

## Employment: Labour force participation rate

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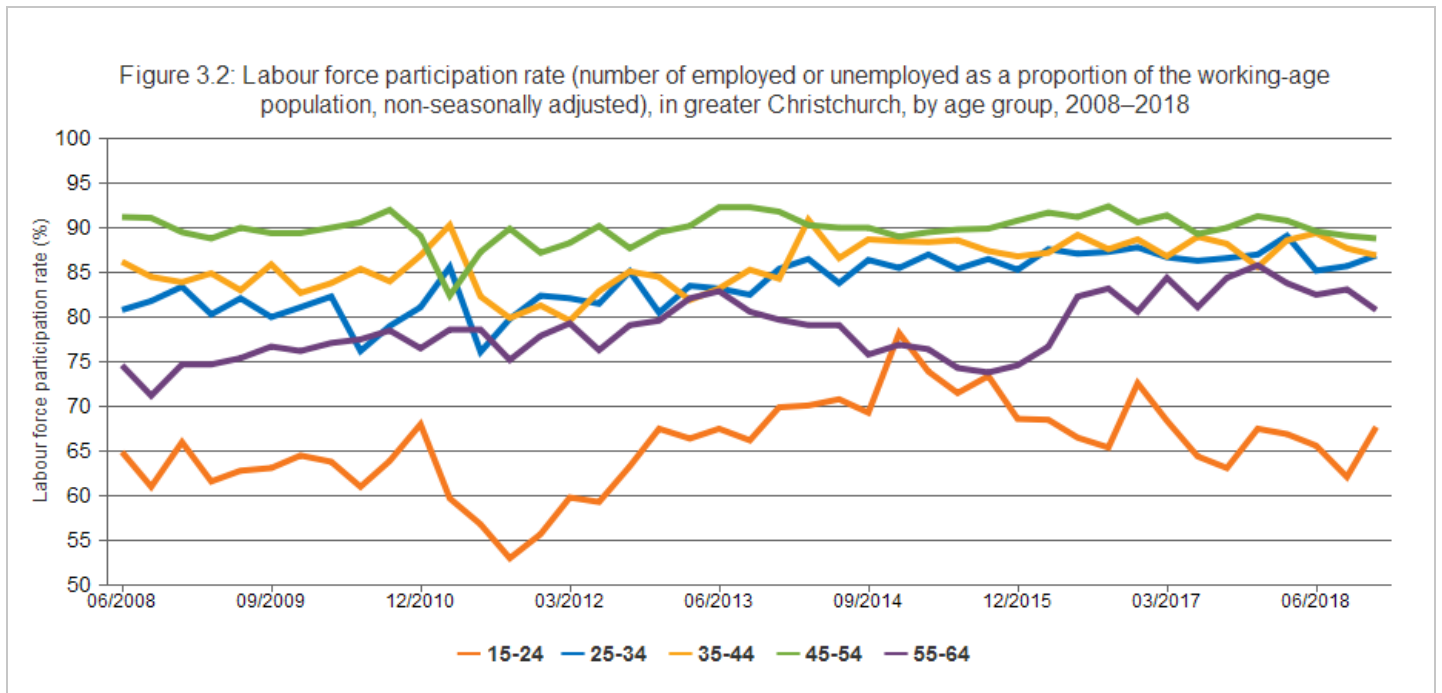
The labour force includes all people who are either employed, or unemployed but looking for work (such as the proportion of the entire working-age population that would turn up for work if suitable work was available) [7]. The size of the labour force is directly related to New Zealand's ability to produce 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.



