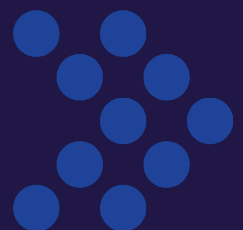
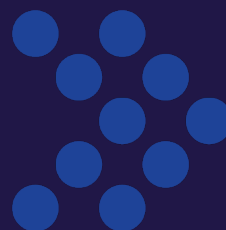
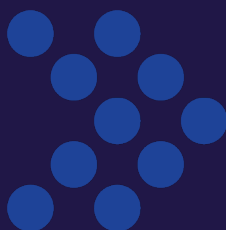


Taranaki Region Skill Needs – Advice for the Tertiary Education Commission

Prepared by the Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group

April 2023



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Introduction

Regional Skills Leadership Groups (RSLGs) are part of a joined-up approach to labour market planning that will see our workforce, education and immigration systems working together to better meet the differing skills needs across the motu. They are a fundamental part of the drive to build productive, inclusive, sustainable and resilient regions.

RSLGs have the ability to inform the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) investment of tertiary education organisations in 2024 through the provision of specific regional advice. This document is the vehicle for this advice.

Broadly, the advice in this document will include:

- Key labour shortages in Taranaki and the three districts within
- An overview of current engagements with relevant Workforce Development Councils, Tertiary Education Organisations, industry, and regional partners around tertiary education related needs and activities
- Tertiary education specific advice for TEC as it relates to direct investment

This document is in support of Taranaki's Regional Workforce Plan, which includes a wealth of qualitative data as it relates to the first areas of focus for the Taranaki RSLG; Energy and Food, Fibre & Whenua. The release of the 2022/23 Regional Workforce Plan will cover the additional areas of the Kaiāwhina Health Workforce and hauora (health) and wellbeing in the Construction Sector. This release is expected in July 2023.

Taranaki as a region, enjoys relatively stable employment levels, hovering around 67% of the total working age population, although the productivity levels typically trail that of national levels (0.9% annual growth vs 2.3% respectively). Through our mahi (work), we seek to support fair, equitable and inclusive employment and training opportunities for all who call, or seek to call, Taranaki home. Compared to other regions, Taranaki has high youth Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET) rates of over 10% annually, meaning that many young people have periods in their life where they are not engaged in mahi, school or training. Studies¹ show that those with longer terms as 'NEET' often struggle to re-join the workforce or education system.

This document draws on relevant labour market statistics and projections, paired with knowledge and advice from employers, iwi, unions, local and central government, Workforce Development Councils and other labour market influencers. While the primary purpose is to inform the TEC on the RSLGs recommended investment in the region, the RSLG welcomes training providers, industry and kaimahi to use this information to make informed decisions around training pathways and skills attainment.



¹ Such as the Ministry of Education research 'Not just about NEETs A rapid review of evidence on what works for youth at risk of limited employment' (2019).

Skill Shortages in Taranaki

The skill shortages set out below highlight the industries and occupations where there are projected skill shortages looking out to 2028. These projections are based on a range of factors including current levels of relevant training being undertaken, regional share of job openings, employment levels in the sector and forecast demand. These projections are taken from mahi that Infometrics have undertaken to support the RSLGs, and from insights provided by local stakeholders. The information has been ratified by the Taranaki Regional Skills Leadership Group.

Critical Skill Shortages in Taranaki

Demand within these sectors is very high. Jobs in these sectors make up a considerable number of all job openings in the region and demand is higher than the national average.

- ❖ Healthcare and Social Assistance (New Plymouth District in particular)
- ❖ Manufacturing (South Taranaki in particular)
- ❖ Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (South Taranaki and Stratford Districts in particular)

Significant Skill Shortages in Taranaki

Demand for key kaimahi (employees) within these sectors is very high. Jobs in these sectors make up a considerable amount all job openings in the Taranaki region.

- ❖ Construction (South Taranaki and New Plymouth Districts in particular)
- ❖ Education and Training (Stratford and New Plymouth Districts in particular)
- ❖ Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
- ❖ Retail Trade (Stratford District in particular)
- ❖ Public Administration and Safety (Stratford District in particular)

High Regional Demand for Skills

These sectors have ongoing projected demand for kaimahi in roles within these sectors.

- ❖ Accommodation and Food Services
- ❖ Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- ❖ Technology and industries undergoing technological advancements

Specific Occupations in Demand

These occupations have ongoing current and projected demand for kaimahi with relevant qualifications.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| ❖ Asset Integrity Engineer | ❖ Scaffolder |
| ❖ Trades Technician | ❖ Bricklayer, Block layer and Tiler |
| ❖ Halal Butcher | ❖ Plumber, Drainlayer and Gas Fitter |
| ❖ Registered Nurse | ❖ IT Professional |
| ❖ Midwife | ❖ Community Worker (Kaiāwhina Health Worker) |
| ❖ Project Manager | |

