

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*¹. For more information on sectors and regions, see MBIE's *COVID-19 economic data*². The *Monthly Labour Market Fact Sheet* will be updated next on 20 June 2022.

Overview

Headline quarterly statistics

Data up to March 2022 quarter

Measures	Mar-21	Jun-21	Sep-21	Dec-21	Mar-22
Employment	2,748,000	2,774,000	2,824,000	2,824,000	2,826,000
— Paid Employee or Employer	2,366,800	2,396,400	2,435,000	2,458,000	2,448,300
— Self-employed	354,100	342,400	351,600	353,300	356,000
Employment Rate	67.1%	67.7%	68.8%	68.8%	68.6%
Participation Rate	70.4%	70.5%	71.2%	71.1%	70.9%
Underutilisation	361,000	312,000	277,000	276,000	280,000
— Unemployment	133,000	114,000	98,000	93,000	94,000
— Underemployment	122,000	107,000	97,000	102,000	95,000
— Potential Labour Force	106,000	91,000	83,000	82,000	91,000
Underutilisation Rate	12.1%	10.5%	9.2%	9.2%	9.3%
Unemployment Rate	4.6%	4.0%	3.3%	3.2%	3.2%
Not in the Labour Force	1,212,000	1,208,000	1,182,000	1,188,000	1,197,000
Youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET)	79,000	79,000	79,000	70,000	74,000
NEET Rate	12.1%	12.3%	12.2%	10.9%	11.5%
Average Weekly Hours Paid (per FTE)	38.46	39.02	38.86	38.98	38.81

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 March 2022 quarter, next release on 03/08/2022)*. All the data except Paid Employee or Employer, Self-employed and Average Weekly Hours Paid (per FTE) are seasonally adjusted.

The recent story

The New Zealand labour market remained resilient during the March 2022 quarter despite Omicron cases peaking across the country, with the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate remaining steady at 3.2 per cent. However, the underutilisation rate slightly increased to 9.3 per cent compared to 9.2 per cent in the December quarter 2021. Underutilisation is a broader measure of slack in the labour market compared to unemployment. The increase in underutilisation is attributed to the increase in the potential labour force. The potential labour force includes people who are either not actively seeking a job or are not able to start in the reference week of the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS).

The strength of the labour market was spread across all population groups. The labour market indicators continue to improve for Māori and Pacific Peoples. The reported unemployment rate for Māori decreased to 6.3 per cent during March 2022 (down 2.4 percentage points from a year ago). Likewise, the reported unemployment rate for Pacific Peoples fell to 6.7 per cent (down 3.7 percentage points from a year ago)³.

With a robust impetus from the first quarter of 2022, positive annual growth in online job advertisements was recorded during April 2022, highlighting continued demand for labour. However, growth in online job advertisements is coming down to pre-COVID-19 trend rates. The annual growth in online job advertisements for Community & personal services and Clerical & administration remained high. However, negative annual growth is observed for Trades & technicians and Managers.

The proportion of the working-age population on main benefits continues to remain below the 2021 rates. There were 347,049 people on all main benefits as at 29 April 2022, with 101,196 on the Jobseeker Support - Work Ready benefit. Overall, the number of grants of Jobseeker Support continues to remain below the number of cancellations since February 2022.

The strong labour market is a result of a combination of resilience and government support made available for those unable to work due to being tested for COVID-19 or needing to isolate after testing positive (Leave Support Scheme (LSS) and Short-Term Absence Payment (STAP)). Also, the Covid Support Payment (CSP) is available for continuity of businesses which have experienced 40 per cent or more reduction in their revenues⁴. However, future labour market conditions remain uncertain amid geopolitical disturbances, inflation, and uncertain inbound and outbound migration behaviours.

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

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

³<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/employment-and-skills/labour-market-reports-data-and-analysis/labour-market-statistics-snapshot/>

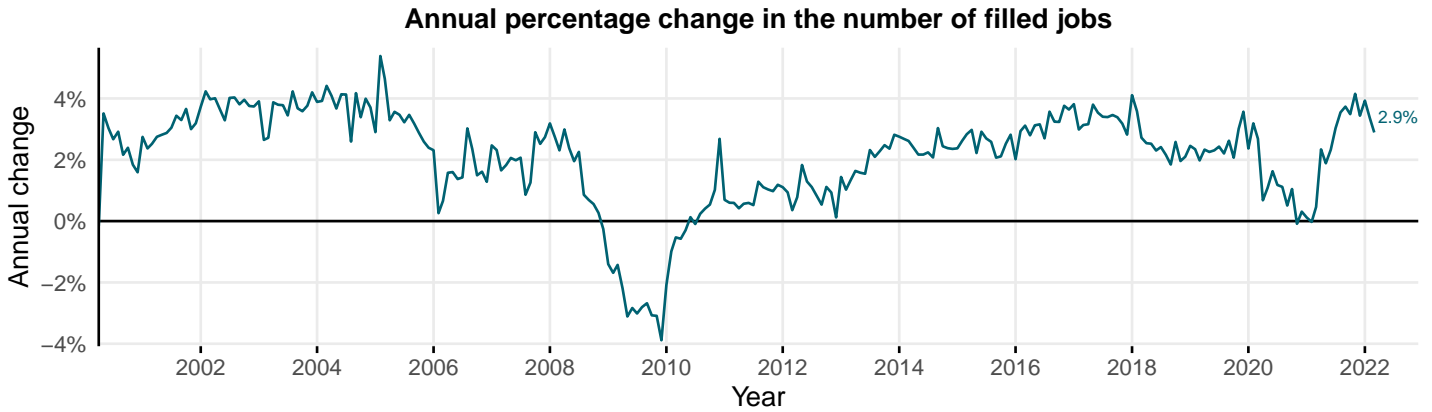
⁴<https://www.ird.govt.nz/covid-19/business-and-organisations/covid-19-support-payment>



