



OUR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT ACTION PLAN

Setting our young people on a strong pathway to fulfilling working lives



ISBN 978-1-99-000420-9 (print)
ISBN 978-1-99-000419-3 (online)
August 2019

MINISTER'S FOREWORD

This Government wants to set our young people on a strong pathway to fulfilling working lives

We want all of our young people to get as much as they can from schooling and experience the smoothest possible transitions to either employment or further education and training. Ultimately, we hope this will set them on a clear path to rewarding and satisfying lives where they can pursue their goals and flourish.

Improving young people's education, training and employment outcomes is critical for setting people up for good lifetime careers. This in turn is important for personal and community wellbeing, and an inclusive, successful society and economy.

We think we can do this more effectively by ensuring government agencies work together across the education, welfare and employment systems. This also needs to happen in partnership with Māori and communities.

This Youth Employment Action Plan builds on the existing pipeline of supports to develop this Government's blueprint for putting our young people onto a stronger pathway to reaching their fullest potential and building resilience and adaptability for the future.

Hon Willie Jackson | Minister of Employment
August 2019





PART ONE

PURPOSE: IMPROVING OUR PIPELINE OF SUPPORT

The Youth Employment Action Plan is the first population-focused action plan for improving employment outcomes under the Government's Employment Strategy.

A cross-system lens is used to identify how different government systems, such as the education and welfare systems, are experienced by a particular group. In the case of this Action Plan, this approach recognises that young people can often require a range of services from across the different systems and aims to highlight where there are opportunities to improve how the systems work together to support better outcomes.

Young people (15 – 24-year-olds) have amongst the highest levels of unemployment and non-participation in education or training of all age groups. We also know that early education, training and employment experiences have long-lasting effects on wages later in life, adult employment and life satisfaction.

Māori, Pacific peoples, disabled people and people with caring responsibilities have amongst the highest levels of unemployment and/or non-participation in education or training in this age group.

The Action Plan highlights the strengths of New Zealand's system of education, training and employment supports already in place, but also areas that we need to work on. This Action Plan sets out the actions that government agencies are committed to undertaking, together with community partners, to build on and improve the pipeline of support we have in place to:

- › **prevent young people from falling into unemployment and/or non-participation in education or training and put in place the building blocks for success** through earlier identification and effective interventions to better build labour market preparedness
- › **support young people to make informed choices and good transitions in a complex environment** through better careers guidance and job brokering; creating better incentives to employ and train people with challenges; strengthening partnerships with whānau, hapū, iwi, and community; expanding effective pastoral care/mentoring to those that need it; promoting more collaboration and connectivity across services; and scaling effective interventions
- › **ensure young people have employment opportunities and access to the support they need to overcome barriers and get back on track** through increasing driver licence uptake and creating employment opportunities.

Next steps

This Government is committed to ensuring initiatives are well-targeted to meet people's needs and build resilience in the locations where they are needed. This includes taking a whānau-centred approach, that is, an approach that is culturally-grounded, holistic, and focused on improving the wellbeing of whānau and addressing individual needs within a whānau context.

Government agencies across the education, welfare and employment systems will work together and with communities to design and implement an initial phase of actions to take effect in 2020. The Action Plan also highlights actions to be implemented over a longer four-year timeframe that will progressively build a pipeline of supports for young people that is world-leading.





PART TWO YOUTH EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT IN NEW ZEALAND

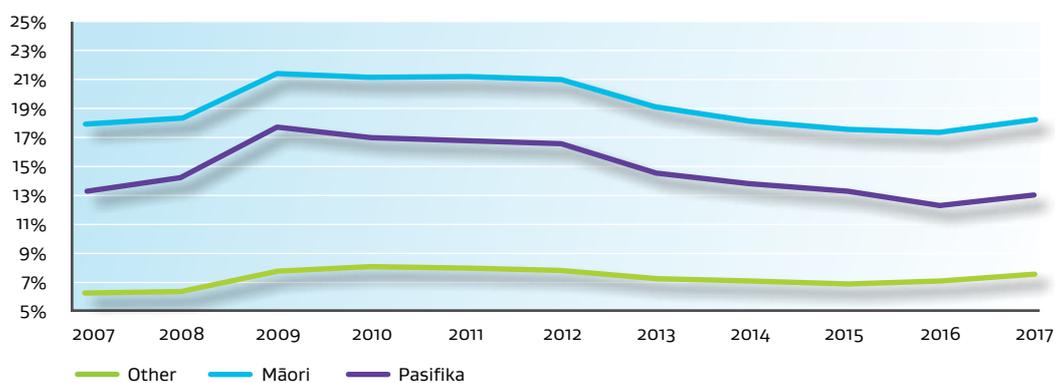
Some young people face hurdles getting started on the right step and may need extra support to build on their strengths as they move out of secondary school

Most young people successfully navigate transitions from school to work, training or education, and lead fulfilling working lives. But some of our young people face additional challenges that mean the pathway to fulfilling employment is not as straightforward.

Most young people in New Zealand aged 15-24 experience periods when they are not in education, employment or training (NEET), totalling around 90,000 at any one time. For most people this is a short period of time, for example a few weeks between courses or moving between study and work, and this does not tend to be a problem.

However, around 10% of these young people (approximately 9,000) will experience a period as long-term NEET, that is, a stint of unemployment or non-participation in education or training for six months or longer. As Figure 1 shows, Māori and Pacific peoples are overrepresented in this group with rates around twice that of other ethnicities. Young women and people with disabilities are also overrepresented in the NEET rate.

FIGURE 1: Long-term NEET rate by ethnicity, 2007-2017



Source: MBIE¹

¹ Access to the anonymised data used in this study was provided by Statistics New Zealand in accordance with security and confidentiality provisions of the Statistics Act 1975, and secrecy provisions of the Tax Administration Act 1994. The findings are not Official Statistics. The results in this paper are the work of the authors, not Statistics NZ, and have been confidentialised to protect individuals from identification.

