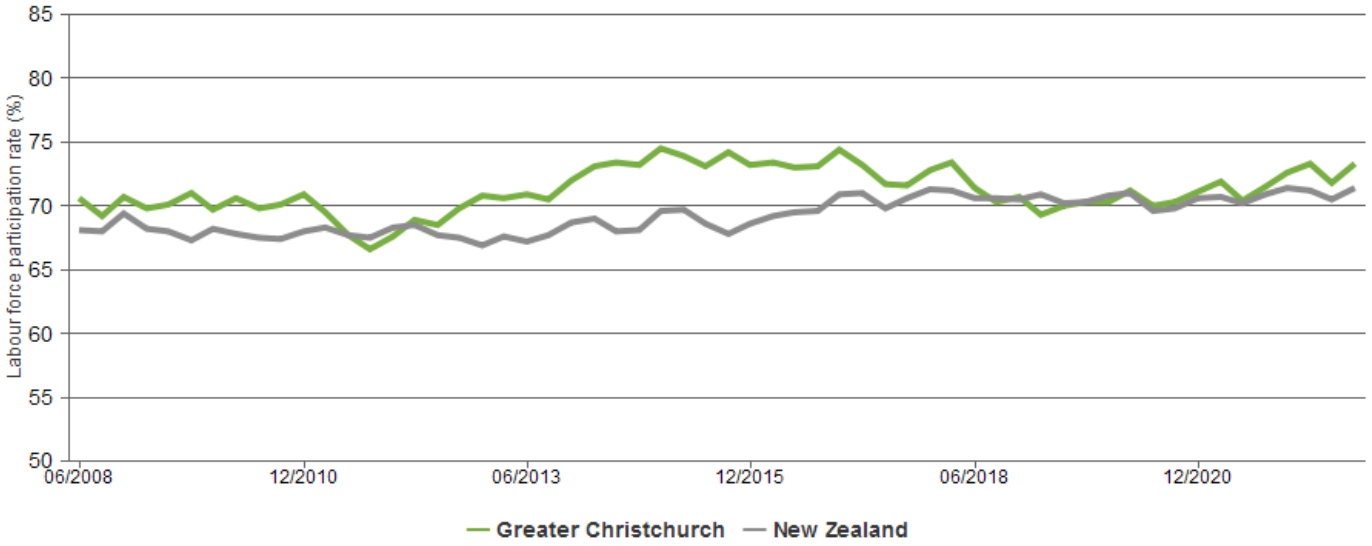
Employment: Labour force participation rate

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The labour force includes all people who are either employed, or unemployed but looking for work (such as the proportion of the entire working-age population that would turn up for work if suitable work was available) [7]. The size of the labour force is directly related to New Zealand's ability to produce goods and services. Short-term changes in the participation rate are linked to current job market conditions, which can vary with cycles of business growth.

This indicator measures the proportion of the working-age population in the labour force (non-seasonally adjusted). The labour force consists of members of the working-age population who are classified as employed or unemployed (people working + people looking for work). The labour force participation rate is, therefore, the proportion of the working-age population who are either employed or unemployed.

Figure 3.1: Labour force participation rate (number of employed or unemployed as a proportion of the working-age population, non-seasonally adjusted), in greater Christchurch and New Zealand, 2008–2022