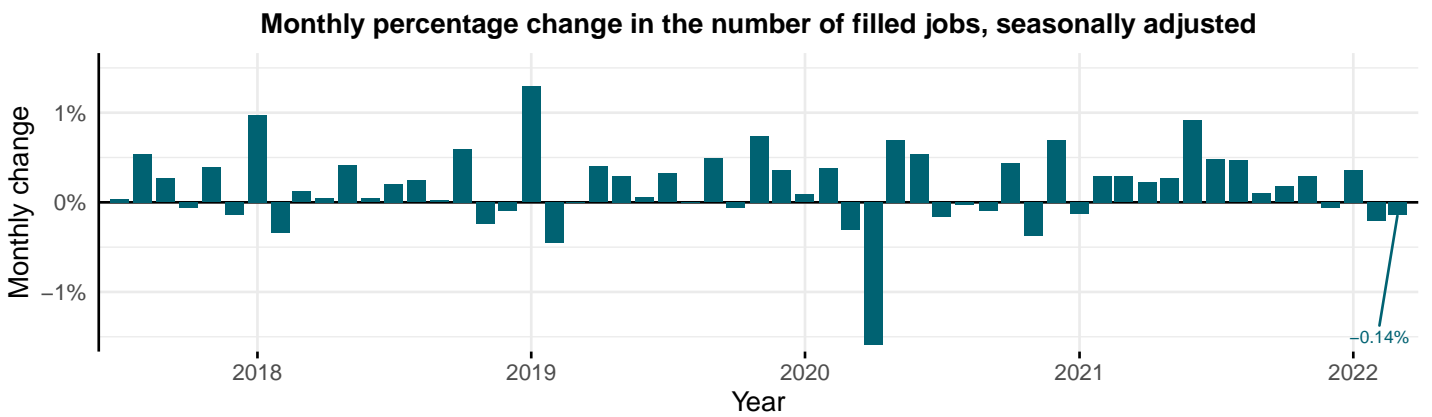
Filled Jobs

Data up to March 2022

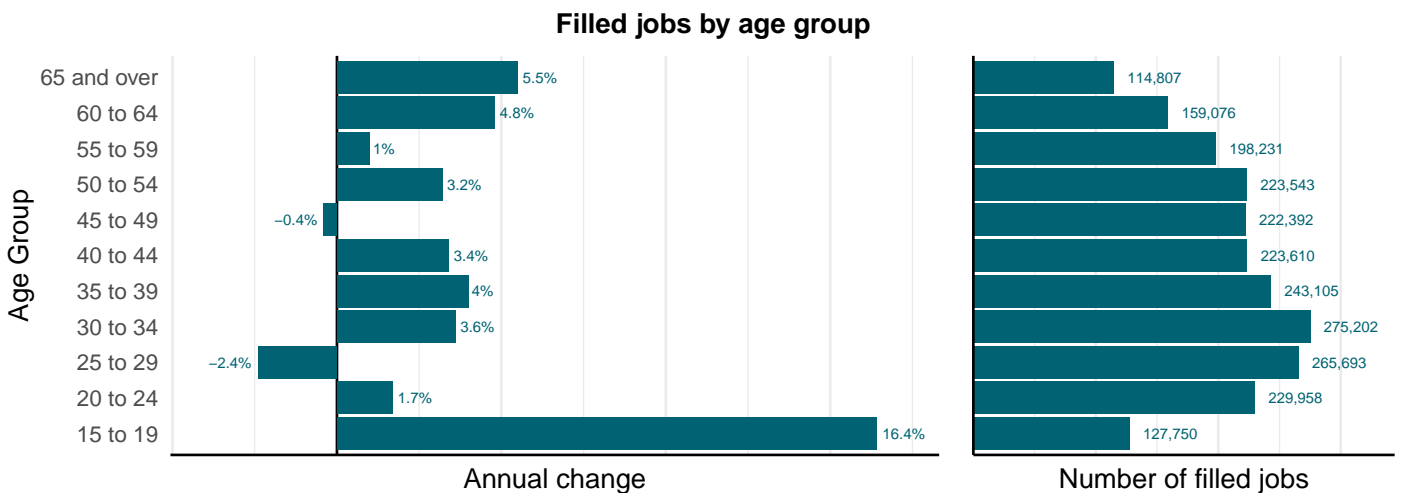
Stats NZ's Monthly Employment Indicators (MEIs) count of filled jobs uses employer payday filing of tax data. These statistics are a useful indicator to supplement the official Labour Market Statistics, although they do not count the self-employed. Recent results can be subject to fluctuations due to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



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to March 2022, next release on 27/05/2022)