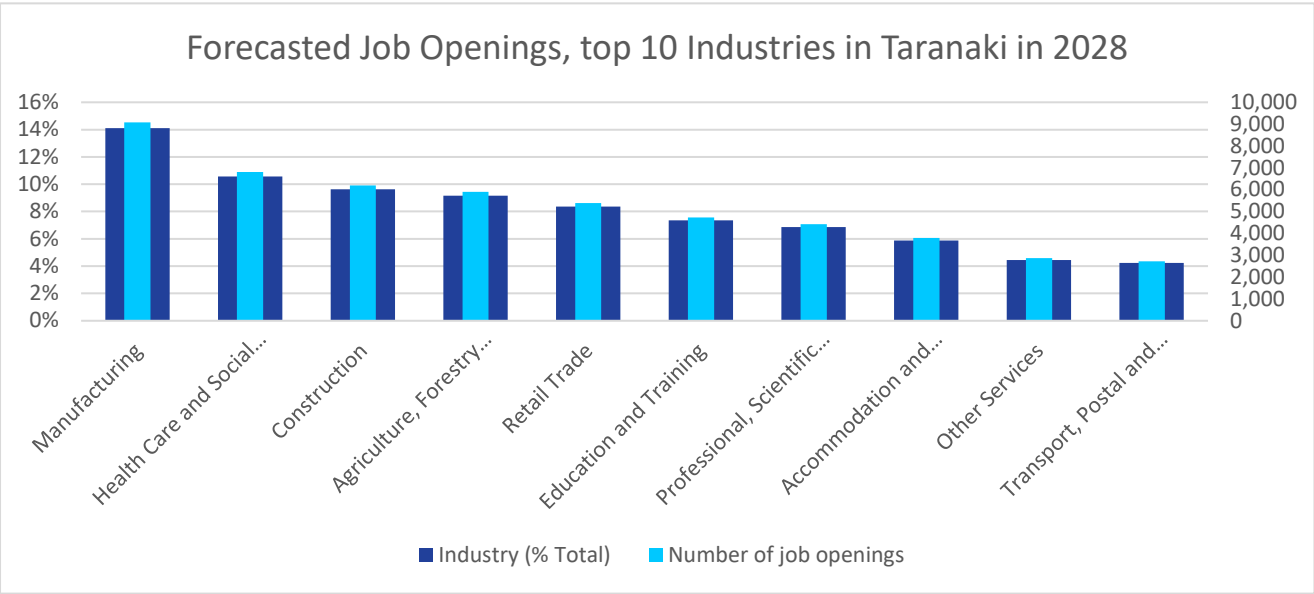
Skill Shortages for Emerging Industries in Taranaki

While the exact skill needs of emerging industries is not yet known, any training and upskilling courses supporting the following industries will be in demand in Taranaki:

- ❖ Roles relating to hydrogen production, transportation and storage
- ❖ Roles relating to offshore wind turbine generation including design, manufacturing, development and maintenance
- ❖ Roles in support of offshore wind generation such as (but not limited to) Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers
- ❖ Roles relating to advances within the agritech and environmental services industries
- ❖ Roles relating to future infrastructure investment such as Three Waters Investment and Transport Infrastructure needs.

Projected Regional Industry Outlook

Taranaki currently has 14% of the regional workforce employed in the Manufacturing Industry, which is projected to increase to over 16% by 2028. Construction is currently the second largest workforce in the region at 16% of the total workforce. Although this is forecast to decrease in proportion over the next five years. Health Care and Social Assistance job openings will increase significantly in the next five years.



Projected Regional Skills Outlook

This section has a primary focus on forecasts that provide an indication of the skills required to fill the future workforce needs for the previous and current focus areas of the Taranaki RSLG (Energy, Food, Fibre & Whenua and Kaiāwhina Health). This picture is created by looking at

- ❖ The size of the workforce (number of kaimahi)
- ❖ Predicted job openings (brand new jobs and replacement jobs for kaimahi retiring or leaving the industry)
- ❖ The corresponding qualifications needed to fill new job openings (Level 1 to 7)

This forecast data is compared to 2022 current workforce information.

Energy

The needs of the Energy sector are constantly evolving; however, stakeholder engagement and international research has shown that the large percentage of skills needed for this workforce are transferable. While the exact skill needs in the future are not yet confirmed, the RSLG is confident that the data below coupled with industry knowledge allows for relevant assumptions to be made around skill needs.

Forecasts 2028

The Taranaki Energy workforce (sector defined by analysing relevant parts of these industries: (a) Mining (b) Manufacturing (c) Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services²) is predicted to be 2,685 by the year 2028.

The Infometrics estimates for this sector are not deemed reliable by the RSLG due to the unknown elements of technological advancements, future government policies and potential subsidies, investments and international energy market fluctuations.

However, what the RSLG has heard from industry is that roles in the renewable energy space will be similar to that of the existing energy sector, particularly for panel operators, trade mechanical, energy engineers and technical personnel. For more information, the RSLG recommends the [Building Energy's Talent Pipeline: an Industry Skills Action Plan](#), which was developed in partnership by Energy Resources Aotearoa, Taranaki RSLG, Te Pūkenga and Industry.

Current 2022

The Energy workforce for Taranaki currently sits at 2,865. Workers are estimated as being distributed across the following occupations (top five):

Consistent with regional demographics, 82.4% of the workforce are of European ethnicity. The percentage of the workforce identifying as Māori increased 2.3 percentage points (to 14.1%) between 2013 and 2018.

The Energy Sector remains a male-dominated sector, with 77.2% of kaimahi identifying as male in 2022.

Specialist Managers	379
Design, Engineering and Science Professionals	299
Business, HR and Marketing Professionals	238
Machinery Stationery and Plant Operators	230
Engineering, ICT and Science Technicians	141

² The breakdown of industries (Infometrics) includes: Mining, Coal Mining, Oil and Gas Extraction, Metal Ore Mining, Non-Metallic Mineral Mining and Quarrying, Exploration and Other Mining Support Services, Petroleum and Coal Product Manufacturing, Basic Chemical and Chemical Product Manufacturing, Polymer Product and Rubber Product Manufacturing, Non-Metallic Mineral Product Manufacturing, Primary Metal and Metal Product Manufacturing, Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services, Electricity Supply, Gas Supply, Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Services, Waste Collection, Treatment and Disposal Services

Food, Fibre & Whenua

The Food, Fibre and Whenua sector remains crucial to the economic viability of the Taranaki region. While this sector is difficult to define, for the purposes of this analysis we have used the definition of the People, Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council (Muka Tangata³). It is very important to note that this definition does not include primary processing, which is a large employer in South Taranaki.

Forecasts 2028

The Food and Fibre workforce for Taranaki is predicted to be 7,003 by the year 2028.

By 2028, it is estimated that this sector will have 1,594 job openings. This estimate includes a drop in new job openings until 2026, with over 1,400 replacement roles (to fill roles by kaimahi who move to another sector or retire, leaving a vacant role to be filled).

Primary Processing was not included in the 'Food and Fibre workforce' data, however this industry is projected to be 5,122 by the year 2028. For new roles in 2028, almost 30% will require Degree (Level 7+) qualifications, showing a significant shift in skills needs within the Primary Processing Industry.