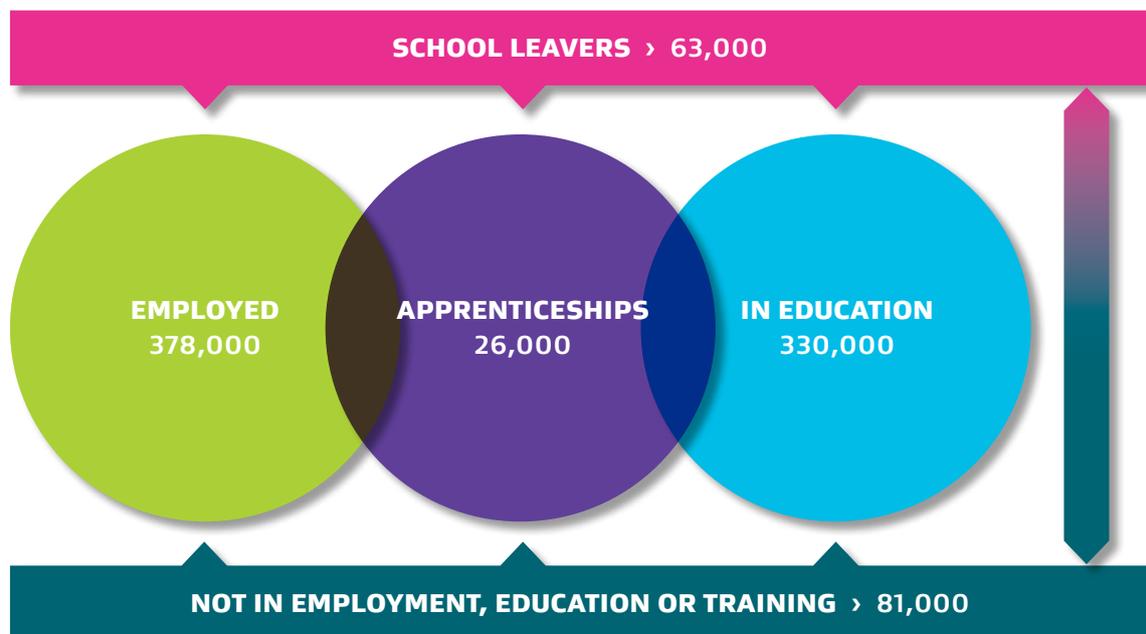
Young people who experience a long-term spell of unemployment and non-participation in education or training are at a far greater risk of poorer outcomes later in life, including lower wages, lower employment levels and poorer life satisfaction. The lost potential associated with this group is estimated to be worth \$400 million for the individuals concerned and their communities in wages, productivity and government expenditure. On top of this are the lost wellbeing effects of being in fulfilling work (estimate based on Pacheco and Dye, 2013).

This is not the only group of young people we are concerned about. Recent research also indicates that many young people are also at risk of continued limited employment. These young people move between low paid and/or short-term jobs, have low levels of tertiary education and are often underemployed for long or frequent periods (McGirr, 2019). Out of the 513,000 16 to 24-year-olds in New Zealand, around 26,000 could be classified as being at a high risk of limited employment.

This means a focus on young people who are at risk of poor educational outcomes and long-term unemployment as well as those who are already or are at risk of being NEET is important.

Figure 2 below captures the flows and volumes of young people from school and between education, apprenticeships, employment and NEET status. It also highlights the overlapping responsibilities of government agencies for people through their introduction to the labour market.

FIGURE 2: Flows of young people into and between education, training and employment

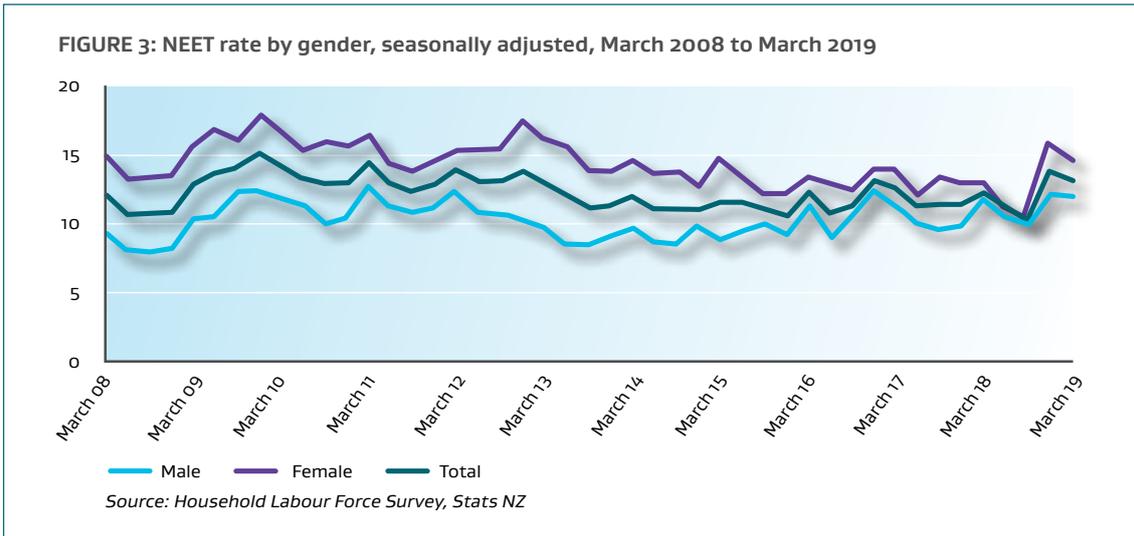


Sources: Household Labour Force Survey March 2019, annual average quarterly labour market data; Education Counts 2017 data.

Who are the people at risk and what barriers do they encounter?

