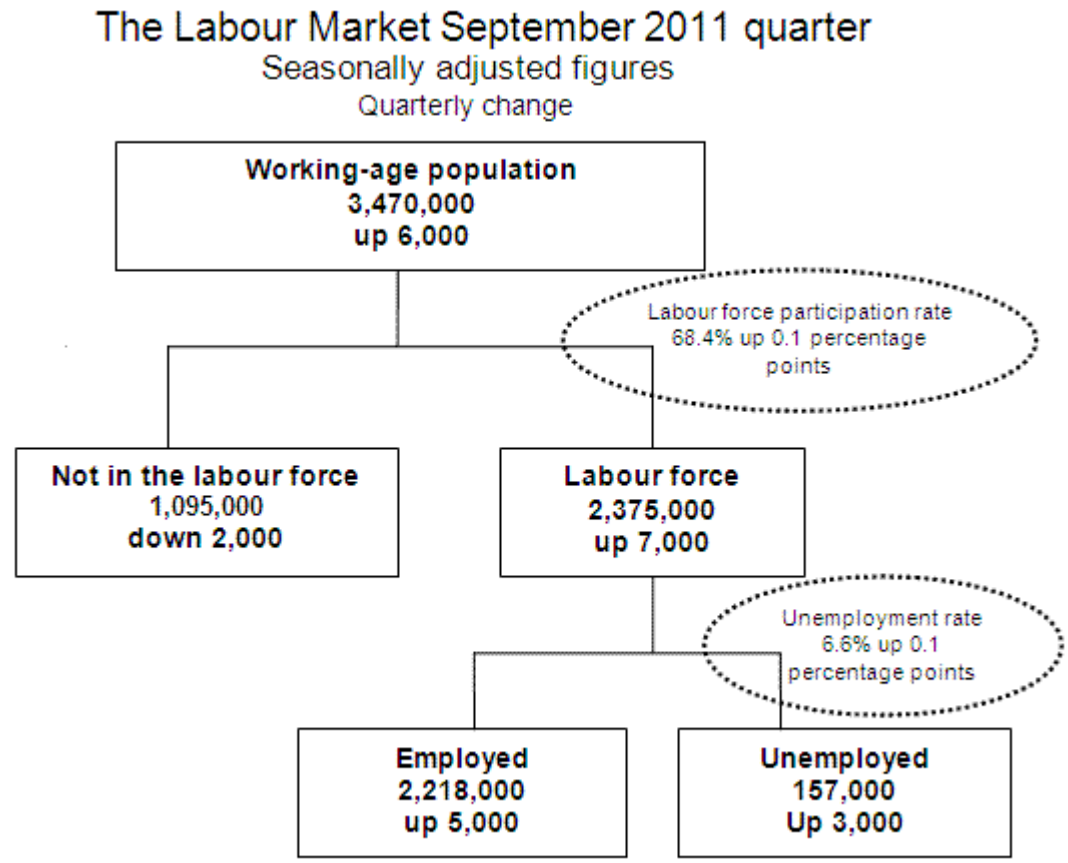
Employment and unemployment increase

The labour force grew during the September 2011 quarter, through an increase in both the number of people employed and the number of people unemployed. As the number of people unemployed increased at a greater rate than the total labour force, the unemployment rate rose slightly, to 6.6 percent. While labour market outcomes generally improved for men over the quarter, women's employment decreased and unemployment increased.

The number of people employed increased by 5,000 over the quarter. Full-time employment grew by 8,000, while part-time employment decreased by 3,000. Over the quarter, the number of men employed grew while the number of women employed fell. In annual terms, however, both male and female employment grew, with stronger employment growth for females.

The total number of people unemployed increased by 3,000 over the quarter, with an increase of 4,000 women unemployed and a slight decrease of 1,000 men unemployed. The male unemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage points to 6.3 percent and the female unemployment rate increased 0.3 percentage points to 7.0 percent.

In annual unadjusted terms, employment increased significantly in the Auckland region, while there was a significant decrease in employment in the Canterbury region.



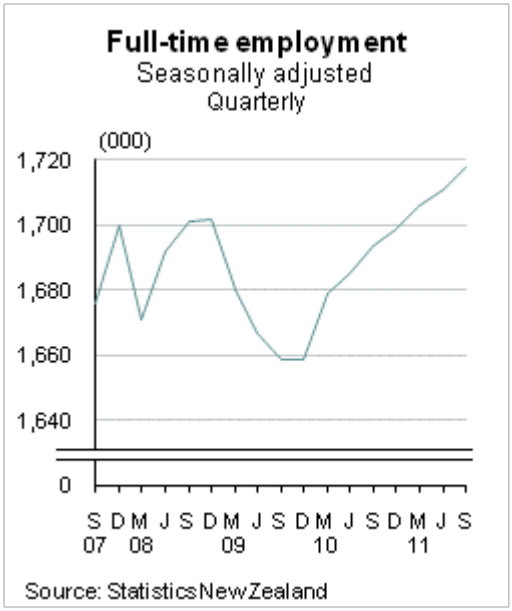
Note that quarterly changes may not add up due to rounding.

