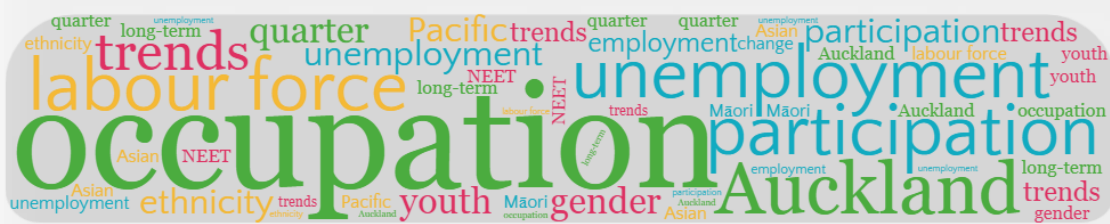


# Auckland Regional Household Labour Force Survey: Quarterly Overview as at September 2022

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November 2022

Research and Evaluation Unit (RIMU)

Auckland Council

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## Table of contents

1	Introduction .....	1
2	Overview and highlights .....	2
3	Labour force status and unemployment rate by age .....	4
4	Labour force status and unemployment rate by gender .....	5
5	Labour force status and unemployment rate by ethnic group.....	6
6	Employment by occupation.....	7
7	Employment by industry .....	8
8	Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by age .....	9
9	Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by ethnic group.....	10
10	Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by broad location.....	11
11	Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by local board area..	12
12	Appendix: Definitions and technical notes .....	13

# 1 Introduction

This report provides an overview of aspects of labour force participation in Auckland, as indicated by results of the quarterly Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS).

Particular focus is provided on short and long-term trends across age and ethnic groups in Auckland, and the rate of youth who are not in employment, education or training (NEET).

The HLFS is a national sample survey undertaken by Stats NZ. It is primarily designed for national estimates. The national sample contains about 15,000 private households and about 30,000 individuals each quarter. The sub-sample size for Auckland is approximately 4500 households and 9000 individuals.

In order to ensure information is seasonally aligned, rolling annual averages are used throughout this report (with some exceptions) for reporting across time. As the HLFS is a sample survey, all statistics are subject to survey sampling error. Statistics presented here at the sub-sample (e.g. local board) and sub-variable (e.g. NEET) levels are also subject to additional sampling errors and should be treated as indicative. More information on the survey, and caveats to the use of the data are provided in technical notes at the end of the report.

It is useful to note that from the March 2020 quarter onwards, results have been affected to a greater or lesser extent by the effects of Covid-19 on the labour market, including border closures and lockdowns of various durations and levels of restriction.

Note also that Stats NZ revise the backdata slightly each quarter to match ongoing population revisions arising from latest migration estimates. This report uses the latest version of backdata.

The information provided in this report supplements other freely available HLFS information and economic reporting:

- **Further labour market analysis** is available from MBIE: <https://www.mbie.govt.nz/business-and-employment/employment-and-skills/labour-market-reports-data-and-analysis/>
- **National and some regional data released on Stats NZ website:** [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz)
- **Additional Auckland HLFS data** is available on request from the author: [Ross.Wilson@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Ross.Wilson@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)
- **Auckland Economic Update (monthly)** - an overview of key economic trends in Auckland, prepared by the author, is available on the Knowledge Auckland website. <https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/auckland-economic-update-may-2022/>
- **Auckland Economic Quarterly** - an update on Auckland's economic challenges and opportunities including unemployment, housing, migration and more, prepared by the Chief Economist Unit, is available on the Knowledge Auckland website.

Also available at <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/about-auckland-council/business-in-auckland/Pages/economic-advice.aspx>

## 2 Overview and highlights

For the September 2022 quarter, compared to the preceding quarter (June 2022)<sup>1</sup>:

- Auckland's unemployment rate was 3.3%, compared to 3.4% in June 2022.<sup>2</sup> This and 2021 were Auckland's lowest September overall unemployment rates since 2006.
- The number of people who were unemployed was 32,800, similar to recent quarters.
- Slightly more people were employed: 965,200 (+14,800, mostly part-time (+12,600)).
- The number of people not in the labour force (NILF) fell slightly to 361,500.
- At 73.4%, the labour force participation rate rose slightly.

In addition, for the September 2022 quarter:

- The rate of young people aged 15 to 24 not in employment, education or training (NEET) was 10.7%, similar to June 2022 (11.0%) and the rest of New Zealand (10.1%).

Over the year ended September 2022, compared to the year ended September 2021:

- The unemployment rate averaged 3.3%, compared to 4.4% in the 12 months to September 2021 – constituting a reduction of one fourth.
- The unemployment rate for those aged 15 to 19 years averaged 15.4%, a sixth lower than the year before (18.2%).
- The unemployment rate for females averaged 3.7%, a fifth lower than 4.6% a year prior. The rate for males averaged 2.9% (down a third from 4.3% a year prior), so the gap between males and females currently matches the 20-year average (0.8%).
- Changes in unemployment rates varied between ethnic groups, with the largest decrease in unemployment rate being for Asian peoples (halving to 2.5%, from 4.5%).
- Pacific peoples' unemployment rate, 6.6%, was down a quarter from 8.6% the year before, but Māori unemployment fell only slightly to 7.2%, from 7.7%.
- The labour force participation rate (LFPR) averaged 72.4%, slightly above 2021 (71.2%).
- The labour force participation rate for females (67.6%) was above a year prior (65.7%), but for males (77.4%) the change was smaller (from 76.8%).
- Labour force participation rates rose from a year earlier primarily for ages 15-19 (45.1%, up 4.3% from 40.8%) but also all other ages except 20-24 (78.4%, up 0.3%).
- Labour force participation rates were above a year prior for all ethnicities, especially Pacific (65.4% up 2.6%) and Asian (76.3%, a 1.7% rise), but also Māori (68.2%, up 1.1%) and European (73.3% up 1.0%).