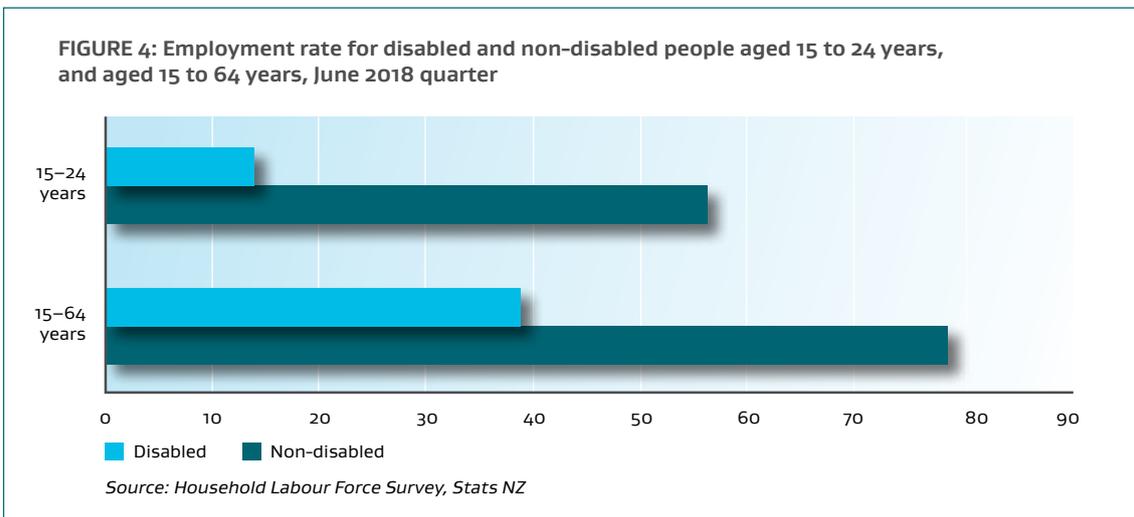
It is important to focus on young people that have higher rates of unemployment and non-participation in education or training.

Young women have tended to have higher rates of unemployment and non-participation in education or training than young men, in large part due to caring responsibilities for young children. In recent years the male and female NEET rates have converged.



Most (67%) of the NEET population resides in Auckland, Canterbury, Wellington or Waikato (Household Labour Force Survey, March 2019, annual average quarterly data). However, Gisborne/Hawke's Bay and Manawatū/Whanganui have high rates of youth NEET populations (HLFS, March 2019).

Māori and Pacific peoples consistently experience higher NEET rates; and the NEET rate for disabled people is particularly high at 43.3% compared with 9.7% for non-disabled people (HLFS, June 2018).



Many of the young people who experience long periods of non-participation in education or training and joblessness have one or more of the following characteristics:

- › material hardship growing up, for instance experiencing intergenerational benefit dependency
- › poor mental or physical health or disability
- › disengagement from school, and leaving school early with lower or no educational qualifications
- › limited opportunities for work experience
- › caring responsibilities for children or other family members.

Young people who have been in the care of the state (those in the care or custody of the chief executive of Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children) are considerably more likely to have experienced a number of these characteristics.

Many of the underlying factors associated with poor education, training and employment outcomes can be addressed through early, well-targeted and holistic support.

A basic level of education, for instance basic literacy, numeracy and qualifications, are fundamental building blocks for good further education, training and employment outcomes. Preventing school disengagement and identifying and meeting diverse learning needs is critical to supporting good outcomes.

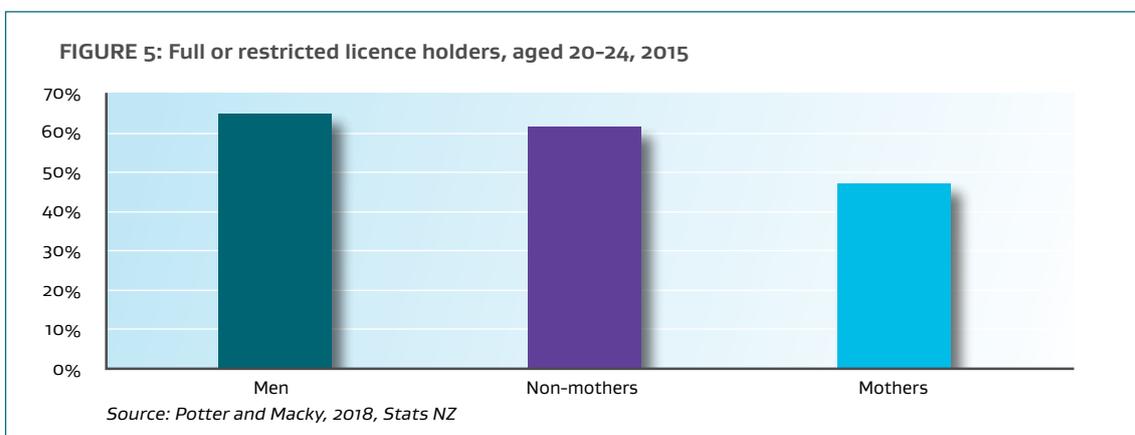
Soft skills, or employability skills, such as motivation, teamwork, self-management and communication skills, are also an important part of the skillset required to make the transition into paid work. Work experience can play a key role here in helping young people build and recognise these skills.

Underlying systemic factors can also be influenced to improve outcomes. For instance, institutional processes that are difficult to comprehend or navigate can be improved upon. Furthermore, educators' and employers' capability, tolerance, and cultural competency can be built to support better engagement with young people. To elaborate on this point, employers can perceive young people as having a 'poor attitude' to work, while young people report a web of unfamiliar and invisible practices, language and rules on entering the workplace (The Attitude Gap, 2013). This gap can be self-perpetuating and can lead to more disengagement from both employers and young people, and create a barrier to effective employment transitions for young people.