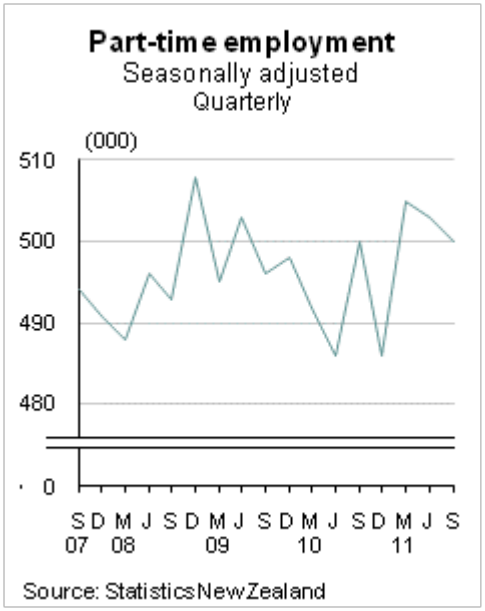
Full-time employment increases

Employment increased by 5,000 (0.2 percent) during the September 2011 quarter, to 2,218,000. Full-time employment increased by 8,000, while part-time employment decreased by 3,000.

In the September 2011 quarter, male employment grew by 9,000 (0.8 percent), with male full-time employment increasing by 1.4 percent and male part-time employment decreasing by 4.2 percent. The number of women employed decreased by 5,000 (0.4 percent) over the quarter. This was due to a decrease in female full-time employment (down 1.2 percent), while female part-time employment increased by 0.9 percent.

Since the September 2010 quarter, employment has increased by 25,000 (1.1 percent). Annually, both male and female employment has increased, with the increase in the number of women employed (14,000) larger than the increase in the number of men employed (10,000). Almost all of the annual growth in employment has been in full-time employment, up 24,000.





The employment rate is calculated as the number of people employed expressed as a percentage of the working-age population. In the September 2011 quarter, the employment rate was flat at 63.9 percent. The male employment rate increased, compared with the June 2011 quarter, by 0.5 percentage points to 70.2 percent. In contrast, the female employment rate decreased, compared with the June 2011 quarter, by 0.4 percentage points to 58.0 percent.

The trend series

The trend series adjusts for seasonal effects and removes the irregular comp onent from a series. This can help reveal the underlying movement in a series. Refer to the Data quality section of this release for more information about trend series.

The trend series shows that employment grew by 2,000 people (0.1 percent) during the quarter, reaching 2,217,000. Female employment fell to 1,035,000 (0.2 percent), while male employment grew by 0.4 percent to 1,182,000.

Unadjusted annual movements

During the September 2011 year, employment increased by 10,600 for those aged 65 years and over and decreased by 7,700 for those aged 15–19 years old.

Both the level of employment and the employment rate increased significantly in Auckland. The number of people employed in Auckland increased by 58,900 (9.1 percent) to 704,600 during the September 2011 year. Increases in both male and female employment contributed to this growth. In Canterbury, employment decreased by 26,800 people (8.0 percent) to 308,400 people.

By occupation, there were significant increases in the number of people who were employed as professionals (18,800) and as machinery operators and drivers (11,900). The number of people employed as technicians and trades workers decreased by 13,900 over the year.

Self-employment increased by 17,200 people (7.5 percent) during the September 2011 year.

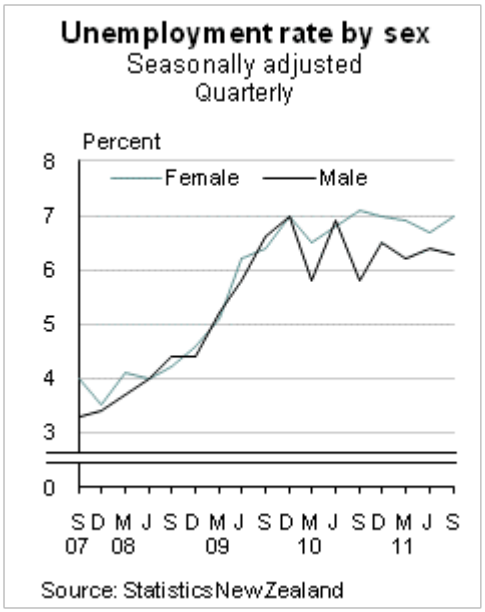
Significantly more people identifying as ‘Pacific peoples only’ and ‘Asian only’ were employed during the September 2011 year, up 15.7 percent and 7.5 percent, respectively.

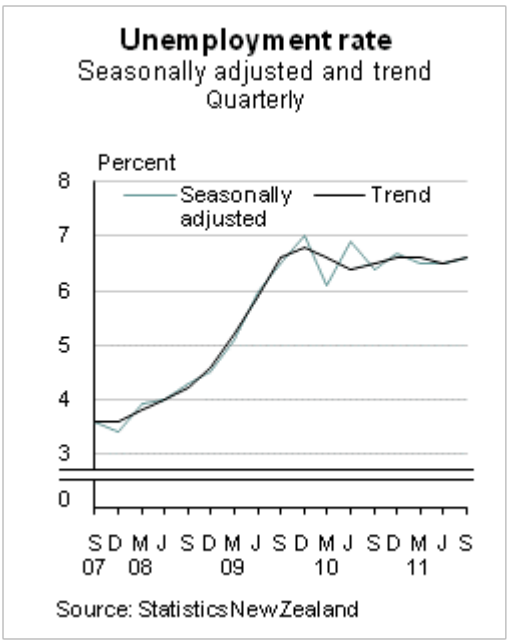
More unemployed women contribute to a total increase in unemployment

During the September 2011 quarter, unemployment increased by 3,000 (1.7 percent) to 157,000. Female unemployment increased by 4,000 (5.1 percent) to 78,000, while male unemployment decreased by 1,000 (1.5 percent) to 79,000.