In addition, over the year ended September 2022:

- The annual average NEET rate for Auckland was 11.9%, similar to the New Zealand average (11.5%) and lower than the year ended September 2021 (13.2%).
- NEET rates had partly recovered (fallen) to the levels just prior to the pandemic.
- Auckland NEET rates were highest for Māori (22.8%), Southern Initiative area (18.6%), Pacific peoples (16.6%), and those aged 15 to 19 years (14.6%).

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<sup>1</sup> Results are not seasonally adjusted.

<sup>2</sup> The definition of 'similar/slightly' or 'different' is relative to survey sampling error margins produced by Stats NZ. For further details see 'Significant difference' in Appendix 1.

Table 1: Labour force status, comparison to preceding quarter and year

	Quarter end Jun 2022 (snapshot)	Quarter end Sep 2022 (snapshot)	Year end Sep 2021 (annual average)	Year end Sep 2022 (annual average)
Number employed	950.4	965.2	929.9	952.9
Number unemployed	33.1	32.8	43.3	32.7
Number not in the labour force (NILF)	376.9	361.5	394.5	375.8
Number in the working age population	1360.4	1359.4	1367.7	1361.3
Labour force participation rate (%)	72.3	73.4	71.2	72.4
Unemployment rate (%)	3.4	3.3	4.4	3.3

Note: Numbers are '000s of people.

Table 2: Overview of rates for age, gender and ethnic groups (%) (annual averages)

	Year end Sep 2021	Year end Sep 2022	Year end Sep 2021	Year end Sep 2022
	Unemployment rate		Labour force participation rate	
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>71.2</b>	<b>72.4</b>
15-19 years	18.2	15.4	40.8	45.1
20-24 years	9.3	6.7	78.1	78.4
25-39 years	3.9	3.0	85.5	86.8
40-54 years	3.0	2.1	87.0	88.5
55 years +	2.2	1.3	49.8	51.0
Female	4.6	3.7	65.7	67.6
Male	4.3	2.9	76.8	77.4
European	3.3	2.7	72.3	73.3
Māori	7.7	7.2	67.1	68.2
Pacific	8.6	6.6	62.8	65.4
Asian	4.5	2.5	74.6	76.3

Note: During the lockdowns (of varying coverage and restrictiveness) of 2020, 2021 and 2022, some people may not have met the criteria to have been actively seeking or available to start work, despite wanting a job. In these cases, the respondent will have been classified as 'not in the labour force' rather than 'unemployed'. Others remained employed due to government wage subsidies, with or without reductions in hours and pay. In addition, survey response rates sometimes fell, which may introduce bias.

### 3 Labour force status and unemployment rate by age

Labour force status by age group for the year ended September 2022 is shown in Table 3. Unemployment rates since 1995 are shown in Figure 1.

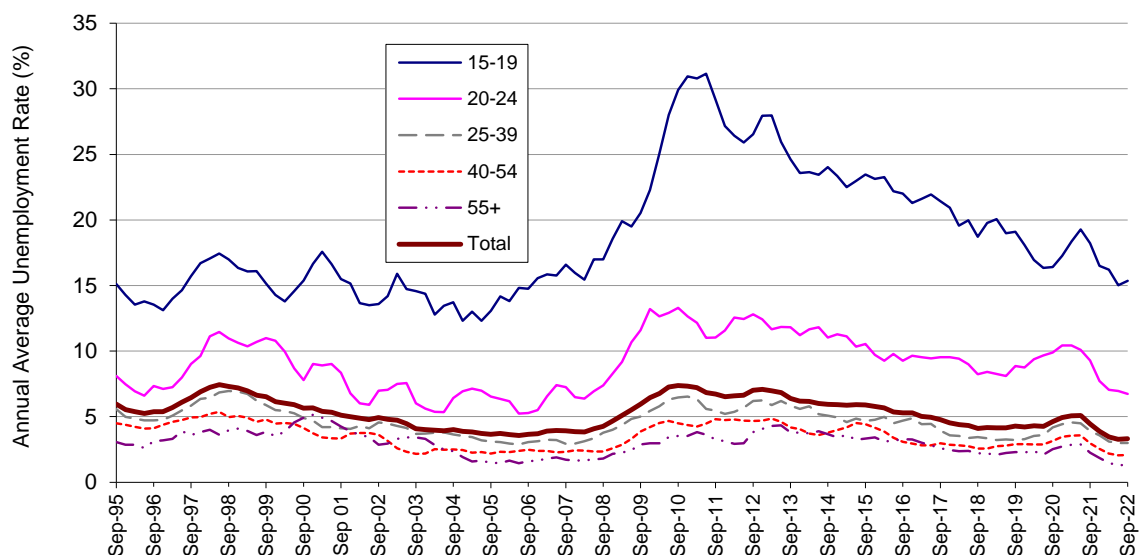
Table 3: Labour force status by age group, year ended September 2022 (annual averages)