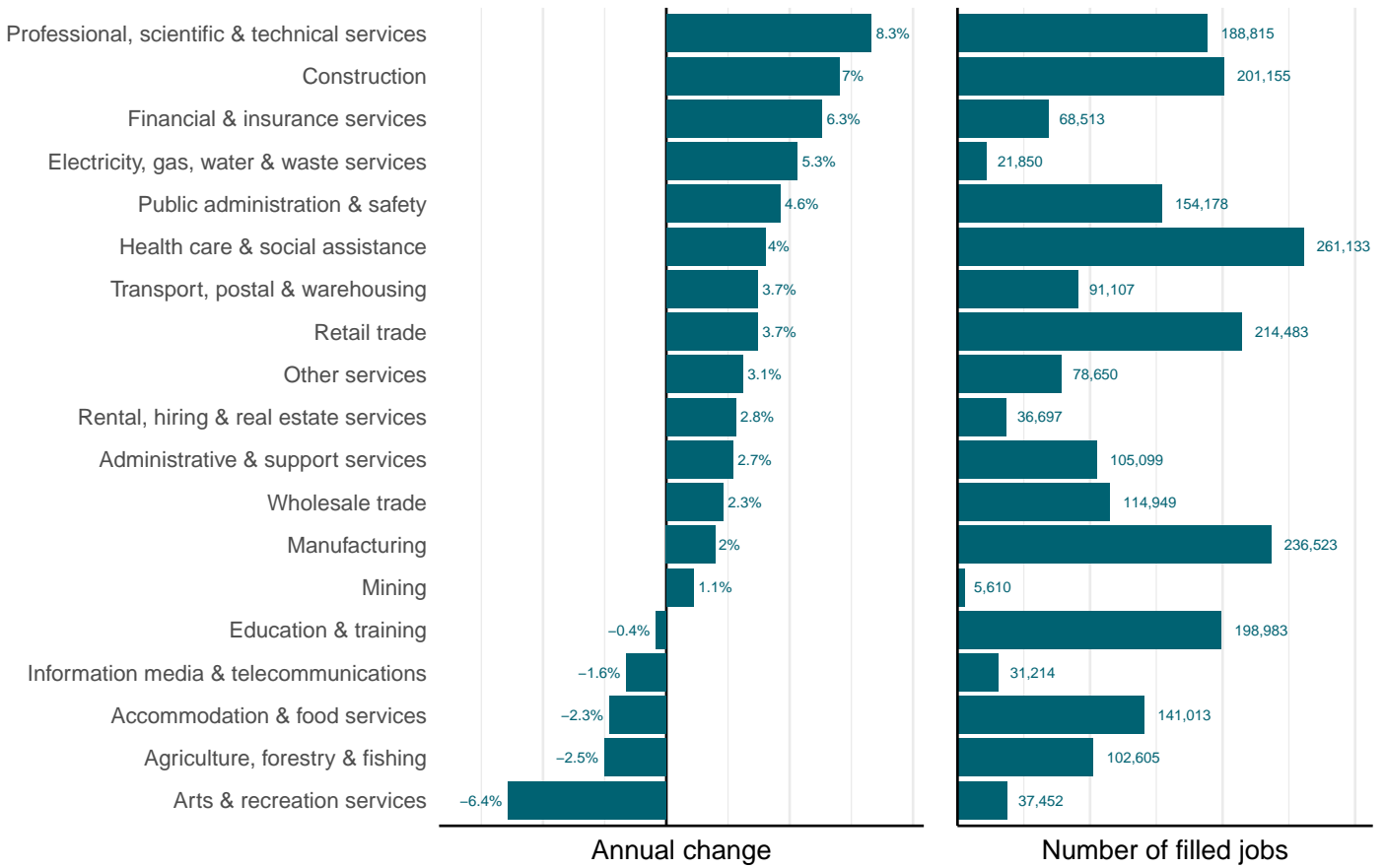
Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to March 2022, next release on 27/05/2022)



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to March 2022, next release on 27/05/2022)

