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WORK ARRANGEMENTS IN NEW ZEALAND: FIRST RESULTS FROM THE SURVEY OF WORKING LIFE

**Michelle Barnes, Sharon Boyd
and Sophie Flynn**

*Statistics New Zealand and the
Department of Labour*



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Abstract

Work arrangements in New Zealand have changed substantially in the last 30 years, leading to increased diversity in contracting arrangements, hours and times worked, and terms and conditions of employment. This paper describes the current work arrangements, employment conditions and job satisfaction levels of employed people in New Zealand from data collected in the Survey of Working Life. The survey was run as a supplement to the Household Labour Force Survey in the March 2008 quarter, to answer questions such as: 'How prevalent is casual work in New Zealand?', 'How many employed people work non-standard hours?' and 'Who is most likely to experience stress or discrimination at work?' The focus of the data analysis is to identify workers with different types of employment relationships (for example, temporary versus permanent employees), and describe the demographic and job characteristics associated with these different employment relationships. Working-time patterns and conditions of employment are the other key topics examined in this paper. It is intended that this supplement be repeated every three years to monitor changes in employment conditions, work arrangements and job quality in New Zealand.

Introduction

This paper presents key findings from the Survey of Working Life in New Zealand (SoWL). The SoWL was run as a supplement to the Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) in the March 2008 quarter. All employed HLFS respondents were asked to take part in the SoWL. The objective of the SoWL is to provide reliable statistical data to monitor changes in the employment conditions, working arrangements and job quality of employed people in New Zealand, and to better understand the reasons for and implications of these employment patterns. It is intended the SoWL be repeated every three years.

The main topics covered by the SoWL and highlighted in this paper are: employment relationships, job tenure, working times and hours, work at home, job flexibility in main job, work-related health and safety, employer-funded study and training, annual leave entitlements, type of employment agreement, union membership and job satisfaction.

Employment Relationship

Of the 2,138,900 people employed in the March 2008 quarter, 73.6 percent were permanent employees, 12.0 percent were self-employed and not employing others, 7.7 percent were temporary employees and 5.7 percent were employers. These categories refer to the person's employment relationship in their main job. Temporary

employees were more likely to be female (55.6 percent), while employers and those who are self-employed were more likely to be male (70.7 percent and 67.0 percent, respectively).

Employees

Of the 1,743,200 employed people classified as employees in the March 2008 quarter, 90.4 percent were permanent employees and 9.4 percent were temporary employees. The remaining 0.2 percent were unable to be classified as either temporary or permanent. Of all male employees, 8.2 percent had a temporary employment relationship, compared with 10.7 percent of all female employees.

Just over one-third (34.9 percent) of all temporary employees were 15 to 24 years of age. This age group accounted for only 17.3 percent of permanent employees and 16.0 percent of the total employed population. Approximately two-thirds of permanent employees (66.9 percent) and all employed people (65.7 percent) were 25 to 54 years of age. In comparison, only 50.1 percent of temporary employees were in this age group.

Of all employees by ethnic group, 11.5 percent of Māori only, 10.7 percent of Asian only, 9.7 percent of Pacific peoples only, 9.0 percent of European only, and 8.9 percent of European/Māori were temporary employees.

The proportion of all employees who were temporary employees was largest in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry (24.1 percent), followed by the education industry (14.8 percent). The proportion of employees who were permanent employees was largest in the construction industry (94.5 percent).

Of all employees, the occupation group with the largest proportion of permanent employees was legislators, administrators and managers (97.4 percent), followed by trades workers (95.7 percent). The agriculture and fishery workers, and elementary occupations groups employed the largest proportion of temporary employees (22.8 percent and 19.4 percent, respectively).

Median gross hourly earnings were \$19.18 for permanent employees compared with \$15.00 for temporary employees.

Temporary Employees

People who gave more than one response to the questions on their type of temporary employment were classified to one worker type using a prioritisation method.

Of the 163,600 employees classified as temporary in the SoWL, 52.0 percent were casual workers, 24.6 percent were fixed-term workers, 13.6 percent were seasonal workers whose employment relationship was not further defined, and 7.3 percent were temporary agency workers.

Temporary agency, fixed-term and casual workers were all more likely to be female (69.7 percent, 62.4 percent, and 54.7 percent, respectively). However, seasonal workers whose employment relationship was not further defined, were more likely to be male (61.7 percent). By age, the largest proportion of workers for all types of temporary employment was in the 15- to 34- year age group.

workers cited employment and industry conditions most often as their reason for doing temporary work (42.3 percent).

More than half of casual workers (55.7 percent) indicated a preference for continuing to do temporary work rather than getting a job that is permanent. A slight majority of fixed-term and temporary agency workers indicated a preference for changing to permanent work rather than continuing to do temporary work.

The mean usual weekly hours worked per week in the main job was lowest for casual workers, at 22.0 hours. Temporary agency workers on average usually worked 28.6 hours per week in their main job while fixed-term workers usually worked on average 34.2 hours per week. The average number of usual hours worked per week by permanent employees in their main job was 37.6 hours.

All temporary employees were asked if their main job was seasonal or not, with 28.4 percent responding positively. The largest proportion of these seasonal workers (32.8 percent) were employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry, with 76.2 percent of all temporary workers in this industry identifying as seasonal. A further 29.4 percent of all seasonal workers were employed in the manufacturing industry, with 55.9 percent of all temporary employees in this industry identifying as seasonal. The two largest occupation groups for seasonal workers were agriculture and fishery workers, and plant and machine operators and assemblers.

