Hospitality and Tourism Employment

REBOUND AND ROADS FORWARD

2024

REPORT BY

Associate Professor David Williamson
and Professor Candice Harris

MINISTRY OF BUSINESS, INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

AUT

CONTENTS

As I venture further into te ao Māori, I see it as an essential way of connecting to people and places through storytelling. For me, tourism is a natural continuation of what it means to be Māori – to manaaki and to kaitiaki, which is to welcome guests and uphold respect for the natural world.

Hospitality is such a huge part of New Zealand and has a massive migrant culture. Some weeks I'd feel like I'd travelled the world with the breadth of people I'd met and experiences I'd had.

I have been in the sector for over 20 years. Tourism has the ability to be a huge enabler of sustainability, regeneration and conservation. It is a high energy and fun industry to work in that never has a dull day.

(Respondent quotes)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report showcases results from a 2024 survey of hospitality and tourism employees and their employment conditions in New Zealand. The survey resulted in 1,031 valid responses from both managers and non-managers across all sub-sectors of hospitality and tourism.

The study was commissioned by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. It captured views from a broad range of respondents, varying by demographics, roles, job levels and organisational types.

Information was collected about the contractual and relational nature of employment relationships in the hospitality and tourism sector, including wages, conditions, and employment experiences. This year, questions related to thriving at work, employee wellbeing, and environmental sustainability were also included. Key findings are summarised in the three categories of getting better , 'positive new findings' and 'areas of concern/work still to be done .

Positive new findings:

- A very high percentage of respondents (91%) cared about being productive in their jobs
- A very high percentage of respondents (90%) felt they had the skills to do their jobs with confidence
- Over half of the respondents stated that they were often learning at work (61.4%), and 72.0% felt they were continually improving at work
- When asked about environmental sustainability, 56.8% agreed that there were good practices in their workplaces, and 58.2% agreed that environmental sustainability is important when making employment decisions

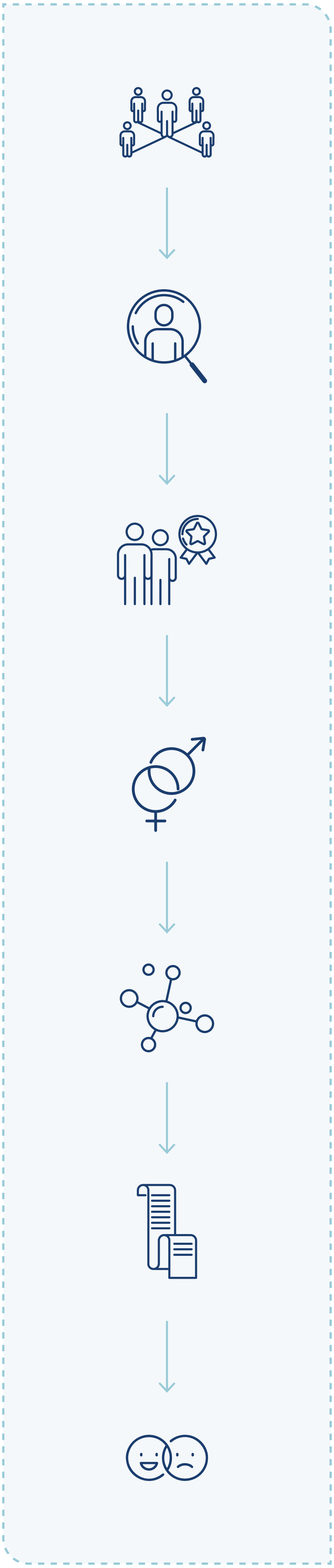
Getting Better

Overall, the 2024 survey showed significant improvements on the 2022 He Tangata report findings, with increases across many key measures:

- One of the most significant improvements was in the percentage of respondents stating that 'training opportunities are good', increasing to 57.2% in 2024 from 40.5% in 2022
- Respondents being paid less than the Minimum Wage fell to 0.9% in 2024 vs 7.5% in 2022
- Overall job satisfaction increased to 67.5% in 2024 vs 62.2% in 2022
- The percentage of respondents indicating they intended to leave the hospitality and tourism sector dramatically reduced to 18.3% in 2024 vs 33.7% in 2022
- Respondents' being able to voice their opinions without fear of retribution increased to 64.3% in 2024 vs 59.9% in 2022
- Respondents' perceptions of having good opportunities for promotion increased to 50.0% in 2024 vs 42.2% in 2022
- Respondents' perceptions of being treated with respect and dignity by managers improved to 74.3% in 2024 vs 68.8% in 2022
- Respondents who reported they enjoyed their work increased to 72.0% in 2024 vs 70% in 2022
- Respondents who indicated they were being paid fairly were up 10.0% compared to 2022
- Improvements were also shown in reported compliance with sick leave, holiday pay, opportunities for promotion, and receiving supportive feedback from managers

Areas of concern/work still to do

- Just over half of all respondents (51.0%) reported earning less than the Living Wage. This increased to 71.8% for front-line workers vs 30.0% for managers and supervisors
- There was no change in the number of respondents who reported experiencing bullying or harassment (23.0%) from the 2022 survey
- Reports of witnessing bullying or harassment (32.4%) remain very similar to 2022 (33.9%)
- The percentage of respondents indicating they intended to leave their specific job increased to 31.7% in 2024 vs 27.6% in 2022
- Only 58.4% of respondents felt they could always take sick leave when they were unwell
- Only 50.5% of respondents stated they could always take their contracted breaks
- A total of 59.7% of respondents stated they would like more training



COHORTS OF INTEREST

Small organisations

Lower than average results for employee satisfaction with training, and compliance with sick leave, rest breaks and public holiday pay were found in small organisations (1–5 people). Respondents from these small organisations also scored well below average when reporting if they got paid for every hour they worked.

Age

Younger workers had the lowest level of agreement for being treated with respect and dignity by managers. They also showed significantly lower overall job satisfaction (54.9%) than older workers (83.5% for those 65 and over). Almost all respondents aged 15–19 (94.0%) reported earning less than the Living Wage, compared to respondents aged 40–44 (28.2%) (The New Zealand Living Wage is defined as the income necessary to provide workers and their families with the basic necessities of life, enabling workers to live with dignity and to participate as active citizens in society). Young workers also reported significantly higher rates of job-level turnover intention (45.2% for those under 25 vs 29.5% for those aged 35–44). Younger workers also had the highest levels of burnout.

Managers vs non-managers/front-line workers

Front-line workers reported lower overall job satisfaction (60.9%) than managers (74.4%) and significantly higher levels of burnout. Nearly three-quarters (71.8%) of front-line workers reported earning less than the Living Wage, compared to 30.1% of managers. Front-line workers also showed higher turnover intention (36.0%) than managers (26.8%).

Gender

Female workers reported significantly higher rates of burnout than males. 57.3% of female respondents also reported earning less than the Living Wage compared to 40.0% of males.

Neurodiversity

Respondents who considered themselves neurodivergent (n = 151) reported considerably lower job satisfaction (53.0%) than those who did not (67.5%). These respondents also reported higher turnover intention (50.3%), higher burnout than neurotypical workers and a stronger desire for more training. A total of 65.5% of respondents who considered themselves neurodivergent earned less than the Living Wage compared to 46.9% of those who considered themselves neurotypical.

