

## Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)

“Over recent years, the proportion of young people in New Zealand who are not engaged in employment, education, training or caregiving (NEET) has been monitored as an indicator of youth engagement in training and employment. It serves as a good alternative to the traditional labour force participation rate, which is less relevant for youth given the high numbers of youth out of the labour force because they are at school or in tertiary study. Those youth who are categorised as NEET are disengaged from both formal learning and work, and as such, are considered to be missing the opportunity to develop their potential at an age that heavily influences future outcomes. While the NEET measure does not count young people involved in other activities that could contribute to their well-being, or are ‘in between’ activities for a short period of time (for example, just returned from or about to leave for overseas, or on holiday from work or study), it is still a particularly useful indicator of youth disengagement.”<sup>8</sup>

As at March 2011, in the 15-19 years age group, just under one in ten (9.3%) of males were NEET, compared with 7.6% of females. The school leaving age is now 16.

Among those aged 20-24, 12.3% of men and 10.4% of young women were NEET. Young Māori aged 15-24 have the highest NEET rates, at 17%, followed by Pacific youth at 14.5% and European youth at 8.2%.

### Employment-related age complaints

The following section summarises complaints received by the Human Rights Commission in relation to employment and age issues. The most common theme of age discrimination complaints in the last five years involves explicit or perceived age preferences in pre-employment. This includes complaints from people who have been told that they are either too old or too young for jobs, as well as people who believe that age is the reason for being declined employment. Of those who stated that they were told they were ‘too old’ or ‘too young’ for a role, most had been told they were too old for a role. Being considered ‘too old’ affected people in all age groups, including a complainant aged under 20 who was considered too old for a role in which the employer wanted to pay youth rates. Retirement complaints largely involve older workers claiming pressure to retire by their employers.

Table 16 / Age employment complaints

	NUMBER OF AGE COMPLAINTS	PROPORTION OF AGE COMPLAINTS
Age preference in pre-employment	109	40%
Pre-employment questions	32	12%
Retirement	29	11%
Different entitlements based on age	13	4%

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/lmr/youth/in-the-labour-market/youth-2009\\_07.asp](http://www.dol.govt.nz/publications/lmr/youth/in-the-labour-market/youth-2009_07.asp)