We also know that there are some specific skills that can have a significant impact on the ability of young people to find and remain in training and employment. Recent research has shown that young people who are NEET are less likely to hold a driving licence than those in education or employment (Potter and Macky, 2018; MBIE, forthcoming). Not having a driving licence can limit employment and training opportunities particularly for young mothers and parents, making it difficult to look for work, travel to work and training, and to gain a job where driving is required. It can also limit a person's ability to socialise and connect with family and friends.

These studies suggest that increasing driver licence rates could lower barriers to education and employment for Māori, Pacific peoples and young mothers in particular (MBIE, forthcoming).

The following figure shows a recent snapshot of licence holders, highlighting the opportunity to improve licence rates for young mothers.



Accessible and affordable childcare is also highlighted as being a critical enabler for young mothers to engage with education, training and employment (Potter and Macky, 2018).

Further, unemployment and non-participation in education or training can have a negative effect on psychological health, which itself becomes a barrier to employment or further education – and creates an inability to move forward.

Given the broad range of contributors and drivers to poor education, training and employment outcomes for some groups of younger people, a holistic and strength-based approach to the range of support services that are available are important. This ensures that support can be tailored to the particular needs of the individual to help them make informed decisions and reach their education and employment goals.



PART THREE OUR COMMITMENT TO IMPROVING YOUTH EDUCATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

Good education, training and employment experiences are critical to setting young people up for good lifetime careers and wellbeing. We think we can do this more effectively.

New Zealand's education, training and employment systems have strengths, but there are opportunities to reinforce the pipeline of support across these systems. In particular, there are opportunities for improvement in the following areas:

- › Disengagement is identified too late, and we do not intervene effectively. This results in too many young people, particularly young Māori and Pacific peoples, leaving school without the foundations for further learning, and navigating training and employment pathways.
- › Whole-of-person services that can help people overcome challenges and meaningfully engage with training and employment can be difficult to access, particularly for those who face a range of barriers.
- › Government-funded services are not always well-linked, or encouraged to on-refer people to services that are better suited to meeting a young person's particular needs.
- › Some service offerings are not as effective as they could be, whereas some that are effective could be better supported to scale-up and be made available in more areas where they are needed.
- › Employers overlook some young people, particularly those with challenges, for opportunities to work and train at the same time.

We want to improve the pipeline of support for young people so they can fulfil their potential and reach their life goals

This Government has committed to work across the education, welfare and employment systems and to partner with Māori and communities to improve the pipeline of support for young people with actions to:

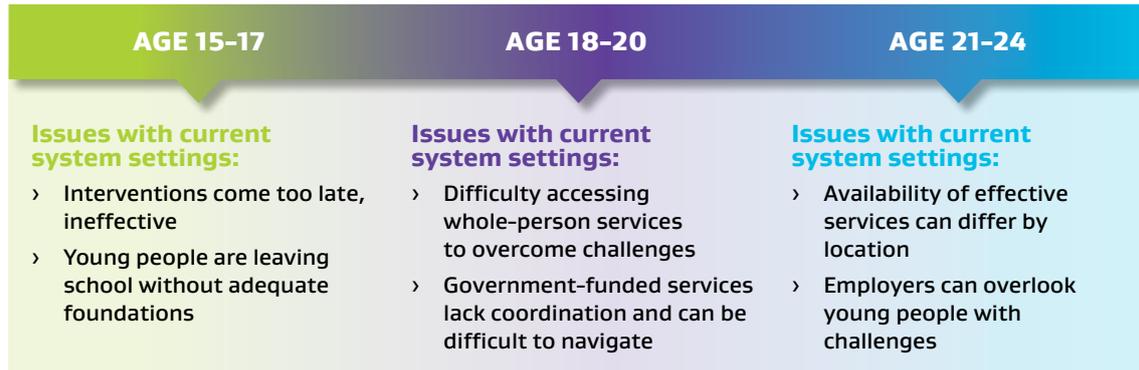
- › **prevent young people from falling into unemployment and non-participation in education or training and put in place the building blocks for success** through earlier identification and effective interventions to build labour market preparedness
- › **support young people to make informed choices and good transitions in a complex environment** through better careers guidance and job brokering; creating better incentives to employ and train people with challenges; strengthening partnerships with whānau and community; expanding effective pastoral

care/mentoring to those that need it; promoting more collaboration and connectivity across services; and scaling effective interventions

- › **ensure young people have employment opportunities and access to the support they need to overcome barriers and get back on track** through increasing driver licence uptake and creating employment opportunities.

Figure 6 below sets out the overlapping and compounding nature of the challenges faced by some young people, and the Government's approach to improving the pipeline of support.

FIGURE 6: Youth employment intervention pipeline



CROSS-GOVERNMENT ACTIONS TO IMPROVE YOUTH EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OUTCOMES:



This Action Plan detailed in the next section sets out the range of actions this Government is intending to take to build on each of these parts of the pipeline.



PART FOUR ACTION PLAN FOR IMPROVING THE PIPELINE OF SUPPORTS

A three-stage pipeline of support sets out how we will achieve better employment outcomes for our young people.

STAGE 1: Actions to prevent young people falling into limited employment and non-participation in education and training

We are committed to moving our service approach from being an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff for young people at risk of long-term unemployment and limited employment to one where our young people receive support as soon as they need it.