Fast-Food workers

Fast food employees reported the highest burnout levels compared to any other sub-sector and also showed higher levels of turnover intention (39%). A massive 82.7% of fast-food workers earned less than the Living Wage compared to 23.3% of other tourism workers.

Who are the 'happiest' workers?

Older male managers in large organisations.

Who are the least 'happy' workers?

Younge female front-line workers in small fast-food/takeaway organisations.

1. Introduction

This infographic summarises findings from a survey of **1031** New Zealand hospitality and tourism employees, with respondents spilt by managers and non-managers across all sub-sectors.

The study was commissioned by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and captured a broad range of respondents, varying by:

- demographics
- roles
- job levels and
- organisational types

2. Data

The **2024 New Zealand Hospitality and Tourism Employment Survey** ran from 15 May 2024 to 31 August 2024. The survey had a total of 51 questions about Employment & Pay, Retention & Turnover, Thriving at Work, Wellbeing, Bullying & Burnout, Sustainability and more.

Female	Male	Another Gender	Neurodivergent	No Qual	School - Diploma	Bachelor's +
62%	37%	<1%	15%	5%	56%	38%

3. Positive Improvements

91% of respondents care about being productive in their jobs.

90% of respondents feel they have the skills to do their jobs well.

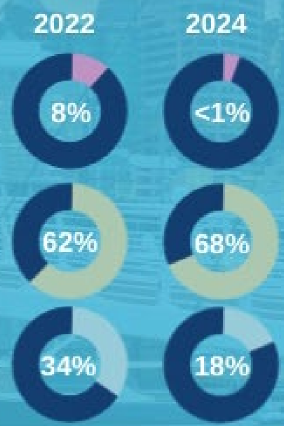
71% agreed that they see themselves as continually improving at work, consistent across all age bands.

Comparisons to 2022

1 Respondents being paid less than the Minimum Wage has fallen to **<1%** in 2024 vs **8%** in 2022.

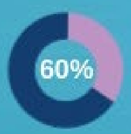
2 Overall job satisfaction has increased to **68%** in 2024 vs **62%** in 2022.

3 The percentage of respondents indicating they intend to leave the hospitality and tourism sector has dramatically reduced to **18%** in 2024 vs **34%** in 2022.



4. Work Still To Do

51% of respondents report earning less than the Living Wage. This increases to **72%** for front-line workers vs **30%** for managers and supervisors.



60% of respondents state they would like more training.

1

INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that the hospitality and tourism sectors have faced unprecedented challenges since the arrival of the COVID 19 pandemic. The general disruption, labour shortages, rising costs and falling disposable incomes have tested these sectors more intensely than at any time since World War II. However, a sector described as vulnerable has shown itself to be resilient and continues to provide significant economic, employment and social contributions to New Zealand. Hospitality and tourism employment creates ambassadors of joy – those working hard to offer New Zealand attractions and hospitality to the world. Every day, those working in hospitality and tourism curate unforgettable experiences.

New Zealand's hospitality and tourism sector is showing a strong recovery. The Tourism Satellite Account shows total tourism expenditure in New Zealand of $37.7b for the year ending March 2023, an increase of $10.7b from the previous year (Stats NZ, 2024). While this is a 39.6% improvement from 2022, it is still down from the $41.5bn seen in the year ending March 2020 (BDO New Zealand, 2024). The hospitality industry saw annual sales hit $15.7b for the year ending March 2024, reflecting a 5.8% growth over the previous year (Restaurant Association of New Zealand, 2024).

The hospitality and tourism sectors play a crucial role in our economy, employing about 8.4% of the workforce, with further jobs supported indirectly. For the year ending 2023, the total number of people employed in the tourism industry increased by 49.2 % to 318,000 people (Doocey, 2024; Stats NZ, 2024). The 189,432 people directly employed in tourism comprise 6.7% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand (Tourism New Zealand, 2024). The hospitality industry directly employed around 145,000 people by early 2024, growing by 7.3% from the previous year, and outpacing the growth rate of new hospitality establishments (Restaurant Association of New Zealand, 2024).

With borders reopened, the demand for workers has increased, but the supply has not kept pace, particularly in regions heavily reliant on international visitors. The sector today continues to face significant employment challenges, especially in finding adequate staff. The Government's strategic focus is on measures to support sustainable growth, including enhancing year-round tourism, investing in regional infrastructure to boost resilience, and addressing labour shortages through training and immigration policies. The $1.2b Regional Infrastructure Fund, which will invest in new and existing infrastructure projects, will be of interest to many of New Zealand's regional tourism operators (BDO New Zealand, 2024; Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit, 2024).

Hospitality and tourism work often provides a first point of entry into the workforce for young people and migrants, helping them gain practical experience and work ethics. There are also pathways for professional development, with opportunities to climb career ladders from operational roles to management positions. Employment in the sector has a ripple effect, supporting other industries such as retail, agriculture, food and beverage production, and transportation. It can also strengthen communities by enhancing local infrastructure and services. Hospitality and tourism enterprises often provide, in more remote areas, a crucial source of income and job creation – employment that helps reduce regional disparities and supports local communities.

It is important to remember that there is no "one" hospitality employee experience, as workers' experiences are shaped by complex intersections of gender, class, ethnicity, and associated divisions of labour (Ioannides et al., 2021). Several studies have explored the historical antecedents of current employment conditions (Williamson & Harris, 2019, 2022, 2024) and questioned the impacts of the Covid period as a unique time or amplification of the norm (Baum et al., 2020). In order to understand the complex relationships between the impacts of COVID-19, employment legislation, migrant labour, economic conditions and business pressures, and employee experiences, longitudinal data is required. The survey data gathered in 2022 and 2024, as discussed in this report, contribute to furthering our understanding of contemporary employment in the sector.

Today, enterprise operators in the sector are increasingly committed to sustainable practices, working to preserve New Zealand's natural landscapes and biodiversity. Cultural exchange and preservation opportunities are also supported through hospitality and tourism employment, enabling the sharing of New Zealand's unique Māori culture passed down through generations. Hospitality and tourism employment can also facilitate learning, thriving and wellbeing. As found in this study, employees cared very much about being useful and productive at work. Three-quarters of respondents also cared about their employing organisations being profitable. Such findings show that some of the best enablers of sustainable hospitality and tourism employment can be the employees themselves.

Research design

The 2024 New Zealand Hospitality and Tourism Employment Survey ran from May 15 to 31 August, 2024. The survey was based on the previous 2022 He Tangata survey (Williamson & Rasmussen, 2022) with minor wording changes and the introduction of new questions to reflect the ever-changing New Zealand workforce. Core questions from the 2022 survey were retained to enable comparison with the data collected in 2024.

Sector-wide consultation and feedback were sought from the following groups regarding the survey design:

- **Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment**
- **Hotel Council Aotearoa**
- **Travel Agents' Association New Zealand**
- **Hospitality New Zealand**
- **Restaurant Association of New Zealand**
- **Unite Hospitality Union**
- **Tourism Industry Aotearoa**
- **MBIE Tourism Data Leadership Group**

New areas of investigation were included, enabling us to present findings on thriving at work, wellbeing, burnout, and environmental sustainability. This report also provides a more nuanced view of worker experiences in this sector, including information about neurodivergence and the experiences of a significant proportion of managers who have built rewarding and long-term careers.