Job Tenure

For this survey, job tenure describes the length of time respondents had been working for their employer in their main job, or in their business if they were self-employed. In the March 2008 quarter, 78.4 percent of all employed had been in their main job for one year or more, and 40.6 percent had been in their main job for five years or more.

Almost one-quarter (23.0 percent) of employed people had been in their main job for one year to less than three years. Only 3.2 percent had been in their main job for less than one month.

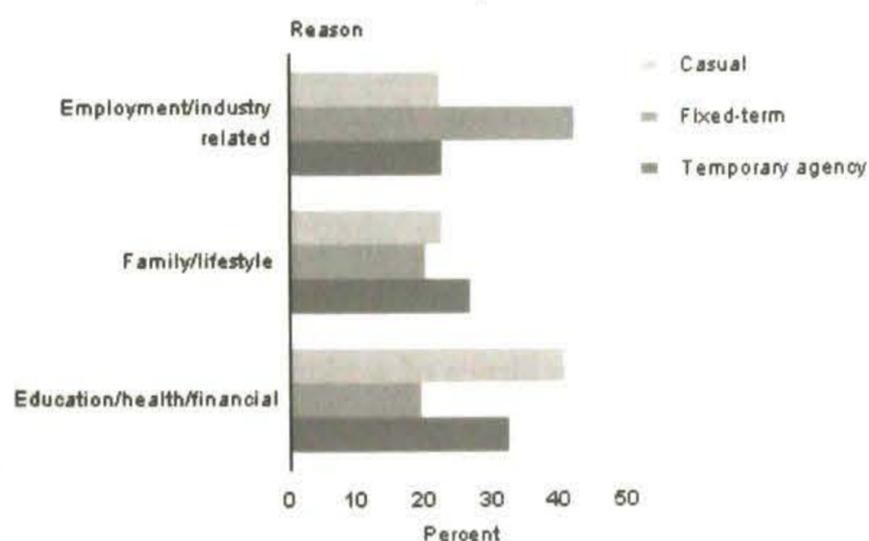
Job tenure varied widely among different employment relationship groups. Almost half (48.2 percent) of temporary employees had been in their main job for one year or more, compared with 78.9 percent of permanent employees, 87.4 percent of those who were self-employed, and 95.7 percent of employers.

It was most common for temporary employees to have job tenure of one month to less than six months (28.8 percent). They were also the least likely to have been employed for 10 years to less than 15 years (only 3.8 percent of temporary employees fell into this group).

Both employers and the self-employed were most likely to have job tenure of 15 or more years (37.8 percent and 26.3 percent, respectively). This compared with only 10.5 percent of employees.

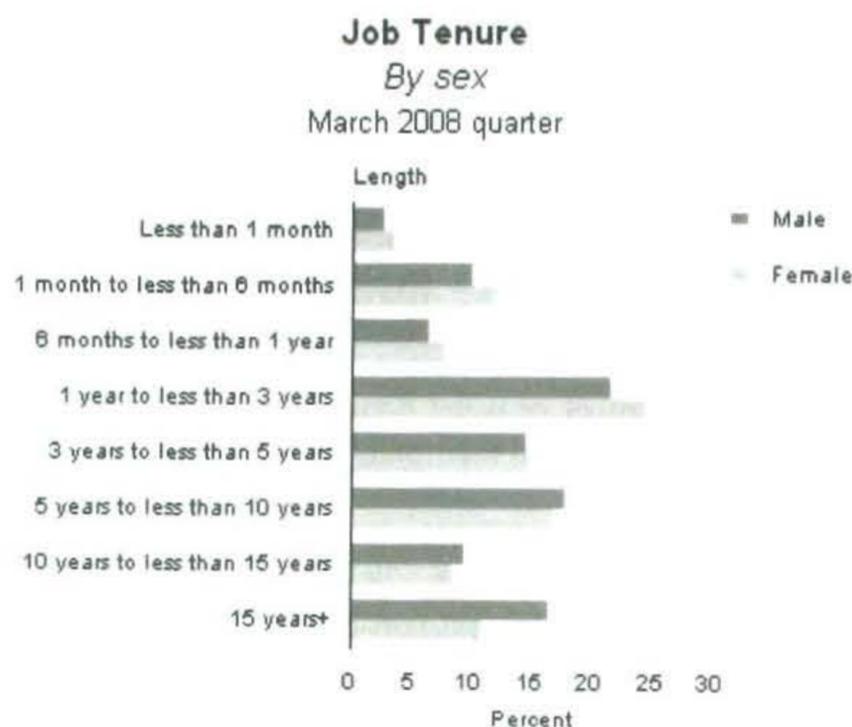
Reasons for Temporary Work

Temporary employees only
March 2008 quarter



Temporary employees were asked to provide their reasons for doing temporary rather than permanent work. The most common reason given by casual and temporary agency workers was education/health/financial reasons (40.9 percent and 32.5 percent, respectively). Fixed-term

Females were more likely to have shorter job tenure compared with males. The largest difference between males and females was for job tenure of 15 years or more (16.6 percent of males compared with 11.1 percent of females). The median tenure for females was three years, compared with four years for males.



Younger age groups were associated with shorter job tenure. Those aged 15 to 24 years had median job tenure of one year. Median job tenure increased through the age groups to reach 13 years for those aged 65 years and over.

Those employed in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry had the longest median job tenure of five years. This compared with those employed in the wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation, cafes and restaurants industry who had the shortest median tenure of two years.