Annually, unemployment has risen by 7,000 (4.6 percent). Female unemployment has decreased by 0.1 percent, while male unemployment has grown by 9.8 percent.

The unemployment rate rose by 0.1 percentage points to 6.6 percent during the September 2011 quarter. The female unemployment rate increased by 0.3 percentage points to 7.0 percent, while the male unemployment rate decreased by 0.1 percentage points during the quarter, to 6.3 percent.





The trend series

The trend shows unemployment has increased by 1.0 percent to 157,000 people over the quarter. The trend unemployment rate also rose by 0.1 percentage points during the quarter to 6.6 percent and has stayed within a tight band of 6.4 to 6.6 percent since the March 2010 quarter.

Unadjusted annual movements

In the year to September 2011, the unemployment rate increased significantly for the ‘Middle Eastern/Latin American/African only’ ethnic group and for those who specified two or more ethnic groups other than European/Māori.

The unemployment rate for all people who identified with the Māori ethnic group (including those who also identified with other groups) was 13.2 percent in the September 2011 quarter. This rate has decreased slightly since the September 2010 quarter, when it was 13.4 percent. This figure is known as the total response Māori unemployment rate.

Employment decreases in Canterbury

Supplementary tables with detailed data for the Canterbury region have been included in this release. These are similar to tables 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 11, and 14 from the main tables. Data in the tables for the Canterbury region are all unadjusted. A brief overview of the Canterbury labour market is provided below.

Unadjusted annual changes for the September 2011 quarter			
	Canterbury	National excluding Canterbury	National
	Annual change	Annual change	Annual change
Unemployment rate	+0.7	+0.1	+0.2
Unemployed	+5.3%	+4.6%	+4.7%
Employed	-8.0%	+2.8%	+1.1%
Employment rate	-3.7	+0.6	0.0
Not in the labour force	+8.3%	-0.7%	+0.5%
Labour force participation rate	-3.3	+0.8	+0.2
Actual hours	-5.2%	+3.6%	+2.3%

For the year to the September 2011 quarter, employment decreased significantly in the Canterbury region, down 26,800 (8.0 percent). This compared with employment growth for New Zealand as a whole of 24,400 (1.1 percent) during the same period. The employment rate for New Zealand was unchanged over the year, at 63.6 percent. In the Canterbury region, the employment rate decreased from 66.7 percent in September 2010 to 63.0 percent in September 2011.

Decreases in female employment in Canterbury accounted for approximately 70 percent of the total employment decrease recorded over the year. There was also a notable decrease in part-time employment over the year, with a drop of 19,800.

The employment rate for youth (those aged 15–24) dropped by 8.6 percentage points over the year. This compares with a 1.9 percentage point decrease for those aged 25–54, and a 1.0 percentage point fall for those aged 55 years or older.

By industry, the most notable decrease in employment was in the retail trade, accommodation and food services industry group, down 12,600 (22.4 percent). Approximately two-thirds of this decrease was in the accommodation and food services part of this industry group. Employment in the construction industry increased by 4,500 (18.0 percent) in Canterbury over the year.

The number of people not in the labour force increased significantly in Canterbury – up 12,500 (8.3 percent). The number of unemployed in Canterbury increased slightly by 900 (5.3 percent). This compares with an increase of 6,700 (4.7 percent) unemployed for New Zealand as a whole. The unemployment rate in the Canterbury region increased by 0.7 percentage points to 5.5 percent over the year. This is still lower than the national unemployment rate.

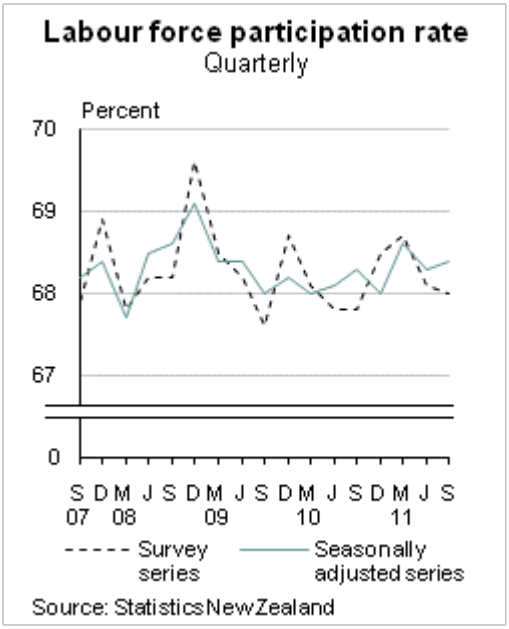
Labour force participation rate increases for men

During the September 2011 quarter, the labour force participation rate increased by 0.1 percentage points to 68.4 percent. Annually, participation also increased by 0.1 percentage points.

During the quarter, the male labour force participation rate increased by 0.4 percentage points, while the female participation rate decreased by 0.2 percentage points. Annually, both male and

female labour force participation increased moderately, up 0.1 percentage points and 0.2 percentage points, respectively.

The total labour force increased by 7,000 people (0.3 percent) to 2,375,000 during the quarter. Annually, the labour force has risen by 32,000 (1.3 percent).