	Total	15 to 19	20 to 24	25 to 39	40 to 54	55 and over
Number employed	952.9	41.2	84.2	328.4	292.8	206.3
Number unemployed	32.7	7.5	6.1	10.1	6.2	2.8
Number not in the labour force	375.8	59.2	24.9	51.6	38.8	201.2
Number in the working age popn	1361.3	107.9	115.2	390.1	337.8	410.2
Labour force participation rate (%)	72.4	45.1	78.4	86.8	88.5	51.0
Unemployment rate (%)	3.3	15.4	6.7	3.0	2.1	1.3

Note: Numbers are '000s; numbers and rates are based on latest population estimates.

Annual average unemployment rates for the year ended September 2022 were similar to the year ended June 2022, and substantially less than a year prior, for all age groups. The unemployment rate continued to vary based on age: it was highest for those aged 15 to 19 years (15.4%), and lowest for those aged 55 and over (1.3%). Unemployment rates for all age groups are now similar to their lows of 2005-2008 and similar or below the 1996 trough.

Figure 1: Unemployment rate by age (rolling annual average), 1995-2022



Labour force participation rates (LFPR) in the year ended September 2022 (72.4%) varied from 45.1 per cent for those aged 15 to 19, to 88.5 per cent for those aged 40 to 54. The LFPR has been rising since March 2021 for all age groups, especially for those aged 15 to 19 (38.2%). Over the longer term, the LFPR almost doubled for those aged 55 and over from June 1995 (26.8%) to June 2022 (50.8%), presumably linked to rising average retirement ages.

## 4 Labour force status and unemployment rate by gender

Table 4 shows labour force status for males and females for the year ended September 2022. Unemployment rates since 1995 are shown in Figure 2.

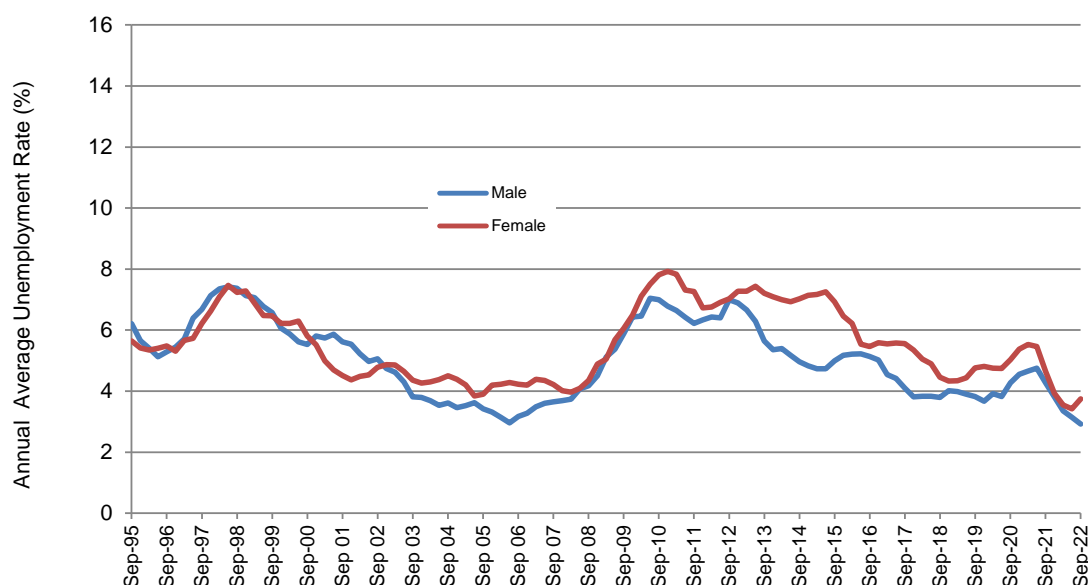
**Table 4: Labour force status by gender, year ended September 2022 (annual averages)**

	Total	Male	Female
Number employed	952.9	502.8	450.1
Number unemployed	32.7	15.2	17.5
Number not in the labour force	375.8	151.6	224.2
Number in the working age popn	1361.3	669.6	691.8
Labour force participation rate (%)	72.4	77.4	67.6
Unemployment rate (%)	3.3	2.9	3.7

**Note:** Numbers are '000s; numbers and rates are based on latest population estimates.

The unemployment rate for the year ended September 2022 was higher for females (3.7%) than males (2.9%). The female-male unemployment rate difference (0.8%) is typical of most of the last 20 years and currently matches the 20-year average, but remains well below levels of 2013-2015, when it peaked at 2.5% (June 2015).

**Figure 2 Unemployment rate by gender (rolling annual average), 1995-2022**



LFPR for females (67.6%) was the highest since at least 1995, but remained significantly lower than for males (77.7%). The LFPR gender gap (10.1%) was broadly similar to most of 2013 to 2021 (9% to 12%), but longer term it has nearly halved since 1995 (19.0%). This is due to the male LFPR remaining largely unchanged over that period, while the female LFPR rose (from 57.3%).