Working Times and Hours

Usual Working Time

Just under two-thirds of all employed people (62.7 percent) said they usually work all their hours at standard working times, that is, they usually work all their hours in all jobs between 7am and 7pm, Monday to Friday. Only 2.0 percent reported having no usual working time, while 35.3 percent said they did not usually work all their hours at standard times.

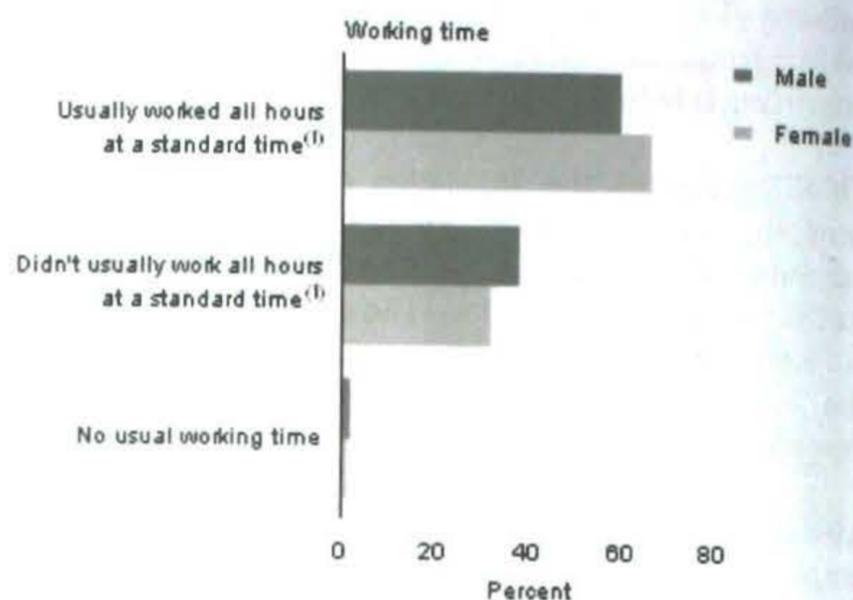
Permanent employees were more likely to work all their hours at standard times (67.1 percent) than temporary employees (58.2 percent), those who were self-employed (50.4 percent) and employers (41.1 percent).

Compared with females, a higher proportion of males usually worked some or all of their hours outside of standard times (38.2 percent of males compared with 32.0 percent of females).

Usual Working Time

By sex

March 2008 quarter



(1) Standard working time is from 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday.

Overall Work Pattern

Employed people were asked to describe their work pattern as being either mainly in the daytime, mainly in the evening, mainly at night or changing shifts. Working mainly during the day was the most common work pattern for employed people in New Zealand (89.3 percent of employed people). A further 4.7 percent of employed people worked shifts that changed from day to day or week to week, 3.5 percent worked mainly in the evening, 1.3 percent had some other type of work pattern and 1.1 percent worked mainly at night.

A higher proportion of employers (94.0 percent) and self-employed (92.2 percent) said they worked mainly in the daytime compared with those who worked as employees (88.6 percent).

Temporary employees were more likely to report working mainly evenings (7.5 percent) than permanent employees (3.5 percent) and those who were self-employed or employers (together at 1.6 percent).

Of those who worked mainly in the daytime, 53.9 percent were males and 46.1 percent were females. These proportions were reversed for those who reported working mainly evenings (53.3 percent were females and 46.7 percent were males). A much higher proportion of those who worked changing shifts were males (61.0 percent) rather than females (39.0 percent).

There was a higher incidence of working mainly evenings among those whose ethnicity was Asian only compared with the rate for all employed people (8.0 percent compared with 3.5 percent), while working mainly at night was more common for the Pacific peoples only ethnic group than it was for all employed people (3.3 percent compared with 1.1 percent). Working changing shifts was more likely for those whose ethnicity was Māori only (6.3 percent) and Pacific peoples only (6.1 percent) than it was for those who identified as European only (4.5 percent) or Asian only (4.0 percent).

Mean weekly hours worked in the main job were higher for those who worked changing shifts or some other work pattern (both at 39.8 hours) than for those who worked mainly in the daytime (37.6 hours), mainly at night (37.2 hours) or mainly in the evening (24.6 hours).

There were some differences in median weekly gross earnings from the main job by work pattern across all jobs. Median weekly earnings were highest for those who worked changing shifts (\$863) and lowest for those who worked mainly evenings (\$249). This compared with median weekly earnings of \$652 for those who worked mainly nights, \$671 for those who had some other work pattern, and \$767 for those who worked mainly in the daytime.

Working-time Patterns in the Last Four Weeks

All employed people who had worked in the four weeks prior to the interview were asked about the incidence of work at non-standard times (in the evening, at night, in the early morning and in the weekend) in all jobs over this period. The number of employed people who had done some work in the previous four weeks was 2,058,100, or 96.2 percent of all employed.

Evening, night and early morning work

For this survey, evening work was defined as working for one hour or more between 7pm and 11pm; night work was work for one hour or more between 11pm and 5am; and early morning work was work for one hour or more between 5am and 7am.

