Most labour market outcomes for Pacific Peoples improved over the year to June 2019, except for the falls in the employment rate and labour force participation rate.

Despite the fall in the employment rate, the number of Pacific Peoples in employment was up 6,700 to 158,900 workers over the year.

The labour force participation rate (LFPR) decreased to 65.5 per cent, down 1.1 percentage points (pp) from a year ago.

The unemployment rate fell by 0.5pp from a year ago to 8.0 per cent.

The annual average NEET rate fell from 17.8 per cent to 16.4 per cent in the year to June 2019. About 12,100 Pacific Peoples youth were not in education, employment or training.

Employment outcomes improved for Pacific Peoples the year to June 2019. Compared with a year ago, 6,700 (or 4.4 per cent) more Pacific Peoples were employed. The employment rates were also up for Pacific Peoples aged 25 to 34, 35 to 44 and 65+ years in the year to June 2019.

The unemployment rate for Pacific women fell by 1.7 pp over the past year, with fewer Pacific women unemployed, down to 7,200 from 8,400 in June 2018. The unemployment rate rose 0.6pp for Pacific men. Pacific Peoples aged 35 to 44 and over 65 years had the biggest fall in the unemployment rate.

Fewer Pacific Peoples are active in the labour market. The LFPR for Pacific Peoples decreased 1.1 pp over the year to 65.5 per cent. This lowered LFPR was in part due to decreases in the LFPR among Pacific Peoples aged 25 to 64 years, and in male (down 1.0pp to 72.1 per cent) and female (down 1.4pp to 59.4 per cent) Pacific Peoples.

Differences in Pacific Peoples employment across the regions continue. Pacific Peoples in the South Island had the highest employment rate (71.5 per cent), followed by Wellington (64.7 per cent) in the year to June 2019. This compares with 57.9 per cent in Auckland, where Pacific Peoples are most concentrated. About 67.3 per cent (116,200) of the total Pacific Peoples labour force is in Auckland, and 11.2 per cent (19,400) in Wellington. Pacific Peoples aged 55 and over had the biggest fall in the employment rate over the year.

In the year to June 2019, there were 263,800 Pacific Peoples of working age. Of these, 172,800 Pacific Peoples were in the labour market. By region, participation rates for Pacific Peoples in the South Island were higher than in the North Island. The participation for Pacific Peoples in Auckland was 63.2 per cent and 69.5 per cent in Wellington.

Most Pacific Peoples employed were in the following industry groups:

- Manufacturing, Wholesale & Retail, and Other Business Services.
- Food Services, Accommodation and other Community, Social & Personal Services.
- Health Care and Social Assistance.
- Professional, Scientific & Technical Services.
- Other Services.

The industries employing the most Pacific Peoples workers in the year to June 2019 were Manufacturing, Wholesale & Retail, and Other Business Services.

Over the year, employment grew in seven out of twelve industry groups. The strongest annual growth was in Other Business Services (12.2 per cent or 4,500 workers), followed by Other Services (25.7 per cent or 1,600 workers).

Proportion of Pacific Peoples in industries, Jan 2019

- Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Mining
- Manufacturing
- Wholesale & Retail
- Other Business Services
- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Utilities and Construction
- Transport and Warehousing
- Public Admin and Safety
- Education and Training
- Accommodation & Food Services
- Other Services
- Financial and Insurance

Note: Sum of employment by industry may not equal total employment due to rounding. The smaller estimates are subject to large sampling errors. The above figures are annual average, and may differ from Statistics New Zealand’s published figures.

*Includes Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services, Administrative & Support Services, and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, and Other Services.
Over the year, employment in most occupation groups increased. The biggest increases in employment were in Professionals (16.8 per cent or 3,400 workers), Clerks (14.2 per cent or 2,300 workers), and Technicians and Trades (9.8 per cent or 1,000 workers). These occupation groups make up most of the increase in Pacific Peoples employment for the year to June 2019.

Pacific Peoples in skilled occupations total 58,100 workers in the year to June 2019, an increase of 5,100 workers (up 9.5 per cent) from a year ago. The biggest increases in employment were in Professionals (16.8 per cent or 3,400 workers), Clerks (14.2 per cent or 2,300 workers), and Technicians and Trades (9.8 per cent or 1,000 workers). These occupation groups make up most of the increase in Pacific Peoples employment for the year to June 2019.

Pacific Peoples representation in skilled occupations has improved. Among Pacific Peoples aged 15-24 years, more females than males were NEET in the year to June 2019. The NEET rate for females was 16.4 per cent in the year to June 2019.