## 5 Labour force status and unemployment rate by ethnic group

Labour force status for the four main ethnic groups for the year ended September 2022 is shown in Table 5. Unemployment rates since 1995 are shown in Figure 3.

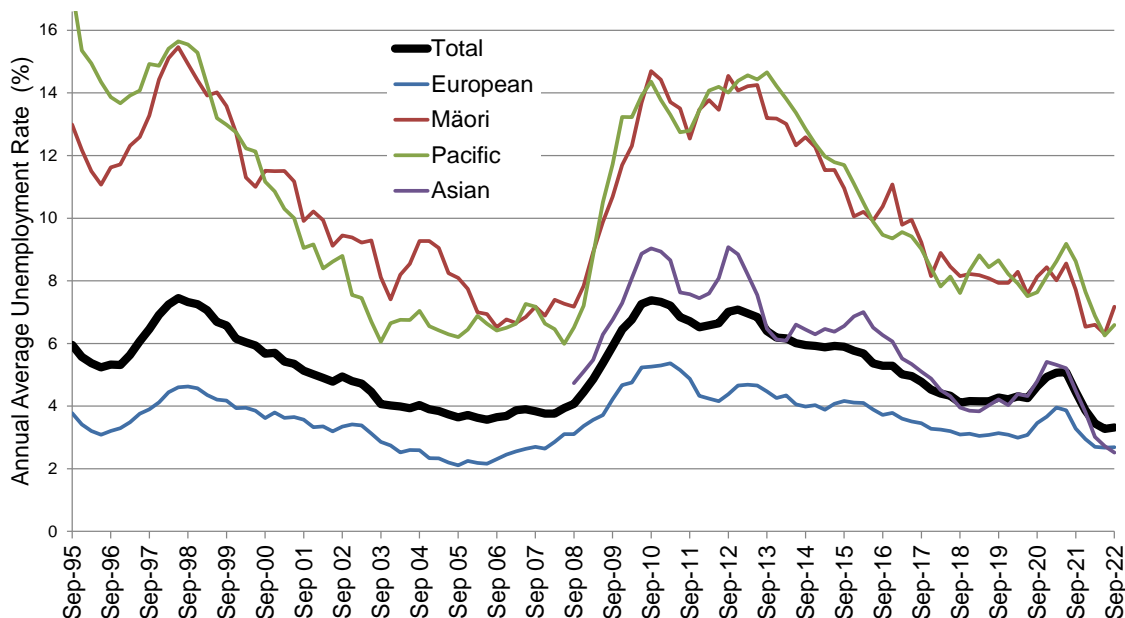
**Table 5: Labour force status by ethnic group, year ended September 2022 (annual average)**

	Total	European	Māori	Pacific	Asian
Number employed	952.9	519.6	88.0	111.6	296.2
Number unemployed	32.7	14.4	6.8	7.9	7.7
Number not in the labour force	375.8	194.6	44.2	63.2	94.2
Number in the working age popn	1,361.3	728.5	139.0	182.6	398.0
Labour force participation rate (%)	72.4	73.3	68.2	65.4	76.3
Unemployment rate (%)	3.3	2.7	7.2	6.6	2.5

**Notes:** Numbers are '000s; sums may exceed totals due to respondents selecting multiple ethnic groups. "Other ethnicities" not shown. These numbers are indicative only as sub-sample sizes are small. Data is based on latest population estimates.

The unemployment rates for the year ended September 2022 were lower than a year prior for all broad ethnic groups: Asian (2.5%, nearly halved from 4.5%), Pacific peoples (6.6%, down a quarter from 8.6%), European (2.7%, down a fifth from 3.3%) and Māori (7.2%, down slightly from 7.7%). As Figure 3 shows, unemployment rates have not been this low since 2009, across all groups.

**Figure 3: Unemployment rate by ethnic group (rolling annual average), 1995-2022**



**Note:** Asian Ethnic Group was included in Other (not shown) until December Quarter 2007.

LFPR varied by ethnicity, from 65.4 per cent for Pacific peoples (up from 55.6% in 2013) to a record 76.3 per cent for Asian (65.1% in 2013). Rates were slightly higher (between 1.0% (European) and 2.6% (Asian)) for all groups compared to the previous year.

## 6 Employment by occupation

Auckland's largest occupational categories in the quarter ended 30 September 2022 were Professionals (25.9% of Auckland's total employment), and Managers (23.1%), followed by Clerical and Administrative Workers (10.7%) and Technicians and Trades Workers (10.2%) (see Table 6).