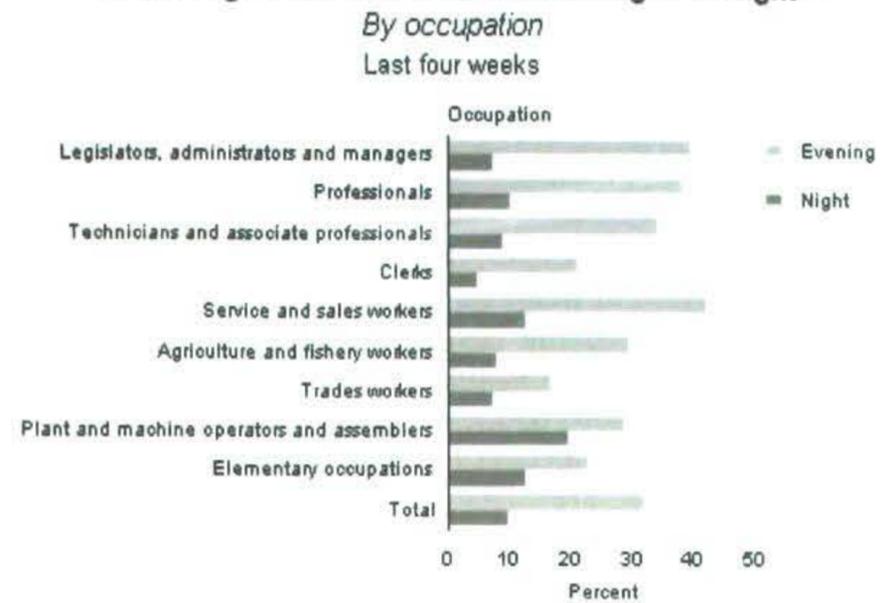
Around one-third (32.1 percent or 661,100) of all employed people who had worked in the last four weeks had worked on one or more evenings during this time. The proportions of employed people who had worked at least once in the early morning (15.8 percent) and at night (9.8 percent) were lower.

Males were more likely to have worked in the evening (34.3 percent), in the early morning (20.8 percent) and at night (11.9 percent) compared with females (29.4 percent, 9.8 percent and 7.3 percent, respectively).

By occupation, those who were more likely to have worked in the evening included service and sales workers (42.2 percent), legislators, administrators and managers (39.5 percent), professionals (38.4 percent) and technicians and associate professionals (34.3 percent). Trades workers were the least likely to have worked in the evening (16.8 percent).

Night work was most common for people employed as plant and machine operators in their main job (19.6 percent). In comparison, only 4.9 percent of clerks had done some work at night in the last four weeks.

Percentage Who Worked in the Evening or at Night⁽¹⁾



(1) Includes those who responded they worked at least once in the evening or at night.

Weekend work

Around half of all employed people who worked in the last four weeks said they had done some weekend work during this time (50.5 percent). Most of those who had worked in the weekend had done so on one to four weekend days (67.9 percent), while 31.2 percent had worked on five to eight weekend days.

It was more common for people to have worked for one hour or more on a Saturday (45.5 percent) than on a Sunday (31.3 percent) in the last four weeks.

Males were more likely than females to have done some work in the weekend (54.6 percent compared with 45.7 percent). This was mainly driven by the higher proportion of males working on a Saturday (50.1 percent compared with 39.9 percent of females).

Any work at a non-standard time

The incidence of evening, night, early morning and weekend work was examined to derive a total for those who had worked at a non-standard time at least once in the last four weeks. The results showed that over half of all employed people who had worked in the last four weeks had done some work at a non-standard time during this period (59.2 percent). It is notable that 37.6 percent of those who usually worked all their hours at standard times had also done some work at one or more non-standard times in the last four weeks.

Of those who had worked at a non-standard time in the last four weeks, 42.1 percent had done so between one and five times, 20.4 percent between six and 10 times, and 36.2 percent had worked at a non-standard time more than 10 times.

The proportion of males who had worked at a non-standard time at least once in the last four weeks was 64.2 percent, compared with 53.2 percent of females.

Difficulties Caused by Working at a Non-Standard Time

The survey collected information about the types of difficulties, if any, experienced by employed people who worked on at least one occasion at a non-standard time in the last four weeks. Twenty-six percent (or 316,900) said they experienced difficulties. The difficulties experienced were family and home responsibility difficulties (39.2 percent), sleeping and health difficulties (37.1 percent), social, leisure or personal difficulties (29.0 percent), and other types of difficulties (14.9 percent).

Employed parents and caregivers with children under 14 years of age were more likely to say they had difficulties working at non-standard times than those who did not have these caring responsibilities (34.3 percent compared with 22.7 percent).

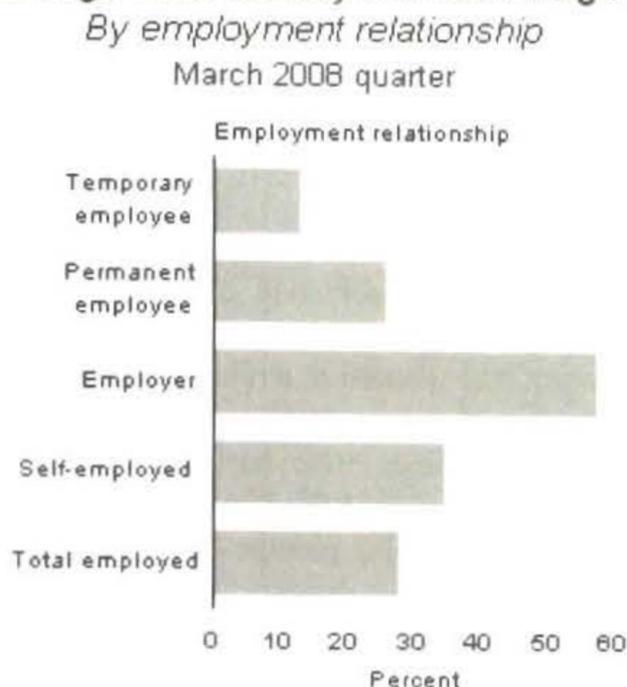
Those who worked 41 hours or more per week were more likely to say they had difficulties than those who worked 40 hours or less per week (31.0 percent and 21.8 percent, respectively). Those who worked changing shifts were also more likely to report difficulties (36.2 percent) than those who worked mainly in the evening or at night (together at 28.2 percent) and those who worked mainly during the day (24.7 percent).