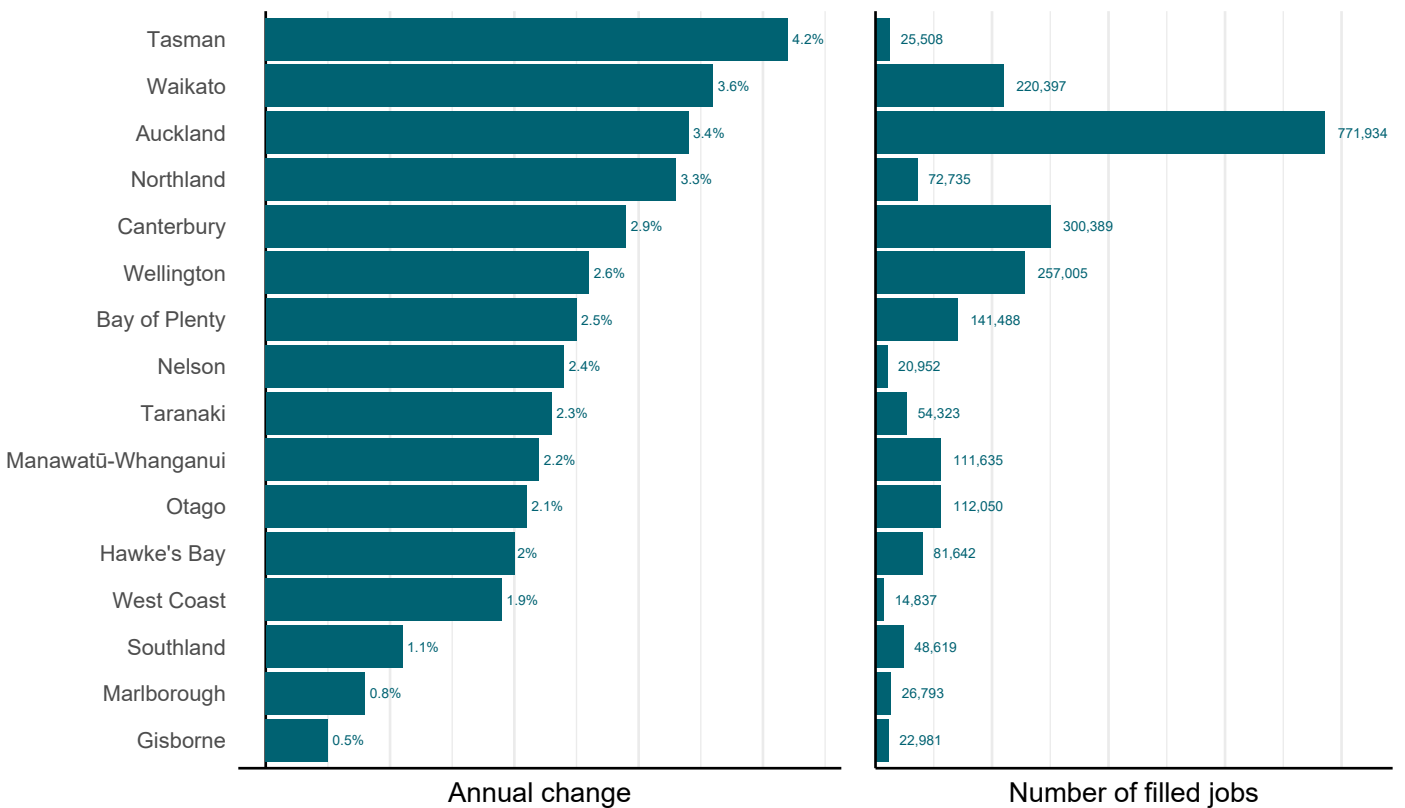


Filled jobs by industry



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to March 2022, next release on 27/05/2022)

Filled jobs by region



Source: Monthly Employment Indicators - Filled Job Series, Stats NZ (Data to March 2022, next release on 27/05/2022)