A survey information sheet and an anonymous link to complete the Qualtrics XM survey were distributed via email and social media using a combination of established AUT industry networks and the aforementioned groups. A total of 51 questions were available to answer. At the conclusion of the survey, 1,031 participant responses were analysed using SPSS version 29. Descriptive statistics and comparisons of means were conducted to summarise the respondent feedback and identify trends. Where results are presented, the sample size is 1,031 unless otherwise specified, and percentages in tables and figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Comments are presented verbatim in the report but, where appropriate, have been edited for readability.

Ethical approval was granted by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on March 15, 2024 (Number 24/32).

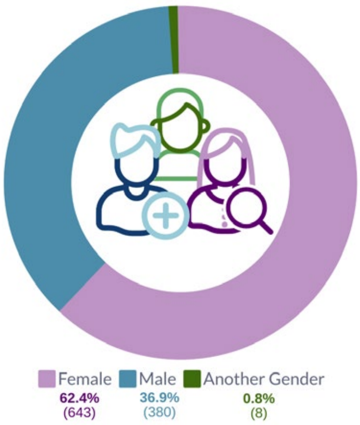
2

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

This section reports on the demographic profile of 2024 survey respondents (Table 1). The largest ethnic groups of respondents were New Zealand European (57.0%), followed by Māori (8.8%), Indian (7.9%) and Pacific Peoples (5.2%). The sample also has a higher proportion of females (62.4%) than males (36.9%) or those identifying as another gender (0.8%), as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1.

Which gender do you most identify with? (N = 1,031)



Nearly 40% of the sample were younger than 30 years (38.2%), including 8.4% who were aged 15–19 years. The largest grouping was those aged 30–50 years (43.1%). A further 18.6% were aged over 50 years, including 6.7% who were aged 60 years or older. This age profile is somewhat consistent with the 2022 He Tangata Hospitality and Tourism report that found the largest group to be 30–50 years. However, while the 2022 He Tangata report noted similar results in the age brackets of 15–19 (6.5%) and 30–49 (40.4%), the 2022 report noted significantly higher results for the 50+ (27.8%) and 60+ (10.3%) age groups.

TABLE 1.

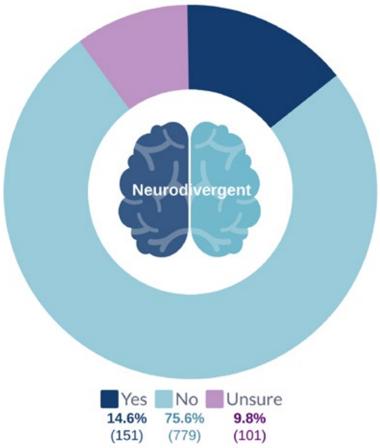
Demographic profile

Characteristic	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Gender (n = 1,031)		
Male	380	36.9
Female	643	62.4
Another gender	8	0.8
Age group (years) (n = 1,030)		
15–19	87	8.4
20–24	161	15.6
25–29	146	14.2
30–34	151	14.7
35–39	130	12.6
40–44	107	10.4
45–49	56	5.4
50–54	67	6.5
55–59	56	5.4
60–64	31	3.0
65+	38	3.7
Age group (years) (n = 1,031)		
New Zealand European	588	57.0
Māori	91	8.8
Pacific Peoples	54	5.2
Indian	81	7.9
Filipino	37	3.6
Chinese	43	4.2
Other Asian	53	5.1
Middle Eastern/Latin American/African	22	2.1
Other	62	6.0

Almost 15% of respondents identified as neurodivergent (e.g., ADHD, dyslexia, autism) and close to 10% responded that they were 'unsure' (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2.

Do you consider yourself to be neurodivergent? (N = 1, 031)



The clear majority (92.7%) of respondents are New Zealand citizens or permanent residents. The other 75 respondents are mainly in the three categories of 'accredited employer work visa (48%), 'another work visa' (18.7%) and then 'working holiday visa' (9.3%).

FIGURE 3.

Are you a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident?

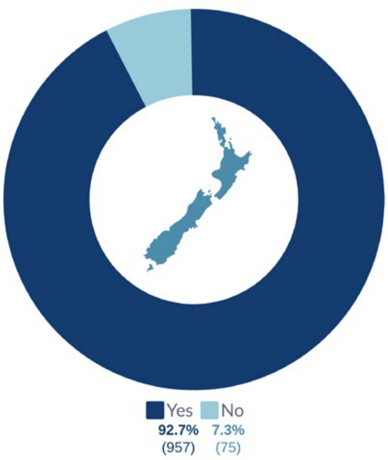


Table 2 shows that the two largest groups of respondents were those with a bachelor's degree (28.1%), closely followed by those with NCEA or another school leaver qualification (27.4%). The results show that around two-thirds (66.9%) of respondents were tertiary qualified.

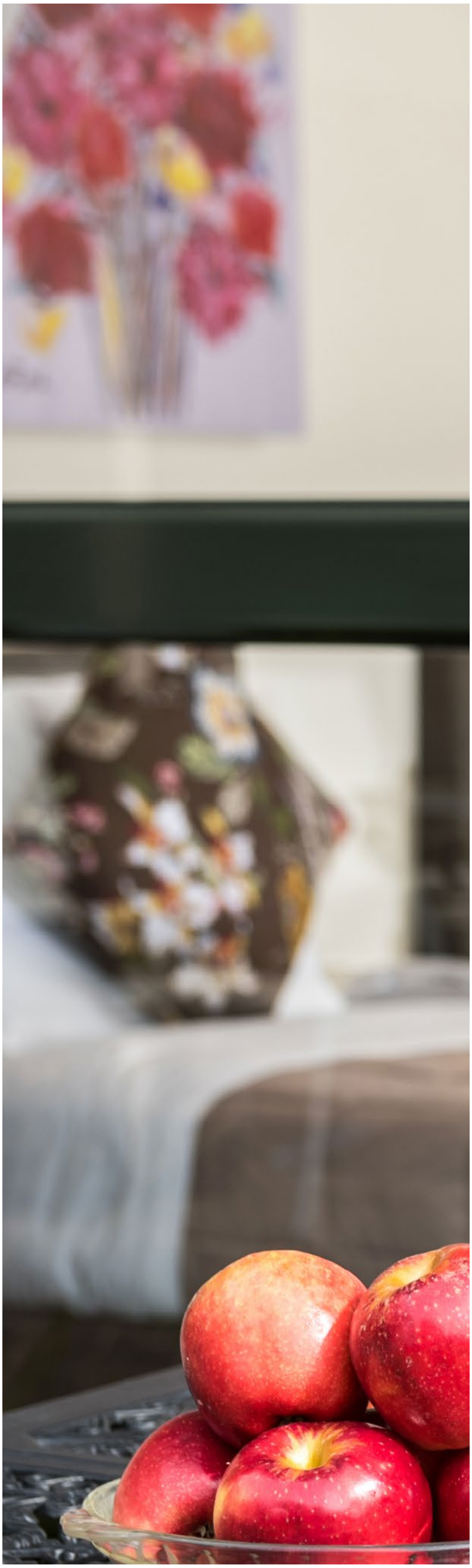


TABLE 2.