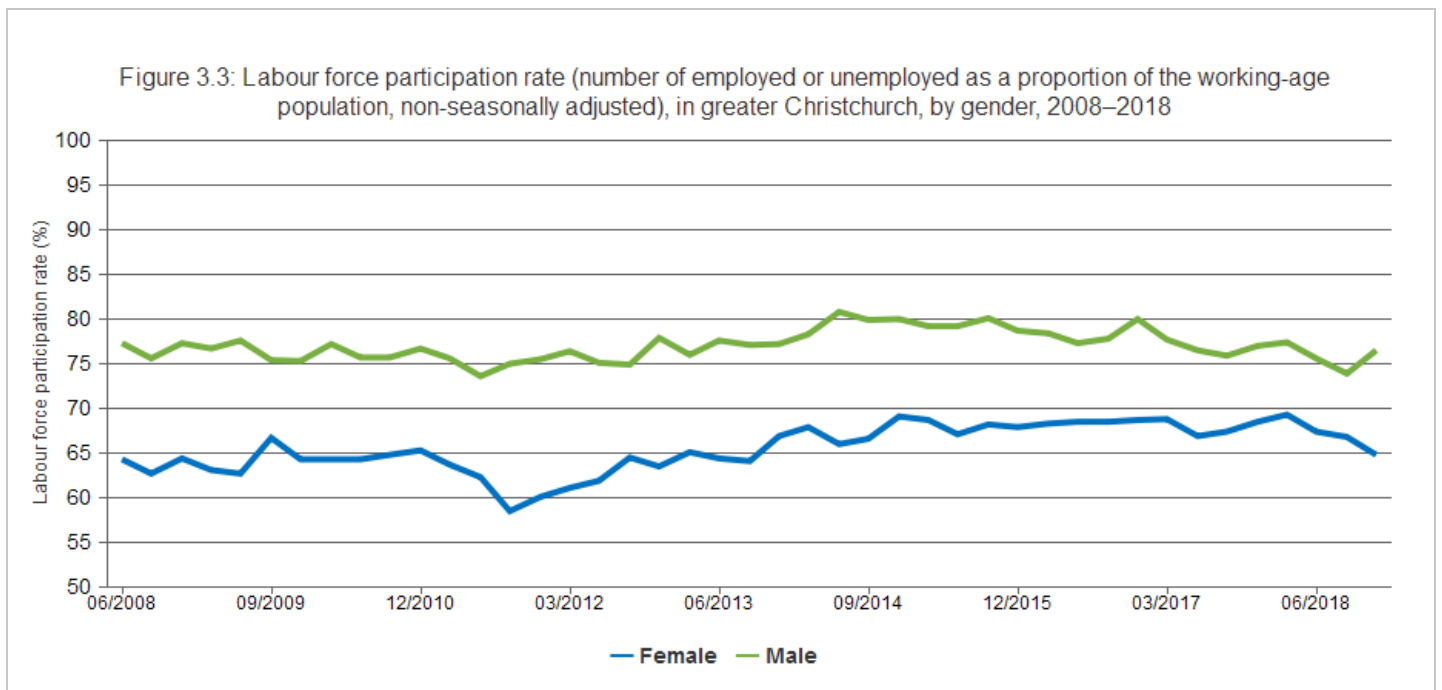
The figure shows that the labour force participation rate (non-seasonally adjusted) in New Zealand has increased over the last ten years. The labour force participation rate for greater Christchurch decreased from 74.4 percent in December 2008 to 70.7 percent in December 2018 (and for New Zealand, remained relatively stable over this time period at 70.9 percent and 70.5 percent). 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 converged with the New Zealand rate.

## Breakdown by age



The non-seasonally adjusted labour force participation rate for greater Christchurch has increased over the last ten years, for all age groups (with the exception of the 45–54 years group, which has remained steady at approximately 90 percent). Labour force participation for younger people (15–24 years) appears to have been particularly influenced by earthquake rebuild-related activities (declining following the start of the Canterbury earthquake sequence, before increasing during the years 2012 to 2015, and currently relatively stable).

## Breakdown by gender



The figure shows some divergence in female and male labour force participation (non-seasonally adjusted) in greater Christchurch following the beginning of the Canterbury earthquake sequence. This suggests that a greater proportion of females than males were adversely affected by the impact of the earthquakes on labour force participation. However, the labour force participation rate for females has increased during the subsequent recovery years, and, while remaining lower, is within 10 percentage points of the male rate in the most recent data (female 68.5 percent; male 77.0 percent, December 2017).

## Data Sources

**Source:** Statistics New Zealand.

**Survey/data set:** Household Labour Force Survey to December 2018. 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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