In order to fill these job openings, the following predictions indicate the qualification requirements to match job openings across the next five years:

Certificate (Level 1-3)	718
Certificate (Level 4)	128
Certificate (Level 5-6)	79
Degree (Level 7+)	669

Current 2022

The Food and Fibre workforce for Taranaki currently sits at 7,128, which is the fourth largest employer, even when excluding primary processing from calculations. Workers are estimated as being distributed across the following areas:

Reflecting a national trend, the large majority (90.9%) of kaimahi in this sector identify as European, with only 11.4% identifying as Māori.

Within the sector the number of hours worked (on average each week), has increased from 2013 to 2018, which highlights where additional labour could be utilised if financially viable to do so.

Within Primary Processing in particular, the following occupations make up the current workforce:

Māori are overrepresented in the Primary Processing sector, making up 33.6% of the workforce in 2018 (compared to 16.1% of regional makeup). Males also make up 64.6% of the workforce in this industry.

Dairy Cattle Farmer	1,975
Mixed Crop & Livestock Farm Worker	812
Mixed Crop & Livestock Farmer	363
Dairy Cattle Farm Worker	333
Beef Cattle Farmer	167

Labourer	2,048
Machinery Operator and Driver	677
Technician and Trades Workers	597

³ *Muka Tangata* – People, Food and Fibre Workforce Development Council represents 14 industries including dairy, sheep, beef, deer, pork, poultry, and other livestock farming; arable farming; vegetables and fruit growing; viticulture and winemaking; forestry; seafood; apiculture; equine, dogs and racing; veterinary; nursery, turf and gardening; and food and fibre support industries.

Kaiāwhina Health

Given the increased pressure our health system is currently facing across Aotearoa New Zealand, the Taranaki RSLG decided to focus specifically on the Kaiāwhina Health industry⁴. As this industry is constantly evolving, for the purposes of this information a decision has been made to use data relating to the wider health and social care workforce to paint an accurate picture of the skills and training needs within Taranaki.

Forecasts 2028

The Health Care and Social Assistance workforce (sector defined by the Toitū te Waiora – Community, Health, Education and Social Services Workforce Development Council⁵) for Taranaki is predicted to be 12,983 by the year 2028. This makes this sector the third largest employer in Taranaki at 10.3% of the total workforce.

In 2028, it is estimated that this sector will have 3,733 job openings. This estimates the number of people required to fill new job openings (757) and replace workers (2,976) who move to another sector or retire.

In order to fill these job openings, the following predictions indicate the qualification requirements to match job openings:

Certificate (Level 1-3)	961
Certificate (Level 4)	412
Certificate (Level 5-6)	399
Degree (Level 7+)	1,960

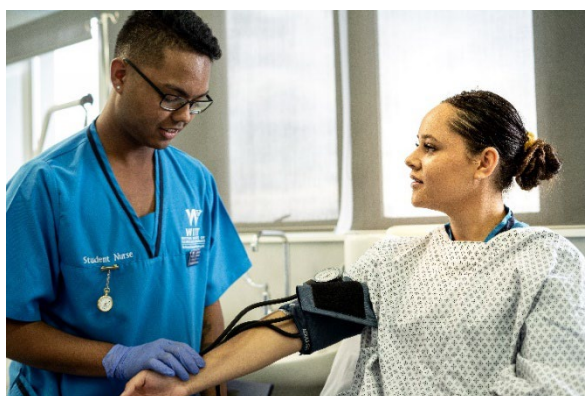
Current 2022

The Health Care and Social Assistance workforce for Taranaki currently sits at 12,227, which is the third highest employing sector in the region. Workers are estimated as being distributed across the following areas (top five):

Reflecting a national trend, the large majority (85.8%) of kaimahi in this sector identify as European, with only 15.2% identifying as Māori. There are slightly more kaimahi identifying as Asian (5.2%), than are represented across all industries in the region (4.8%).

Only 21.1% of kaimahi identify as male in the health workforce in Taranaki.

Personal Care Assistant	1,102
Registered Nurse	878
Early Childhood Teacher	747
Community Worker	261
Age or Disabled Carer	213



⁴ Kaiāwhina is the over-arching term to describe non-regulated roles in the health and disability sector.

⁵ Toitū te Waiora (Community, Health, Education, and Social Services) Workforce Development Council represents sectors including care services, youth services, disability services, education and educational support services, funeral services, and mental health and addictions services. They also represent health services, public order safety, regulatory services, skin and nail therapy services, social services, and urban pest control.

Construction

The Construction sector is a growing sector in Taranaki, with an ever-increasing number of sole traders operating in this space. Despite the economic and social importance of this sector, the Construction sector continues to battle with low hauora and wellbeing, resulting in high mental and physical concerns for kaimahi and employers. The Taranaki RSLG chose to focus on hauora and wellbeing as a barrier and enabler to skills attainment in the region. Alongside this focus, the RSLG are aware that additional training is needed to support the growth and pipeline of upcoming projects in this sector.

Forecasts 2028

The Construction Sector⁶ workforce for Taranaki is predicted to be 6,196 by the year 2028. This forecast will account for 9.6% of the total employment forecast in the region (up from 6.4% in 2022). We expect the current downturn in the residential construction industry to rebound, along with solid growth in the commercial construction industry.

By 2028, it is estimated that this sector will have 1,076 job openings. This includes a significant number of replacement jobs (to replace kaimahi who move to another sector or retire), and new jobs only really coming online from 2028.

In order to fill these job openings, the following predictions indicate the qualification requirements to match job openings:

Certificate (Level 1-3)	310
Certificate (Level 4)	386
Certificate (Level 5-6)	109
Degree (Level 7+)	269

Current 2022

The Construction Sector workforce for Taranaki currently sits at 6,658, contributing 5.9% to the region's GDP (\$589m). Kaimahi are estimated as being distributed across the following areas (top six):

Reflecting a national trend, the large majority (83.2%) of kaimahi in this sector identify as male, although there has been a steady increase in women in this sector since 2013 (when there was only 667 women employed in the sector).

As would be expected, 26.2% of kaimahi in this sector hold a Level 4 qualification (i.e., a completed New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry).

