

This monthly fact sheet summarises the latest labour market information. It focuses on the most recent monthly changes and complements MBIE's quarterly *Labour Market Statistics Snapshot*<sup>1</sup>. For more information on sectors and regions, see MBIE's *COVID-19 economic data*<sup>2</sup>. The *Monthly Labour Market Fact Sheet* will be updated next on 20 May 2022.

## Overview

### Headline quarterly statistics

Data up to December 2021 quarter

Measures	Dec-20	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21
Employment	2,730,000	2,748,000	2,776,000	2,828,000	2,831,000
— Paid Employee or Employer	2,376,800	2,368,200	2,398,500	2,438,300	2,462,500
— Self-employed	343,400	354,300	342,600	352,000	353,900
Employment Rate	66.8%	67.1%	67.7%	68.8%	68.8%
Participation Rate	70.2%	70.4%	70.5%	71.2%	71.1%
Underutilisation	354,000	362,000	312,000	278,000	277,000
— Unemployment	141,000	133,000	114,000	98,000	93,000
— Underemployment	117,000	122,000	107,000	97,000	102,000
— Potential Labour Force	95,000	106,000	91,000	83,000	82,000
Underutilisation Rate	11.9%	12.1%	10.5%	9.2%	9.2%
Unemployment Rate	4.9%	4.6%	4.0%	3.3%	3.2%
Not in the Labour Force	1,217,000	1,212,000	1,209,000	1,184,000	1,190,000
Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	81,000	79,000	79,000	79,000	70,000
NEET Rate	12.4%	12.2%	12.3%	12.2%	10.8%
Average Weekly Hours Paid (per FTE)	38.27	38.41	39.04	38.88	39.01

Source: All measures are from the Household Labour Force Survey except for average hours worked, which is from the Quarterly Employment Survey. *Labour Market Statistics, Stats NZ (Data to December 2021 quarter, next release on 04/05/2022)*

### The recent story

The New Zealand labour market continues to show signs of increased tightness as indicated by growth in online jobs advertisements during March 2022 and a decline in filled jobs over the month of February 2022. This was also reflected in the latest Quarterly Survey of Business Opinion for the March 2022 quarter, which highlighted the intense capacity constraints facing the New Zealand economy<sup>3</sup>. The opening of international borders for New Zealand citizens and residents in February 2022 is still to make an impact.

During March 2022, the jobs advertised online continued to grow, although at a more moderate rate than seen in recent months. Over the year to March 2022, the Healthcare industry (up 24.9 per cent) recorded the highest growth in jobs advertised, while Education (down 3.4 per cent), Construction (up 3.3 per cent) and Hospitality (up 5.1 per cent) recorded the lowest annual growth.

Although annual growth in the number of filled jobs to February 2022 was positive (up 3.4 per cent), over the month of February 2022 negative growth (down 0.3 per cent) was observed. Over the year to February 2022, the growth in filled jobs remained the highest for youth aged 15-19 years (up 17.1 per cent) compared to other age groups. During the same period, the following industries showed no growth or negative growth in the number of filled jobs: Accommodation & food services (nil growth), Agriculture, forestry & fishing (down 4.0 per cent), Arts & recreation services (down 4.8 per cent), and Information, media and telecommunications (down 10.0 per cent).

The number of people on working-age main benefits continues to remain below the 2021 numbers. There were 348,336 people on all main benefits as at 1 April 2022, with 177,642 on the Job Seekers support benefit. The number of new recipients of Job Seeker support remained below the cancellation numbers recorded during February and March 2022.

As a result of the Omicron outbreak in the community, government support has been available for those unable to work due to being tested for COVID-19 or needing to isolate after testing positive. Since 10 December 2021, after the COVID-19 Protection Framework was put in effect, a total of 198,900 applications under the new Leave Support Scheme (LSS) have been approved. In addition, 67,344 applications under the Short-Term Absence Payment (STAP) have been approved. Both LSS and STAP applications are now starting to drop as the number of Omicron cases peak across the country.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/employment-and-skills/labour-market-reports-data-and-analysis/labour-market-statistics-snapshot/>

<sup>2</sup><https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/economic-development/covid-19-data-resources/covid-19-economic-data/>

<sup>3</sup><https://www.anz.co.nz/content/dam/anzconz/documents/economics-and-market-research/2022/ANZ-QSBO-2022Q1.pdf>