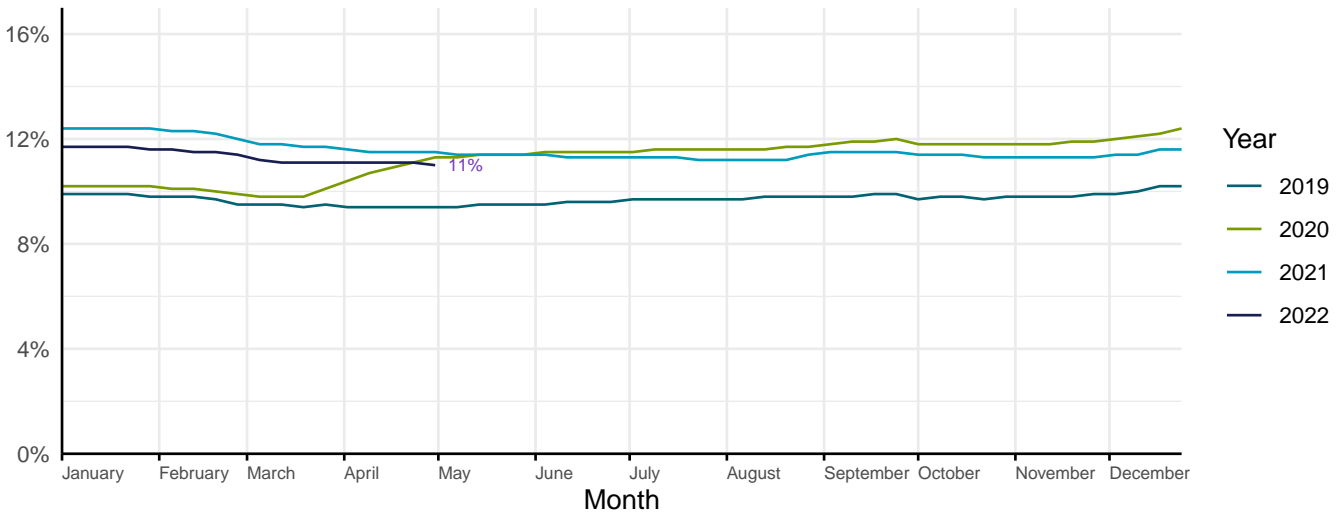


Benefit Recipients

Data up to 29 April 2022

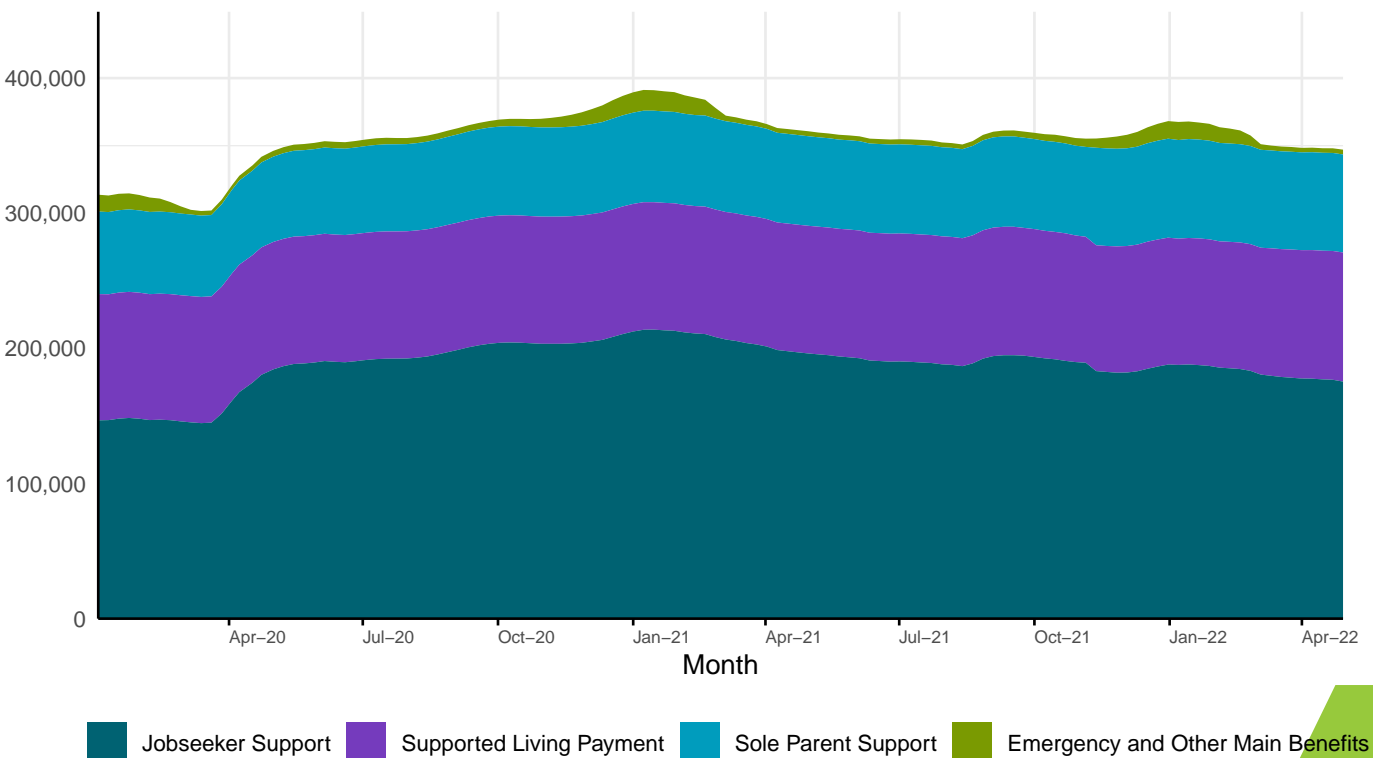
Benefits are primarily a measure of how many people are receiving income support rather than a direct measure of unemployment. Main benefits for working-age people (18–64 years) include: Jobseeker Support, Sole Parent Support, Supported Living Payment, and Emergency and Other main benefits. Benefit numbers, particularly Jobseeker Support - Work Ready may be used as a timely indicator of measuring “slack” in the labour market (which is officially measured through the underutilisation rate from the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS)). While the number of Jobseeker Support recipients has mostly tracked in line with the number of unemployed individuals from the HLFS, there is limited overlap between these two groups. For example, benefit numbers are essentially a measure of income support, which can be affected by policy and operational changes and therefore the relationship with official underutilisation can also vary.

Percentage of the estimated working-age population receiving all main benefits



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 29/04/2022, released every Friday)

All main benefits



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 29/04/2022, released every Friday)