Between the June 2022 and September 2022 quarters, the 14,800 increase in total employment included no significant decreases, but notable increases in the numbers employed in the following occupations:

- Sales Workers (+6,900, a rise of 9.0%)
- Clerical and Administrative Workers (+6,400, a rise of 6.6%)

Between the September 2021 (not shown) and September 2022 quarters, the 9,300 increase in total employment included no significant decreases, but notable increases in the numbers employed in the following occupations:

- Sales Workers (+10,000, a rise of 13.6%)
- Labourers (+8,200, a rise of 13.9%)

**Table 6: Employment by occupation – comparison to preceding quarter (quarterly data)**

Occupation (ANZSCO 1-digit)	June 2022 quarter	September 2022 quarter	June 2022 quarter	September 2022 quarter
	Number		Share (%)	
Managers	218.7	222.7	23.0	23.1
Professionals	255.5	250.4	26.9	25.9
Technicians and Trades Workers	100.1	98.5	10.5	10.2
Community and Personal Service Workers	73.9	76.5	7.8	7.9
Clerical and Administrative Workers	97.3	103.7	10.2	10.7
Sales Workers	76.8	83.7	8.1	8.7
Machinery Operators and Drivers	54.8	54.5	5.8	5.6
Labourers	63.2	67.4	6.6	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>950.4</b>	<b>965.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Notes:** Numbers are '000s. Total includes not elsewhere included. Data is based on latest population estimates.

In addition (not shown), full time employment rose marginally (+2,200), while part-time employment rebounded by 12,600 between the June 2022 (158,900, or 16.7% of total employment) and September 2022 (171,500 or 17.8%) quarters, with major rises for the following occupations:

- Sales Workers (+6,000)
- Clerical and Administrative Workers (+3,900).

## 7 Employment by industry

In the quarter ended 30 September 2022, Auckland’s largest sectors in terms of employment were Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (113,300 people; 11.7% of total employment), Construction (96,300 people; 10.0% of total employment), and Health Care and Social Assistance (91,400 people; 9.5% of total employment) (See Table 7).

Between the June 2022 and September 2022 quarters, the 14,800 increase in total employment included notable increases in the number of people employed in:

- Financial and Insurance Services (+5,000, a rise of 11.8%, all full-timers)
- Administrative and Support Services (+5,400, a rise of 16.8%, of which +3,400 was an increase in part-timers)
- Manufacturing (+5,000, of which +4,100 was an increase in part-timers).

Between the June 2022 and September 2022 quarters, a relatively small decrease was recorded in the numbers employed in:

- Construction (-4000, a fall of 4.0%).

**Table 7: Employment by industry – comparison to preceding quarter (quarterly data)**

Industry (ANZSIC06)	June 2022 quarter	September 2022 quarter	June 2022 quarter	September 2022 quarter
	Number employed		Share (%)	
Primary Industries	10.8	9.8	1.1	1.0
Manufacturing	81.9	86.9	8.6	9.0
Electricity Gas Water and Waste Services	8.6	9.3	0.9	1.0
Construction	100.3	96.3	10.6	10.0
Wholesale Trade	41.3	45	4.3	4.7
Retail Trade	83.9	86.2	8.8	8.9
Accommodation and Food Services	51.2	51.5	5.4	5.3
Transport Postal and Warehousing	50.7	49.3	5.3	5.1
Information Media and Telecommunications	18.9	19.2	2.0	2.0
Financial and Insurance Services	42.3	47.3	4.5	4.9
Rental Hiring and Real Estate Services	25.9	27	2.7	2.8
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	110.2	113.3	11.6	11.7
Administrative and Support Services	32.1	37.5	3.4	3.9
Public Administration and Safety	49	50.7	5.2	5.3
Education and Training	74.6	72.9	7.8	7.6
Health Care and Social Assistance	90.5	91.4	9.5	9.5
Arts and Recreation Services	23.6	21.8	2.5	2.3
Other Services	39.6	37.9	4.2	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>950.4</b>	<b>965.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Notes:** Numbers are ‘000s, rounded to nearest hundred. Total includes “Not elsewhere included”. Data is based on latest population estimates.

## 8 Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by age

In the quarter ended 30 September 2022, the overall percentage of young people (aged 15 to 24) who were not in employment, education or training (NEET) was similar in Auckland (10.7%) to the New Zealand average (10.3%) over the same period (see Table 11). However, quarterly NEET rates are typically subject to substantial seasonal effects, while annual averages are not. In the year ended September 2022, the annual average NEET rate for Auckland was 11.9%, similar to the New Zealand average (11.5%) over the same period.

Statistics for the year ended September 2022 for young people (aged 15 to 24, and split by age: 15-19 years and 20-24 years) in Auckland who were NEET are shown in Table 8. NEET rates since 2005 are shown in Figure 4.

**Table 8: NEET statistics by age, year ended September 2022 (annual averages)**

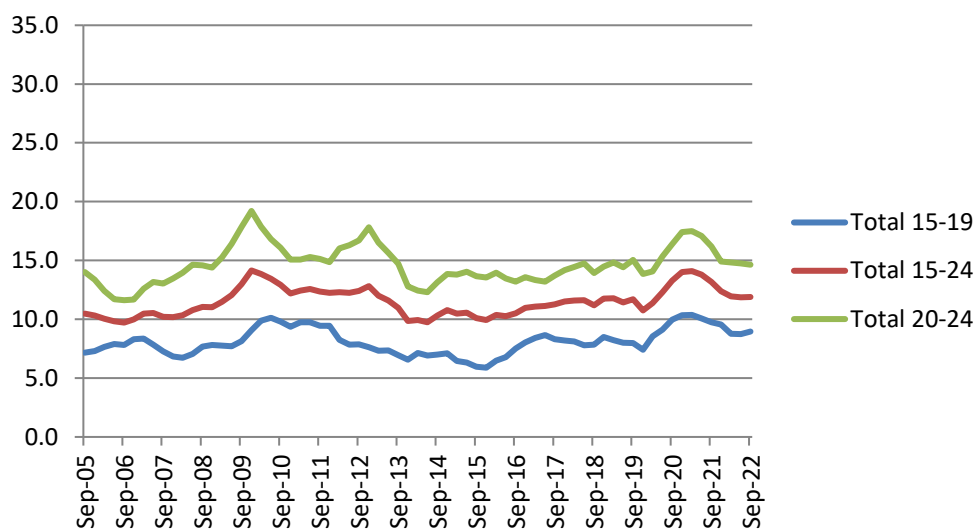
	Total 15-24 years	15-19 years	20-24 years
Number in the selected population	223.1	107.9	115.2
Number NEET	26.6	9.7	16.9
NEET rate (%)	11.9	9.0	14.6
NEET rate (%) a year earlier	13.2	9.8	16.2