Project Builder	843
Electrician (General)	432
Carpenter	338
Labourers	246
Painting Trades Worker	223
Plumber (General)	215



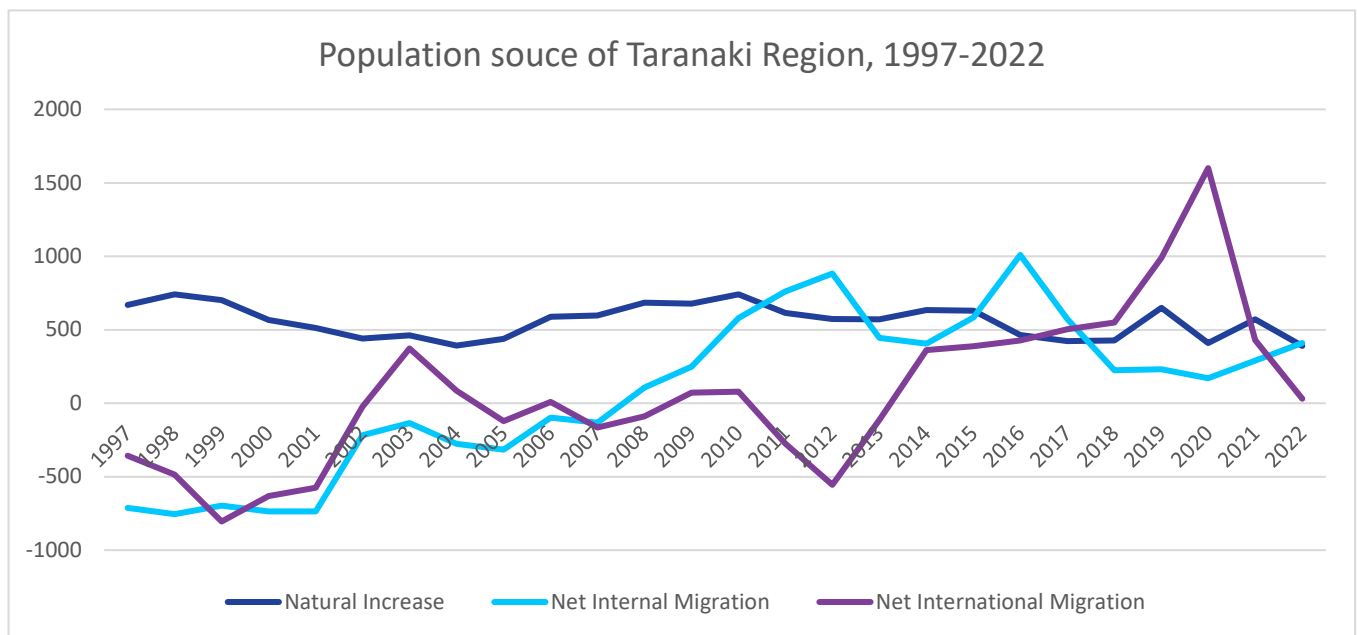
⁶ The Construction Sector includes House Construction, other Residential Building Construction, Non-Residential Building Construction, Road and Bridge Construction, Land Development and Subdivision, Site preparation Services, Concreting, Bricklaying, Plumbing and Electrical Services and more.

Regional Labour Market Trends

Population

Taranaki has a relatively stable resident population, growing between 0.2% and 1.6% each year since 2002. The many benefits of moving to Taranaki including more affordable housing, health services, quality schooling and varied career options, sees a steady stream of individuals and whānau (family) calling Taranaki home.

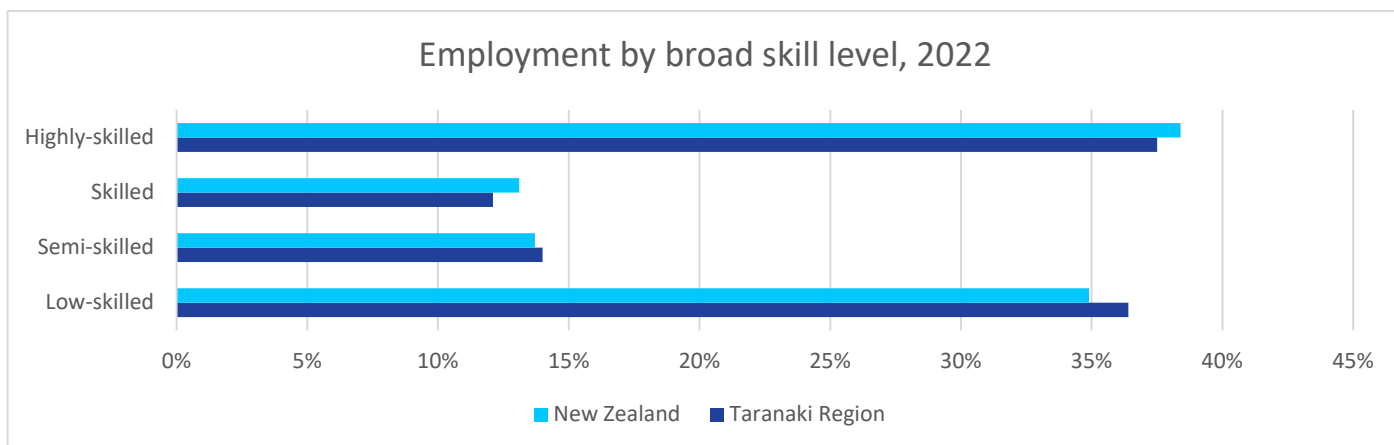
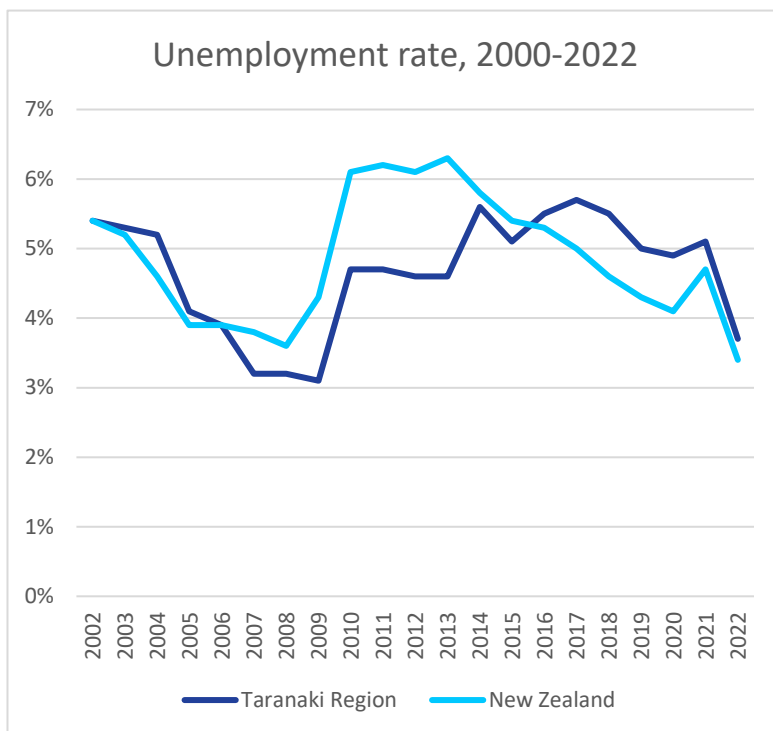
International migration plays a constant role in the available workforce in Taranaki, particularly when it comes to meeting high-skilled, niche roles. For example, in 2018-2019 the region saw a large increase in international migrants (1,600) which can largely be attributed to increases across all visa types. Most visas related to accommodation and food services, with the next largest proportion being student visas.