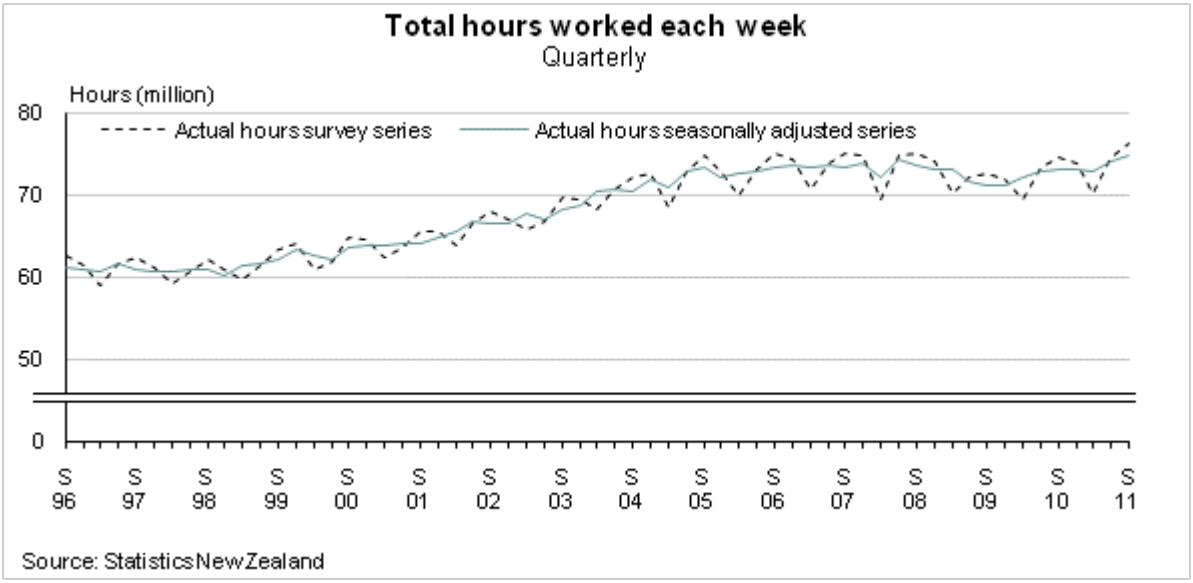
Working-age population increases slightly

The working-age population grew by 5,600 (0.2 percent) during the September 2011 quarter and by 36,700 (1.1 percent) in the year to the September 2011 quarter, to reach 3,466,600.

Total actual hours worked increases together with full-time employment

Actual hours worked are the number of hours a person worked in the reference week (including overtime). Usual hours worked are the number of hours a person normally works in a week (including overtime).

The number of actual hours worked for the September 2011 quarter increased by 1.0 percent to 74,878,000. For the same period, the number of usual hours worked decreased slightly by 0.2 percent to 80,444,000. Annually, both actual and usual hours increased, up 2.3 percent and 1.4 percent, respectively.



Number of jobless grows (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 2010 quarter, the number of jobless people has increased by 10,900 (4.5 percent), to 254,300 people. The largest increase was in the number of people who are officially unemployed, followed by those who are actively seeking work but who are not available.

Fewer underemployed (unadjusted)

The number of underemployed people (people employed part-time who would prefer to work more hours) may serve as a measure of under-utilised labour in the economy. Of those people employed part-time in the September 2011 quarter, 19.4 percent (97,600 people) would prefer to work more hours. This compares with 21.7 percent in the June 2011 quarter and 21.8 percent in the September 2010 quarter, and is the lowest proportion recorded since the December 2008 quarter.

During the September 2011 quarter, 23.3 percent of males working part-time would have preferred to work more hours, compared with 17.9 percent of females.

Duration of unemployment (unadjusted)

Annually, short-term unemployment (those unemployed for 26 weeks or less) increased slightly by 500 people (0.5 percent) to 95,600. During the same period, the number of long-term unemployed (those unemployed for longer than 26 weeks) rose by 3,000 people (7.8 percent) to 41,300. Of the total number of unemployed people in the September 2011 quarter, 63.2 percent had been so for 26 weeks or less, while 27.3 percent had been unemployed for longer than 26 weeks.

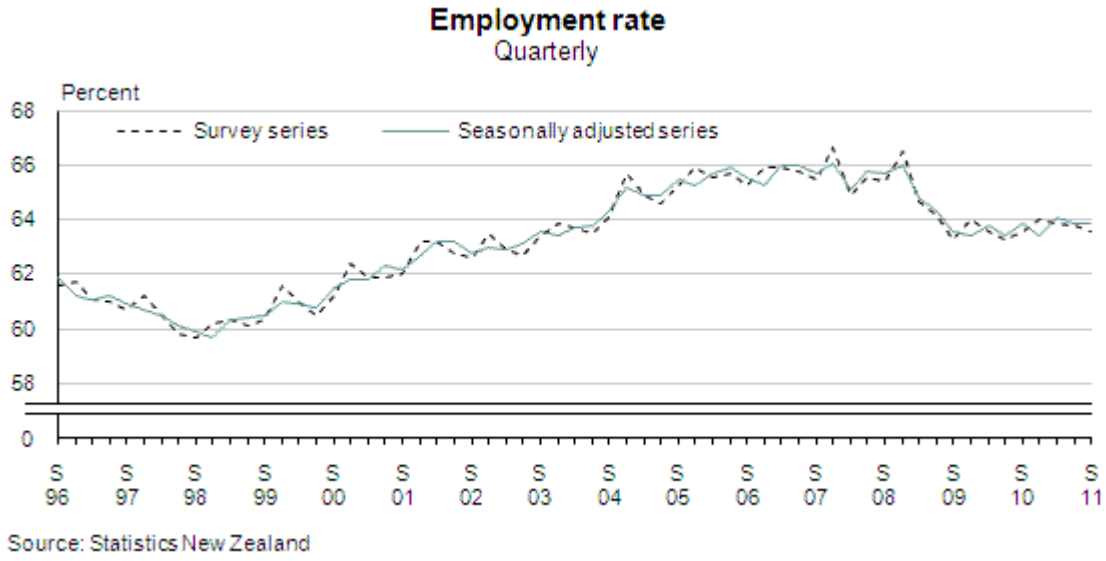
Duration of unemployment (unadjusted)		
	September 2010 quarter	**September 2011 quarter**
	(000)	**(000)**
Short-term unemployment		
26 weeks or less	95.1	95.6
Long-term unemployment		
Over 26 weeks, but not over a year	28.0	30.4
Over one year, but not over two years	7.0	8.1
Over two years	3.4	2.8
Total long-term unemployment	*38.3*	*41.3*
Not specified	11.0	14.3
Total unemployment	144.5	151.2