# Filled Jobs

Data up to February 2022

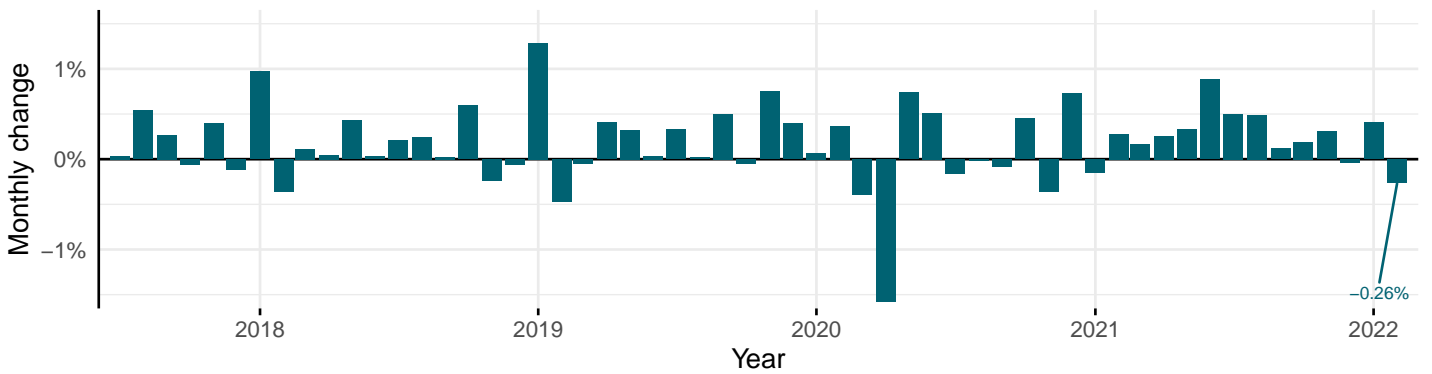
Stats NZ's Monthly Employment Indicators (MEIs) count of filled jobs uses employer payroll filing of tax data. These statistics are a useful indicator to supplement the official Labour Market Statistics, although they do not count the self-employed, do not necessarily represent full-time or permanent jobs. Recent results can be subject to fluctuations due to different employers' payroll schedules.

Annual percentage change in the number of filled jobs



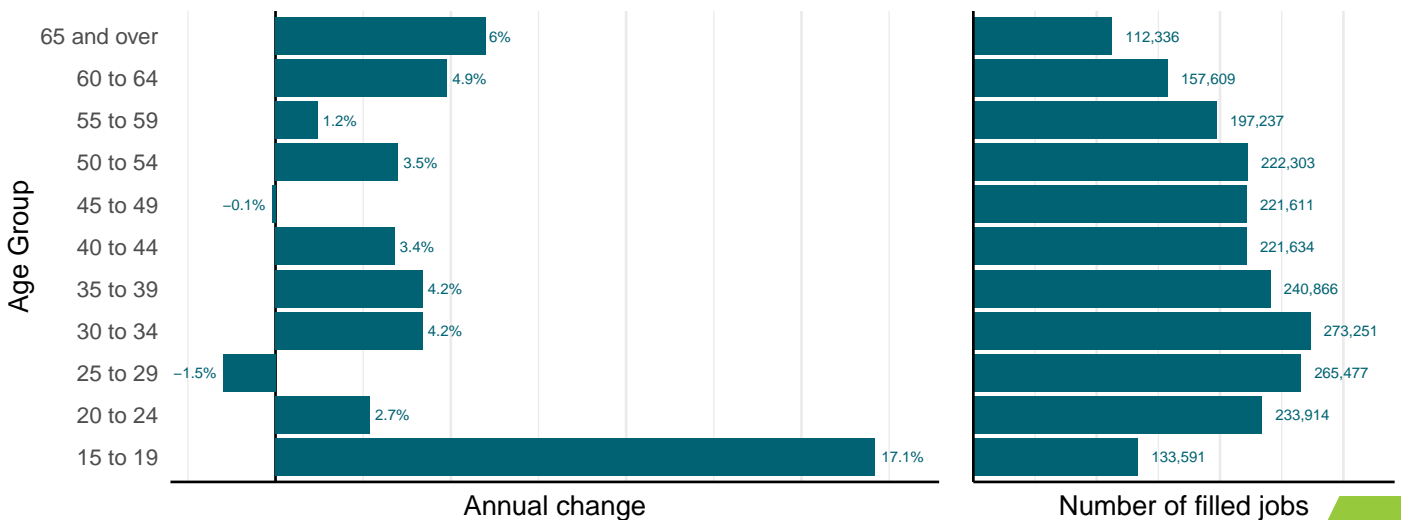
Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to February 2022, next release on 28/04/2022)

Monthly percentage change in the number of filled jobs, seasonally adjusted



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to February 2022, next release on 28/04/2022)

