

Where are we now?



The Commission has looked beyond the basic employment data to illustrate where New Zealand sits in terms of labour force participation.

In compiling employment information for key demographic variables: gender, ethnicity, people with disabilities, young and old, the Commission was struck by a number of points.

- The number of people out of the labour force. This number includes people who are “not actively seeking work” as defined by Statistics New Zealand, as well as parents caring for dependent children and those who have retired.
- That employment data related to people with disabilities is only sampled every five years after the census.
- That there is no national statistical database regarding gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgender and intersex (GLBTI) people.
- The level of unemployment of Māori and Pacific youth.
- The level of unemployment of young Pacific women.
- The higher level of unemployment and the lower rate of youth participation in Auckland than in other regions.

Information has been obtained from two main sources; Statistics New Zealand and complaints and enquiries data from the Human Rights Commission. Employment statistics quoted are unemployment rates and participation rates.

Statistical data was purchased from Statistics New Zealand and is broken down from the Household Labour Force Survey December 2010.¹

Where statistics are broken down to this extent, group samples can get quite small and may not be representative of the group as a whole. Apparent differences may be due to sampling errors rather than actual differences between the groups. Another caution is that in employment there may be several factors acting and the dominant factor may not be readily apparent. The statistics however, do point to areas of concern and at the least warrant further investigation.

Unemployment rate²

People are counted as unemployed if they are of working-age (over 15) who during the reference week were without a paid job, available for work, and had either actively sought work in the past four weeks, or had a new job to start within the next four weeks. Those who are without a job and have not actively sought work recently are not considered to be unemployed and are not in the labour force. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed persons expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

Labour force participation³

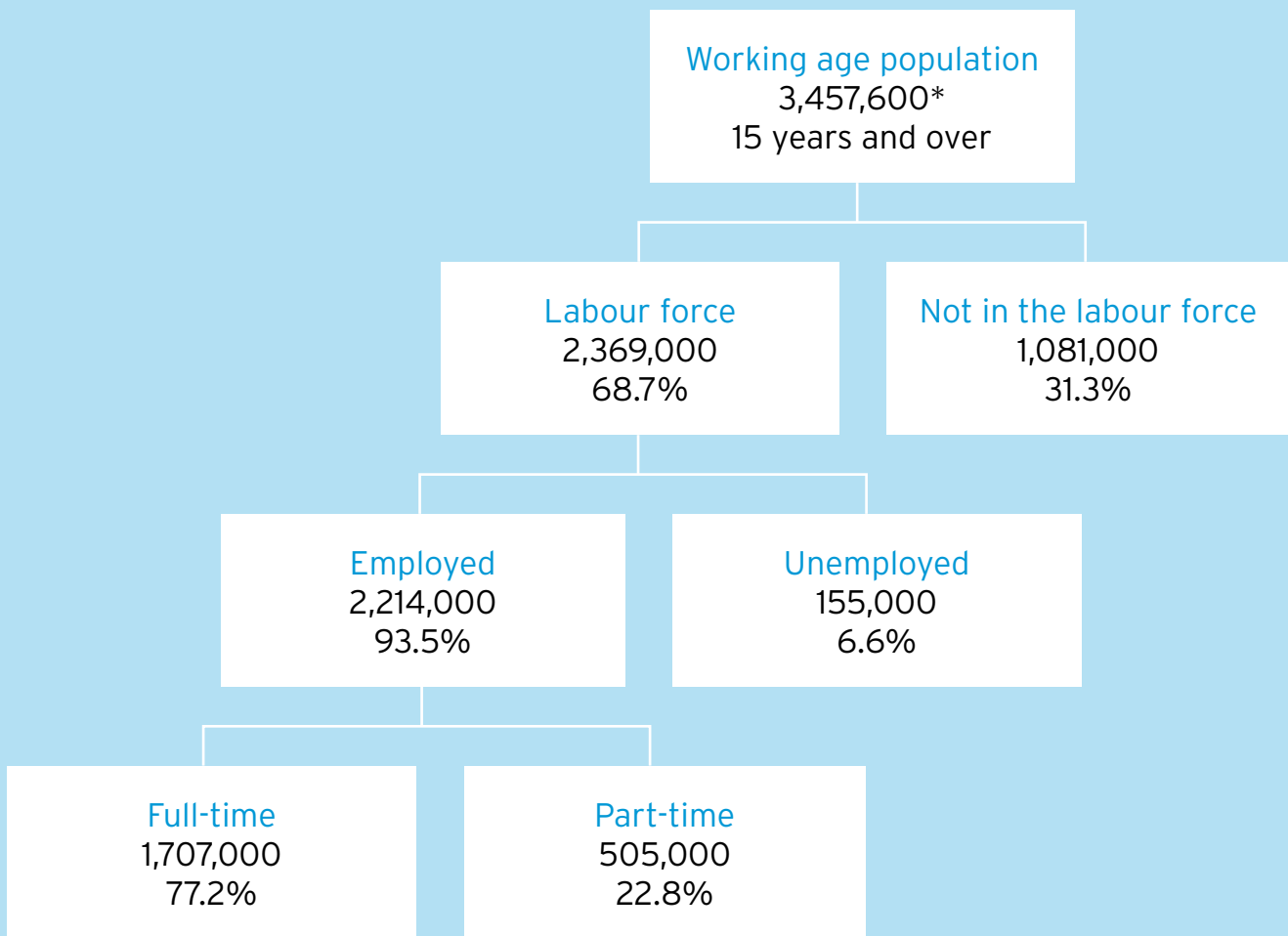
The total labour force is expressed as a percentage of the working-age population. Because New Zealand has no compulsory retirement age and many workers stay in the labour force beyond 65, the figures include those aged 15 years and over with no upper limit. The total labour force is those people who meet the criteria for being employed or unemployed. A paid job of one hour a week or more is considered to be employed.

¹ This work is based on/includes Statistics New Zealand's data which are licensed by Statistics New Zealand for re-use under the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 3.0 New Zealand licence. The data is from the Household Labour Force Survey December 2010

² Statistics New Zealand Household Labour Force Survey 2010 December quarter Technical notes

³ Ibid

**Table 1 / Structure of the Labour Market: March 2011 quarter
(seasonally adjusted)⁴**



* Not seasonally adjusted

⁴ Reproduced from the Department of Labour report on the Household Labour Force Survey