Fewer people in formal study (unadjusted)

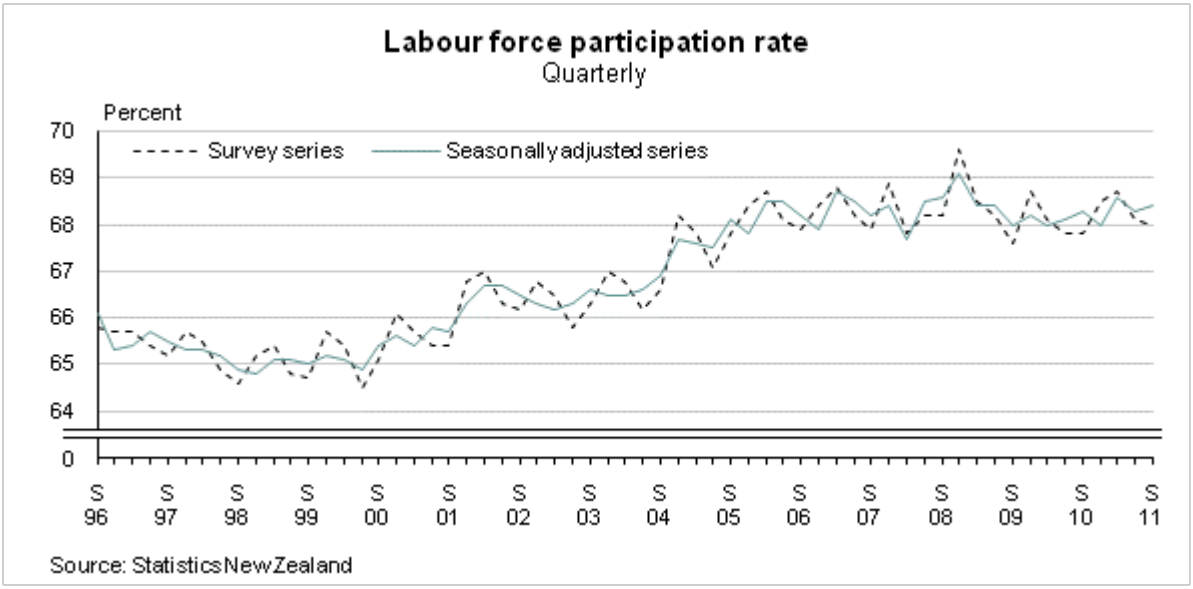
During the September 2011 quarter, 309,900 people were participating in formal study, a 2.5 percent decline from the same quarter in 2010. Unemployed people were the most likely to be involved in formal study, with 13.2 percent participating. This compares with 11.1 percent of those not in the labour force and 7.5 percent of those who were employed.