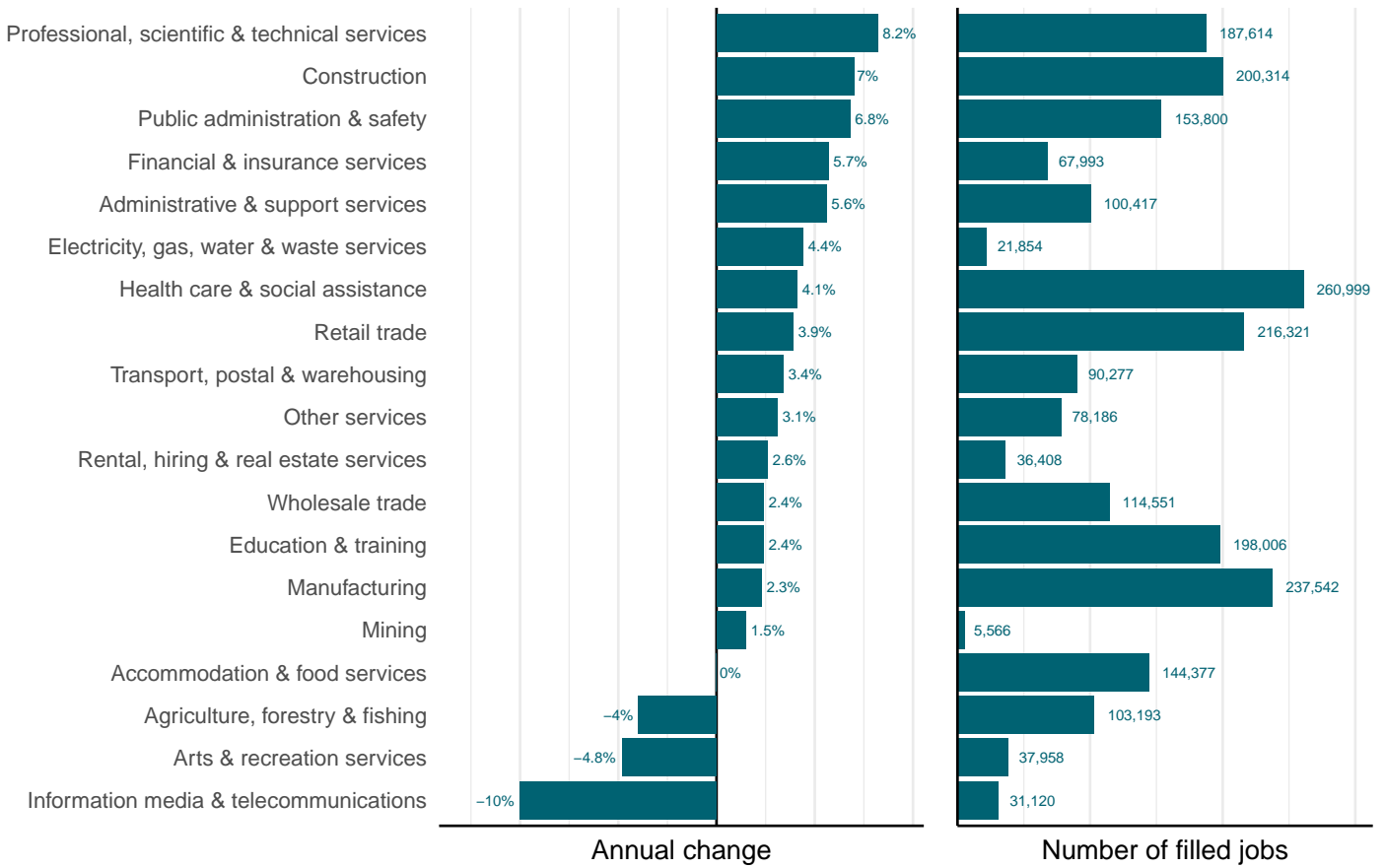
Filled jobs by age group



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to February 2022, next release on 28/04/2022)

