



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

A SNAPSHOT OF FINDINGS FROM THE 2025 EMPLOYMENT MONITOR

Young workers in New Zealand

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 NZ workers aged 18 to 29 years. Verian surveyed 355 workers in this age groups in February and March 2025. Comparisons are made with the 2024 survey.

An economic downturn and rising youth unemployment have made jobs harder to find and thrive in, with employers tightening budgets on things like training. But how are young workers feeling about their place in the workforce?

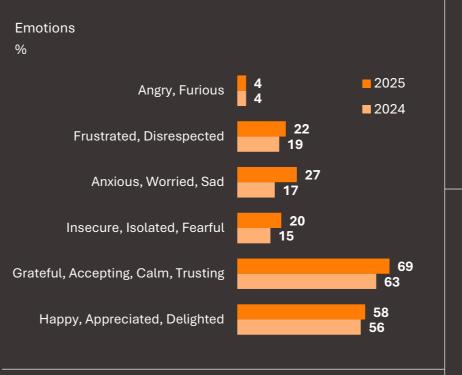


Most young workers continue to say they're satisfied with their current employment situation – a sign of resilience and appreciation in a challenging climate.

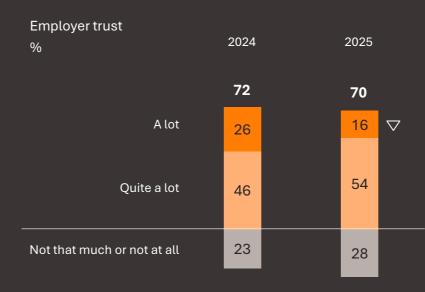


are satisfied with their employment situation (vs 81% in 2024)

But there are signs of greater apprehension in 2025.



While most youth still trust their employer, that trust is weaker than it was.



verian

Compared to last year, fewer young people are strongly positive about some key aspects of their working life...suggesting some are feeling less seen, supported and invested in.



There are growing concerns about fairness.

More than half of young workers now report at least one concern about their employment.

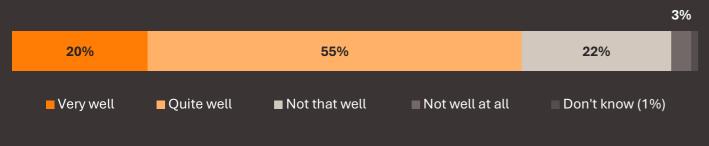
Any employment concern



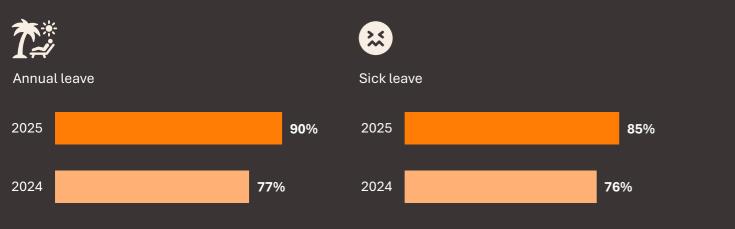
Young workers' self-rated understanding of their employment rights hasn't changed.

One in four young workers say they don't understand their employment rights that well.

Young workers feel they understand their employment rights...



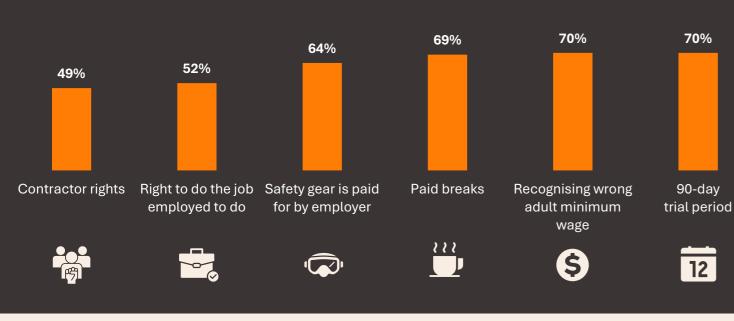
However, tested knowledge has improved for annual leave and sick leave entitlements.



On average, young people lack understanding of four employment rights (out of 14 tested).



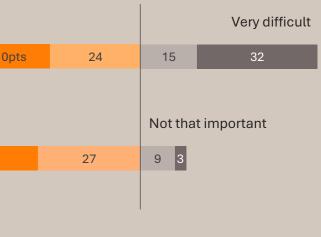




Employment rights are a rising priority and young workers feel more empowered to 'speak up' to Employment NZ.

%				
How easy is it?			Very easy	
			30 ▲10	
How important is it?	Really important			
		61 🔺 13	3pts	
Young workers are mor	e active in	searchi	ng for infor	
than they were last yea		oouronn		
Top 4 sources of useful info on rights:				
	8			
Web searches	Personal	contacts	E	
(50% ▲18 pts)	(23%)		(2	
75% upod ot looot opo oo		linforma	tion (up 16 r	
75% used at least one so				
Finding information on	line is now	easier.	TI	
			N	
% easy			%	
2025		82% 🔺	2	
2024	69%	6	2	
			1^	





rmation on employment rights







Employment NZ emails (14% ▲ 8pts)

points since 2024).

There are signs[^] that perceptions of Employment New Zealand's website have improved.



Not statistically significant due to small base sizes.

Young workers are more enthusiastic about support ideas than in 2024.

Top ideas (% very or somewhat helpful)



Dedicated website on employment rights (87%)



Freephone to ask employment questions (85% **▲** 14pts)



Free independent disputes resolution service (83%)



Freephone at a suitable time (83% **▲** 13pts)

0

Independent advocate to speak to employer on your behalf (83% 🔺 11 pts)

Since 2024, young workers also show more interest in contacting the Employment NZ service centre (up 11 pts to 77%).



Lower risk of exploitation

We see a shift in the size of our four young worker groups that are defined by worker knowledge of rights and risk of exploitation.

Improved knowledge coupled with weaker employment sentiment has led to a decrease in the size of the Naive, but unexploited segment and increase in the Knowledgeable but trapped segment.

2024 43 2025 More knowledge of employee rights

Capable

- 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

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.).

28 2024 2025 13 Knowledgeable but trapped

- lack confidence

Disheartened

- government agencies' support)
- don't know where to get help

Less knowledge of employee rights





Higher risk of exploitation