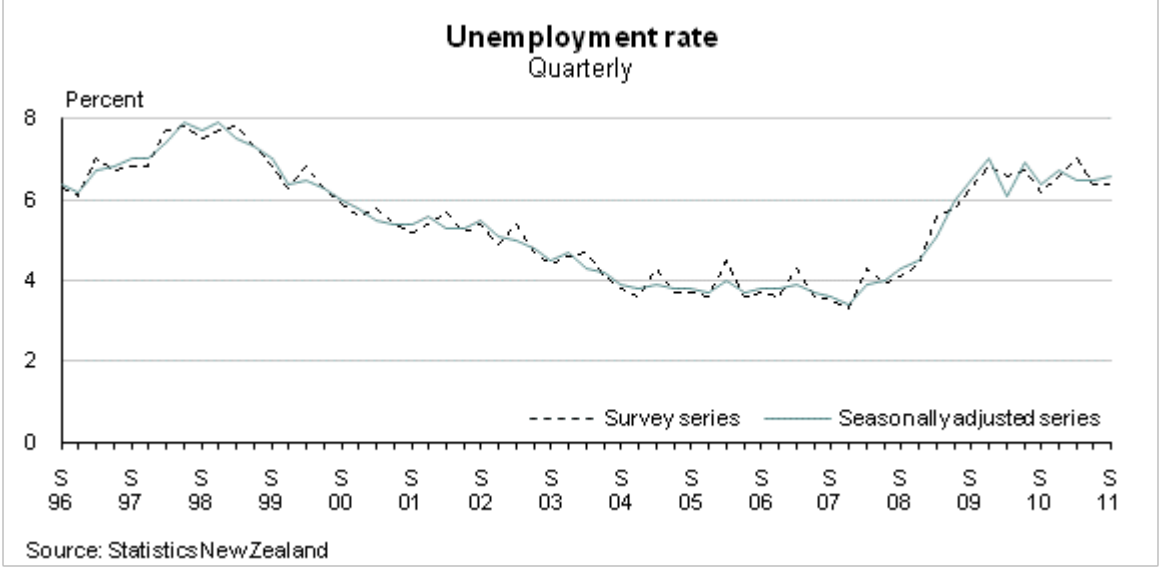
Longer time series

The following graphs show the Household Labour Force Survey series for the employment rate, 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.



Source: Statistics New Zealand





For more detailed data see the Excel tables in the ‘Downloads’ box.

Definitions

About the Household Labour Force 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, Statistics New Zealand produces a range of statistics relating to employment, unemployment, and people not in the labour force.

More definitions

The labour force category to which a person is assigned depends on their actual activity during a survey reference week.

This section includes definitions used in the HLFS release. These conform closely to the international standard definitions specified by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

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 the survey reference week were classified as 'employed' or 'unemployed'.

Labour force participation rate: the total labour force expressed as a percentage of the working-age population. Labour force participation is closely linked to how the working-age population is defined. See Data quality for more detail about how the labour force participation rate used in this release is calculated.

Employed: people 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.

Employment rate: the number of employed people expressed as a percentage of the working-age population.

Unemployed: all people 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.

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

Jobless: the jobless are people who are either officially unemployed, available but not seeking work, or actively seeking but not available for work. The 'available but not seeking work' category is made up of the 'seeking through newspaper only', 'discouraged', and 'other' categories.

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

Hours worked: actual hours are the number of hours a person worked in the reference week (including overtime). The concept of usual hours refers to the number of hours a person normally works in a week (including overtime).

Full-time/part-time status: full-time workers are those who usually work 30 hours or more per week, even if they did not in fact do so in the survey reference week because of sickness, holidays and other reasons. Part-time workers are those who usually work fewer than 30 hours per week.

Underemployment: employed people who work part-time (ie usually work less than 30 hours in all jobs) and would prefer to work more hours.

Formal study statistics: to be participating in formal study, a person 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.

For more information on these definitions please refer to Labour force categories used in the Household Labour Force Survey.

Related links

Upcoming releases

The *Household Labour Force Survey: December 2011* will be released on 9 February 2012.

The Release calendar lists all upcoming information releases by date of release.

Past releases

See Household Labour Force Survey – Information releases for links to past releases.

Related information

For information on the employment rate added to the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS), please see Introducing the employment rate.

For information on the investigation done into using imputation in the March 2011 quarter, please refer to Imputation study for Household Labour Force Survey March 2011 quarter.

Quarterly Employment Survey includes statistics on total gross earnings, total paid hours, filled jobs, average hourly and weekly earnings, and average weekly paid hours, based on the Quarterly Employment Survey.

National Employment Indicator (NEI) provides an early indication of changes in the number of filled jobs at the national level. The NEI covers filled jobs, where employees were paid wages or salaries in the month, by an employer who filled an employer monthly schedule with Inland Revenue. This includes jobs filled by self-employed people who pay themselves a wage or salary.

Linked Employer-Employee Data (LEED) provides statistics on filled jobs, job flows, worker flows, mean and median earnings for continuing jobs and new hires, and total earnings. LEED information is based on tax data.

Data quality

This section has information about data that does not change between releases.

Data source

The target population for the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) is the civilian, usually resident, non-institutionalised population aged 15 years and over.

The statistics in this release **do not** cover:

- long-term residents of homes for older people, hospitals, and psychiatric institutions
- those living in non-private dwellings (ie hotels, motels, hostels etc)
- 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
- people living on offshore islands (except Waiheke Island).

Accuracy of the data

Sample design

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 areas throughout New Zealand, and information is obtained for each member of the household. The sample is stratified by geographic region, urban and rural areas, ethnic density, and socio-economic characteristics.

Households stay in the survey for two years. Each quarter, one-eighth of the households in the sample are rotated out and replaced by a new set of households. Therefore, up to seven-eighths of the same people are surveyed in adjacent quarters. This overlap improves the reliability of quarterly change estimates.

The period of surveying/interviewing consists of 13 weeks. The information obtained relates to the week before the interview (referred to as the ‘survey reference week’). Respondents are first interviewed face-to-face at their home. Subsequent interviews are by telephone wherever possible. Respondents also have the option to file self-complete questionnaires.

Where practicable, the information is obtained directly from each household member. Otherwise

a proxy interview is conducted, whereby details are obtained from another adult in the household.

Sampling errors

Sampling error can be measured, and quantifies the variability that occurs by chance because a sample rather than an entire population is surveyed.

Sampling errors are calculated for each cell in the published tables and for estimates of change between adjacent quarters using a model-based approach. For example, the estimated total number of people employed in the September 2011 quarter is 2,206,300 before seasonal adjustment. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 21,800, 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 2,184,500 and 2,228,100.

Smaller estimates, such as the number of people who are unemployed, are subject to larger relative sampling errors than larger estimates. For example, the estimated total number of people unemployed in the September 2011 quarter is 151,200 before seasonal adjustment. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 9,500 or 6.3 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 141,700 and 160,700.