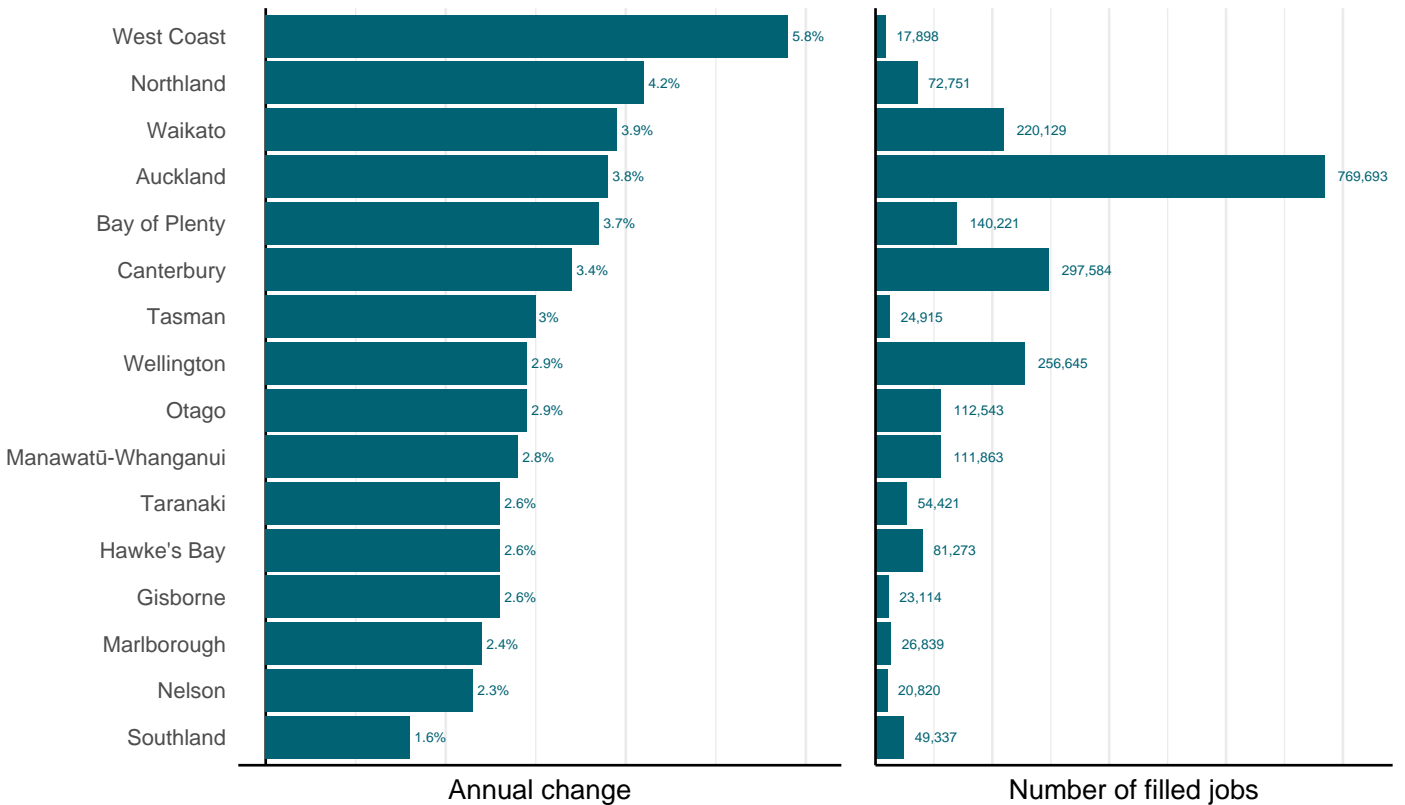


### Filled jobs by industry



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to February 2022, next release on 28/04/2022)

### Filled jobs by region



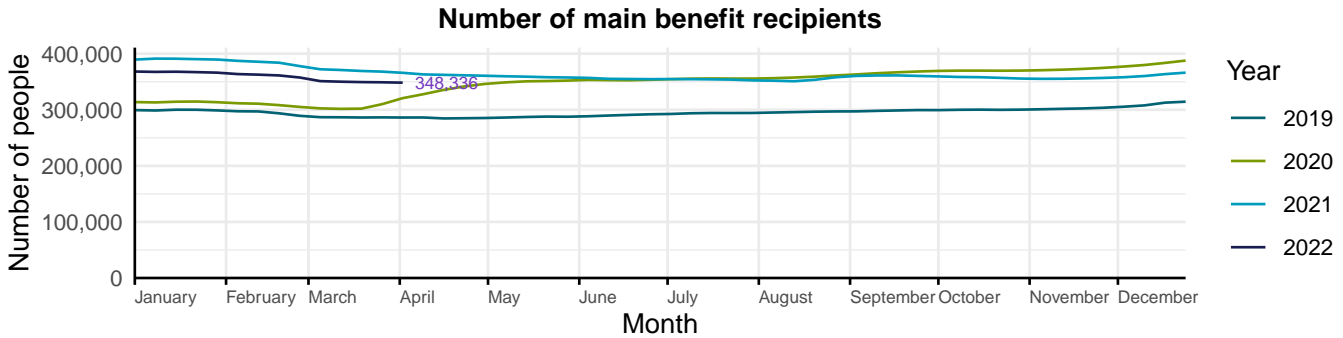
Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to February 2022, next release on 28/04/2022)