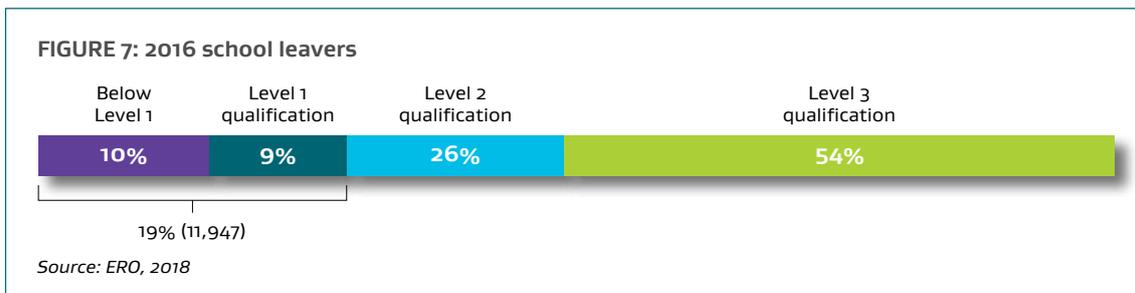
We want to ensure that more people, particularly Māori, Pacific peoples and disabled people get early work experience opportunities at school and leave school with adequate foundation skills, qualifications and a plan for moving forward.

We have seen improvements in schooling outcomes, but particular groups continue to be underserved and disengage

New Zealand's young people have schooling outcomes at around the OECD average, and better than average early training and employment experiences. In recent years we have seen reductions in young people leaving school without qualifications, including Māori. This has coincided with greater emphasis being placed on:

- › interventions to strengthen teaching and learning across the schooling system, such as Communities of Learning/Kāhui Ako to enable schools to work collectively to raise the achievement of students across their full learning pathway, and putting greater emphasis on learning needs-assessment through the Education Review Office
- › greater support for students with additional learning needs, such as the Positive Behaviour for Learning Initiative (PB4L) and the Intensive Wraparound Service
- › interventions to improve transitions from school to work and/or further education, such as Secondary Tertiary Partnerships, foundation tertiary education (eg Youth Guarantee Fees-Free) and Vocational Pathways.

However, Māori, Pacific peoples, those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, in the care of Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children, and disabled and learning-diverse ākonga continue to have poorer outcomes and are underserved by aspects of the education system. While there has been a significant increase in the number of school leavers achieving NCEA level 1 literacy and numeracy, a large number of students continue to leave the schooling system without achieving basic literacy and numeracy skills (see Figure 7 below). Many of these learners attempt to complete their school qualifications later through foundation tertiary education, but only about half of these learners complete their courses.



Many people who disengage from school do so early on, often due to their needs not being adequately identified and effectively met (eg. family circumstances, additional learning needs, low self-esteem, disability, or high health needs).

Many of these young people leave school without employability skills or having had access to work experience. This is especially likely for young people leaving the care of the State, who are less likely to have access to natural support networks to assist with access to work experience opportunities.

Some disabled students miss out on learning and early job experience opportunities at school, which would help equip them for further training or work because of low expectations about what they can do. There is also considerable variability between schools in terms of assistance for young disabled people to make effective transitions to further study, training or work. Providing additional support to ensure young disabled people have some work experience, even if just for a couple of days or an hour a week, can make a marked difference in longer-term outcomes.

We can do more to improve young people's building blocks for success

Educational attainment is a key protective factor. Maintaining engagement is fundamental to this, and this requires early attention.

Work experience and non-cognitive skills also stand out as key factors in distinguishing why some young people experience relatively limited employment outcomes. The lack of work experience stands out as a major employment barrier for young people who leave school with low or no qualifications and for young people who come from family backgrounds with limited social capital. Non-cognitive skills develop over time as a person's usual way of behaving and interacting overlap with traits such as attitude, motivation, self-management and interpersonal skills.

We also know that we need to thread any initiatives with strong strategic partnerships with whānau, hapū, iwi and communities.

Major reviews of the education system are currently underway and are aimed at improving outcomes for all learners, especially those currently underserved by the system. These include the review of NCEA, Tomorrow's Schools, the Reform of Vocational Education (RoVE), the Disability and Learning Support Action Plan and the Early Learning Strategic Plan.

For example, the NCEA Change Package will make our senior secondary qualification more robust, consistent, inclusive and accessible for students of all abilities and backgrounds. Pathways from NCEA to further education and employment will also be clearer.

Through the Reform of Vocational Education, vocational education will deliver to the unique needs of all learners, including those who have been traditionally under-served, such as Māori, Pacific peoples, and disabled learners, particularly as Māori and Pacific peoples will form a growing part of the working-age population in the future. Students, apprentices and trainees will have more access to high-quality workplace learning and employer networks in addition to off-the-job study. They will be able to move between on-the-job and off-the-job study more easily.

Beyond these reviews, the Government further intends to progress the following actions to improve young people's building blocks for success:

Action	Objectives/Indicators	Responsibility
1. Improve early identification and effectiveness of interventions targeting young people at risk of limited education, employment and training outcomes	Improve school engagement, reduce early school leaving	Ministry of Education
2. Expand early work experience opportunities and access to high quality vocational education and training pathways, including thorough improvements to NCEA and RoVE	Move the focus of teaching and learning more strongly towards workplaces and actively explore and implement work-integrated learning models	Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education Commission, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment

STAGE 2: Actions to support people to make informed choices through complexity

We are committed to ensuring that well-tailored support is available when and where young people need it to navigate and access the array of pathways they face when they leave school. We also want to ensure that those who face additional challenges can access effective support that addresses their specific needs, enabling them to access opportunities to realise their potential.

We have invested a great deal to improve transitions, but many continue to fall through the cracks

Young people face a complex environment when they leave school. This is particularly challenging for people with additional needs who may need support from multiple services.

New Zealand has a number of dedicated and effective programmes to support young people to make informed choices before they leave school through in-school careers and counselling services.

In some areas job brokers are available to help jobseekers prepare for entry into the world of work, and provide pastoral care and support once they have been placed in a job. A number of organisations offer these supports, for instance the Tāmaki Regeneration Jobs & Skills Hub, many councils, iwi trusts and other iwi organisations, industry and community organisations such as Rangatahi Ma Kia Eke in Hawke's Bay², Take Charge in Christchurch³, and Whānau Ora navigators in particular locations.

