

Māori Employment

Over the last decade the Māori unemployment rate improved from 14.8% in September 1999 to 7.9% in the September year 2008. Similarly, there were improvements in Māori long term unemployment rates (i.e. those unemployed for more than 26 weeks) during this period.

Falling unemployment has been matched with increasing Māori labour force participation, which has continued to improve since 1999.

Given the rapidly changing economic conditions internationally, it is very difficult to forecast future Māori employment outcomes with any certainty. On the basis of the information available to it, Te Puni Kōkiri considers that a likely scenario is for a rise in Māori unemployment to 12-15% by mid 2010.¹

Table 1: Māori Labour Market Trends, September 1999-2008

September Quarter	Labour Force Participation Rate ²	Employment Rate ³	Unemployment Rate ⁴	Youth Unemployment Rate ⁵	Long Term Unemployment Rate ⁶
1999	62.0	52.8	14.8	24.3	5.9
2000	62.8	53.9	14.1	31.4	4.6
2001	63.5	55.7	12.3	27.7	4.2
2002	65.9	58.1	11.9	22.5	3.6
2003	65.7	59.3	9.7	20.7	2.9
2004	63.7	58.4	8.3	20.9	1.6
2005	67.1	60.8	9.4	28.3	2.3
2006	66.4	61.3	7.6	22.4	1.5
2007	67.4	62.0	8.0	23.7	1.3
2008	67.4	62.1	7.9	19.7	1.3

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, Statistics New Zealand (2008)

Māori Employment by Industry

By industry, the strongest percentage of Māori employment growth for the 2003 and 2008 June years has been in construction (7,500 or 58.3%), and Health & Community services

¹This forecast is based on a Treasury forecast of a rise in general unemployment to 5.7% over the next 2 years with an assumption that Māori unemployment will continue to be at least double the general rate. There are also initial signs of an economic slowdown in construction, tourism and primary industries. Māori are strongly represented in each of these sectors.

² Labour Force Participation Rate is the total Labour Force divided by Working-Age population.

³ Employment Rate is the Total Employed divided by Working-Age population.

⁴ Unemployment Rate is the Total Unemployed divided by Total Labour Force.

⁵ Youth Unemployment Rate is number of unemployed youths aged 15-19 years divided by total number of youths in the labour force aged 15-19 years.

⁶ Long Term Unemployment Rate is all persons 15 years and over unemployed for more than 26 weeks divided by Total Labour Force.



(6,900 or 49.3%) industries. The growth in Māori employment in the Construction sector over the last five years has come to an end over the last year with a decline of 700 jobs for Māori.

The two industry sectors experiencing declines over the last five years were the primary industry sector and the Accommodation, Cafes, and Restaurants sector. The primary industry sector's Māori employment declined by 2,200 or 13%, while Māori employment in Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants fell 2,100 or 16.7 percent.

Table 2: Māori Labour Market Trends, years to June 2003, 2007 and 2008

Industry employment	2003 (‘000)	2007 (‘000)	2008 (‘000)	June 2008 % of total	%change 2003-2008	%change 2007-2008
Primary ⁷	16.9	16.9	14.7	7.1	-12.9	-12.9
Manufacturing	35.4	33.8	33.5	16.2	-5.3	-1.0
Construction	12.7	20.9	20.2	9.8	58.3	-3.7
Wholesale & Retail	25.8	28.4	30.5	14.7	18	7.4
Accommodation, Cafes & Restaurants	12.2	11.8	10.1	4.9	-16.7	-14.0
Transport & Storage & Electricity	8.7	11.1	12.8	6.2	55.0	12.1
Communication services	2.9	3.8	3.6	1.8	25	-4.0
Finance & Insurance	3	3.1	3.4	1.6	14.4	9.8
Property & Business Services	11.6	15	15	7.2	29.4	-0.2
Education	16.9	16.4	17.3	8.3	2.1	5.0
Health & Community services	14	19.2	20.9	10.1	49.3	9.1
Other services	23.2	22.2	22.5	10.9	-2.9	1.6
Total Employed	184.5	204.9	207	100	12.2	1.0

Source: Household Labour Force Survey, Statistics New Zealand

Discussion

This workshop focuses on Māori people in the labour market, which will be affected by the economic recession. The nature, extent and scale of any effects on Māori people will vary across the industries in which they are employed.

- What are the key issues facing Māori people in the labour market arising from the recession?
- What can Māori do to enhance/mitigate these issues/opportunities or their impacts?
- What can New Zealand do to enhance/mitigate these issues/opportunities or their impacts for Māori people in the labour market?
- How can the government support Māori and wider New Zealand efforts?
- What are the immediate priorities for action?
- What are the longer term areas for focus for Māori people in the labour market?
- What are the key points to be communicated to the Employment Summit?

⁷ Primary Industry includes Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry & Fishing & Mining.