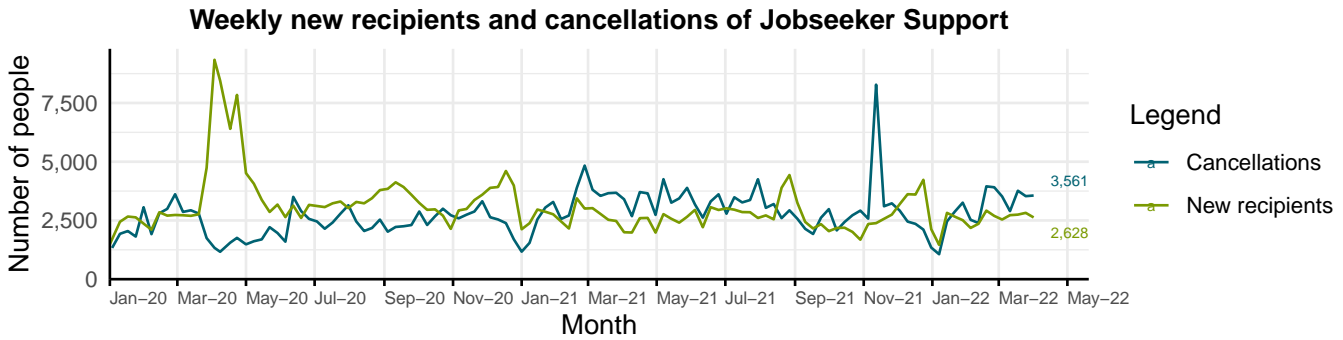
# Benefit Recipients

Data up to 1 April 2022

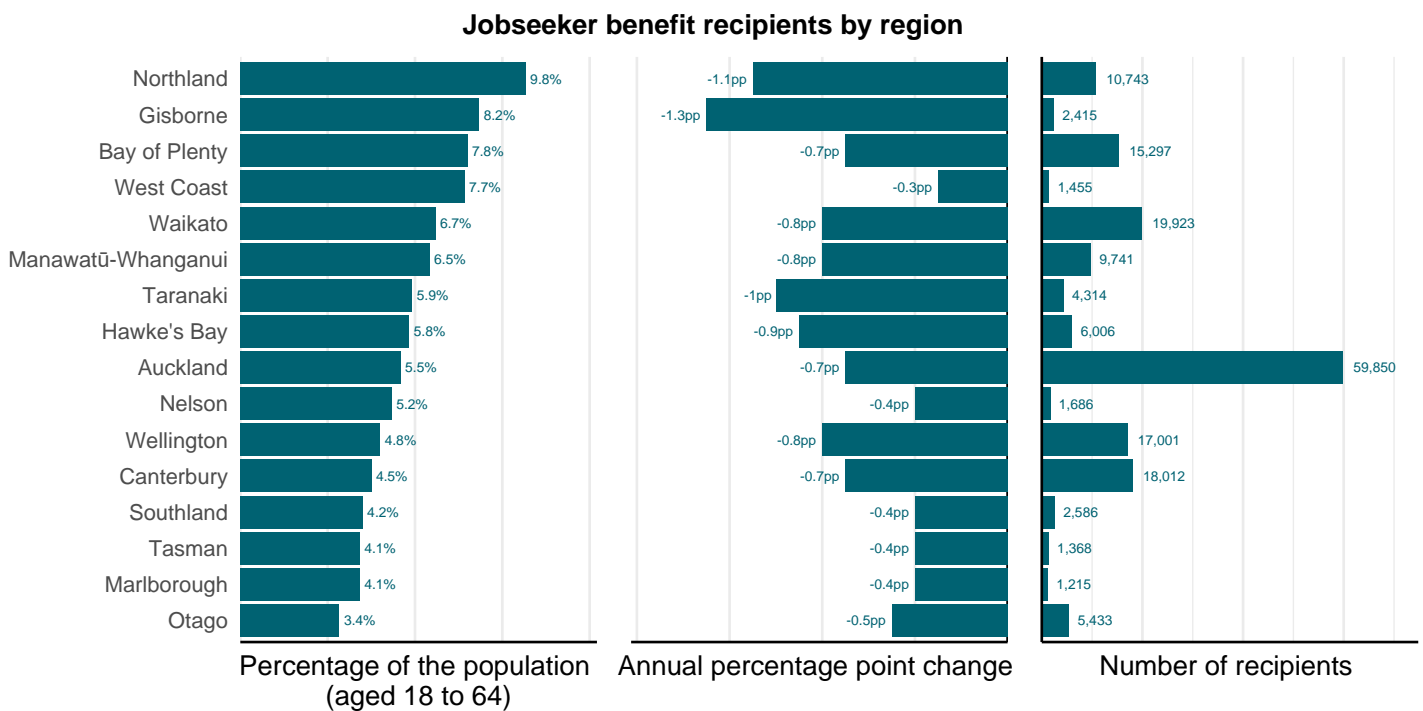
Benefits are primarily a measure of how many people are receiving income support rather than a measure of unemployment, but since 2008 the number of Jobseeker Support recipients has mostly tracked in line with the number of unemployed individuals. Measuring all working-age main benefits covers additional circumstances in which someone could need extra income. These benefits are a better proxy for the underutilisation rate, which is a more useful measure of “slack” in the labour market than the unemployment rate alone.



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 01/04/2022, released every Friday)



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 01/04/2022, released every Friday)



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 01/04/2022, released every Friday)



## Wage Subsidy

### Wage Subsidy data up to 9 December 2021 and LSS and STAP data up to 1 April 2022

A number of COVID-19 wage subsidies have been available since March 2020 to help employers and self-employed people who would otherwise have had to lay off staff or reduce their hours due to COVID-19<sup>4</sup>.

The COVID-19 Wage Subsidy and Leave Payment Scheme, available from 27 March 2020 to 9 June 2020, supported a large number of jobs (1,787,216 jobs) compared with subsequently available subsidies. The original Wage Subsidy Scheme was followed by the Wage Subsidy Extension Scheme introduced on 10 June 2020, which supported 588,379 jobs. In addition, a Resurgence Wage Subsidy payment was available for the last two weeks in August 2020 when Auckland was placed at Alert Level 3 supported 296,169 jobs.