Government has expanded support in recent years to help people make good transitions from school to employment, education, apprenticeships and training, for example:

- › placing more emphasis on employment and careers services to young people in schools, which will increase further as the Government's Careers System Strategy is implemented
- › expanding and improving the focus of the Youth Service, which supports young people into further education, training or work-based learning.

However, there are a variety of unmet needs – ranging from the straightforward to the more challenging. Many people may just require better information about who to get in contact with, while others have more complex needs such as health conditions and disabilities, a lack of qualifications, underlying learning difficulties, functional illiteracy (including digital and technological literacy), a lack of experience and skills, or are young parents or have other caring responsibilities.

² This collaborative project between the Ministry of Social Development and Hastings District Council aims to include young people who have health conditions or a disability in paid project-based work where they can develop employment skills, work experience and on-the-job training. The initiative involves a collaborative approach to linking participants to sustainable work or training at the conclusion of each project. Other partners include Oranga Tamariki, Te Puni Kōkiri, Hawke's Bay DHB and the Eastern Institute of Technology.

³ This trial is delivered in partnership with Odyssey House Christchurch. It is an adapted model of Individual Placement and Support tailored for young people aged 18 -24 with common mental health needs or substance addiction issues and provides support to find and stay in work.

In some cases current interventions do not adequately serve the needs of young people:

- › services do not always provide effective referral pathways to support informed transitions to training and/or work opportunities
- › many effective place-based interventions are not available everywhere, or can be difficult to access due to complex eligibility rules.

Even where the right services and employment and training pathways are available it can be hard for young people, and the people supporting them (including family, whānau and staff in schools), to navigate to the support that best suit their needs.

This can be doubly difficult for young people who lack role models in their lives and are heavily influenced by intergenerational unemployment.

We can do more to support young people to make good transitions

Interventions involving job search assistance, work experience and/or on-the-job training have been shown to be amongst the most effective in improving long-term employment outcomes. It is also important that such interventions provide pathways to real and sustainable employment opportunities. Ideally, all young people, regardless of whether they are in or outside the secondary or tertiary education system, or in work but looking for their next step, would have access to job brokers who are well-connected with employers and training providers.

To improve outcomes, we need to ensure that employment and career services are well-tailored and effective for young people. We need to ensure that effective employment services are accessible where and when young people need them.

We need to ensure that those with additional challenges can access the right package of supports to address their specific needs and barriers. We need to ensure that government-funded services are better connected, and more easily navigated. We also need to take a strengths-based approach that is supported by good pastoral care and mentoring, this is particularly important for Māori and Pacific young people, as well as for those that lack good family and community support.

The Government is in the process of implementing and expanding a number of services:

- › Sector Workforce Engagement work in mapping existing and developing career pathways for sectors that have long-standing labour market issues, such as a heavy reliance on migrant labour.
- › A Careers System Strategy is being developed to ensure all New Zealanders have the skills and capabilities needed for a fulfilling career and sustainable income throughout their working life.
- › He Poutama Rangatahi is connecting young people with employers and further training in regions which have some of the highest rates of youth joblessness and non-participation in education or training.
- › Other place-based initiatives are helping to connect young people with jobs and skills training ranging from the basic (eg. literacy, numeracy and driving), to career steps (for instance Ara, CBD and Tāmaki hubs in Auckland).
- › A new Oranga Tamariki Transitions Support Service (from 1 July 2019), which will provide relationship-based support for eligible young people leaving care or youth justice from age 15 up to 25.
- › Review of the Youth Service, and expansion of this to improve its effectiveness.

A number of services (eg Check and Connect, He Poutama Rangatahi, Youth Guarantees) have adopted an emphasis on providing pastoral care and mentoring as part of their service specification. Essentially this involves a support person that can be attentive and offer the young person advice, direction and hope through challenging patches – whatever is needed in the moment, for instance to support their physical, spiritual, family or mental health (as is set out in the Whare Tapa Whā model). Such pastoral support has been shown to improve self-esteem and self-confidence. However, in doing this we need to ensure that pastoral care and mentoring support is effectively delivered, and for Māori and Pacific young people, is based on cultural frameworks and approaches that build on cultural and community strengths.

The Government intends to progress the following actions to support young people to make informed choices and transitions:

Action	Objectives/Indicators	Responsibility
3. Improve brokering of employment opportunities and careers assistance, including the development of the Career Systems Strategy	Reduced course turnover, stable engagement, greater support for transitions into the labour market	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Education; Tertiary Education Commission; Te Puni Kōkiri
4. Improve the quality and effectiveness of pastoral care/mentoring programmes, including approaches that build on cultural and community strengths	Increased trust and sustained support leads to improved completion rates	Ministry of Education; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry for Pacific Peoples
5. Increase opportunities for young people to gain the vital skills they need to transition out of compulsory schooling into further education, training or employment	Improved transitions from schooling into further training, education and employment, such as through changes to NCEA and the Reform of Vocational Education	Ministry of Education
6. Provide a support service for young people transitioning from care and youth justice to independence (ages 15 to 25)	Improved transitions from care and youth justice to independence by supporting young people and connecting them to the services and supports that they need	Oranga Tamariki; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
7. Strengthen interventions delivered through local partnerships such as local connector/kaitūhono services, and expand initiatives demonstrated as being effective	Increased service uptake; reduced drop-out	Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Te Puni Kōkiri; Ministry for Pacific Peoples
8. Improve service provider collaboration, for instance through including better referral pathways and joined-up funding	Improved collaboration, information sharing; more stable engagement	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Education; Tertiary Education Commission

STAGE 3: Actions to support people to overcome barriers to employment

We are committed to helping young people to pick up the employability skills they need, and assisting employers to realise the fullest potential in our young people. This final stage of the pipeline addresses young people's skill needs and the role employers play in making the most of young people's skills and talents.