What is your highest qualification (N = 1,031)

Nearly 80% of respondents were not currently studying, suggesting some opportunities for further development. Of the 225 respondents currently studying, just 83 (36.9%) were studying for a qualification in hospitality or tourism.

Qualification	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
No qualifications	46	4.5
NCEA or other high school leaver qualification	282	27.4
Certificate	138	13.4
Diploma	159	15.4
Bachelor's degree	290	28.1
Postgraduate degree	103	10.0
Other	13	1.3

FIGURE 4.

Are you studying toward a formal qualification (e.g. diploma or degree) in hospitality or tourism?

As Figure 5 shows, many respondents lived in a property they owned (33.5%), followed by those who rented with others (30.6%).

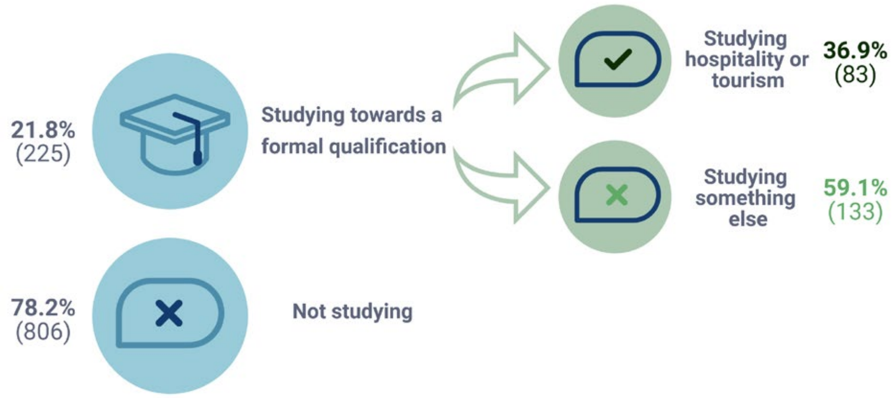


FIGURE 5.

What is your living situation? (N = 1,031)

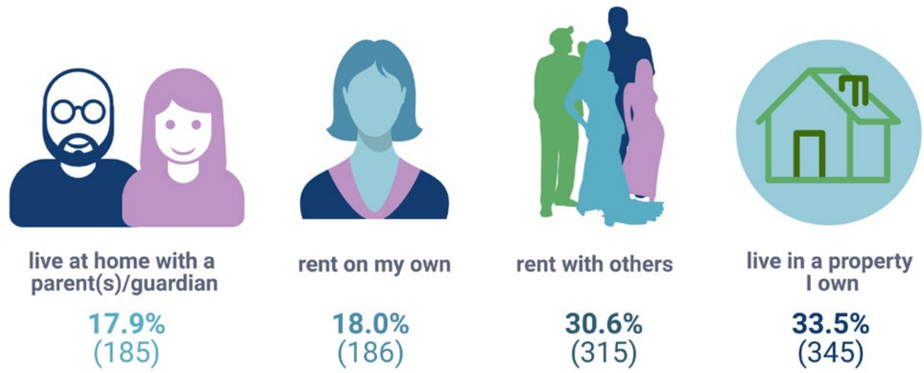
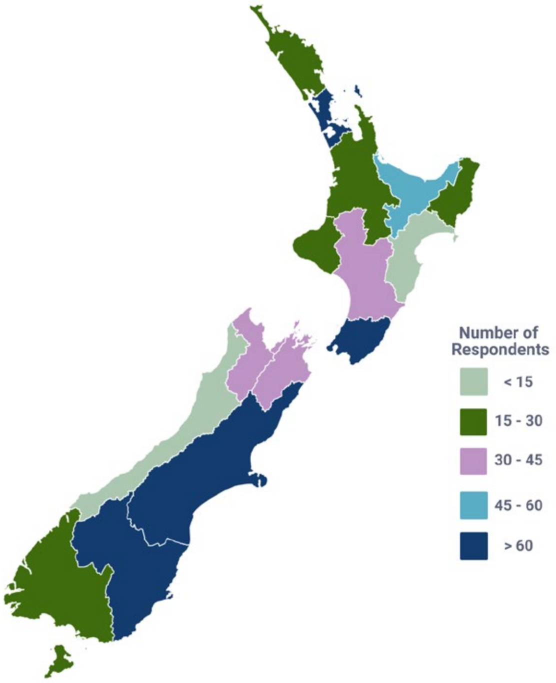


FIGURE 6.

Location of work (N = 1,029)



Note: More detailed geographic information is available in Appendix 3.

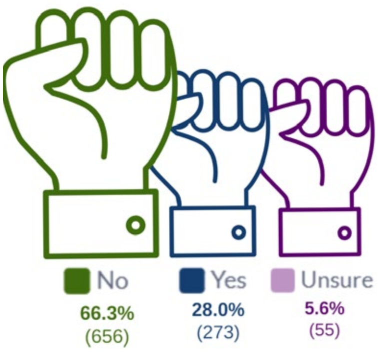
Two-thirds of respondents were not union members (Figure 7).

The three highest groups for union membership were 64.6% Pacific Peoples, 48.6% Filipino, and 42% Maori.

Higher union membership density was found in the younger age groups; for example, 42.6% of those younger than 25 years were union members. Union density was lowest in small organisations (9.2% of union members in organisations with 1–5 people, rising to 39.9% in organisations with 100 or more employees).

FIGURE 7.

Union membership status (N = 975)



Tenure

Most respondents (35.8%) had worked in the industry for 3 years or less (Table 3), followed by 19.3% who had been in the industry for between 3 and 5 years, and 20.8% had careers of 5 to 10 years, with 24.1% having careers of 10 years or more. Compared with the 2022 He Tangata report, 28.0% of respondents had worked for 3 years or less, 19.7% had worked for 3 to 6 years, and 52.3% had careers of 6 years or more. Both surveys show that around half of the respondents have had relatively long-term careers of 5 years or more.

TABLE 3.

How long have you worked in the hospitality or tourism sector?

Duration	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Less than 1 year	99	9.6
Between 1 and 3 years	270	26.2
Between 3 and 5 years	199	19.3
Between 5 and 10 years	215	20.8
Between 10 and 20 years	147	14.2
More than 20 years	102	9.9

Respondents by sub-sector

Accommodation provided the largest number of respondents (27.9%), followed by fast-food/takeaways (15.3%), restaurants and cafes (20.9%), tourism/travel/transport (19.7%), and other hospitality (13.1%). Similarly, in the 2022 He Tangata report, accommodation also provided the largest number of respondents (27.8%), followed by tourism/travel/transport (25.0%), restaurants and cafes (17.3%), fast food/takeaways (7.6%), and other hospitality (7.3%).

Organisation size

Most (69.8%) of the hospitality, travel and tourism businesses were small and medium-sized enterprises with fewer than 50 employees (Table 4). A significant percentage of those small and medium-sized enterprises were very small organisations, with 44.1% having fewer than 20 employees. A total of 14.6% of organisations had 50–99 employees, and a significant 15.6% of businesses had over 100 staff. The 2022 He Tangata report showed a very similar results.