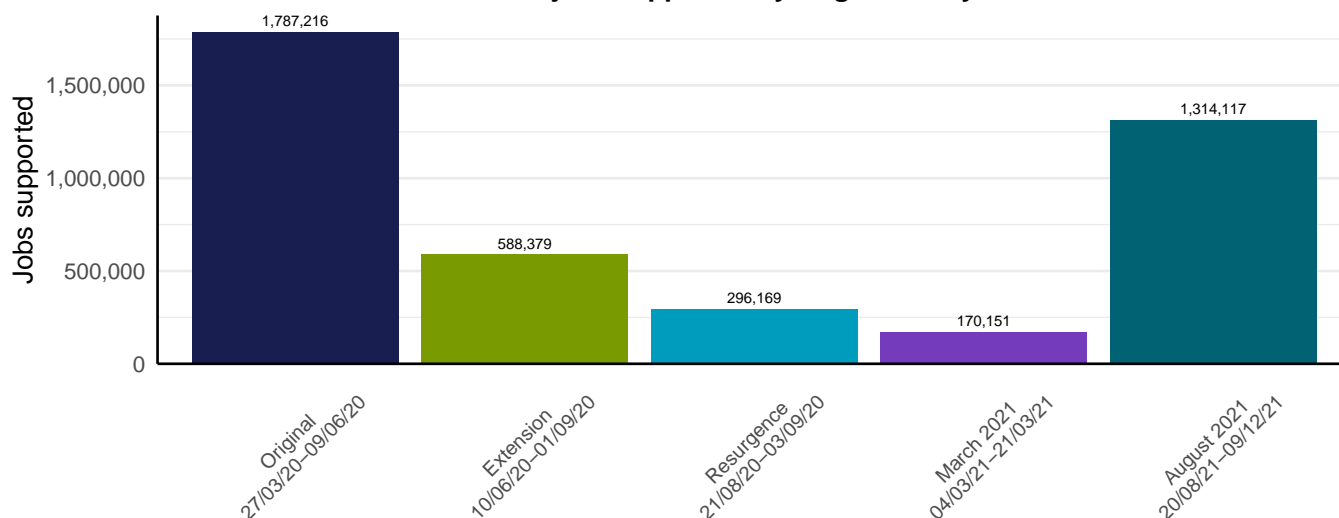
When Auckland once again moved to Alert Level 3 and the rest of the country moved to Alert Level 2 on 28 February 2021, the COVID-19 Wage Subsidy March 2021 supported a total of 170,151 jobs. More recently, the Wage Subsidy August 2021 was introduced, consisting of eight wage subsidies related to the August Alert Level changes which was open until 9 December 2021 and supported many more (1,314,117) jobs.

The Wage Subsidy Scheme ceased and the COVID-19 Protection Framework came into effect in early December 2021. Since then, workers who cannot work from home and need to miss work while waiting for a COVID-19 test result, and those advised to self-isolate due to COVID-19 (and who can't work from home), are eligible for support. The support available is the Short-term Absence Payment (STAP) and Leave Support Scheme (LSS), respectively.

Initially there were more applications approved for the STAP, which covers those waiting for a COVID-19 test result, than for the LSS, which is for those who are advised to self-isolate and cannot work from home. In the week ending 18 February 2022, the STAP approved was 4,059 and the LSS approved was 3,075.

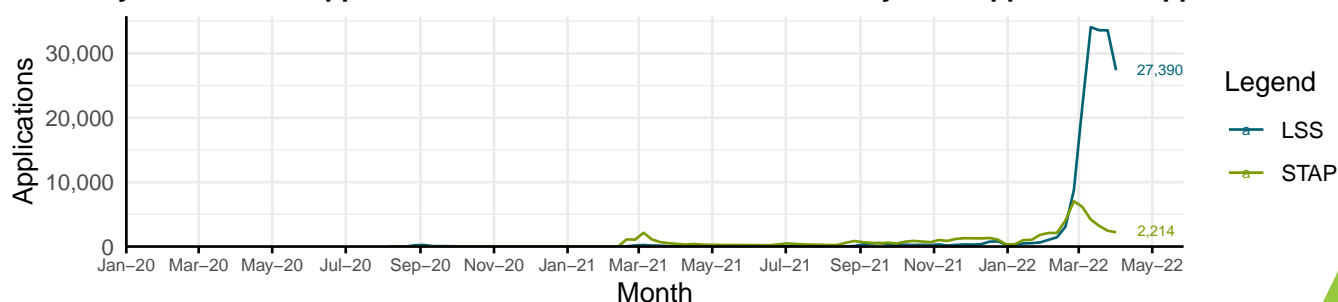
However, there have been fewer applications approved for the STAP than for the LSS from the week ending 25 February 2022. Over the period from the week ending 25 February 2022 to the week ending 1 April 2022 (latest available), the STAP applications (waiting for the test result) approved decreased from 7,050 to 2,214. The LSS applications (isolating after testing positive) increased sharply from 8,781 to 27,390.