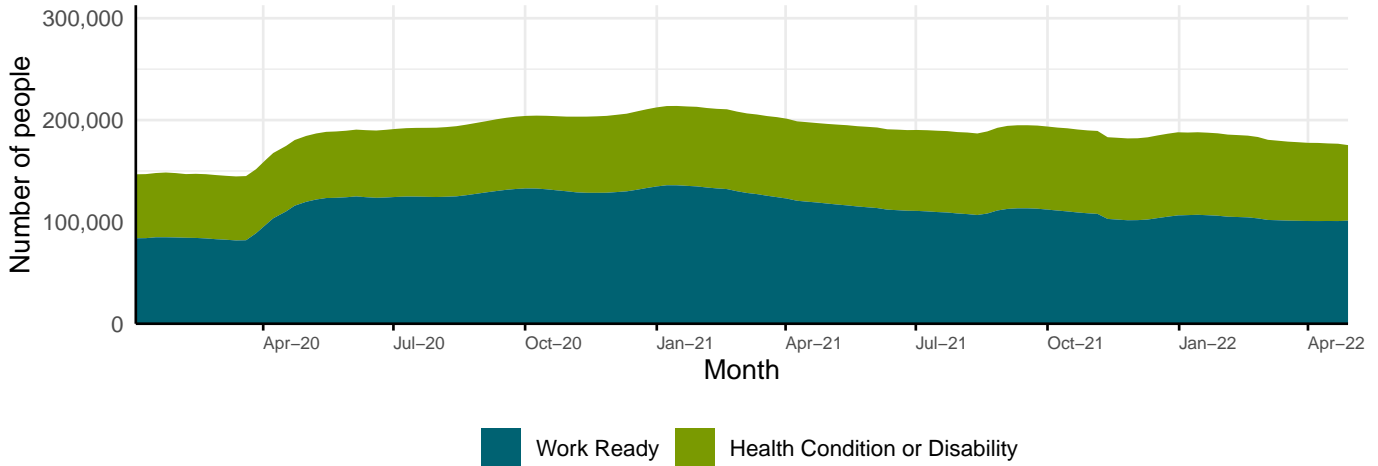


Jobseeker Benefit Recipients

Data up to 29 April 2022

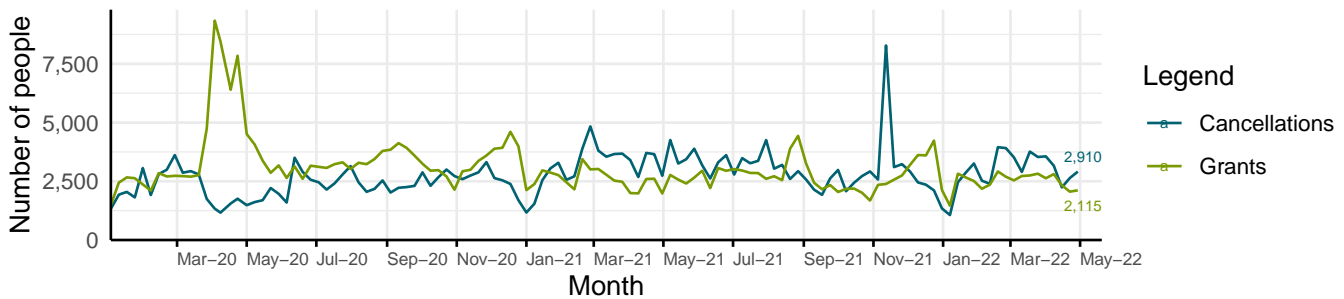
Jobseeker Support is for people who are actively looking for or preparing for work. It includes both Jobseeker Support - Work Ready (JS-WR) and Jobseeker Support - Health Condition or Disability (JS-HCD). It is a weekly payment that helps people until they find work. It includes people not in employment and looking for a job, or in part-time employment seeking more work (JS-WR), or have a health condition or disability which affects their ability to work, which means that either they have to reduce hours or stop work for a while (JS-HCD).

Jobseeker Support (Work Ready & Health Condition or Disability)



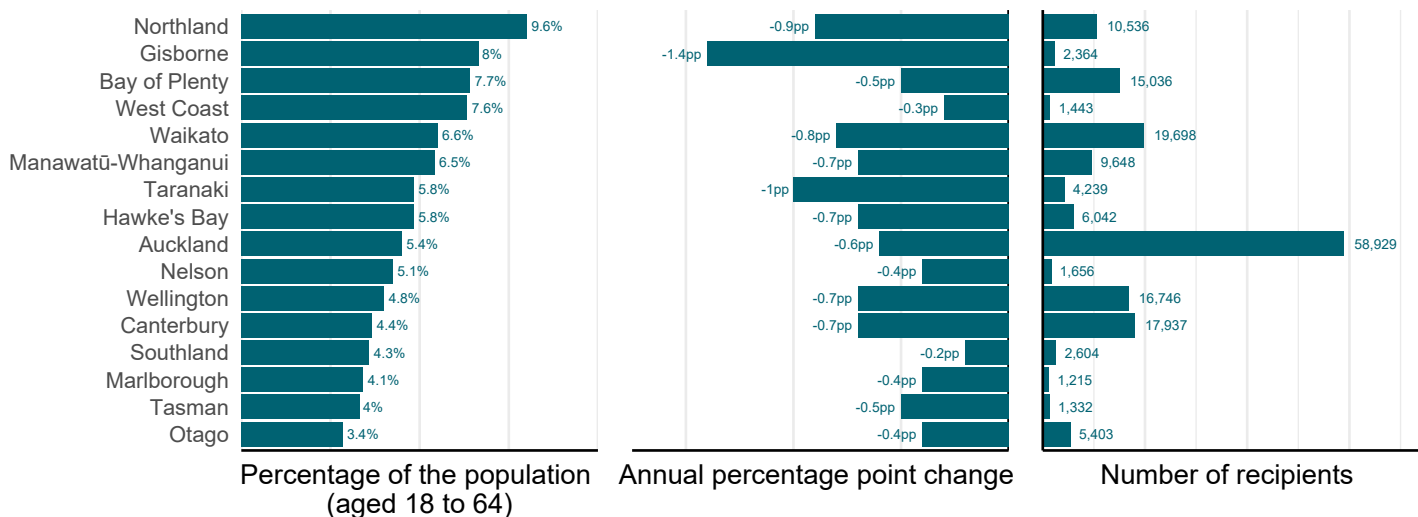
Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 29/04/2022, released every Friday)

Weekly grants and cancellations of all Jobseeker Support



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 29/04/2022, released every Friday)

All Jobseeker Support benefit recipients by region



Source: Working-age main benefits, MSD (Data to 29/04/2022, released every Friday)



Wage Subsidy

Wage Subsidy data up to 9 December 2021 and LSS and STAP data up to 29 April 2022