TABLE 4.

Approximately how many people are employed in your place of work?

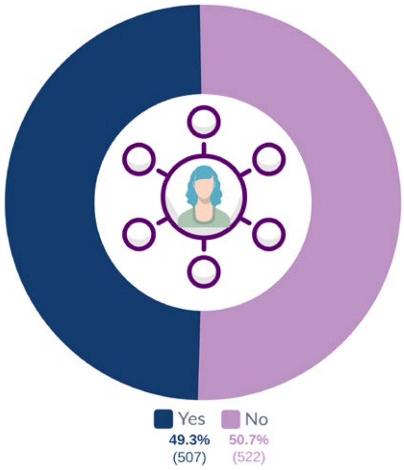
Number	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
1–5	138	13.4
6–19	317	30.7
20–49	265	25.7
50–99	151	14.6
100+	161	15.6

Front-line staff vs managers/supervisors

The survey showed a nearly even split between managers and supervisors (49.3%) and front-line/non-managerial workers (50.7%) (Figure 8).

FIGURE 8.

Do you manage staff? (N = 1,029)



Employees by sector

The largest percentage (18.3%) of front-line employees were from the fast-food sector (see appendix 2), followed by waiters and food and beverage attendants (13.5%), other hospitality roles (11.8%), chefs/kitchen hands (11.6%), administration/marketing roles (10.8%), housekeeping/cleaners (9.4%), tourism and travel (7.4%), hotel front office (7.0%), and transport/airlines (2.4%). Hospitality roles comprised 55.2% of the front-line roles, whereas tourism, travel, accommodation and administration comprised 37%. The 2022 He Tangata report did not capture front-line roles.

3

EMPLOYMENT AND PAY

This section presents data on general employment conditions and pay.

Signed employment agreements

Most respondents (89.7%) had signed employment agreements with their employers. The 2022 He Tanaga Report showed a similar result (87.9%).

Status of main employment agreement

Almost two thirds of respondents (60.8%) were in permanent full-time employment (Table 5), while 26.3% were in permanent part time employment. Only 8.4% of respondents were casual or on-call, and just 3.9% were contractors or on fixed-term agreements. By comparison, the He Tangata report showed that 62.3% of respondents were in permanent full-time employment, while 17.9% were in permanent part time employment. 6.4% of respondents were casual, and 2.5% were contractors, but 6.9% were on fixed-term agreements.

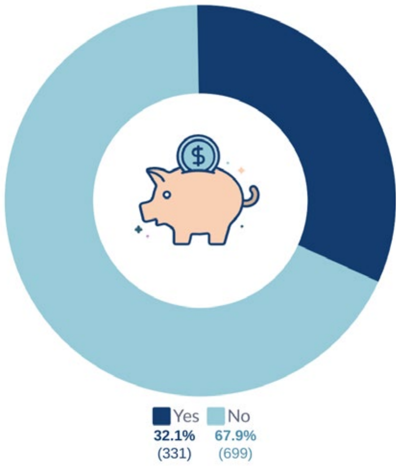
TABLE 5.

What is the status of your main employment agreement? (N = 924)

Status	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Permanent part-time with employer	243	26.3
Permanent full-time with employer	562	60.8
Casual/on-call with employer	78	8.4
Fixed-term or temporary	19	2.1
Contractor	17	1.8

FIGURE 9.

Are you paid a salary? (not paid by the hour) (N = 1,029)



PAY

This section presents pay data from the 2024 and 2022 surveys in three categories: hourly pay rates for front-line workers, hourly pay rates for managers and supervisors, and salary rates for those not on hourly pay rates.

Hourly rate or salary: 32.1% of the respondents were paid a salary, and 67.9% were on an hourly rate.

Hourly pay rates

In 2024, the Minimum Wage rate for those over 16 was $23.15 per hour, while the starting-out and training rate was $18.52 per hour. The Living Wage was $27.80 per hour as of September 1, 2024.

In 2024, 43.7% of front-line employees were earning below $25.00, 36.6% were earning between $24.00 and $29.99, and 20.1% were earning $30.00 and over. By comparison, 10.3% of managers and supervisors were earning less than $25.00, 30.9% were earning between $24.00 and $29.99, and 58.6% were earning $30.00 and over (Figure 10).

FIGURE 10.

Hourly rates for front-line workers (n = 492) and managers/supervisors (n = 479)

The 2024 survey captured a larger percentage of salaried employees in the lower three segments (52.1% earning less than $80,000) than in 2022 (39.5% earning less than $80,000). The 2024 survey also had almost half of the salaried workers in the top three segments (12.9% earning over $120,000), compared to 2022 (22.7% earning over $120,000).

FIGURE 11.

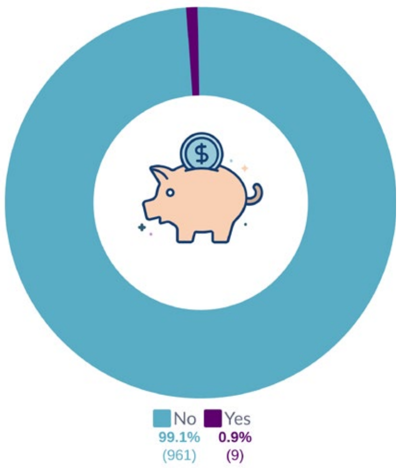
Comparison of 2022 (n = 309) and 2024 (n = 309) salary rates

Minimum Wage

Figure 12 shows that only 0.9% of respondents were paid less than the Minimum Wage. This is a significant improvement on the 2022 He Tangata report, where 7.5% of respondents indicated they did not receive Minimum Wage.

FIGURE 12.

Are you paid the Minimum Wage? (N = 970)



Pay respective to the Living Wage hourly rate

The survey data shows that 51.1% of respondents were paid less than the Living Wage (Figure 13). Furthermore, 71.8% of front-line workers were paid less than the Living Wage rate, while 30.1% of managers and supervisors earned less than the Living Wage rate. Spilt by gender, 57.3% of female workers, 40.0% of male workers and 87.5% of those who identified as another gender earned less than the Living Wage rate.

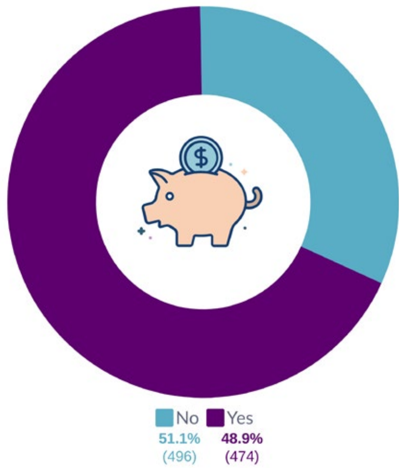
Of those who identified as being neurodivergent, 65.5% earned less than the Living Wage. A similar number was found for those unsure if they were neurodivergent (62.0%), compared with 46.9% of those who identified as neurotypical, earning less than the Living Wage.

The highest rates for earning less than the Living Wage were reported in fast food (82.7%), followed by restaurants and cafes (64.1%), other hospitality (56.3%), accommodation (37.7%) and tourism (23.3%).

