



A SNAPSHOT OF FINDINGS FROM THE 2025 EMPLOYMENT MONITOR

Pacific workers in Aotearoa

MBIE's employment monitor delivers a comprehensive view of New Zealand workers' and employers' perceptions, experiences and pressures in the employment market. This infographic focuses on Pacific workers. Verian surveyed over 200 Pacific workers in February and March 2025. Comparisons are made with a baseline 2024 survey where relevant.



Top 3 job sources



40% Online recruitment sites or advertising



32% Friends or family



15% Recruitment agent or labour for hire

Union membership is higher among Pacific workers than average.



33%

of Pacific workers belong to a union compared to 23% of all NZ workers



89%

of Pacific workers are satisfied with their employment situation.

67%

trust their employer (vs 71% for the average NZ worker). **But Pacific** workers feel more vulnerable in 2025.

82%

of Pacific workers say their employer could easily replace them (vs 69% of NZ workers)

Pacific workers rate their own knowledge of employment rights a little lower than the average NZ worker.

I feel I understand my employment rights...

Pacific workers



■ Well 74% ■ Not well 26%

All NZ workers



■ Well 81% ■ Not well 18%

But Pacific workers' tested knowledge is on par, with one exception.

On average Pacific workers (and the average NZ worker) incorrectly understand (or are unsure about) four of 14 employment rights tested.



Tested Pacific worker knowledge is lowest for... % correct



47% Contractor rights



60% Right to do the job employed to do



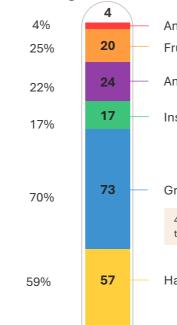
65% Paid breaks



66% Recognising wrong adult minimum wage



69% Safety gear paid by employer ∇ This is lower than the NZ average of 78%.



NZ average Angry, Furious Frustrated, Disrespected Anxious, Worried, Sad Insecure, Isolated, Fearful

Grateful, Accepting, Calm, Trusting

46% of Pacific workers are grateful for their job (vs 33% on average).

Happy, Appreciated, Delighted

Percentages add to more than 100% as respondents could choose up to three emotions.



Six in ten Pacific workers have one or more concerns about their employment situation (60% versus 49% of all NZ workers).

Main themes:

8

Pay concerns **35% (vs 26%)** e.g. equity issues, unpaid overtime or public holiday work, broken promises.



Hours **27% (vs 21%)** e.g. longer hours than agreed, unpaid overtime.



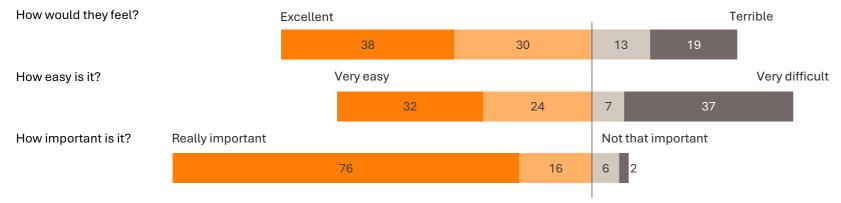
Harassment, discrimination 15% (vs 16%) e.g. verbal abuse, bullying and harassment, racism, other discrimination.



Workplace culture/safety issues 27% (vs 22%)

Pacific workers understand the importance of speaking up to Employment NZ in an exploitative situation, but it would be very difficult for many.

%



Pacific workers told us why they would be scared to speak up...



"At the moment it's really hard to find another job. I wouldn't want to put myself in a predicament where it would be risking my role. I would not want to jeopardise my pay check as I have a family."

"Not sure if it can be face-to-face and just over the internet. I'd be unsure if I would get into further trouble at work.

There hasn't been any real change for Pacific people in any workplace. Pay equity is still an issue."



Top 5 sources of useful information on employment rights



8% Online searches



% Employer/workplace



29% Personal contacts



23% Unic



Emails from Employment NZ

NZ government agencies support NZ workers...



But government sources are still the most sources on employment law

Most trusted sources of employment law



55% Government sources (ENZ website, newsletters, email)



55% Community support (CAB, law centres)



28% Union



14% Mainstream media



13% Ethnic community channels



10% Social media

Just over a third of Pacific workers are in the higher risk segments (on the right).



More knowledge of employee rights

Capable

Lower risk of exploitation

- Very good understanding of employment rights
- High satisfaction/few concerns
- High levels of trust in employer
- More likely to speak up in exploitative situations
- Most know how to find help

Knowledgeable but trapped

- Good understanding of employment rights, but lack confidence
- Many dissatsified with high levels of frustration and anxiety
- They feel trapped as they're reliant on their job and worry about the consequences from raising concerns
- High incidence of employment concerns (low pay, poor workplace culture, long hours or harassment etc.)
- Lack trust in employers and the system.

Naïve, but unexploited

- Poor understanding of employment rights, partly because they are less interested in this
- Satisfied with their employment, trust their employer
- Less reliant on their job
- Some employment concerns but not prevalent
- An element of pessimism (average levels of trust in government agencies to support workers, on the fence about speaking up about issues etc.).

Disheartened

- Poor understanding of employment rights
- **Dissatisfied** with their employment, often frustrated
- Less likely to have employment contracts
- Wide ranging employment concerns (e.g. underpayment, long hours, discrimination, poor workplace culture)
- Low levels of trust (in their employer, Employment NZ and government agencies' support)
- They're less likely to speak up fear consequences and don't know where to get help



Less knowledge of employee rights



Higher risk of exploitation