Employment indicators

Taranaki's unemployment trends tend to mirror that of the rest of Aotearoa New Zealand. The exception to this is from 2017 onward, which could be attributed to the policy changes and investor confidence around offshore oil and gas exploration in the region.

Taranaki had both a high-level of both highly-skilled⁷ jobs (23,400) and low-skilled (22,793) jobs filled in 2022. While the percentage of these roles, 37.5% and 36.4% of total jobs, is reflective of the national average, what is concerning is the low level of skilled roles (12.1% of all roles in the region), which highlights the lack of movement for kaimahi from low-skilled to skilled and highly-skilled roles. It is very important to note that skill-level classifications (particularly low-skilled) does not influence the quality, or importance, of mahi preformed but are used as a classification tool only.



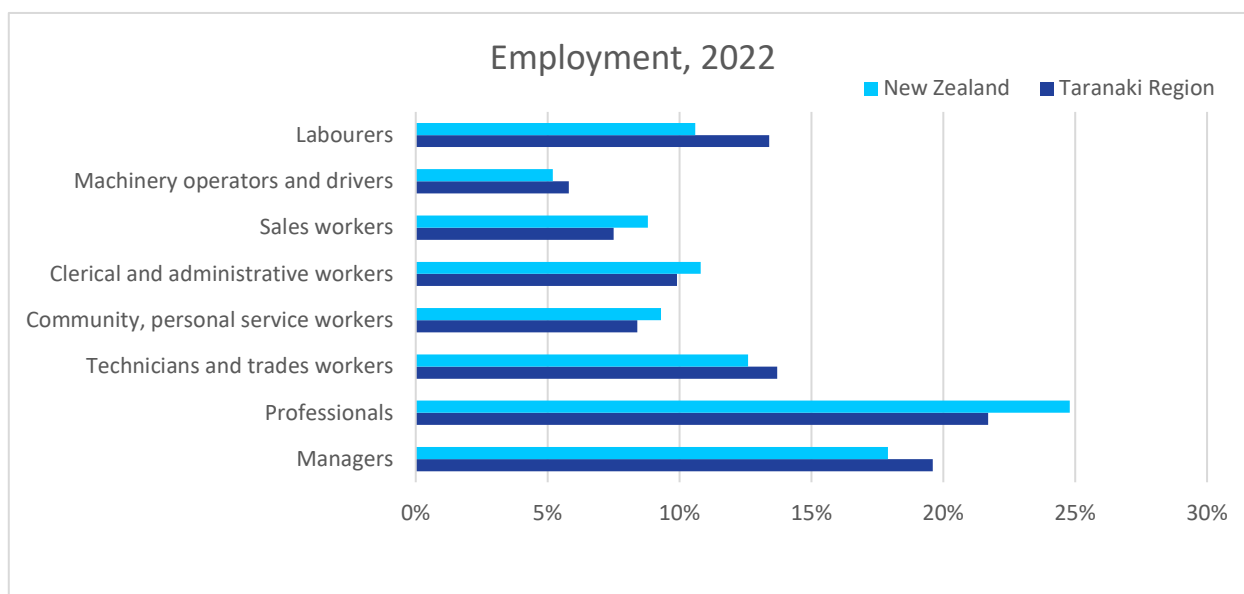
In positive contrast to this is the growth of knowledge intensive employment (those in which the generation and exploitation of knowledge play the predominant part in the creation of economic activity. These sectors represent an increasing share of the New Zealand economy's output and employment and may be a source of future productivity growth). Taranaki currently boasts 4.2% annual growth in knowledge intensive employment, compared to 4% nationally.

⁷ *Highly skilled* occupations typically require a bachelor degree or higher qualification and include professionals such as accountants, teachers, and engineers, as well as most managers such as chief executives. This category is consistent with skill level one of the Australia New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO).

