CANTERBURY WELLBEING INDEX

Employment: Unemployment rate

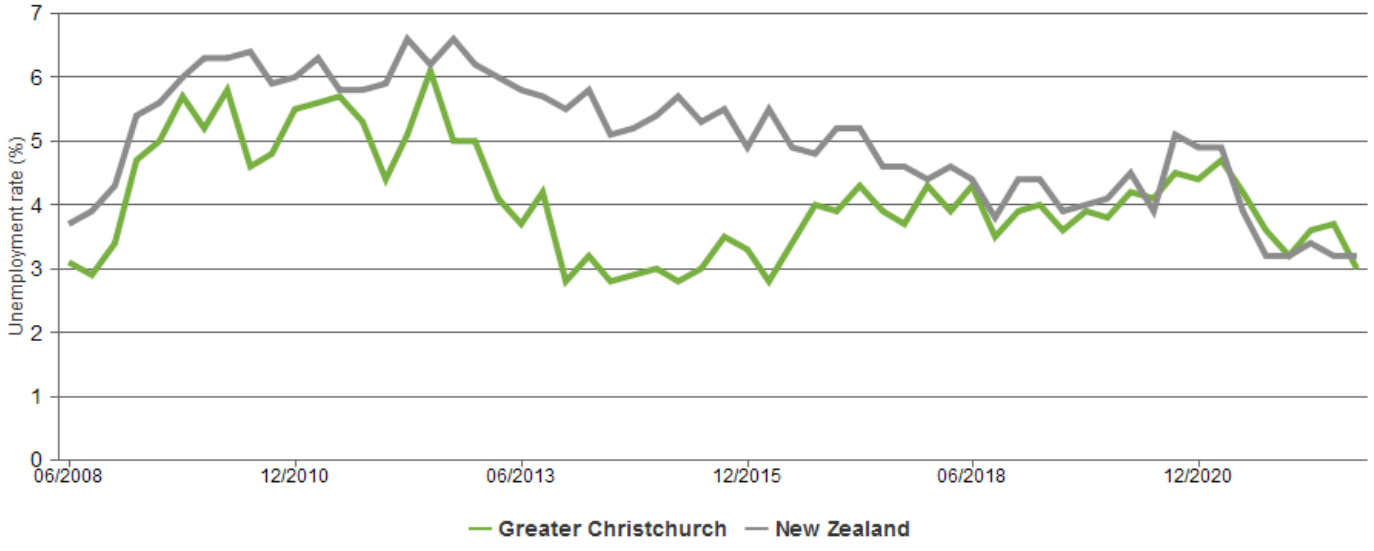
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The labour force (the total potential labour available) is split into two groups: those with a job (employed) and those without (unemployed). Unemployment is the situation of being without work, wanting work, and actively seeking work (but excludes being too discouraged to seek work and those who are in effect unemployed but are working just a few hours, and would like more work) [7].

The personal and social costs of unemployment include severe financial hardship and poverty, debt, homelessness and housing stress, family tensions and breakdown, long-term harm for children and young people, increased social isolation, crime, loss of work skills, ill-health, and reduced subjective wellbeing [11-13]. The health impacts are linked to both the psychological consequences and the financial problems that result from being unemployed. Most of these effects increase with the duration of unemployment [12]. Moving from unemployment to employment improves people's physical health, mental health, and subjective wellbeing [11].

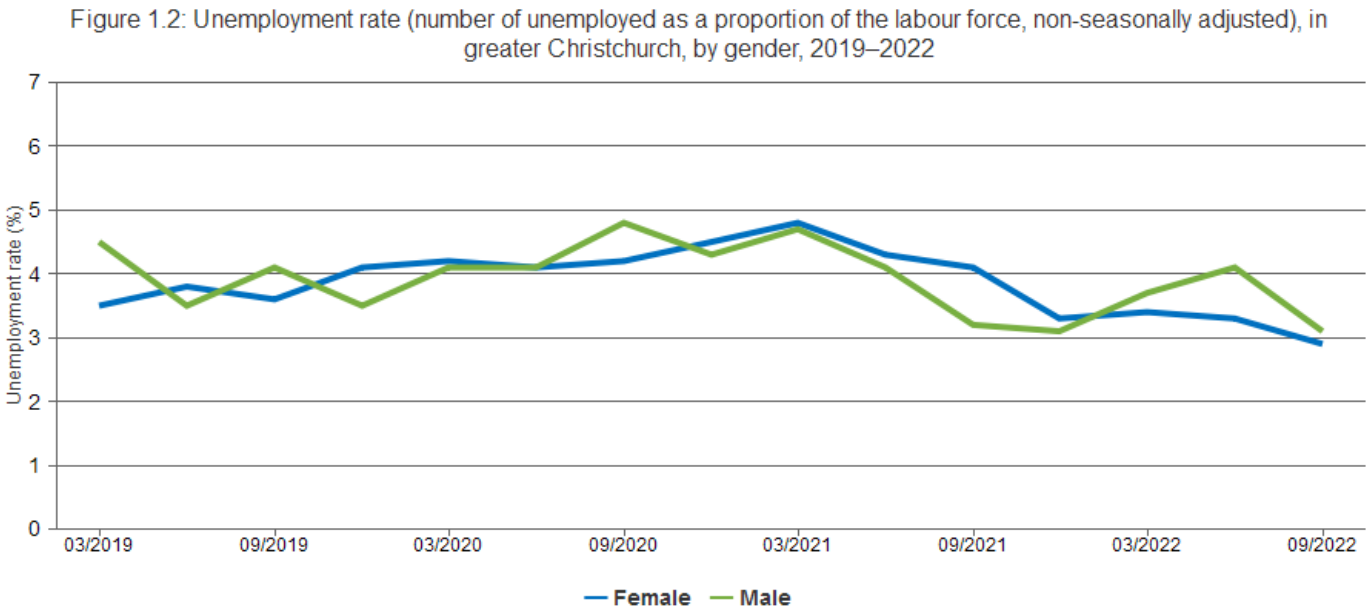
This indicator presents the unemployment rate for greater Christchurch and New Zealand (non-seasonally adjusted). Unemployment is defined as being in the civilian working-age population, without a paid job, but available for work and actively seeking work. The unemployment rate is, therefore, the proportion of the labour force that is unemployed [7].

Figure 1.1: Unemployment rate (number of unemployed as a proportion of the labour force, non-seasonally adjusted), in greater Christchurch and New Zealand, 2008–2022



In September 2022, the (non-seasonally adjusted) unemployment rate in New Zealand fell to 3.2 percent, the lowest unemployment rate since 2008. In comparison, the unemployment rate in greater Christchurch converged with the New Zealand rate from March 2016 to March 2021, increasing 1.9 percentage points (from 2.8% to 4.7%) before decreasing notably, to 3 percent in September 2022, similar to New Zealand overall. The pattern of increasing unemployment in greater Christchurch since late 2015, and convergence with the New Zealand rate from 2018, is at least partly due to an increase in activities relating to the Christchurch rebuild. The unemployment rate in greater Christchurch now appears to be tracking in-step with New Zealand overall.

Breakdown by gender



The figure shows no substantial differences between the female and male unemployment rate (non-seasonally adjusted) in greater Christchurch, 2019 to 2022 (female, 2.9% and male 3.1% in 2022).

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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