**Note:** Numbers are '000s; numbers and rates are based on latest population estimates.

The NEET rate for the year ended September 2022 (11.9%) continues to differ by age group: 9.0 per cent for those aged 15 to 19, and 14.6 per cent for those aged 20 to 24.

The annual average NEET rates for the year ended September 2022 were below the year ended September 2021, and below the March 2021 peak, for both age groups 15 to 19 (slightly down from 9.8%) and 20 to 24 years (down from 16.2%).

**Figure 4: NEET rate (%) by age (rolling annual average), 2005-2022**



## 9 Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by ethnic group

NEET statistics for those aged 15-24 for the four main ethnic groups for the year ended September 2022 are shown in Table 9. NEET rates since 2005 are shown in Figure 5.

**Table 9: NEET statistics by ethnic group, year ended September 2022 (annual average)**

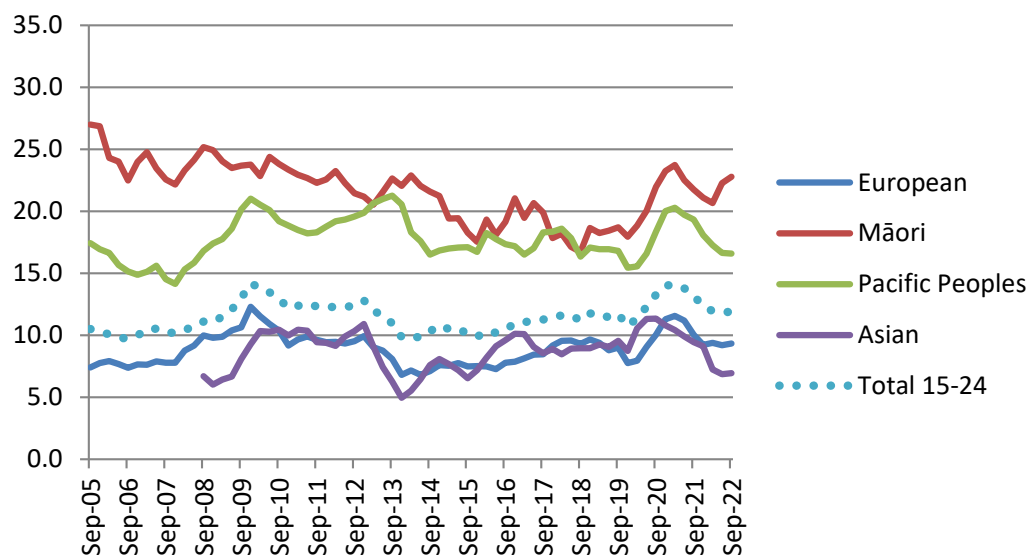
	Total	European	Māori	Pacific	Asian
Number in the selected population	223.1	111.8	38.4	48.1	58.9
Number NEET	26.6	10.5	8.8	8.0	4.1
NEET rate (%)	11.9	9.3	22.8	16.6	7.0
NEET rate (%) a year earlier	13.2	10.0	21.8	19.3	9.4

**Notes:** Numbers are '000s; sums may exceed totals due to respondents selecting multiple ethnic groups. "Other ethnicities" not shown. These numbers are indicative only as sub-sample sizes are small. Data is based on latest population estimates.

The annual average NEET rates for the year ended September 2022 were lower than a year prior for all broad ethnic groups except Māori (22.8%, slightly up from 21.8%). The others varied: Pacific peoples (16.6%, down from 19.3%), European (9.3%, slightly down from 10.0%) and Asian (7.0%, down from 9.4%).

As Figure 5 shows, NEET rates across all ethnic groups spiked up in 2020 to levels comparable to 2009 (post-GFC) but have since been falling towards pre-Covid levels. Rates for Māori have possibly been falling more slowly, but survey sampling error margins of around a third add uncertainty.

**Figure 5: NEET rate (%) by ethnic group (rolling annual average), 2005-2022**



**Note:** Asian Ethnic Group was included in Other (not shown) until December Quarter 2007.

## 10 Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by broad location

NEET statistics for those aged 15-24 for broad areas of Auckland and New Zealand for the year ended September 2022 are shown in Table 10. NEET rates since 2005 are shown in Figure 6.