There is a strong correlation between youth and earning less than the Living Wage. Rates steadily fall from 94.0% for the 15–19 age group to 28.2% for the 40–44 age group. Rates then start climbing again from 36.0% for the 45–49 age group to 50.9% for the 55–59 age group, and finally, 56.3% for those 65 and older.

FIGURE 13.

Are you paid the Living Wage or above? (N = 970)



Paid or time off in lieu for working during statutory holidays

Figure 14 shows that 65.8% of respondents were 'always' and 16.0% were 'sometimes' getting paid or having time off in lieu for statutory holidays. Only 7.3% of respondents stated they never received this entitlement. The 2022 He Tangata report showed very similar results.

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored significantly below the averages for being paid for time off (45.3% always; 16.8% sometimes; and 15.3% never), while large organisations (100+ people) scored well above the average (73.3% always; 13.7% sometimes; and 5.0% never).

Sick leave

Concerningly, only 58.0% of respondents could always take sick leave when unwell, while 30.5% sometimes could and 5.9% never could. However, this is an improvement on the 2022 survey results, where 9.7% of respondents stated they could never take sick leave when unwell.

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored significantly below average for taking sick leave when needed (49.6% always; 30.7% sometimes; and 8% never), while large organisations (100+ people) scored well above the average (63.7% always; 28.7% sometimes; and 1.9% never).

Rest breaks

A modest 50.5% of respondents reported they could always take their rest breaks, while 40.7% reported they sometimes could, and 6.3% stated they never did. There was no noteworthy difference in results from the 2022 survey.

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored significantly below average for taking rest breaks in Figure 14 (43.4% always; 36.8% sometimes; and 10.3% never), while large organisations (100+ people) scored well above the average (57.5% always; 37.5% sometimes; and 3.1% never).

FIGURE 14.

Paid time off, sick leave and rest breaks

	Paid or time off in lieu for working during statutory holidays	Can take sick leave easily when unwell	Take the rest breaks entitled to in current job
Always	65.8%	58.0%	50.5%
Sometimes	16.0%	30.5%	40.7%
Never	7.3%	5.9%	6.3%
Unsure	10.9%	4.9%	2.4%
	1029	1026	1025

Highest → Lowest

2024 holiday pay

Compliance with holiday pay in 2024 remained very similar to the 2022 report with 70.4% of respondents reporting they were always paid correctly, 14.6% sometimes paid correctly, and just 3.1% never paid correctly. However, a significant 11.9% remained unsure about receiving their correct holiday pay. By comparison, the 2022 He Tangata report showed that 71.7% of respondents reported always receiving the correct holiday pay, 8.6% sometimes, and 4.7% never.

For permanent full-time employees, 92.4% indicated they always or sometimes got correct holiday pay, compared to 83.5% of permanent part-time workers and 78.2% of casual employees.

Extra pay

The 2024 survey shows an improvement in the number of respondents reporting receiving regular extra pay, with Figure 15 showing that 18.4% of respondents were always regularly receiving extra pay, 29.1% reporting they sometimes did, and 42.0% of respondents stating they never did. By comparison, the 2022 He Tangata report showed that 16.9% of respondents always regularly received extra pay, 34.1% sometimes did, and 42.6% of respondents stated they never did.

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored significantly below average for receiving extra pay (14.6% always; 25.5% sometimes; and 39.4% never), while large organisations (100+ people) scored well above (22.5% always; 31.3% sometimes; and 34.4% never).

Being paid for every hour worked

Figure 15 shows that 67.9% of respondents were always paid for every hour they worked, 18.4% sometimes were, and 8.8% of respondents stated they never were. The 2022 He Tangata report showed very similar results.

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored significantly below the averages for being paid for every hour they worked in Figure 15 (50.4% always; 19% sometimes; and 13.9% never), while large organisations (100+ people) scored well above (68.1% always; 18.1% sometimes; and 10.6% never).

Permanent full-time employees and fixed term/temporary workers registered the highest rates of unpaid work (88.5% and 73.7% for always and sometimes getting paid for every hour worked). Permanent part-time (11.7%) and fixed-term temporary employees (21.1%) undertook the least amount of unpaid work.

FIGURE 15.

Pay questions

	Paid your correct holiday pay in current job	Receives a regular wage/pay slip showing pay and all deductions	Regularly receives extra pay in current job (e.g. tips, bonus, penalty rates)	Get paid for every hour worked in current job
Always	70.4%	85.2%	18.4%	67.9%
Sometimes	14.6%	7.8%	29.1%	18.4%
Never	3.1%	3.2%	42.0%	8.8%
Unsure	11.9%	3.8%	10.4%	4.9%
	1026	1027	1026	1026

Highest → Lowest

Fair pay

Most respondents (57.2%) agreed they were paid fairly for the work they did, while 22.3% disagreed (Figure 16). By comparison, in the 2022 He Tangata report, 47.7% of respondents agreed that they were paid fairly for the work they did, while 31.5% disagreed.

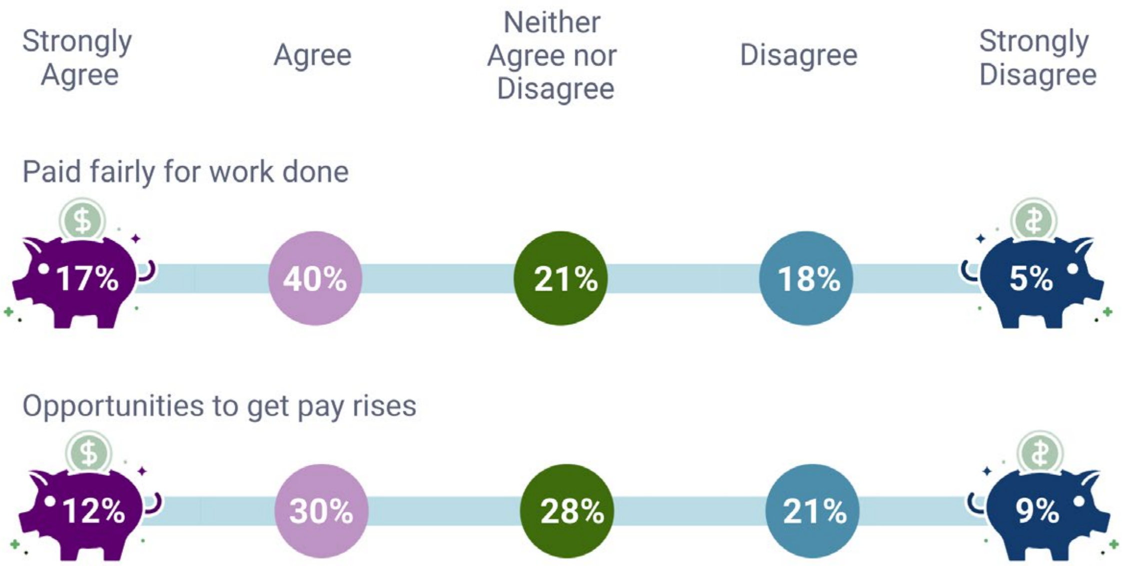
Permanent full-time (60.9%) and casual employees (65.4%) indicate the strongest agreement with being fairly paid, while fixed term/temporary (47.4%) and permanent part-time workers (46.9%) were less positive about the fairness of their pay.