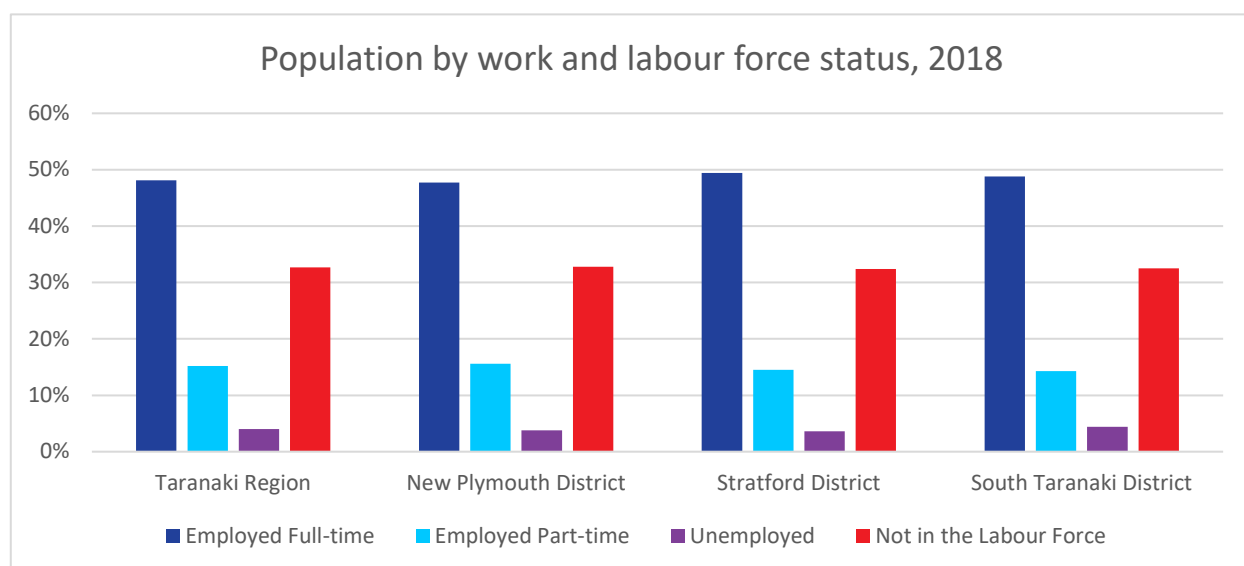
Medium-high skilled occupations typically require an NZ Register Diploma, an Associate Degree or Advanced Diploma. The category includes some managers (such as retail managers) and technicians (such as architectural draftspersons, ICT support technicians and dental hygienists). This category is consistent with skill level two of the ANZSCO classification.

Medium skilled occupations typically require an NZ Register Level 4 qualification. The category includes tradespersons (such as motor mechanics), skilled service workers (such as firefighters), as well as skilled clerical and sales workers (such as legal secretaries and estate agents). This category is consistent with skill level three of the ANZSCO classification.

Low skilled occupations typically require an NZ Register Level 3 qualification or lower. It includes a range of lower skilled occupations from general clerks, caregivers, and sales assistants, through to cleaners and labourers. This category is consistent with skill level four and five of the ANZSCO classification.

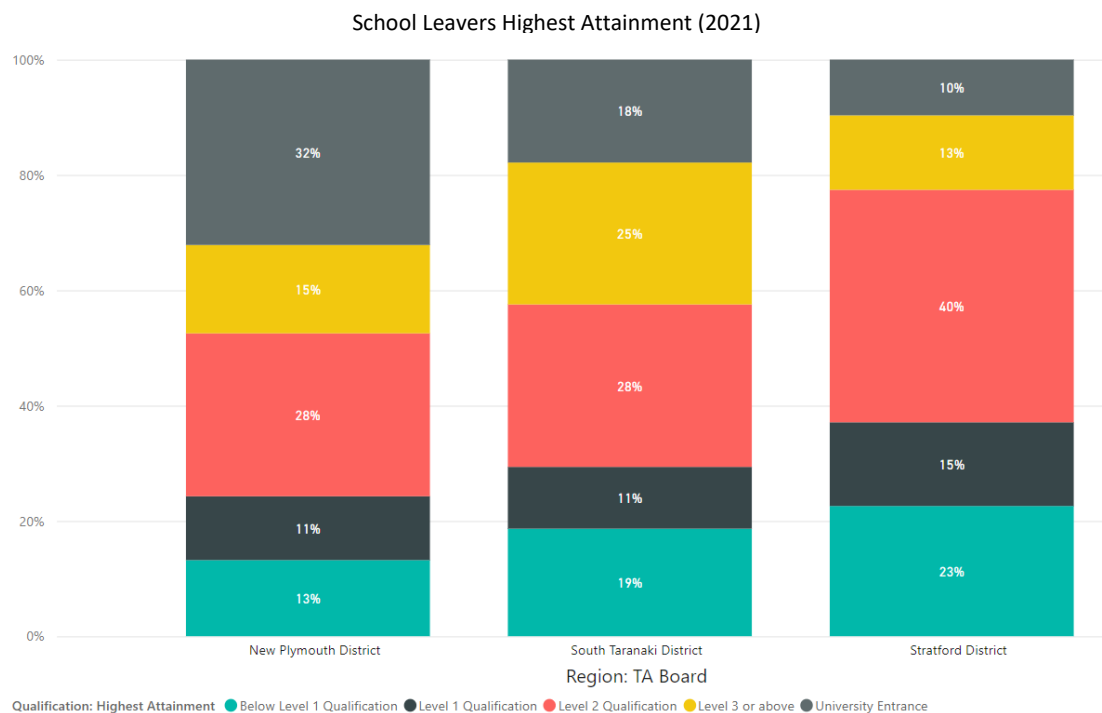


Taranaki had relatively similar levels of employment across all three districts. The Stratford District had slightly higher full-time employment levels (49.45), with New Plymouth District having the lower level at 47.7%, although higher part-time employment levels at 15.6% (compared to 14.5% and 14.3% in South Taranaki District). The unemployment rate was highest in South Taranaki District (4.4%), compared to 3.8% in New Plymouth District and 3.6% in the Stratford District.

