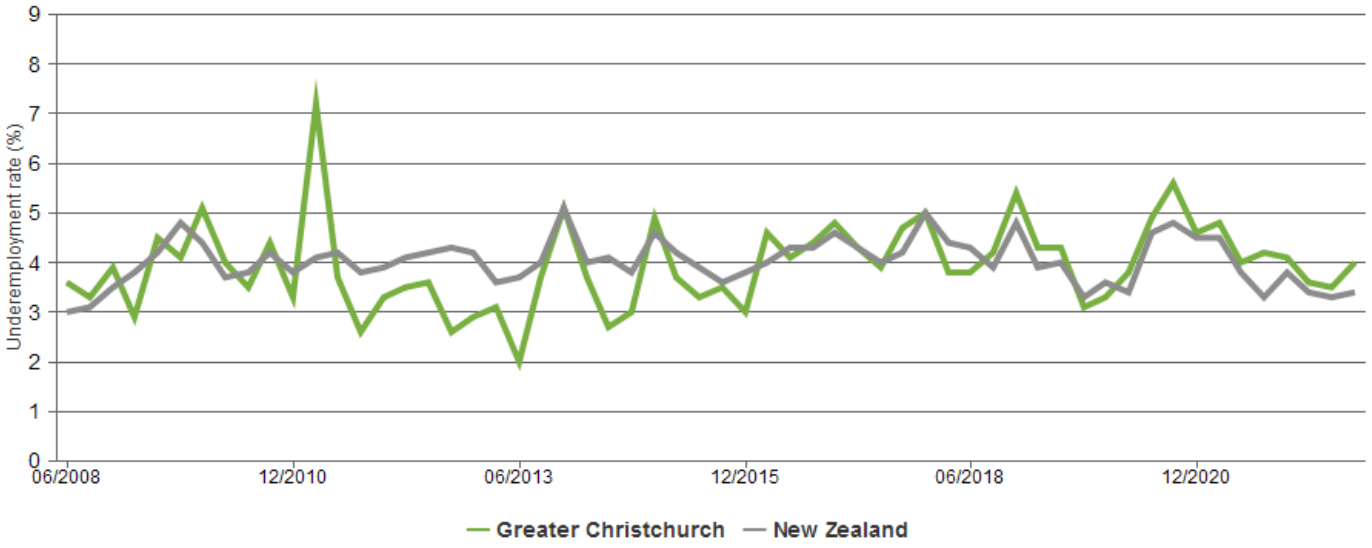
Employment: Underemployment rate

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The labour force is fundamentally split into two groups: those with a job (employed) and those without (unemployed). However, underemployment relates to the grey area of employment where people have a job but face a partial lack of work (labour force underutilisation) and have similarities to unemployed people. The underemployment rate includes people who have a part-time job of less than 30 hours per week but who want to work more hours, and are available to do so [7]. Underemployment describes workers who are constrained by the demand side of the labour market to work fewer hours than they desire.

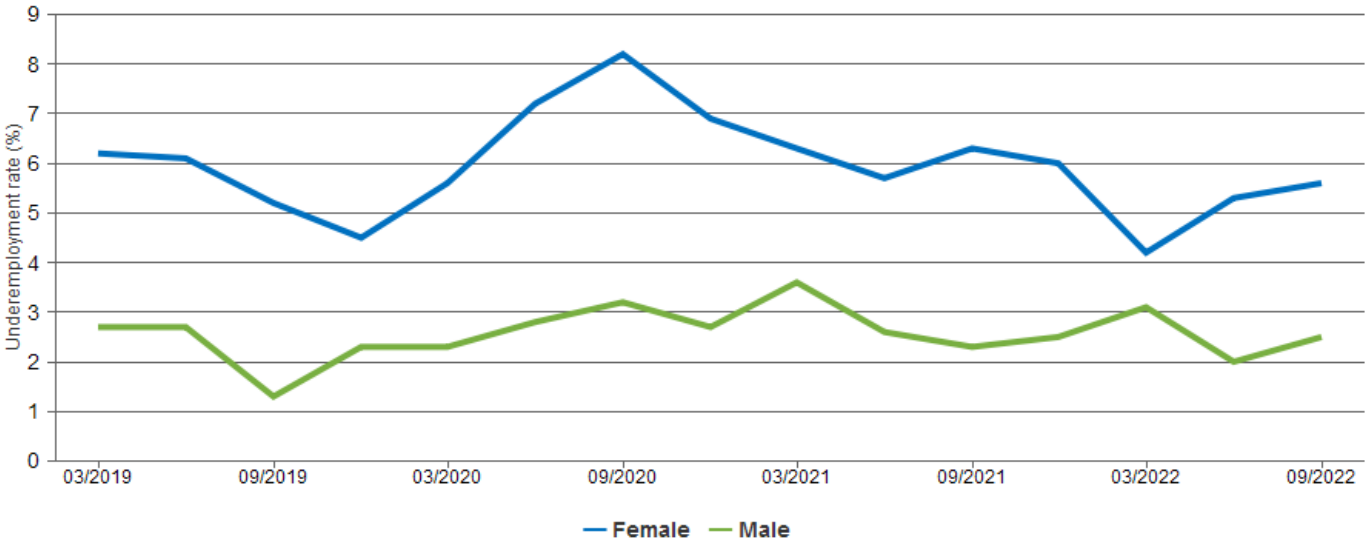
This indicator presents the proportion (non-seasonally adjusted) of total employed who work part-time (less than 30 hours per week) who want to and are available to work more hours, in greater Christchurch and New Zealand.

Figure 4.1: Proportion of total employed who work part-time who want to and are available to work more hours, non-seasonally adjusted, in greater Christchurch and New Zealand, 2008–2022



The figure shows that the non-seasonally adjusted underemployment rate (includes people who have a part-time job of less than 30 hours per week but who want to work more hours and are available to do so) in New Zealand has remained relatively stable over the time series shown. The underemployment rate for greater Christchurch deviated notably from the New Zealand rate following the beginning of the Canterbury earthquake sequence (from 3.3% in December 2010 to a maximum of 7.2% in March 2011) while the rate for New Zealand overall remained relatively unchanged over this period. The greater Christchurch underemployment rate was then slightly lower on average than the national rate from late 2012 until 2016, as rebuild-related economic activity continued. The underemployment rate for greater Christchurch has now converged with the New Zealand rate (4% and 3.4% in September 2022, respectively).

Breakdown by gender



The figure shows that the non-seasonally adjusted underemployment rate in greater Christchurch is notably higher for females compared with males, across the time series shown (5.6% and 2.5% in September 2022, respectively). The figure suggests that a greater proportion of females than males were adversely affected by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on labour force participation (underemployment rate peaking for females at 8.2% compared with 3.2% for males in September 2020). Overall, the time series suggests a pattern of convergence in the underemployment rate for females and males, in greater Christchurch, between March 2019 and September 2022. Note, this breakdown is only available from 2019.

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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