Long Working Hours

Over one-quarter of all employed people (28.1 percent) usually worked long hours (45 hours or more per week).

Consistent with figures showing employers worked the highest mean number of hours per week in their main job, this group was also more likely to work long hours in all their jobs than other employed people. Around six out of 10 employers (57.6 percent) said they usually work 45 hours or more per week, compared with 35.1 percent of self-employed, 26.4 percent of permanent employees and 13.4 percent of temporary employees.

Percentage Who Usually Worked Long Hours⁽¹⁾



(1) Long hours is defined as 45 hours or more per week.

Males were more likely than females to work long hours, with 40.2 percent of males usually working 45 hours or more per week compared with 14.0 percent of females.

By industry, those most likely to work long hours were employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing (47.7 percent), and construction (42.9 percent). Those working in the health and community services industry were the least likely to say they usually worked long hours (12.9 percent).

Those who said they usually work long hours were asked whether working long hours caused them any difficulties. Over one-third of those who worked long hours said this caused them (or sometimes caused them) difficulties (36.3 percent). While there was little variation in this proportion by employment relationship, a higher proportion of females compared with males said that working long hours caused them difficulties (47.0 percent of females compared with 33.1 percent of males).

Preference for Working at Different Times of the Day

Of the 227,900 employed people who did not work mainly in the daytime, around one-third (33.9 percent) responded 'yes/partly' to the question on whether they would prefer to work at different times of the day than they usually worked.

Changing shift workers were more likely to want to work at different times of the day (38.2 percent) than those who worked mainly nights (32.8 percent), those who worked mainly evenings (32.1 percent) and those who had some other type of work pattern (26.3 percent).

The preference for working at different times of the day increased with the frequency of work at non-standard times. Of those who worked at non-standard times on one to five occasions in the last four weeks, 23.3 percent said they would prefer to work at different times of the day. This proportion increased to 36.6 percent for those who worked more than 10 times at non-standard times in the last four weeks.

Preference for Working Fewer Hours and Earning Less

Those who worked full-time (that is, usually worked 30 hours or more per week), and who were not unpaid family workers, were asked if they would like to work fewer hours in their main job or business and earn less. Almost one in five employed people who worked full-time (17.7 percent) said they would like to work fewer hours and earn less.

People employed full-time and aged 35 years and over were more likely to indicate a preference for working fewer hours for less pay (20.9 percent) compared with those aged 15 to 34 years (11.8 percent). A higher proportion of those who usually worked long hours in their main job (23.6 percent) said they would prefer to work fewer hours and earn less compared with those who

usually worked less than 45 hours per week (14.6 percent).

Work at Home

The total number of employed people who had done some work at home during the four-week period prior to being interviewed was 603,300 (29.3 percent). Of these, 351,000 were males and 252,300 were females.

There was a large difference between employees and those who were employers or self-employed, in the proportion of people who had worked at home. Compared with 21.9 percent of employees, 66.3 percent of employers and 61.6 percent of those who were self-employed had done some work at home. Of those who were employees, permanent employees were more likely to have done some work at home (22.6 percent) than temporary employees (15.0 percent).

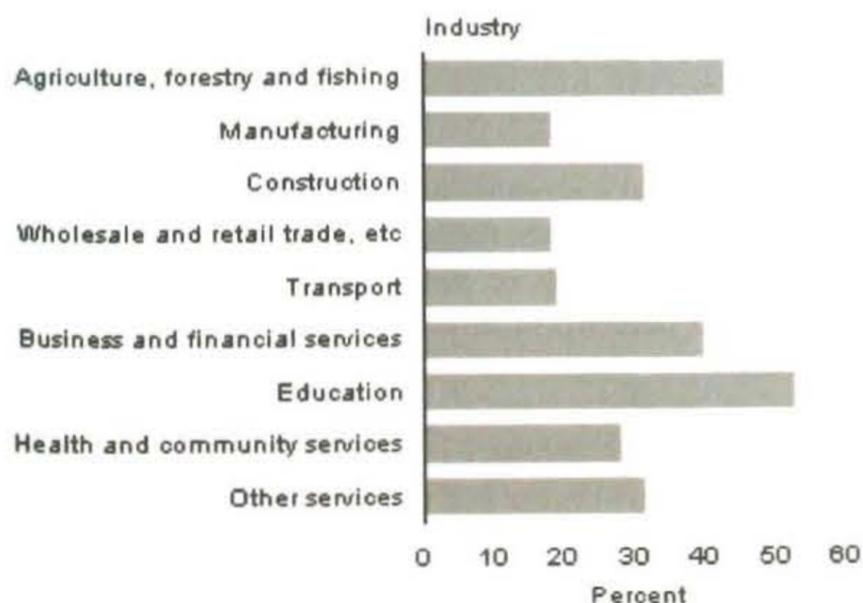
Employees who had done some work at home for their main job were asked whether or not they had an arrangement with their employer to be paid for this work. Just over one-third (34.5 percent) reported having an arrangement to be paid for all or some of the work done at home.

Employed people who were a parent or caregiver of a child under 14 years of age, were more likely to have worked at home in the last four weeks (36.5 percent). This compared with 26.4 percent of those who were not a parent or caregiver of a child under 14 years.

The education industry had the largest proportion of people who had done some work at home in the last four weeks (52.8 percent). In contrast, the manufacturing industry had the smallest (18.2 percent).