Table 10: NEET statistics by location, year ended September 2022 (annual average)

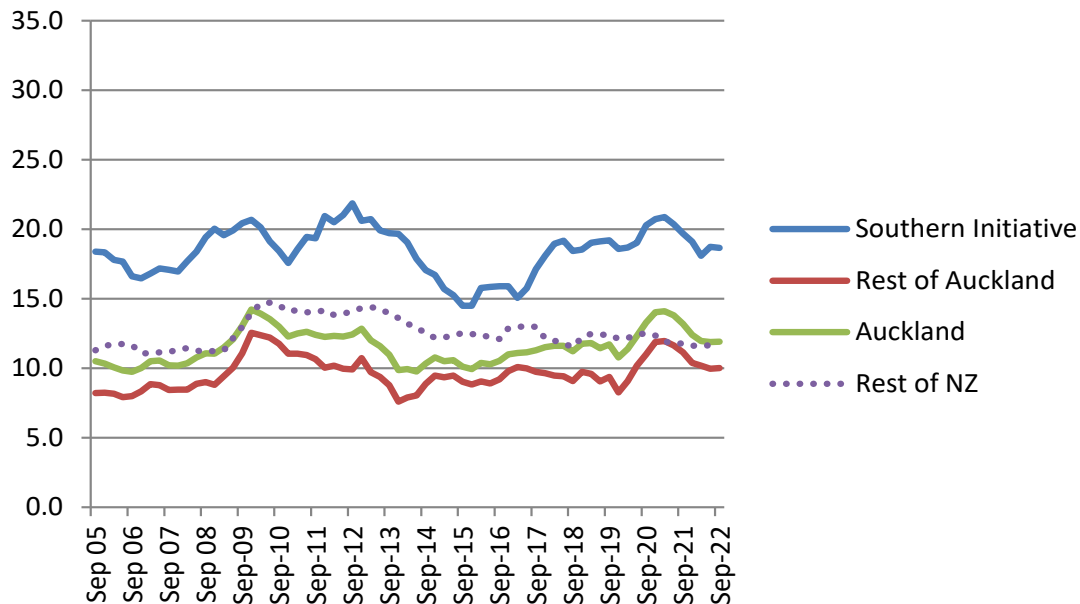
	Total Auckland	Southern Initiative	Rest of Auckland	Rest of NZ	New Zealand
Number in the selected population	223.1	49.1	174.1	416.9	640.1
Number NEET	26.6	9.2	17.4	47.4	73.9
NEET rate (%)	11.9	18.6	10.0	11.4	11.5
NEET rate (%) a year earlier	13.2	19.7	11.1	11.8	12.3

Notes: Numbers are '000s; numbers and rates are based on latest population estimates. Rest of NZ is New Zealand excluding Total Auckland.

NEET rates for the year ended September 2022 were higher (as usual) for Southern Initiative (18.6%) than for Rest of Auckland (10.0%) and Rest of New Zealand (11.4%).

As Figure 6 shows, NEET rates in Auckland spiked up in 2020 then fell in 2021; however, the 2020 increase was less pronounced in the Southern Initiative area, and largely absent in Rest of New Zealand. Consequently, NEET rates for the year ended September 2022 were lower than a year prior for all the Auckland broad areas shown, but only marginally so for Rest of New Zealand.

Figure 6: NEET rate (%) by location (rolling annual average), 2005-2022



## 11 Young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) by local board area

Indicative NEET rates for the various local board areas for the latest quarter and year are shown in Table 11. Due to small sub-sample sizes, this information is not always available for some local board areas ('..S'/blank), and is never available for Great Barrier (not listed). The other local board NEET levels and rates have varying error margins (18% to 56%; e.g. at 56% error margin, '10% NEET rate' could be anywhere between 4.4% and 15.6%).

Table 11: NEET statistics by local board area – quarter and year ended September 2022

Local board area	Population Age 15-24(000)	Quarterly NEET (000)	Quarterly NEET rate (%)	Annual average NEET Rate (%)
Rodney	5.6	..S	..S	..S
Hibiscus and Bays	19.1	1.0	5.3	8.1
Upper Harbour	8.8	..S	..S	6.3
Kaipātiki	11.8	1.5	12.4	11.3
Devonport-Takapuna	12.3	1.0	8.5	9.9
Henderson-Massey[W]	17.1	2.2	13.1	15.0
Waitākere Ranges [W]	9.0	..S	..S	18.7
Waiheke	..S	..S	..S	..S
Waitematā	11.6	..S	..S	11.5
Whau [W]	12.8	1.4	11.0	12.3
Albert-Eden	11.3	..S	..S	12.1
Puketāpapa	3.6	..S	..S	35.8
Ōrākei	11.7	1.0	8.9	11.0
Maungakiekie-Tāmaki	15.0	2.8	18.9	19.9
Howick	20.4	..S	..S	12.1
Māngere-Ōtāhuhu [*]	9.4	2.2	23.5	19.7
Ōtara-Papatoetoe [*]	18.5	3.0	16.1	16.2
Manurewa [*]	13.7	2.4	17.7	20.5
Papakura [*]	8.8	1.6	18.1	21.3
Franklin	9.8	1.8	18.0	13.2
Southern Initiative [*]	50.4	9.2	18.2	18.6
Rest of Auckland [*]	180.3	15.6	8.6	10.0
Western Initiative [W]	38.9	4.0	10.4	13.1
<b>Auckland total</b>	<b>230.6</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>11.9</b>
Rest of New Zealand	409.4	41.5	10.1	11.4
<b>Total New Zealand</b>	<b>640.0</b>	<b>66.2</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>11.5</b>

**Notes:** Data is based on latest population estimates. Any finer geography than Auckland total is below the design level of the survey; local board area estimates should be treated as indicative only and used with caution...S = data suppressed due to base numbers being too small (e.g. NEET below 1000 for the quarter (quarterly) or for all of the four quarters (annual average)). [\*] The Southern Initiative is made up of the Māngere-Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, Manurewa and Papakura Local Boards. [W] = Western Initiative area.