Pay rises

Figure 16 shows that 41.9% of respondents agreed that they had opportunities for pay rises while 29.9% disagreed. The 2022 He Tangata survey results were very similar.

FIGURE 16.

Fair pay (N = 1,027) and pay rises (N = 991)



4

INDUSTRY ATTRACTION & TURNOVER INTENTION

What attracted you to the tourism/hospitality sector?

The most common theme from the open-ended questions regarding what attracted people to the industry was the sociable, people-based, and interactive nature of the work. Respondents valued the opportunity to work with and meet a variety of diverse people and have a positive impact on their experiences:

> *It's all about people and experiences. This sector revolves around providing excellent service and creating memorable moments for travellers.*
>
> *People! I have a real passion for people and connecting people. I like to form strong and genuine relationships and take the time to get to know people.*

Another key theme was the flexibility of the work and how it allowed for study, travel, other jobs, and relationships to be managed effectively. The opportunity to start a business was important, as was the fun, creative and challenging nature of the work:

> *Wanting to become self-employed after years in other industries, we decided to purchase a suitable property, quit our jobs and relocate … once open, we've found we love hosting guests.*
>
> *I needed to bring in some extra income and working bar work at nights was a way for me to do this without interrupting my day job.*
>
> *As a chef, I find immense joy and fulfilment in creating delightful and memorable dining experiences for guests. The dynamic and ever-evolving nature of this sector constantly challenges me to innovate and excel in my craft.*

The industry was also seen to embody sustainability and the natural expression of what it means to be Māori and care for people and the environment.

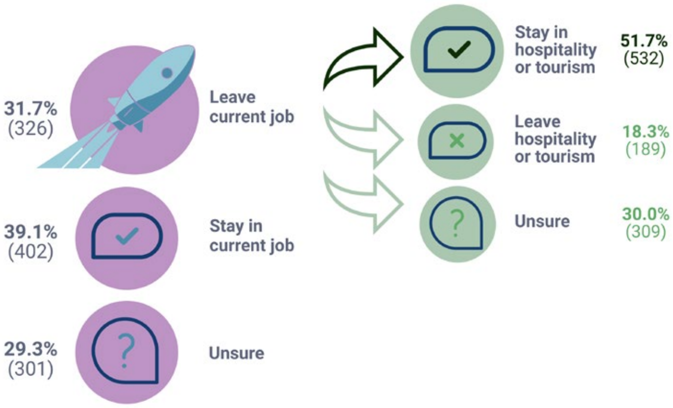
People, flexibility, fun and opportunity were also the leading themes regarding attraction to the industry in the 2022 report.

Turnover intention

It is concerning that turnover intention in the next 12 months at the job level has increased (Figure 17), with over half (61.0%) of respondents either intending to leave their job in the next 12 months (31.7%) or unsure if they will leave (29.3%). A similar picture was found in 2022, with 59.2% of respondents stating that they either expected to leave their current job (27.6%) or were unsure about leaving (31.6%).

FIGURE 17.

Turnover and sector movement intentions



Notes: Leave current job (N = 1,029); Stay in hospitality or tourism (N=1,030).

By business type, the group with the highest turnover intention were respondents working in restaurants and cafes (41.0%), followed by fast food (39.0%), and then accommodation (27.6%). However, for respondents intending to leave their jobs, it was more unclear whether they intended to leave the sector, with most responding 'No' or 'Unsure'.

There is an association between intention to leave their current job and age. The highest proportion of those intending to leave their job in the next 12 months were those aged under 25 (45.2%), with just 27.8% of this group not intending to leave. The next largest groups expressing that they intended to leave were those aged 25–34 years (36.4%) and 35–44 years (29.5%). Approximately half (50.3%; n = 76) of those who identified as neurodivergent (n = 151) believed they would leave their current job in the next year.

Large organisations (100+ people) had the lowest job turnover intention score (21.7%), followed by small organisations (1–5 people) at 25.4%. Mid-range organisations (20–99 people) scored between 31.4% and 36.7%. This was also the pattern for sector turnover scores.

Permanent full-time employees had the lowest turnover intention (25.8%), while fixed term/temporary (57.9%), permanent part-time (44.9%) and casual employees (43.6%) all showed significantly higher turnover intention.

Managers/supervisors had significantly lower turnover intention (26.8%) than non-managers (36.0%).

Qualitative analysis of reasons for leaving current job

Most comments by respondents surrounding their intentions to leave their current job (Table 6) were in a grouping that captured discontent with pay, concerns over hours (too many, not enough, unsocial hours and resulting poor work/life balance), and stress induced by high workloads, unpaid hours and increasingly aggressive and demanding customers. Many comments linked these three themes, e.g. "I'm not getting paid enough given the long and unsocial hours, the stress from angry customers". It should be noted that pay was the most significant driver of intention to leave by a large margin:

Cost of living. I can't make a living with this job.

I love my job, but I am severely underpaid for the level of experience I bring to the role.

Consistently understaffed… The managers also make it difficult to call in sick and I feel guilty if nobody covers the shift as I know it just makes the person working really stressed. It's a (basically) minimum-wage job that just isn't worth the stress. I would rather be broke.

The next most common theme highlighted moving on to new opportunities, careers, and travel. This group also captured those who never intended to stay in the job and are moving on to roles that are better aligned with the qualifications they hold or have just gained:

I feel isolated. There are hardly any other Māori in our industry and it's lonely after returning back to the industry.

I'm finishing my last year, year 13 and then I'm going into the Army.

The third grouping captures comments regarding poor conditions and toxic environments, a lack of career prospects, opportunities and growth, and a lack of appreciation and recognition. Many felt their skills and potential were not being well used:

Even when I hold a certificate which should push me towards a promotion, it feels like it's always dangled in front of me instead of promoting to the position I've worked hard towards and feel like I deserve.

TABLE 6.

What are the main reason(s) for wanting to leave your current job within the next 12 months?

Reasons	Number of responses for leaving job	Number of responses for leaving sector
Poor pay; getting a better-paid job	87	51
Better opportunities; new career; going to university; starting something new; starting own business; desire for a better job; travel; moving away	58	26
Long hours; not enough hours; bad hours; poor work-life balance	53	27
Poor career prospects; lack of opportunity; lack of growth	42	16
Bad management; bad communication; unfair treatment	38	13
Never a career; just a part-time job; new job better aligned with qualifications	26	33
Poor conditions; bad environment	26	13
Stressful/demanding/customers; stressful/high workload; unpaid work; abusive and aggressive customers	25	30
Not using personal skills; potential not recognised or appreciated	13	15
Promotion and advancement	12	
Burnout, mental health, feeling drained	10	11
Not good for families	5	5
Getting older; retirement; feeling out of touch	0	5

Intention to leave the sector

Of the respondents who intended to leave their jobs in the next 12 months (Figure 17), only 18.3% intended to leave the hospitality and tourism sector altogether in the next 12 months, compared with 33.7% in 2022. It was also found this year that of those wanting to change their job, 51.7% did not want to leave the sector (30.0% were unsure), as compared to 2022, where just 18.9% did not want to leave the sector (with 47.4% being unsure).

