**Youth unemployment in Canterbury – latest data**

The June Household Labour Force Survey shows that the number of 15-24 year olds who are not in employment, education or training (NEET) in the region fell by 13% to reach 6,800 between June 2010 and June 2011.

The percentage of the 15-24 year population who are NEET went from 9.4% to 8.5%. Nationally, the percentage of the population aged 15-24 years who are NEET decreased from 9.6% in June 2010 to 9.1% in June 2011.

Figure 1 below shows the trend for the June quarter 2004 to 2011.

**Figure 1: Proportion of the population aged 15-24 Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), greater Christchurch and New Zealand, June 2004-2011**

Recession

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Household Labour Force Survey

Notes:

1. Greater Christchurch means the local authorities of Christchurch City and Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts.
2. Data relates to the June quarters.
3. There are relatively large sampling errors in the greater Christchurch data.

However, the extent of the apparent improvement in Christchurch is magnified by the drop in the youth population in the region. The number of 20-24 year olds fell by more than 6,000 in Christchurch between June 2010 and June 2011 (while it increased nationally by 10,000).

And when look at the NEET data for the 20-24 year olds, we see that the percentage of NEETs in Christchurch has deteriorated when compared to the rest of New Zealand. The percentage of people aged 20-24 who are NEET in Christchurch rose from 10.6% to 12.2% between 2010 and 2011, while the corresponding movement for New Zealand as a whole was a fall from 11.6% to 10.6%. The trend is illustrated in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Proportion of the population aged 20-24 Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), greater Christchurch and New Zealand, June 2004-2011**

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Household Labour Force Survey

Notes:

1. Greater Christchurch means the local authorities of Christchurch City and Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts.
2. Data relates to the June quarters.
3. There are relatively large sampling errors in the greater Christchurch data.

To reinforce the message from the Household Labour Force Survey, MSD data indicates that the number of people aged 24 or under on the unemployment benefit increased by 15% in the year to July 2011.

One of the reasons that the overall NEET rate has fallen while the rate for 20-24 year olds increased is that there has been an increase in the number of 15-19 year olds in formal education in Christchurch, Selwyn and Waimakariri, compared with a year ago. The table below gives the participation rate in education of 15-19 year olds as calculated from the June Household Labour Force Survey data.

**Table 1: Participation rate in formal education in greater Christchurch, June 2009-2011**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** |
| School participation rate | 47% | 45% | 50% |
| Formal education participation rate | 69% | 71% | 81% |

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Household Labour Force Survey

Notes:

1. Greater Christchurch means the local authorities of Christchurch City and Selwyn and Waimakariri Districts.
2. Data relates to the June quarters.
3. There are relatively large sampling errors in this data.

The overall messages are:

* The number of people aged 20-24 who are NEET in the region has fallen between June 2010 and June 2011.
* But part of the fall is due to a drop in the number of 20-24 year olds living in the region.
* And part has been due to stronger retention in education among 15-19 year olds.
* The percentage of 20-24 year olds who are NEET in greater Christchurch has increased, despite a drop across New Zealand as a whole.