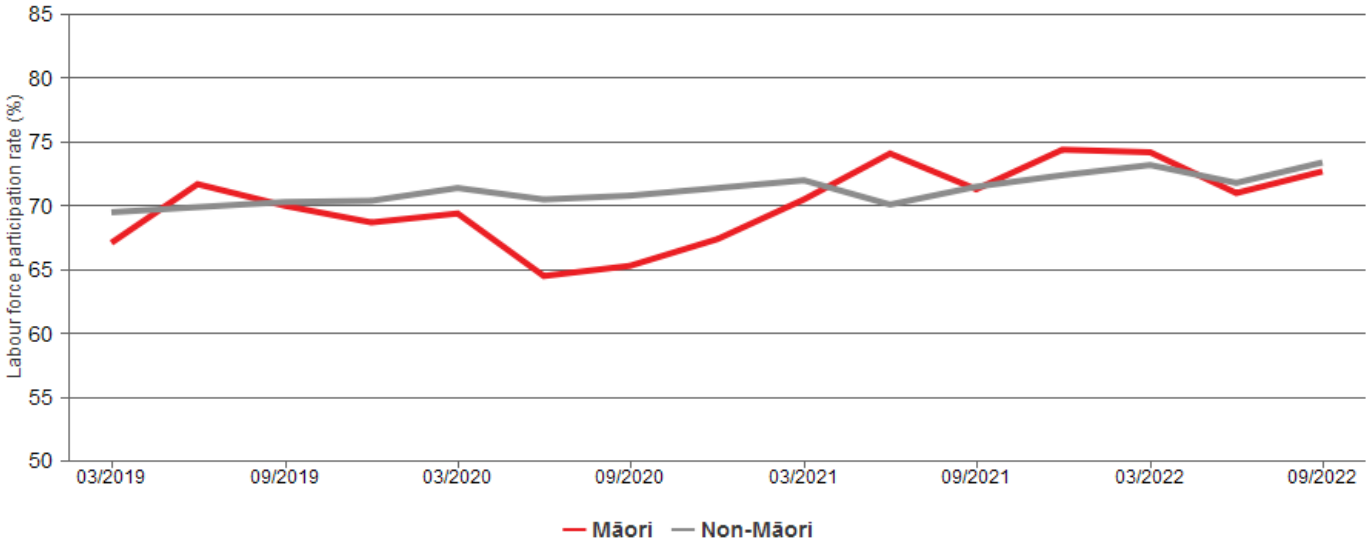


The figure shows that the labour force participation rate (non-seasonally adjusted) in New Zealand has increased steadily over the time series shown (68% in 2008 to 71.4% in 2022). The labour force participation rate for greater Christchurch deviated from the New Zealand rate following the beginning of the Canterbury earthquake sequence. The greater Christchurch rate was three or four percentage points higher than the national rate from late 2012 until early 2017, as rebuild-related economic activity continued. However, the labour force participation rate for greater Christchurch has now largely converged with the New Zealand rate (having peaked at 74.4 percent in December 2016 the rate has increased steadily since early 2019 to 73.3 percent in September 2022).

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Breakdown by ethnicity

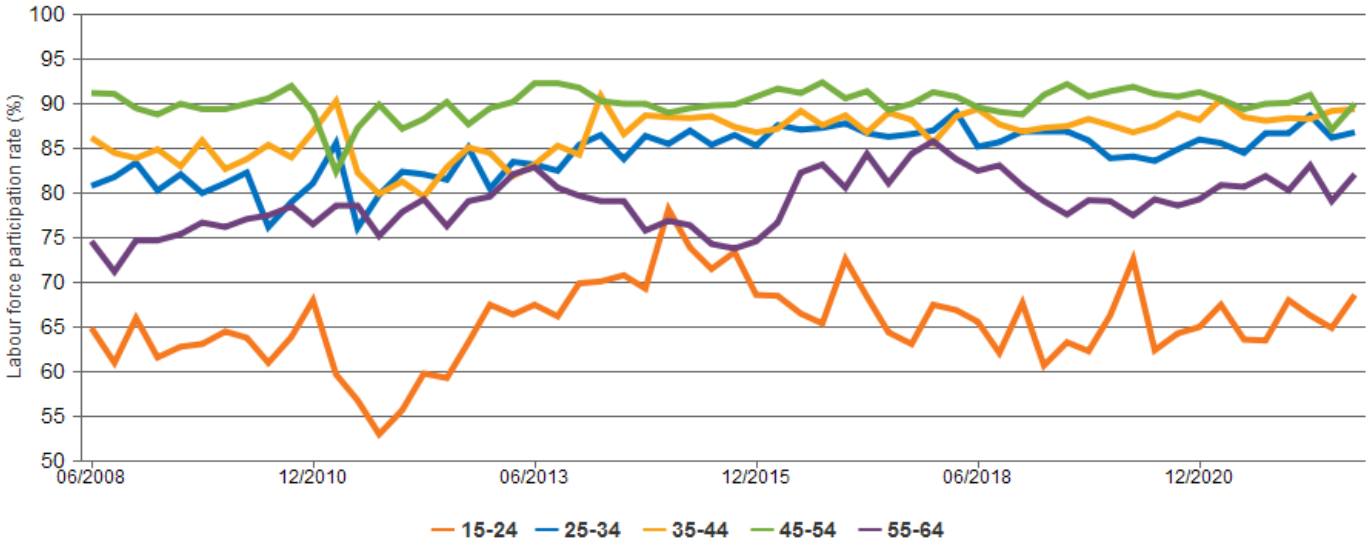
Figure 3.2: Labour force participation rate (number of employed or unemployed as a proportion of the working-age population, non-seasonally adjusted), in greater Christchurch, by ethnicity, 2019–2022