## 12 Appendix: Definitions and technical notes

### Definitions used in the HLFS

**Employed:** Those HLFS respondents who during their survey reference week had either:

- worked for one hour or more for pay or profit, as employee/employer/self employed
- worked without pay for one hour or more for a relative's farm or business
- had a job but were temporarily not at work.

**Labour force:** Members of the working-age population who during their 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.

**NEET rate:** Calculated as the total number of youth (aged 15–24 years) who are not in employment, education or training (NEET), as a proportion of the total youth working-age population (aged 15-24 years).

**Not in the labour force:** Any person who is neither employed nor unemployed. This category includes, for example:

- retired persons
- persons with personal or family responsibilities such as childcare, unpaid housework
- persons attending educational institutions
- persons permanently unable to work due to physical or mental handicaps
- persons who were not actively seeking work (see note below regarding unemployed).

**Significant difference:** The HLFS is a sample survey, so all statistics are subject to survey sampling error – the random variation between the sample and the total population. For a difference to be statistically significant, it must exceed this margin of error (see also technical note on sampling errors).

**Unemployed:** Unemployed persons are those in the working-age population who 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. (Note: 'Actively sought work' does not include people whose only job search method was to look at job advertisements in newspapers or online.)

**Unemployment rate (UER):** The number of unemployed expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

**Working age population (WAP):** total population (i.e. of all labour force statuses) aged 15 or over (including over 65), who have or propose to live in New Zealand for at least 12 months, but excluding institutionalised people (in prison, or long-term residents of homes for older people, hospitals, and psychiatric institutions); sometimes restricted to a particular specified sub-group such as by gender or ethnicity – and sometimes also for a sub-group defined by age e.g. youth (aged 15-24).



## Technical notes

**HLFS survey sampling:** Households are sampled on a statistically representative basis from areas throughout New Zealand, and information is obtained for each member of the household aged 15 or older. Each quarter, one-eighth of the households in the sample are rotated out and replaced by a new set of households.

**Seasonality and annual averages:** In order to ensure information is seasonally aligned, rolling annual averages are used throughout most of this report for reporting across time. Remaining quarterly data in this report will be subject to seasonality (and may differ from some of the HLFS headline numbers published by Stats NZ that are ‘seasonally adjusted’).

**Revisions:** The survey and some back-data were revised by Stats NZ in October 2020 and again in January 2021 to match revised regional population estimates. There are also ongoing minor revisions to recent population backdata due to revisions of migration estimates. In addition, the survey and all back-data since 2009 was revised in June 2016 when ‘searching online ads only’ was redefined from ‘official unemployed’ to ‘looking at job ads only’ (i.e. not actively seeking employment, therefore Not In Labour Force). This overview uses the revised data, but back-data for before 2009 still uses the old definition.

**Sampling errors:** As the HLFS is a sample survey, all statistics are subject to survey sampling error. Statistics presented here at the sub-sample (e.g. local board or ethnic groups) and sub-variable (e.g. NEET for ages 15-24) levels are also subject to additional sampling errors and should be treated as indicative only. Note also that in some cases a difference can be significant for a sample but not for any of its component sub-samples (e.g. ethnic groups).

**Survey questionnaire changes:** In June 2016, the HLFS questionnaire was changed to identify more self-employed people (who would previously have been Not In Labour Force and/or NEET), and to include members of the armed forces living in private dwellings (previously not part of ‘Working Age Population’). Consequently, employment and unemployment rates and other affected data prior to June 2016 are not fully compatible with later periods.

### For further information

Technical notes on the HLFS on Stats NZ website:

<https://datainfolplus.stats.govt.nz/item/nz.govt.stats/6a13af44-0057-4a63-835a-c1a0c6f8ef91>

June 2016 questionnaire changes:

[http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse\\_for\\_stats/income-and-work/employment\\_and\\_unemployment/improving-labour-market-statistics.aspx#gsc.tab=0](http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/income-and-work/employment_and_unemployment/improving-labour-market-statistics.aspx#gsc.tab=0)

2020 Covid-19 impacts:

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/methods/covid-19-and-labour-market-statistics-in-the-june-2020-quarter>

2021 Covid-19 impacts:

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/methods/covid-19-and-labour-market-statistics-in-the-december-2021-quarter>

Stats NZ Guide to unemployment stats (Third edition)

<https://www.stats.govt.nz/assets/Reports/Guide-to-unemployment-statistics-third-edition/guide-unemployment-statistics-third-edition.pdf>