Percentage Who Worked At Home⁽¹⁾

By industry
Last four weeks



(1) Includes those who responded they worked at home on one or more occasions.

Job Flexibility

The survey investigated several dimensions of job flexibility, including whether employed people had flexible hours, whether employees thought their employer would let them take a few days of unpaid leave if needed, and for those who worked 35 hours or more per week, whether their employer would let them reduce their hours. Temporary agency, seasonal and casual workers, and those who worked changing shifts or some other work pattern were asked about the amount of notice given of their work schedule.

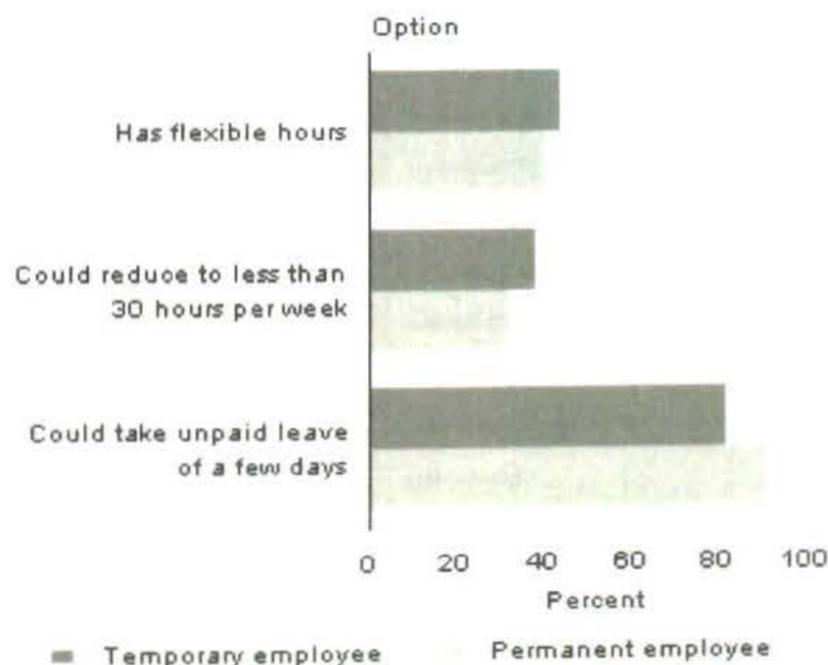
Having flexible hours means that an employed person can start and finish work at different times of the day if they want to. Results showed that 48.0 percent of employed people have flexible hours in their main job, and another 6.2 percent said they sometimes have flexible hours. Those who were self-employed (82.1 percent) or employers (73.9 percent) were more likely to have flexible hours than employees (40.8 percent).

Most employees thought their employer would (or probably would) let them take a few days of unpaid leave if they needed to (89.9 percent). A higher proportion of permanent employees reported having this option than those who were temporary employees, (90.8 percent compared with 81.6 percent).

The proportion of employees who worked 35 hours or more per week and who thought their employer would (or probably would) let them reduce their hours to less than 30 per week was much higher among females than males (40.9 percent compared with 27.4 percent). It was also higher among temporary employees than among permanent employees (38.2 percent compared with 32.4 percent), and especially for temporary employees classified as casual workers (58.5 percent).

Job Flexibility Options

Employees only
March 2008 quarter



Temporary agency, seasonal and casual workers, and those employees working changing shifts or some other work pattern were asked how much notice they get about the days and times they have to work. Of these

employees, 36.8 percent always knew the days and times they have to work. This compared with 11.7 percent who reported having one day or less advance notice and 10.6 percent who reported that advance notice of their work schedule varies.

Employer-funded Study and Training

The survey asked employees about time spent on employer-funded study or training in the 12 months prior to being interviewed. A total of 538,900, or 30.9 percent of employees reported having done this training. Almost half of these employees (46.5 percent) undertook two to five days of training.

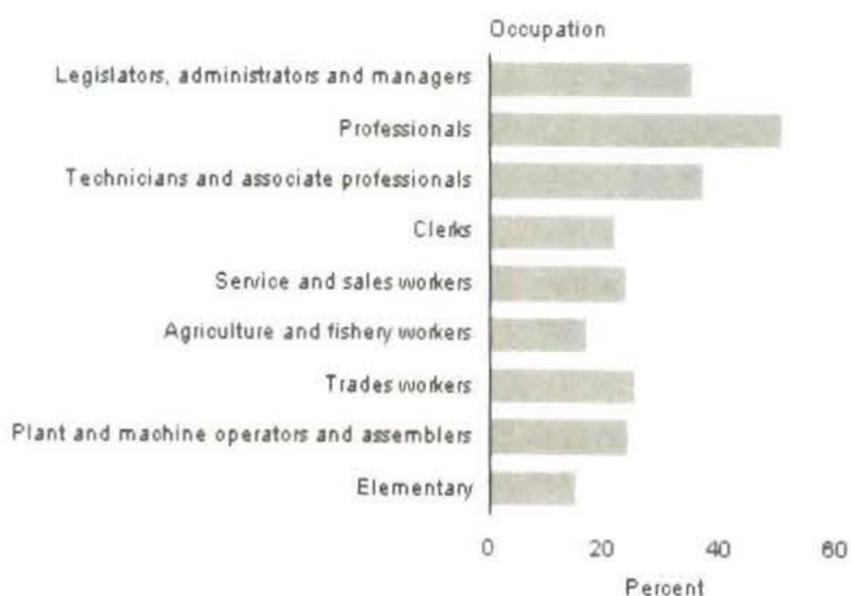
It was more likely for permanent employees to have done employer-funded study or training than it was for temporary employees (32.3 percent compared with 18.0 percent). Among temporary employees, 27.1 percent of fixed-term and temporary agency workers had done employer-funded study or training, compared with 12.5 percent of casual workers.