We want young people to have the skills needed to enter the workforce, and for businesses to value hiring young people

As discussed earlier, young people can face a range of barriers to entering the workforce, from health issues to low qualification levels and poor employability skills. On top of this, employers can view hiring a young person as a cost or risk to their business, particularly if they feel that young people need additional support to integrate into the workplace. Young people and employers can also face an 'attitude gap', or clash of norms and expectations which can result in employer risk aversion.

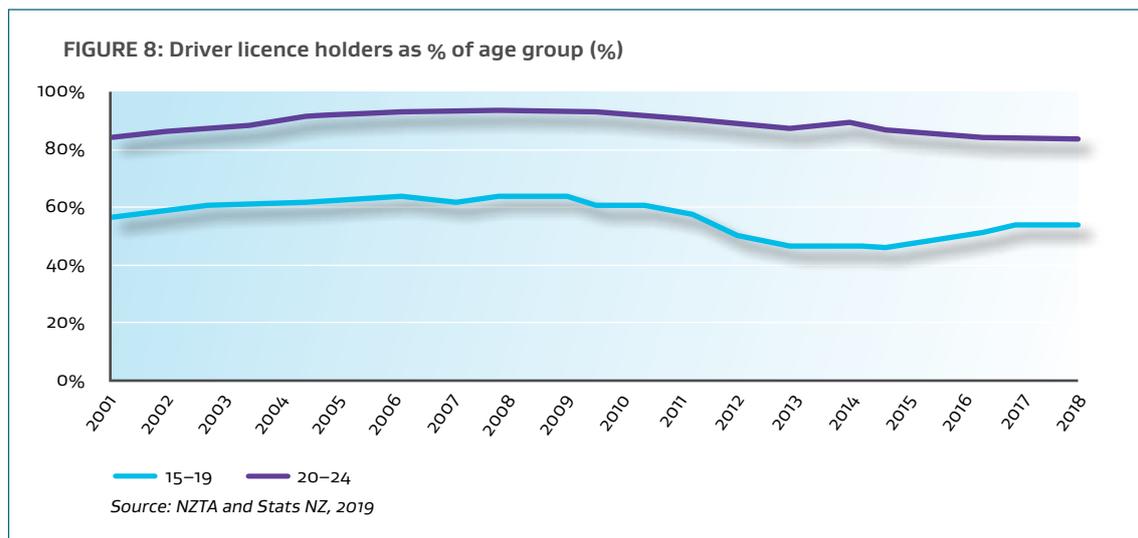
New Zealand has a diverse mix of programmes and services for improving youth employability, involving a range of government agencies and sectors. The effectiveness of these programmes varies. For example, there is growing evidence that training and education alone is not effective in improving long-term employment outcomes, whereas on-the-job training is one of the most effective approaches in improving long-term employment outcomes. Also, few interventions respond to external factors such as intergenerational family benefit receipt and external risk factors such as this are rarely used to trigger interventions.

This can be exacerbated by many of New Zealand's health, social, employment and educational services being highly devolved to and varying within regions. This can also mean that young people who need a bit more support, or linking between their school and social and health services and training institutions, can be well served in some schools or regions, but not in others. Some of these issues are most pronounced in areas where numbers of young people not in education, employment or training are highest, such as Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington and Waikato.

We can do more to help young people overcome barriers to employment

Evidence indicates that increasing driver licence uptake could help lower barriers to education and employment for young people at risk of poor employment or training outcomes, and Māori, Pacific peoples and young mothers in particular. However, these groups often face significant barriers in getting a licence.

Figure 8 shows that the proportion of young people with a driver licence in the 15- 24-year-old age group decreased from around 2011 when the eligibility age for obtaining a driver licence was lifted from 15 years to 16 years.



We also know that apprenticeship and other work-study programmes are among the most effective at helping some of the most disadvantaged young people transition into work. Countries with low youth NEET rates emphasise and strongly support apprenticeships. Good apprenticeship uptake requires good connections between education providers and employers (which is being addressed by the Review of Vocational Education), but also adequate incentives and risk limitation for firms. We also know that taking on people with added challenges can require external support and encouragement.

The Government is in the process of implementing and expanding a number of services, such as:

- › creating a unified vocational education system so that learners receive more support while they are training, and vocational education that is more relevant to work. They will be able to move more easily between regions and between on-the-job and off-the-job, and will be able to continue training more easily if their employment situation changes.
- › improving NCEA so it is accessible for all learners, and there are clearer pathways into employment and further study
- › programmes that build self-confidence and motivation to help young people access training, such as Limited Services Volunteers
- › Work Ready Passport, which has been rolled out in a number of regions via employment and training trusts that are supported by economic development agencies
- › Mana in Mahi – Strength in Work, with a particular emphasis on building pathways to industry training qualifications and expanding it to include other at-risk groups (eg young people leaving the care of the State)
- › driver training initiatives already being undertaken by community groups, councils, and government agencies. These are usually part of a wider support system for young people. There has recently been a significant increase in funding in this area, from both the Provincial Growth Fund and the NZ Transport Agency (Community Road Safety Fund)
- › Pacific Employment Support Service (PESS), which helps young Pacific people find employment and complete further training or study
- › Māori and Pasifika Trades Training, which provides fees-free tertiary places for Māori and Pacific people aged between 16 and 40 to achieve in pre-trades training and progress to sustainable trades or trades-related employment (including New Zealand Apprenticeships)
- › contracted supported employment services for disabled people, including those with mental health conditions (MSD-funded). Post-placement support is included as a part of these contracts.