Estimates of change are also subject to sampling error. For example, the survey estimate of change in total employment from the June 2011 quarter to the September 2011 quarter is a decrease of 2,000. 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 2011 quarter to the September 2011 quarter has a 95 percent chance of lying between -20,600 and 16,600.

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.

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).

Suppression of data

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.

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	**National response rate (percent)**
September 2010	86.1
December 2010	87.7
March 2011	84.3
June 2011	87.2
September 2011	88.2

Seasonal adjustment and trend 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.

For any series, the estimates can be broken down into three components: trend, seasonal, and irregular. Seasonally adjusted series have had the seasonal component removed. Trend series have had both the seasonal and irregular components removed, and reveal the underlying direction of movement in a series.

The series for each labour market statistic 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.

See Seasonal adjustment in Statistics New Zealand for more information about how we seasonally adjust our statistics. Seasonal adjustment makes data for adjacent quarters more comparable by smoothing out the effect on the times series of any regular seasonal events. This ensures that the underlying movements in the time series are more visible. 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.

Quality of seasonal adjustment

We monitor our data to make sure that our seasonal adjustment is robust.

The X-12-ARIMA programme is highly customisable and can produce a wide variety of possible adjustments for any particular input series. Consequently, X-12-ARIMA produces a number of diagnostics which are useful in assessing the quality of the chosen adjustment.

The following table provides a selection of diagnostics. The reference value provides an indication of the desired value for each. Most are acceptable, though there is evidence of a changing seasonal pattern for the number of males who are unemployed and females who are not in labour force. More detail about seasonal adjustment in the HLFS is available upon request.

Seasonal adjustment diagnostics							
	Reference value	**Male employed**	**Female employed**	**Male unemployed**	**Female unemployed**	**Male not in labour force**	**Female not in labour force**
Test for seasonality	<0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Test for moving seasonality	>0.10	0.20	0.64	0.02	0.25	0.67	0.05
Periods until trend dominates	<3	1	1	1	2	2	2
Trend contribution to change	<20	32.34	42.90	47.05	14.84	12.48	20.66
Seasonal contribution to change	>50	58.31	41.88	31.05	68.54	75.92	51.66
Irregular contribution to change	<20	9.35	15.21	21.91	16.63	11.60	27.68
Quality statistic	<1	0.42	0.51	0.71	0.67	0.64	0.94

Outliers

During the seasonal adjustment process, X-12-ARIMA can give less weight to the irregular component. Specifically, if the estimated irregular component at a point in time is sufficiently large compared with the standard deviation of the irregular component as a whole, then the irregular component at that point can be downweighted or removed completely and re-estimated. Such observations are referred to as partial and zero-outliers, respectively. In practice, the downweighting of outliers will do little to seasonally adjusted data, but the impact of the outliers on the trend series will generally be reduced. However, if an outlier ceases to be an outlier as more data becomes available, then significant revisions to the trend series become possible. There are no outliers present over the last 4 quarters of data.

Revisions

Each quarter, the seasonal adjustment process is applied to the latest quarter and all previous quarters. This means that seasonally adjusted estimates for any of the previously published quarters may change slightly. The following table lists the change in estimates between the current and previous publication for the seasonally adjusted data. For example, in the June 2011 quarter release, the seasonally adjusted number of females employed for June 2011 was 1,039,000. In the September 2011 quarter release, that same estimate has been revised to 1,038,000. These numbers are rounded to the nearest 1,000, but the relative change derived from the unrounded estimates is a downwards revision of 0.1 percent.

Percent revision from last published, seasonally adjusted						
Quarter	**Male employed**	**Female employed**	**Male unemployed**	**Female unemployed**	**Male not in labour force**	**Female not in labour force**
Sep 2010	-0.02	0.11	0.18	-0.70	0.06	-0.15
Dec 2010	0.07	0.00	-0.11	0.22	-0.19	0.00
Mar 2011	-0.07	-0.02	0.11	0.06	0.19	0.05
Jun 2011	0.02	-0.10	-0.26	0.52	-0.08	0.12

The following table presents information on how the trend estimates have been revised. Trend revisions are generally larger than those of the seasonally adjusted data.

Percent revision from last published, trend						
Quarter	**Male employed**	**Female employed**	**Male unemployed**	**Female unemployed**	**Male not in labour force**	**Female not in labour force**
Sep 2010	-0.08	0.04	-0.03	-0.22	0.23	-0.06
Dec 2010	-0.19	0.04	0.07	-0.14	0.54	-0.05
Mar 2011	-0.17	0.05	0.33	-0.18	0.44	-0.04
Jun 2011	0.06	-0.39	-0.18	1.77	-0.33	0.47

Every estimate is subject to revision each quarter as new data is added, though in practice estimates more than two years from the end-point will change little. For example, the trend estimate of male employment for the September 2010 quarter was 1,171,000 when first published. In the September 2011 quarter, one year later, the trend estimate of male employment for the September 2010 quarter is 1,166,000, a decrease of -5,000 (-0.4%). This is an example of a '4-step ahead' revision. The table below shows the average of all such absolute revisions expressed relatively and gives some indication of how much the current estimates might be revised when the December 2011 data becomes available.