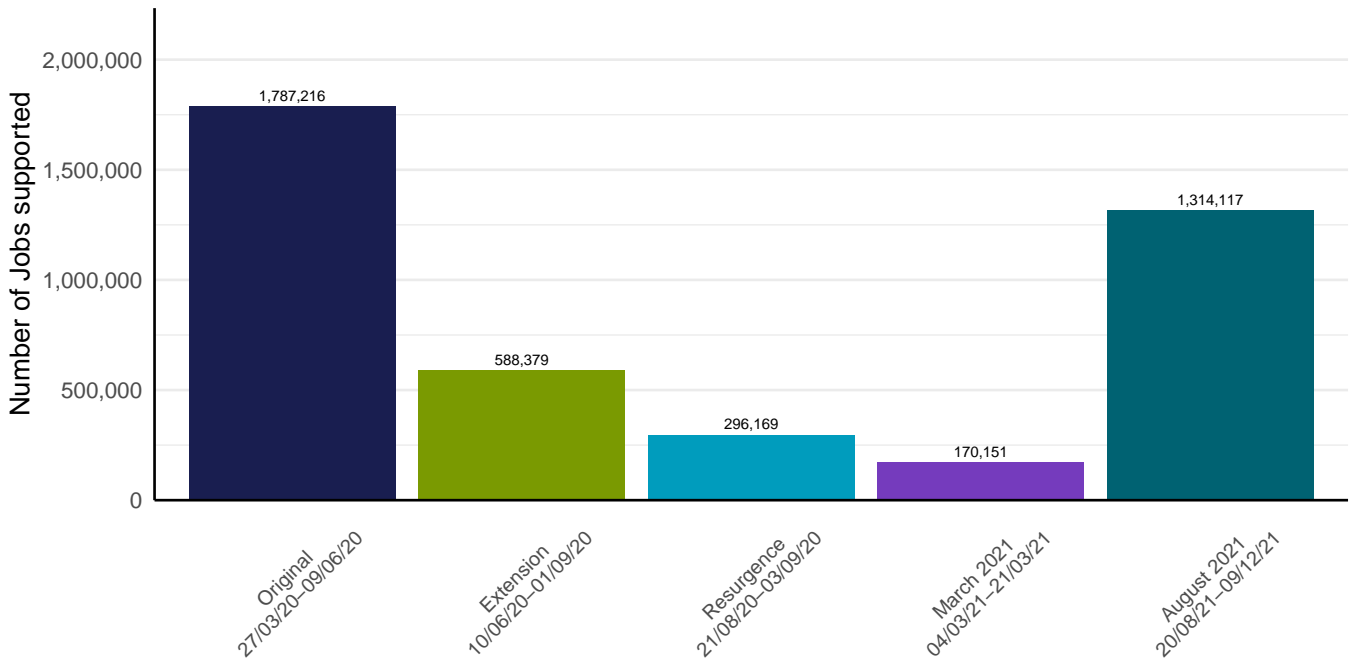
A number of COVID-19 wage subsidies were available since March 2020 to help employers and self-employed people who would otherwise have had to lay off staff or reduce their hours due to COVID-19⁵.

The COVID-19 Wage Subsidy 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 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 and it supported 296,169 jobs.

The COVID-19 Protection Framework came into effect in early December 2021. 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.

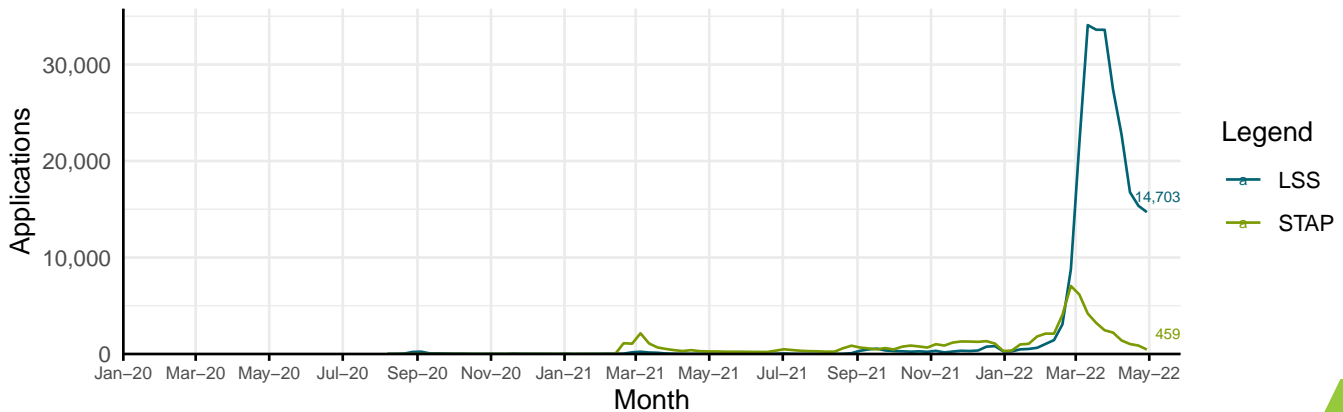
After the Omicron outbreak, the COVID-19 Support Payment was introduced to help support viable and ongoing businesses or organisations which experienced a 40 per cent or more drop in revenue⁶. As at 05 May 2022, there were 110,595 businesses supported by COVID-19 Support Payment.

