

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.



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 11 percentage points of the male rate in the most recent data (female 64.8 percent; male 76.5 percent, December 2018) compared with approximately 16 percentage points when the difference was at its greatest, in September 2011.

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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