Mean absolute percent revisions				
	Seasonally adjusted		**Trend**	
	1-step	**4-step**	**1-step**	**4-step**
Male employed	0.05	0.08	0.16	0.17
Female employed	0.07	0.12	0.27	0.27
Male unemployed	0.44	0.69	1.65	1.73
Female unemployed	0.53	0.99	1.92	1.89
Male not in labour force	0.09	0.17	0.36	0.38
Female not in labour force	0.09	0.15	0.36	0.39

Rounding procedures

Figures presented in this release are rounded. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred or to the nearest thousand for seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. This may result in a total disagreeing slightly with the sum of the individual items as shown in the table. Where figures are rounded the unit is shown as (000) for thousands.

How labour force statistics are classified

The HLFS release includes specific statistics about industry, occupation, study, ethnicity, and region. This section defines what we measure for each of these statistics.

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. When ANZSIC06 was introduced, Statistics NZ developed the New Zealand Standard Industrial Output Categories (NZSIOC). Classifying industries using NZSIOC will help to standardise outputs. The 1996 version (ANZSIC96), used in industry outputs in previous releases, has been updated to the 2006 edition. Industry outputs defined using ANZSIC06 are not comparable with those based on ANZSIC96.

See Implementing ANZSIC 2006 in the Household Labour Force Survey for more information.

Occupation statistics

Since the September 2009 quarter, the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) was used to classify 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.

See Implementing ANZSCO in the Household Labour Force Survey for more information.

Ethnic statistics

In the September 2008 quarter, Statistics New Zealand started publishing ethnicity data using the single/combination output method in the HLFS. 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. This created a complete break in the ethnicity series, as the prioritisation of ethnic groups was no longer produced.

An alternate method of classifying ethnicity is using the total response ethnicity output. Using this classification, people who reported that they belonged to 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 2011 and September 2011 quarters of the HLFS.

Total response HLFS ethnicity data for working-age population[1]		
Ethnic group	**June 2011 quarter**	**September 2011 quarter**
European	2,586,500	2,560,400
Māori	436,500	441,300
Pacific peoples	188,700	210,600
Asian	367,100	376,800
MELAA[2]	41,100	35,900
Other	72,800	73,600

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.

See the 2005 New Zealand standard classification of ethnicity for more information.

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 in 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 statistics in the HLFS. However, introducing the Māori population benchmarks does not necessarily translate to improved estimates for non-Māori ethnic groups.

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 less than 18 years and not in full-time employment.

Updated regional classification

In November 2010, the new Auckland territorial authority (TA) replaced the existing Rodney District, North Shore City, Auckland City, Waitakere City, Manukau City, Papakura District, and part of Franklin District councils. This resulted in a minor change in the boundary between the Auckland and Waikato regions.

From the June 2011 quarter, the statistics in the HLFS release were produced using the new boundaries and backcast for the March 2011 quarter. The new boundaries do not significantly affect measures from the HLFS.

Comparability with other datasets

See Comparing our labour market statistics for more information on how the HLFS compares with the other labour market statistics that we produce. This page explains what measures of employment are included in each of our employment releases, and the timings and coverage of each release.

See A Guide to Unemployment Statistics for more information on the comparison of the HLFS with other datasets on unemployment. This page explains what measures of unemployment are included in the HLFS, the unemployment benefit and the job-seekers register. It also includes information on the timings, coverage, and different purposes of each of these measures.

International comparability of the labour force participation rate

Several alternative definitions of labour force participation rate are in use by other organisations and countries; 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 labour force participation rate. Using this definition for the New Zealand HLFS in the September 2011 quarter gives a surveyed figure of 77.4 percent.

Interpreting the data

This release contains seasonally adjusted, trend, and survey statistics for the September 2011 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.

Timing of published data

The HLFS is published within 6 weeks after the end of the reference period of the quarter.

Confidentiality

Only people authorised by the Statistics Act 1975 are allowed to see your individual information, and they must use it only for statistical purposes. Your information will be combined with similar information from other people or households to prepare summary statistics.

More information

For more technical information, see Information about the Household Labour Force Survey.

Liability

While all care and diligence has been used in processing, analysing, and extracting data and information in this publication, Statistics NZ gives no warranty it is error-free and will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the use directly, or indirectly, of the information in this publication.

Timing

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Tables

The following tables are included with this release. They are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box of *Household Labour Force Survey: September 2011 quarter* on the Statistics NZ website.

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

Supplementary tables

The following tables provide unadjusted statistics for the Canterbury region and can be downloaded from the Statistics NZ website in Excel format.

1. People employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, Canterbury by sex
2. Total people employed, unemployed, and not in the labour force, Canterbury by age group
3. People employed, Canterbury by industry and sex
4. The jobless: those without a job and wanting a job, Canterbury by sex
5. Total actual and usual hours worked, Canterbury only
6. Underemployment, Canterbury by sex
7. Total people employed, unemployed, and not in labour force, Canterbury by sex and formal study status

A longer time series of the supplementary tables is available on request.

Access more data on Infoshare and Table Builder

Use Infoshare, a free, online database to access time-series data specific to your needs. To access the release time series on Infoshare, select the following categories from the homepage:

Subject category: **Work Income and Spending**
Group: **Household Labour Force Survey – [HLF]**

Use Tablebuilder, a free, online tool that enables you to extract the information you want. To the release data on Table Builder, select the following tables from the homepage:

Subject category: **Employment & Unemployment (Labour Market) Tables**
Table title: **Key Labour force measures by qualification, age and sex**