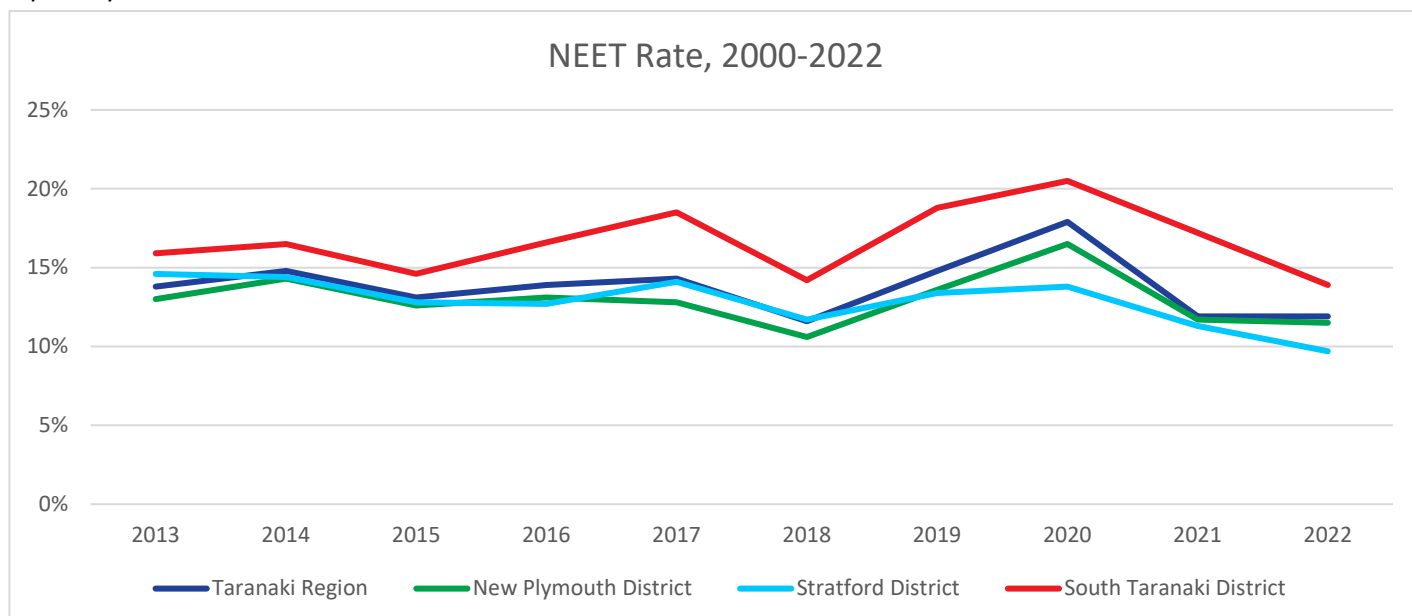


Trends for Taiohi

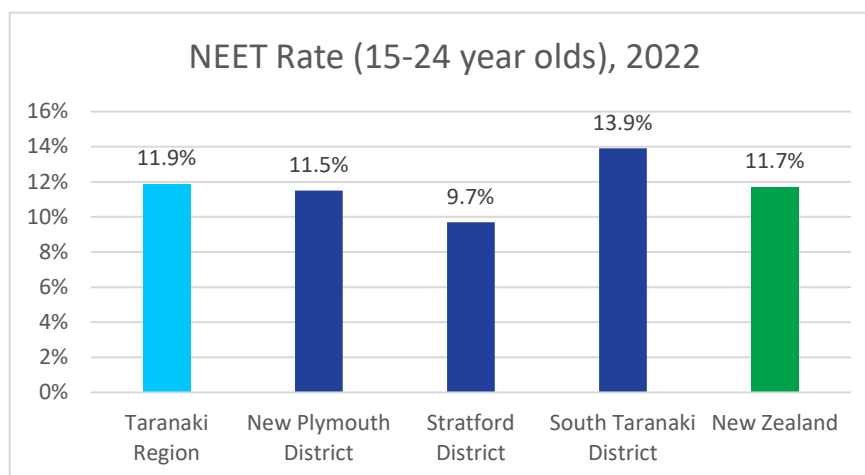
When it comes to our future workforce, taiohi (youth) are our immediate focus. With 17 secondary and composite schools / kura in the region, it is imperative that our taiohi are equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful in the future. Achievement rates of Taranaki taura (students) are below national averages, with only 44.6% of school leavers achieving NCEA level 3 or above (compared to 55.8% nationally), and only 85.1% achieving NCEA Level 1 (compared to 87.3% nationally). Despite these low levels, Taranaki is on-par with national levels for the percentage of school leavers enrolled in tertiary education options within one year of leaving school / kura (65%). Educational achievement varies between the three Districts in the region, as demonstrated below.



However, Taranaki still has around 40% of the school leavers cohort that do not go on to tertiary education/training in any given year. That means around 600 Taranaki secondary students will leave school each year and not go on to tertiary training. Developing education and training provisions that works for this cohort needs to be a regional priority.



Despite the constant need for immigration to meet skill demands in the workforce, Taranaki has relatively high youth (15-24 year old) NEET (not in education, employment and training) rates. Interestingly, the sharp increase in international migration to Taranaki in 2020 responds with a sharp rise in the regional NEET rate from 14.8% to 17.9%. This highlights both that taiohi are not being adequately prepared for future work opportunities, and that the roles being filled by international migrants are of high level and sufficient planning is not being given to upskilling the existing workforce for these opportunities (therefore opening more low-skilled/entry level roles).



The South Taranaki District has the highest NEET rate compared to the other two districts in Taranaki. While there are a range of factors that contribute to NEET rates, availability of suitable training and proximity to this training are two areas that will influence this statistic.

Both the New Plymouth and Stratford Districts had 2022 NEET rates that were below the national rate of 11.7%. When considering initiatives targeting taiohi, district-level variances need to be considered.



What We've Heard from Tertiary Education Providers in Taranaki

Kaimahi and ākonga (learners) in Taranaki are currently supported by a wide variety of education providers and delivery models. The range of opportunities for kaimahi and ākonga is constantly growing, from hospitality through to specialist height and access training. For the purposes of this advice, tertiary education providers that offer training relevant to the Energy, Food, Fibre & Whenua, Construction and Health sectors have been prioritised.

Tertiary education providers have identified the following drivers of ākonga interest in their courses and desired modes of delivery:

- ❖ A mixture of on-the-job and structured classroom time is well received by students
- ❖ Online options are proving popular, but this does require ākonga to have access to suitable technology and internet connectivity, which is limited in parts of the rohe
- ❖ Courses that accurately reflect mātauranga māori context and considerations
- ❖ Options that are delivered in Stratford or South Taranaki districts for example at the Stratford A&P Park and Te Paepae o Aotea Kura
- ❖ Pastoral support opportunities are increasing in demand, with success of certain cohorts increasing in line with support provision

Many tertiary education providers are wanting to further develop mātauranga māori (māori knowledge) offerings, however, are limited in their resourcing to be able to do so. To enshrine and embed mātauranga-a-iwi (tribal knowledge) into programmes requires resourcing to support iwi and hapū groups in the region, particularly in regard to access to qualification developers and qualified pedagogists.