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 29/04/2022, released every Friday)

⁵<https://www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/newsroom/2020/covid-19/covid-19-wage-subsidy-employer-search.html>

⁶<https://www.ird.govt.nz/covid-19/business-and-organisations/covid-19-support-payment>



Job Vacancies

Data up to April 2022

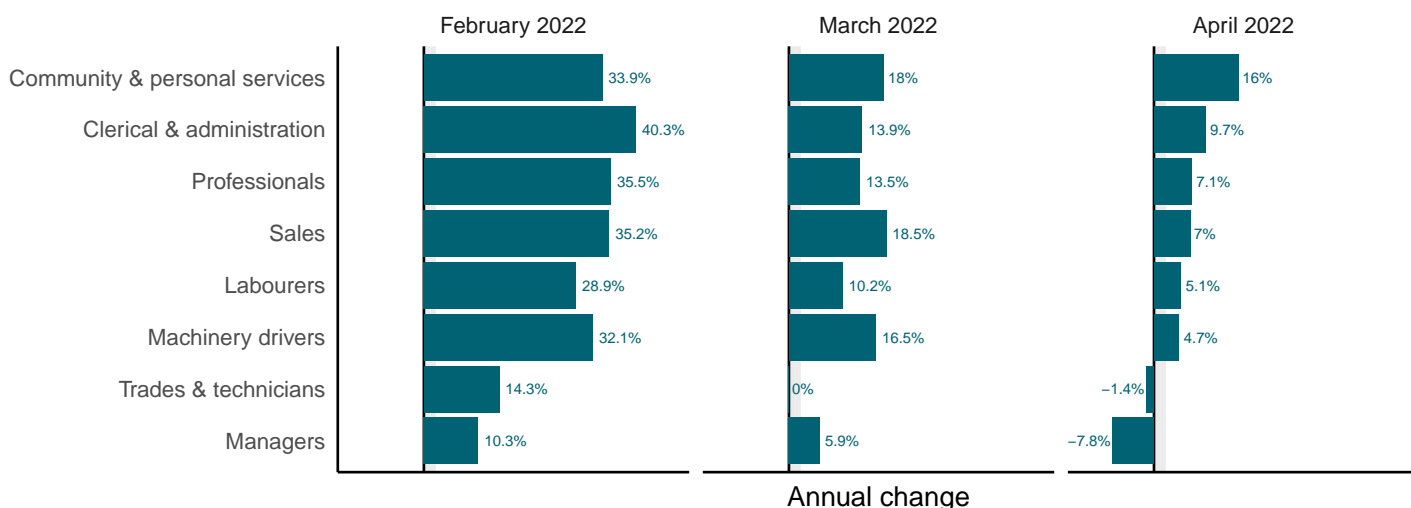
The number of jobs advertised online on major job boards can be used as a proxy for job vacancies, a key indicator of both labour demand and economic change. However, because of different hiring practices and changes in the rate of worker churn within industries, the relationship between online job advertisements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

All Vacancies Index (AVI) – online job advertising



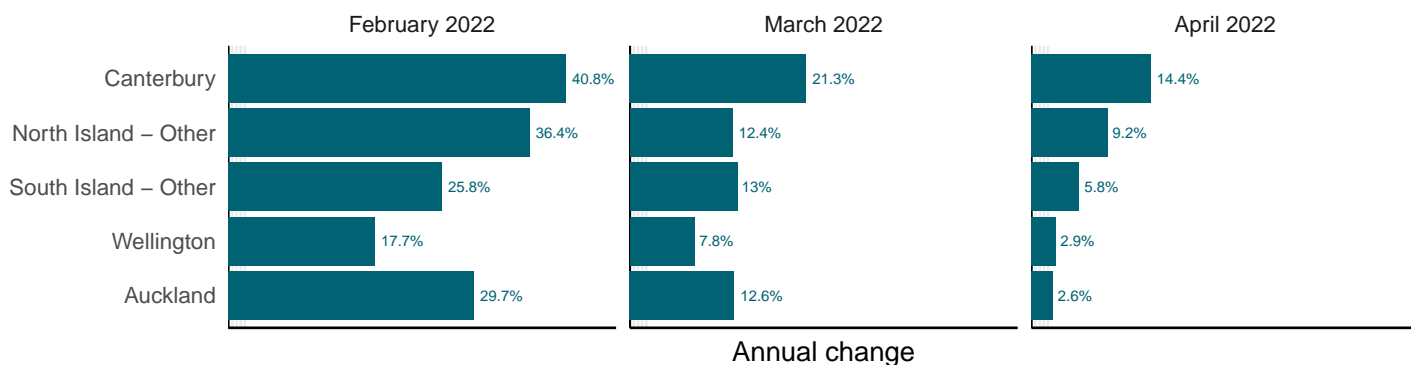
Source: Jobs Online, MBIE (Data to April 2022, next release 14/06/2022)

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



Source: Jobs Online, MBIE (Data to April 2022, next release 14/06/2022)

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



Source: Jobs Online, MBIE (Data to April 2022, next release 14/06/2022)



Data sources

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 edition⁷ 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 edition⁸ 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.

⁷<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/11556-monthly-labour-market-fact-sheet-july-2020>

⁸<https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/11637-monthly-labour-market-fact-sheet-august-2020>