Number of jobs supported by wage subsidy schemes



Source: Income Support and Wage Subsidy Weekly Update, MSD (Data to 09/12/2021, released every Friday)

Weekly New Leave Support Scheme and Short-term Absence Payment Applications Approved



Source: Income Support and Wage Subsidy Weekly Update, MSD (Data to 01/04/2022, released every Friday)

<sup>4</sup><https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/newsroom/2020/covid-19/covid-19-wage-subsidy-employer-search.html>

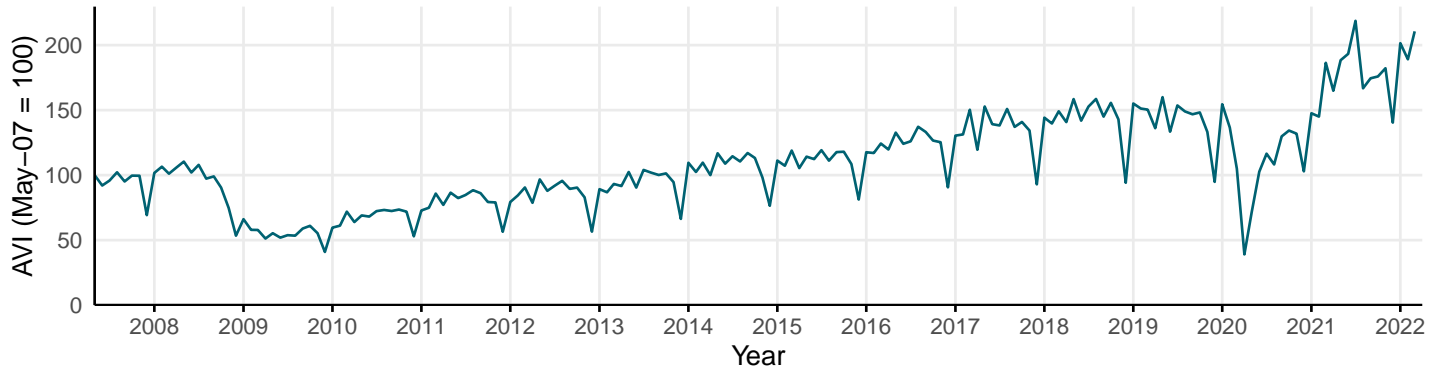


# Job Vacancies

## Data up to March 2022

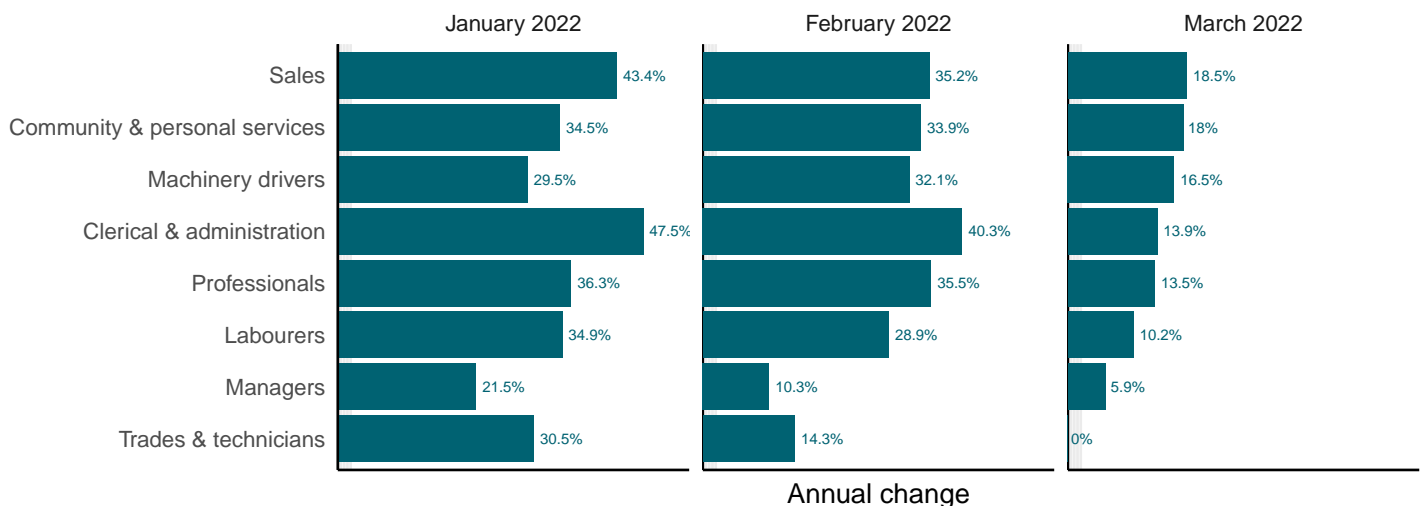
The number of jobs advertised online on major job boards can be used as a proxy for job vacancies, a key indicator of both labour demand and economic change. However, because of different hiring practices and changes in the rate of worker churn within industries, the relationship between online job advertisements and labour demand is complex.

