

Younger Women

Part-time work supports younger women (aged 15-24) while studying, and helps to build skills and networks. Nearly half (49%) of younger women work part-time.

In contrast, over two-thirds (68%) of young men work full-time. Nearly **1 in 5** young female workers are employed in **hospitality**, more than two-thirds of whom work part-time (66%).

Young people have higher unemployment rates, regardless of gender, as they compete with more experienced workers. In December 2021, the unemployment rate for younger women was **10.2%** compared to **3.9%** for all women. For men, these figures were **10.8%** and **3.7%** respectively.

The gender pay gap starts at zero. There is no gender pay gap for workers aged 15-19, as there is little discretion in wages and many earn the minimum wage. For those aged 20-24 a pay gap emerges where women earn **3.6%** less than men.

Effects of COVID-19 on education



In New Zealand, primary and secondary students **lost up to 10 weeks of learning** in the 2020 lockdowns, with students in Auckland further impacted by lockdowns in 2021.

Lockdown effects have played out differently, depending on how well resourced students are. A Christchurch survey identified some benefits to lockdown learning such as **less distraction, more family engagement** with students' education, and greater choice about when and what to study.

However, only **24%** of NCEA students thought learning from home made them a better learner. The Education Review Office found **anxiety, under-achievement**, and the demoralising impact of a lack of academic progress affected students – particularly those from low-decile communities and those in Auckland. **Two-thirds of schools (66%)** report concerns about student progress due to lockdowns. Omicron has further impacted learning at all levels.

Earning and learning



1 in 5 younger women – or 63,000 students – are working while studying. A further **11,700** women (aged 15-24) are looking for jobs while studying. Part-time work and seasonal work are also important economic supports for students.

In December 2021, **12%** of females (aged 15-24) are not in employment, education or training (NEET), compared to **11%** for young males.

Young Māori and Pacific women (aged 15-24) had less engagement with work and education, than other younger women and men.

For women aged 20-24, this is partially explained by caring responsibilities, or difficulties securing childcare, accommodation or transport.



64%
of younger women are in the labour force



64%
of employed younger women work in retail trade and accommodation



7%
of the labour force are younger women

Top 5 industries for youth (15-24)

Females

- Retail trade and accommodation (40%)
- Health (12.6%)
- Professional and administrative services (8.7%)
- Education and training (8%)
- Arts, recreation and other services (7.7%)

Males

- Retail trade and accommodation (26%)
- Construction (20%)
- Manufacturing (11%)
- Professional and administrative services (8.9%)
- Agriculture (6%)

Young women workers are highly concentrated in hospitality, tourism, and retail trade work – industries often impacted by economic downturn. COVID-19 impacted these sectors, reducing jobs for some and reducing hours for others (underemployment). **One-third** of all underemployed women are working in retail trade.

Young men have been more insulated from disruptions to their employment and training, with **20%** employed in construction – an industry where apprenticeships make it possible to earn while you learn.

Tertiary studies



Between 2006-2018, the average completion rate for 3-year programmes was **53%** for females compared to **49%** for males. For five-year programmes, **64%** of females completed their studies compared to **60%** of males.

NEET rates for young labour force by ethnicity and gender
December 2021



Driver licences enable employment

A driver licence is a great enabler to access employment and training, particularly for mothers. It is also a de facto qualification for many employers, and a form of identification for many young people. There are distinct differences in driver licence acquisition by gender, age and ethnicity.

**Driver licence status by selected ethnicities,
19-24 years, 2018**