What We've Heard from Industry

The focus areas the RSLG consulted with (Energy, Food, Fibre & Whenua and Kaiāwhina Health) are all in need of skilled kaimahi. The maturity of the industry and enterprise often determines the likelihood that kaimahi can receive upskilling opportunities, either on or off the job. When industry is looking to upskill their kaimahi, this is what we've heard:

- ❖ Training is often not available locally, so employers are needing to send kaimahi to other parts of the motu to access this. This temporarily reduces capacity and limits the number of kaimahi that can be upskilled at any one time
- ❖ Many kaimahi struggle with the theoretical aspects of apprenticeships, which requires additional support from employers. Where skills can be assessed on the jobsite, kaimahi are having greater success levels
- ❖ "Bite sized" learning by gaining micro-credentials online is preferable within the kaiāwhina sphere, however, the visibility of training pathways is often limited
- ❖ Opportunities where kaimahi can support each other through skill attainment opportunities often has wider benefits for the individual and business
- ❖ Often the bottleneck for training is the number of assessors / instructors. As a result, many employers are opting to develop in-house training in order to meet their individual business needs.
- ❖ Partnerships between industry and education providers work well where co-design principles and experience on job sites is a requirement of the course
- ❖ The agility and responsiveness of Private Training Establishments is valued where 'niche' courses can be developed to upskill kaimahi in certain industries

Given the relative remoteness of the Taranaki region, employers have typically needed to source specialist training across the motu (country); the conversations around bringing the training to kaimahi in the region are relatively new for some. There are strong education providers in the region, which have been developed alongside industry. With the shift and development of new industries in Taranaki, there is a growing need for more diversified training opportunities.



Alignment with Workforce Development Councils

This advice has been presented with a distinct focus on Energy, Food, Fibre & Whenua, Kaiāwhina Health Workforce and hauora & wellbeing within the Construction Sector in Taranaki. For that reason, we have opted to focus our alignment with relevant Workforce Development Councils Hanga-Aro-Rau, Waihangā Ara Rau, Toitū te Waiora and Muka Tangata. The below summary highlights where alignment is between the relevant Workforce Development Councils and findings from the Taranaki RSLG.

Hanga-Aro-Rau

Hanga-Aro-Rau Workforce Development Council represents the manufacturing, engineering and logistics industries including wood manufacturing, bakery, butchery, mechanical, automotive and marine engineering, dairy processing, extractives and drilling, and transport.

Alignment between Hanga-Aro-Rau and the Taranaki RSLG includes recommendations to the Tertiary Education Commission to:

- ❖ Support the unit standard review of the Level 3 Primary Products Food Processing Qualification
- ❖ Support the development of digital skills in manufacturing and engineering to support the adoption of technology and enable staff to contribute to continuous improvement.

Waihangā Ara Rau

Waihangā Ara Rau is the Workforce Development Council for Construction and Infrastructure. They represent many industries including concrete, construction, electricity, gas, infrastructure, plumbing, roading, telecommunication, and water.

Alignment between Waihangā Ara Rau and the Taranaki RSLG includes recommendations to the Tertiary Education Commission to:

- ❖ Support for the review of 'Level 4 Carpentry' and the need for soft skills to be included as a component of the qualification
- ❖ Support the exploration of 'vocational education fast track' opportunities within the carpentry and infrastructure areas to provide low-friction experiences for learners and employers
- ❖ Support industry awareness of cultural competency, especially Te ao Māori

Toitū te Waiora

Toitū te Waiora (Community, Health, Education, and Social Services) Workforce Development Council represents sectors including care services, youth services, disability services, education and educational support services, funeral services, and mental health and addictions services.

Alignment between Toitū te Waiora and the Taranaki RSLG includes recommendations to the Tertiary Education Commission to:

- ❖ Increase provision of all health-related qualifications/courses at Level 3 & 4 being recommended by Toitū te Waiora in Taranaki
- ❖ Provision of the Kaupapa Māori Public Health Certificate (Level 5) to be delivered in Taranaki
- ❖ Provision of the Bachelor of Social Work (Level 7) with a program recognised for registration with the Social Workers Registration Board

Muka Tangata

Muka Tangata is the Workforce Development Council for the food and fibre sector. This sector comprises 14 industries including dairy, sheep, beef, deer, pork, poultry, and other livestock farming; arable farming; vegetables and fruit growing; viticulture and winemaking; forestry; seafood; apiculture; equine, dogs and racing; veterinary; nursery, turf and gardening; and food and fibre support industries.

There are no specific areas of alignment identified at this stage, however the Taranaki RSLG looks forward to continuing the working relationships formed so that changes can be made to better our people and industries.

Conclusion

The Taranaki region is undergoing a Just Transition, and to support this move, our people need access to the training that will enable their future success. Training needs vary based on a range of factors including current education level, employer and industry, geographic location and personal demand. Kaimahi and ākonga will not undergo training unless it is relevant, accessible and delivered in a way that meets their needs.

We have heard from industry and kaimahi that the current concentration of training provision in the New Plymouth District does not work for everyone. With limited public transport options and increased costs of taking personal vehicles, there is a clear demand for relevant training to be delivered in the Stratford and South Taranaki Districts. Some training providers have voiced their plans to offer training at the Stratford A&P Park and Te Paepae o Aotea, however, industry and ākonga demand will largely determine the viability of this.

The 'traditional' education models are no longer serving our ākonga well. They want the option to study on-the-job while earning, and our kaimahi are seeking recognition of their current skills before committing to long qualifications. The options of micro-credentials are appealing for those seeking 'bite-sized' learning opportunities and to staircase to a formal qualification where possible. There is hesitancy from some employers to undergo accreditation for their in-house training, however, a standardised approach will benefit kaimahi if/when they make career changes.

The Taranaki RSLG continues to be an advocate for a range of tertiary education options in our region, while recognising that tertiary-level education may not be desired by all our people. Where there is a clear need for training to be developed and delivered in the region, the RSLG hopes that the Tertiary Education Commission takes this advice into consideration when developing the Supplementary Plan Guidance for 2024.