The industry with the highest proportion of employees who had done employer-funded study or training in the last 12 months was health and community services (47.4 percent), followed by the education industry (45.8 percent). The industry where employees were the least likely to have done employer-funded study or training was agriculture, forestry and fishing (17.5 percent).

Study and training was most common among professionals, with 51.0 percent of employees in this occupation group having done employer-funded study or training in the previous 12 months. This compared with only 15.4 percent of those in elementary occupations and 17.2 percent of agriculture and fishery workers.

Percentage of Employees Who Undertook Employer-funded Study or Training

By occupation
Last 12 months



There was generally a higher proportion of employees receiving employer-funded study or training in the last 12 months among those with longer tenure in their main job. Over one-third (37.4 percent) of employees who had been employed for 10 years or more had received this study and training, compared with 20.0 percent of those who

had been in their job for one month to less than six months.

Work-related Health and Safety

All employed people were asked how often in the last 12 months they had found being at work, or the work itself, stressful; how often they had experienced physical problems or pain because of work; and how often they had felt so tired from work that they were unable to enjoy the things they like to do outside of work. Respondents were also asked whether they had experienced any discrimination, harassment or bullying in the workplace, and their perception of how well health and safety risks were managed in their main job.

Of all employed people, 17.5 percent said that they had often or always found work stressful over the last 12 months. A further 40.9 percent sometimes found work stressful, while 41.1 percent hardly ever or never found work stressful.

The industry groups with the largest proportions of employed people reporting they often or always felt stressed were health and community services (22.4 percent) and education (22.0 percent). The professionals; and legislators, administrators and managers occupation groups had the largest proportions of employed people who often or always found work stressful (23.6 percent and 21.7 percent, respectively).

Only 7.3 percent of employed people reported often or always having experienced physical problems or pain because of work over the last 12 months. A further 21.5 percent sometimes experienced physical problems or pain, and 70.8 percent hardly ever or never experienced physical problems or pain.

The construction industry had the largest proportion of employed people reporting that they had often or always experienced physical problems or pain because of work (13.6 percent), followed by the agriculture, forestry and fishing industry (12.1 percent).

Of all employed people, 13.9 percent reported often or always being too tired from work to enjoy life outside of it over the last 12 months, compared with 31.6 percent who said they were sometimes too tired, and 54.1 percent who were hardly ever or never too tired. Around one-quarter (27.5 percent) of those who usually worked 60 or more hours per week in all of their jobs stated that they were often or always too tired from work to enjoy life outside of it. This compared with 12.4 percent of those usually working 40 hours per week.

The experience of discrimination, harassment or bullying in the workplace over the last 12 months was reported by 9.8 percent of all employed people. Females were more likely to report the experience than males (12.6 percent of females compared with 7.4 percent of males).

Annual Leave Entitlement

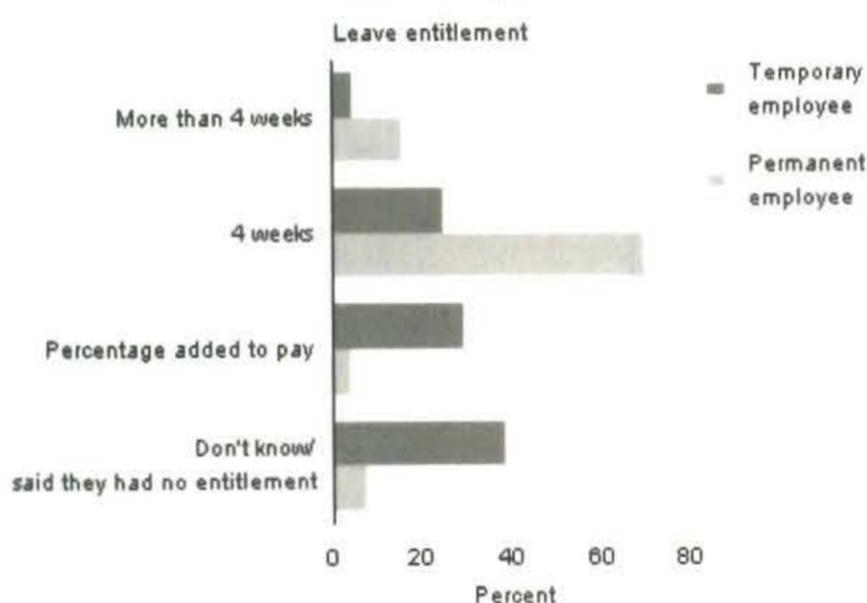
Around two-thirds of all employees (65.5 percent) said they were entitled to four weeks paid annual leave in their main job, 14.9 percent said they were entitled to more than four weeks paid annual leave, and 6.5 percent of employees received a percentage added to their pay instead of annual leave. Two percent of employees said they were entitled to less than four weeks annual leave.

Around one in 10 employees (10.9 percent) said they had no annual leave entitlement in their main job or they did not know their annual leave entitlement.

Permanent employees were more likely to be entitled to more than four weeks annual leave than temporary employees (16.0 percent and 4.9 percent, respectively). Three in 10 temporary employees (29.6 percent) received a percentage added to their pay instead of annual leave, while only 4.1 percent of permanent employees received their annual leave entitlement this way. Temporary employees (38.8 percent) were more likely than permanent employees (7.9 percent) to report having no leave entitlement or to say they did not know what their leave entitlement was.