### All Vacancies Index (AVI) – online job advertising



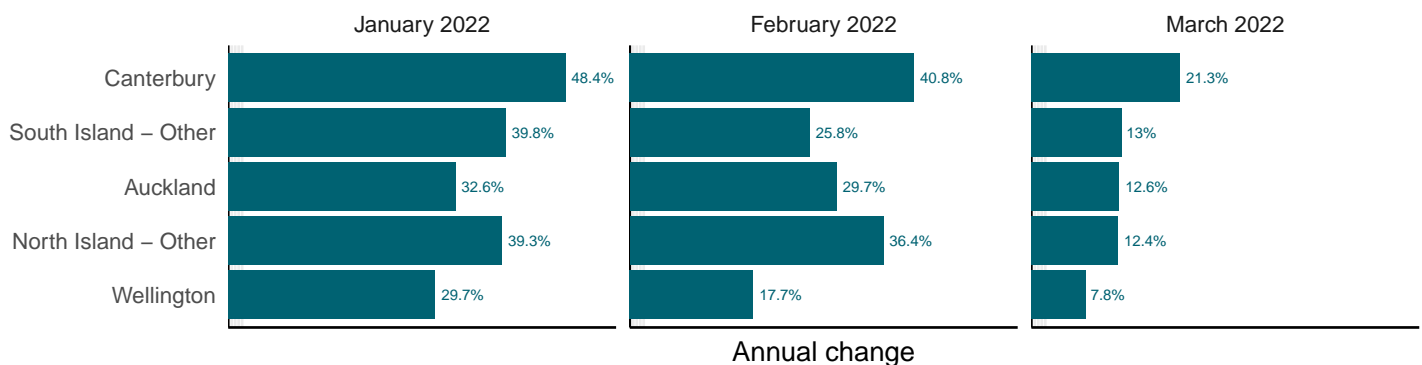
Source: Jobs Online, MBIE (Data to March 2022, next release 13/05/2022)

### Annual change in online job advertising by occupation, latest three months



Source: Jobs Online, MBIE (Data to March 2022, next release 13/05/2022)

### Annual change in online job advertising by region, latest three months



Source: Jobs Online, MBIE (Data to March 2022, next release 13/05/2022)



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## Data sources

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### Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) | Stats NZ

The HLFS is a nationwide, quarterly survey of households run by Stats NZ. It is the official measure of employment and unemployment in New Zealand. Data from the HLFS is used as an indicator of the overall health of the economy, particularly the unemployment rate. HLFS data is also used to compare labour force variables across demographic characteristics.

### Monthly Employment Indicator (MEI) | Stats NZ

The MEI series from Stats NZ provides an early indication of changes in the labour market. These indicators use a combination of data from two different Inland Revenue sources: the Employer Monthly Schedule (EMS) and payday filing. This data is used to produce the filled jobs and gross earnings indicator series, published four to five weeks after the end of the reference month.

### Monthly Benefits Update | Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

The Monthly Benefits Update from MSD provides an overview of benefit and supplementary assistance data. The report presents monthly benefit receipt numbers, and the accompanying data file provides additional information and breakdowns.

### Income Support and Wage Subsidy Weekly Update | Ministry of Social Development (MSD)

The Income Support and Wage Subsidy Weekly Update provides an overview of income support, including COVID-19 Income Relief Payment data. MSD's COVID-19 reporting is available at: <https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/covid-19/index.html>

### Jobs Online | Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)

Jobs Online is a regular data series published quarterly by MBIE that measures changes in online job advertisements from four internet job boards — Seek, Trade Me Jobs, Education Gazette and Kiwi Health Jobs. A monthly series is available at <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/employment-and-skills/labour-market-reports-data-and-analysis/jobs-online/#jobs-online-monthly-data-release>

### Quarterly Employment Survey (QES) | Stats NZ

The QES is a quarterly survey run by Stats NZ. It measures employment, earnings and hours paid of economically significant businesses in New Zealand. The purpose of the Quarterly Employment Survey is to provide a short-term indicator of employment and earnings. In addition, the data is used for compiling the business services industry component of the quarterly national accounts (on the production side). Results from the survey provide a valuable guide to the labour market and general economic conditions within New Zealand.

## Previous editions

The Monthly Labour Market Fact Sheet brings together the latest available administrative and survey data. The July 2020 edition<sup>5</sup> included findings from the Ministry of Health's *COVID-19 Health and Wellbeing Survey*, the Ministry of Social Development's *Wage Subsidy Survey* and Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development's (ATEED) *COVID-19 Business Survey*. The August 2020 edition<sup>6</sup> included findings from Victoria University's *Life in Lockdown* survey.

## Contact us

For further information on the data contained in this fact sheet, please email us: [LabourMarketInsights@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:LabourMarketInsights@mbie.govt.nz).

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<sup>5</sup><https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/11556-monthly-labour-market-fact-sheet-july-2020>

<sup>6</sup><https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/11637-monthly-labour-market-fact-sheet-august-2020>