The figure shows that, since March 2021, the non-seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate for Māori and non-Māori has converged (72.7% and 73.4% respectively, September 2022). The labour force participation rate dipped notably for Māori for most of 2020 (low point 64.5% in June 2020), probably due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic (noting that impacts of COVID-19 restrictions on employment varied substantially across different sectors).

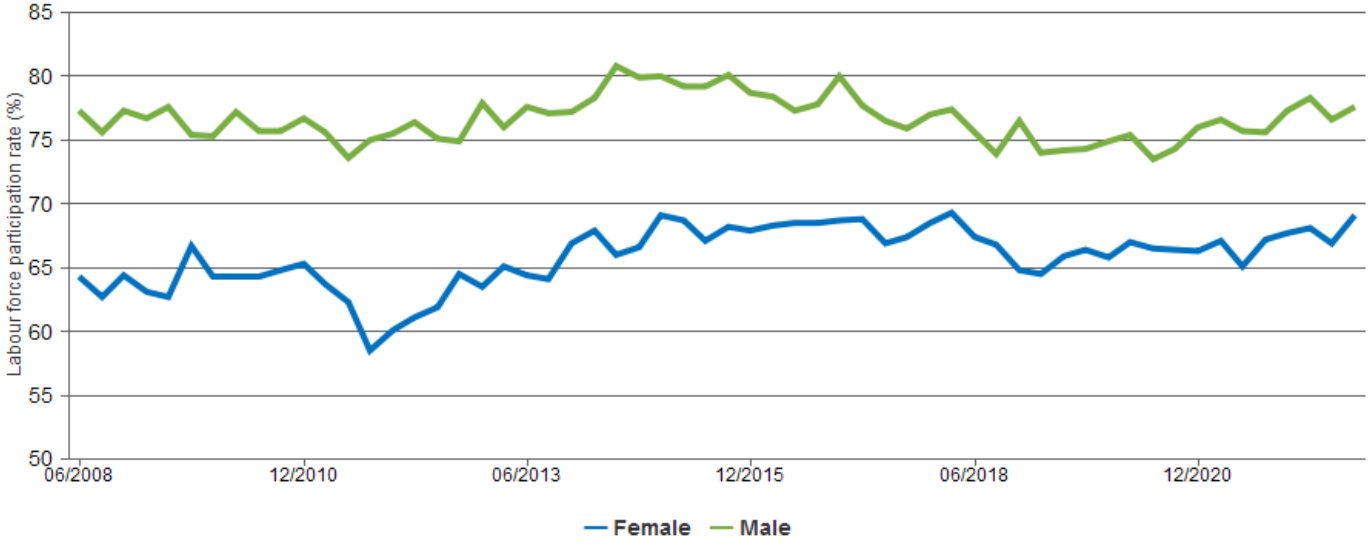
Breakdown by age

Figure 3.3: Labour force participation rate (number of employed or unemployed as a proportion of the working-age population, non-seasonally adjusted), in greater Christchurch, by age group, 2008–2022



The non-seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate for greater Christchurch has increased over the time series shown, for all age groups, with the exception of the 45–54 years group, which has remained steady at approximately 90 percent. The influence of earthquake rebuild-related activities can be seen during the years 2012 to 2015, particularly for younger people 15–24 years.

Breakdown by gender



The labour force participation rate for females is consistently lower throughout the time-series. The rate for females has increased and converged somewhat towards the male labour force participation rate during recent years. In September 2022 the rate for females is 69.1 percent and for males 77.6 percent.

Data Sources

Source: Statistics New Zealand.
Survey/data set: Household Labour Force Survey to September 2022. Custom data request for greater Christchurch region.
Source data frequency: Quarterly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/our-wellbeing/index-data

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