Annual Leave Entitlement in Main Job

Employees only
March 2008 quarter



Employees who worked as professionals were much more likely to say they were entitled to more than four weeks paid annual leave (33.9 percent) than all employees (14.9 percent).

Type of Employment Agreement

More than half of all employees said they were on an individual employment agreement in their main job (57.9 percent). Just over one-quarter of employees said they were on a collective agreement (26.8 percent), which is an agreement covering two or more employees who were union members. A further 10.2 percent of employees were not aware of being on any agreement, and 5.0 percent said they did not know what type of agreement they were on. Female employees were more likely than male employees to be on a collective employment agreement (29.2 percent compared with 24.5 percent).

Of those who knew what type of employment agreement they were on, the proportion of permanent and temporary employees on collective agreements was similar (31.6 percent and 32.3 percent, respectively).

A larger proportion of temporary employees (31.0 percent) compared with permanent employees (13.4 percent) either said they were not aware of being on any agreement or did not know what type of agreement they were on. Casual workers (39.8 percent) were more likely to say they were not aware of being on any agreement or did not know what type of agreement they were on than fixed-term and temporary agency workers (20.0 percent).

Higher proportions of those working in the education (53.3 percent), health and community services (45.3 percent), other services (38.9 percent), transport, storage and communication (33.3 percent) and manufacturing (28.4 percent) industries were on collective agreements compared with all employees (26.8 percent).

Employees working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing (25.2 percent); wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation, cafes and restaurants (21.7 percent); and construction (19.3 percent) industries were the most likely to say they were not aware of being on any agreement or did not know what type of agreement they were on.

Being on a collective agreement was most common for professionals (41.7 percent) and those employed as plant and machine operators and assemblers (36.8 percent), and least common for legislators, administrators and managers (11.4 percent) and agriculture and fishery workers (10.8 percent).

Union Membership

The survey identified a total of 525,200 employees as union members (30.1 percent of all employees). Employees who said they were on a collective employment agreement were automatically counted as union members, while all other employees were asked whether they were a member of a union in their main job.

Female employees were more likely to be union members than males (33.0 percent and 27.4 percent, respectively).

Union membership was slightly higher for permanent employees than for temporary employees (30.7 percent and 25.8 percent, respectively). The most notable difference in union membership was between temporary employees who were fixed-term and temporary agency workers (32.3 percent were union members), and those who were casual workers (17.3 percent).

By industry, union membership was highest for those who worked in education (58.5 percent), health and community services (52.0 percent) and other services (42.8 percent).

Satisfaction with Main Job

Of all employed people, 84.1 percent reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their main job. At the other end of the scale, 4.8 percent reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their main job, while 10.8 percent were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their main job.

Those employed people who reported that they had often or always found work stressful over the last 12 months were more likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their main job (13.7 percent), compared with 2.3 percent of those who were hardly ever or never stressed. The pattern was similar for those who had often or always been too tired from work to enjoy life outside of it over the last 12 months, with 13.5 percent dissatisfied or very dissatisfied compared with 2.6 percent of those who were hardly ever or never too tired from work.

The median weekly income for those who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied was slightly lower than for those who were satisfied or very satisfied, at \$729 per week compared with \$767 per week.

Job satisfaction generally increased with age. The proportion of people who were satisfied or very satisfied with their main job increased from 80.7 percent of the employed in the 15- to 24- year age group to 94.7 percent of employed people aged 65 years and over.

Satisfaction with Work-life Balance

About three-quarters (75.8 percent) of the employed population reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their work-life balance, while 8.8 percent were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Another 14.9 percent said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their work-life balance.

Dissatisfaction with work-life balance was higher for those who reported that they had often or always been so tired from work that they were unable to enjoy the things they like to do outside of it, with 30.4 percent dissatisfied or very dissatisfied compared with 3.0 percent of those who were hardly ever or never too tired. Dissatisfaction was also higher for those who had often or always found work stressful over the last 12 months, with 23.9 percent dissatisfied or very dissatisfied compared with 3.0 percent of those who were hardly ever or never stressed.

The education industry employed the highest proportion who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their work-life balance (11.1 percent), followed by the health and community services, and construction industry groups (9.5 percent each).

Usual hours of work were closely related to satisfaction with work-life balance. In general, as usual weekly hours worked in the main job increased, so did the proportion of employed who were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

Future Work

Information from the Survey of Working Life will provide an improved understanding of people's employment conditions and work arrangements in New Zealand, including :

- how working-time patterns affect people's ability to balance their work and non-work roles
- the extent and nature of casual and seasonal employment
- the links between employment relationship, job security and other employment conditions such as earnings and workplace health and safety
- the aspects of work that have the greatest influence on job satisfaction.

This information will be used to inform policy development work in areas such as employment relations, workplace health and safety, and labour force participation and skill development.

Further data analysis will be undertaken by the Department of Labour and Statistics New Zealand, and a more detailed report of the survey results will be published in 2009.

Authors

Michelle Barnes
Statistics New Zealand
Statistics House
The Boulevard
Harbour Quays
PO Box 2922
Wellington 6140
Michelle.Barnes@stats.govt.nz

Sharon Boyd
Statistics New Zealand
Statistics House
The Boulevard
Harbour Quays
PO Box 2922
Wellington 6140
Sharon.Boyd@stats.govt.nz

Sophie Flynn
Statistics New Zealand
Statistics House
The Boulevard
Harbour Quays
PO Box 2922
Wellington 6140
Sophie.Flynn@stats.govt.nz