Government intends to progress the following actions to improve young people's employment opportunities and support to overcome barriers:

Action	Objectives/indicators	Responsibility
9. Building on the Reform of the Vocational Education system, provide better support for employers to employ and train more young people with employment challenges	Increased young people in apprenticeships and other forms of industry training, particularly Māori, Pacific and disabled people	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Social Development, Tertiary Education Commission, Ministry of Education
10. Increase driver licence uptake and progression through the Graduated Driver Licences System	Increase uptake and progression through Graduated Driver Licences System, particularly of Māori and Pacific peoples	Ministry of Education, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, New Zealand Transport Agency, Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kōkiri, NZ Police, Ministry of Transport
11. Advocate for public sector internships and employment opportunities for young people leaving care of the state	Increased number of young people in public sector, particularly Māori and Pacific peoples	Oranga Tamariki
12. Improve employment opportunities and address barriers to employment for young disabled people	Increase in the number of young disabled people in employment	Ministry of Social Development



PART FIVE MULTI-AGENCY ACTION PLAN TO SUPPORT YOUNG PEOPLE TO HAVE FULFILLING WORKING LIVES

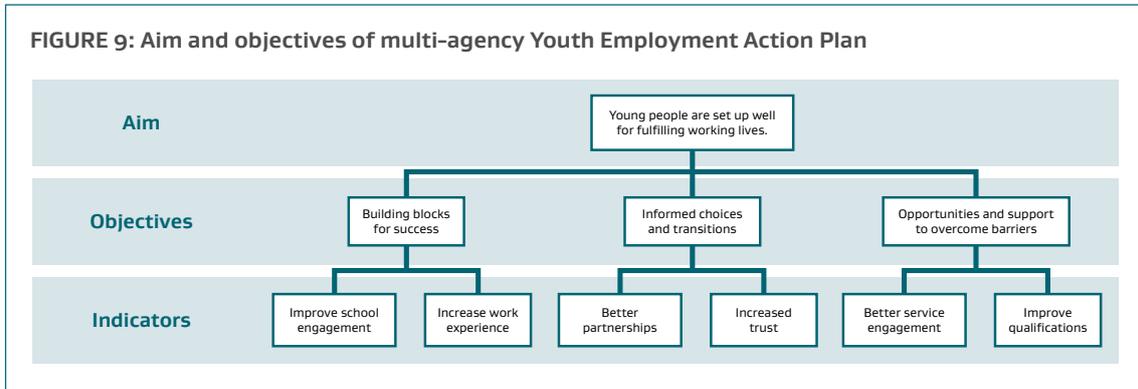
We have outlined the challenges some of our rangatahi are facing, this Government’s aims and why the work we are carrying out is important to support young people to have fulfilling working lives.

The initial phase of actions will be completed for implementation from July 2020. The second phase will focus on consolidating actions so that they work well together, across agency domains.

At the end of the implementation period we will develop a renewed response to improving youth employment outcomes. This will involve reviewing what has been done – and how successfully – and looking at what we still need to do in the context of a changing work environment.

The work programme will focus the efforts of government agencies across education, welfare and employment systems working with local communities and key stakeholders to:

- > improve young people’s building blocks for success
- > support young people to make informed choices and transitions through complexity
- > help young people overcome barriers to employment.



The work programme set out below shows who is responsible for each action and when the action is expected to be developed, as well as how they relate to the aims of the Government's Employment Strategy.

TABLE 1: Multi-agency action plan to support young people to have fulfilling working lives

Action	Objectives/indicators	Responsibility
<i>Actions to improve young people's building blocks for success</i>		
1. Improve early identification and effectiveness of interventions targeting young people at risk of limited education, employment and training outcomes	Improve school engagement, reduce early school leaving	Ministry of Education
2. Expand early work experience opportunities and access to high quality vocational education and training pathways, including through improvements to NCEA and RoVE	Move the focus of teaching and learning more strongly towards workplaces and actively explore and implement work-integrated learning models	Ministry of Education; Tertiary Education Commission; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
<i>Actions to support young people to make informed choices through complexity</i>		
3. Improve brokering of employment opportunities and careers assistance, including the development of the Career Systems Strategy	Reduced course turnover, stable engagement, greater support for transitions into the labour market	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Education; Tertiary Education Commission; Te Puni Kokiri
4. Improve the quality and effectiveness of pastoral care/mentoring programmes including approaches that build on cultural and community strengths	Increased trust and sustained support leads to improved completion rates	Ministry of Education; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry for Pacific Peoples
5. Increase opportunities for young people to gain the vital skills they need to transition out of compulsory schooling into further education, training or employment, including through improvements to NCEA and RoVE	Improved transitions from schooling into further training, education and employment	Ministry of Education
6. Provide a support service for young people transitioning from care and youth justice to independence (ages 15 to 25)	Improved transitions from care and youth justice to independence by supporting young people and connecting them to the services and supports that they need	Oranga Tamariki

Action	Objectives/Indicators	Responsibility
7. Strengthen interventions delivered through local partnerships such as local connector/kaitūhono services, and expand initiatives demonstrated as being effective	Increased service uptake; reduced drop-out	Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Education; Te Puni Kōkiri; Ministry for Pacific Peoples; Ministry of Health
8. Improve service provider collaboration, for instance through including better referral pathways and joined-up funding	Improved collaboration, information sharing; more stable engagement	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Ministry of Education; Tertiary Education Commission
<i>Actions to overcome barriers to employment</i>		
9. Building on the Reform of Vocational Education system, provide better support for employers to employ and train more young people with employment challenges	Increased young people in apprenticeships and other forms of industry training, particularly Māori, Pacific and disabled people	Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; Ministry of Social Development; Tertiary Education Commission; Ministry of Education
10. Increase driver licence uptake and progression through the Graduated Driver Licences System	Increase uptake and progression through Graduated Driver Licences System, particularly of Māori and Pacific peoples	Ministry of Education; Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment; New Zealand Transport Agency; Ministry of Social Development; Te Puni Kōkiri; NZ Police; Ministry of Transport
11. Advocate for public sector internships and employment opportunities for young people leaving care of the state	Increased number of young people in public sector, particularly Māori and Pacific peoples	Oranga Tamariki
12. Improve employment opportunities and address barriers to employment for young disabled people	Increase in the number of young disabled people in employment	Ministry of Social Development