The percentage intending to leave the sector in the next 12 months was nearly identical for women (31.5%) and men (31.7%), but higher for those identifying as another gender (50%; n = 4).

Again, there is an association between intention to leave the sector and age. Of those intending to leave their job, the highest proportion of those intending to also leave the sector in the next 12 months were those younger than 25 years old (26.2%), followed by those in the 25–34 age group (22.7%). Most individuals in the 45–64 age group who intended to leave their job in the next year intended to remain in the sector, reporting intentions not to leave by those in the 45–54 year (64.2%) and 55–64 year (64.4%) groups.

In a similar fashion to turnover intention for jobs, turnover intention for leaving the sector showed permanent full-time employees registering the lowest turnover intention (13.9%) followed by casuals (28.2%), permanent part-timers (28.0%) and fixed-term or temporary employees (21.1%).

Qualitative analysis of reasons for leaving the sector

As Table 6 shows, respondents' reasons for their intention to leave the sector closely matched those comments regarding leaving specific job roles. Again, pay was a clear leader, with concerns over hours and stress commonly grouped:

Upper management want 2019 results on 2024 staffing. Quality staff are hard to come by. Wages have not kept up with demands arising from the cost of living. Extended period of no days off (currently 41 days straight) has led to health issues. The stress is not worth the experience.

The pay is absolute trash. Especially considering I work every weekend till 3am, I get no extra money for working weekends or past 12am…I have a lack of a social life and find it hard to have a normal sleeping schedule.

There is limited room for growth financially within this sector when you compare the number of hours worked vs earnings compared to other sectors.

The next most common theme also highlighted moving on to new opportunities and captured those who never intended to stay in the job and are moving on to roles better aligned with their qualifications. Lack of career prospects was not as strongly highlighted, compared to comments regarding leaving their job. The third grouping captures comments regarding poor conditions and the fact that respondents' skills and potential were not being used well:

There's just a raft of issues concerning sexism in our industry which are completely ignored, including gendered and Indigenous pay gaps. Not to mention the lack of breaks, systematic wage theft, and the overall lack of respect … Anyone who believes hospitality is a low-skilled industry should try a high-volume night behind the bar, shaking a million cocktails while dealing with customers and often violence on shift.

It's horrible. No accommodation in Queenstown, especially affordable accommodation for the amount we get paid. They always overwork their current workers because they are understaffed, and they wonder why everyone quit this place.

Another respondent was clear in their reasons for wanting to stay in the sector:

Work environment: I am fortunate to be part of a team that values collaboration and innovation. The supportive and positive work environment motivates me to stay and contribute to our collective success. I am committed to achieving excellence in my craft, and my current job provides the platform and resources necessary to pursue this goal. Leaving now would disrupt the progress I have made and the goals I have set for myself.

5

DEVELOPING AND THRIVING AT WORK

This section explores developing and thriving at work. Firstly, confidence, skills, and perceptions of training and development opportunities are examined. Then, thriving at work is also explored, comprising vitality and learning dimensions.

Thriving is a psychological state composed of the joint experience of vitality and learning. Porath et al. (2012) define thriving as “people who are thriving experience growth and momentum marked by both a sense of feeling energised and alive (vitality) and a sense that they are continually improving and getting better at what they do (learning)” (p. 12).

Confidence and skills

Notably, 90% of respondents felt they had the skills to do their job confidently (Figure 18). Consistently high results were found across all age groups and from those who identified as neurodivergent (89.2%).

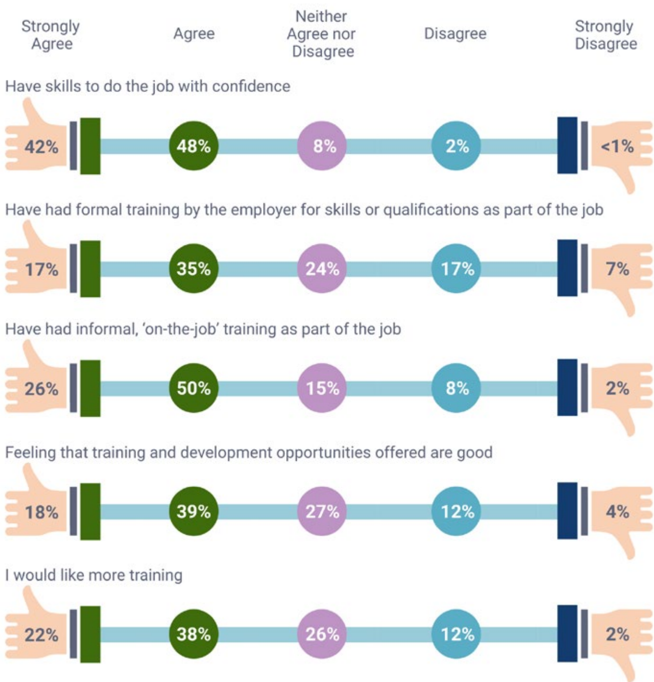
It is more unclear what underpins the high ratings for skills to do the job confidently (Figure 18), given that just 52.6% agreed that they have had formal training by the employer for skills or qualifications as part of their job. An outlier is those aged 55–65 years, who reported 37.2% agreement, 31.4% neutral and 31.4% disagreement. Most respondents aged over 65 years (n = 37) agreed that they had formal training (48.6%).

Unsurprisingly, formal training was less common in small organisations (1–5 people), scoring approximately 10% lower (47.1% agreement) than large organisations (100+ people) at 57.3% agreement. However, informal training was scored evenly across all organisation sizes.

Formal training was less common for permanent part-time workers (46.1%) and casuals (52.6%) compared with permanent full-time workers (58.0%). Informal training was scored evenly across all employment agreement types.

FIGURE 18.

Job skills and training



Notes: N = 986; 1,026; 1,027; 1,027; 1,027.

It is apparent that respondents have often learned by doing, with three-quarters of respondents agreeing they have had informal training on the job, consistent across the age groups. It was found to be even higher for neurodivergent respondents (78.2%).

Most (57.2%) respondents agreed that training and development opportunities were good, and this finding was consistent across genders. This indicates a considerable improvement on the 2022 He Tangata report, where only 40.5% of 2022 respondents felt that training opportunities were good.

However, it is concerning that a further 27.1% were neutral about such opportunities. This suggests that further exposure to workplace learning opportunities is warranted, as evidenced in Figure 18, which shows that 60.0% would like further opportunities for training and development. Individuals aged 25–35 years showed the most interest (68.4%) in further training.

Thriving at work: The learning dimension

When respondents were asked if they often learned at work, 61.4% agreed (Figure 19). A higher percentage (70.2%) agreed they learned more at work with time. Close to three-quarters (72.0%) agreed that they saw themselves as continually improving at work, which was consistent across all age groups, and two-thirds (67.0%) felt they were learning at work.

Overall, 64.8% felt that they were developing a lot as a person at work; a higher rate of Pacific Peoples (85.8%), Indian (87.1%) and Other Asian (94.0%) also felt they were developing.

The percentage of respondents who answered as neutral (neither agree nor disagree) across all these five learning questions sits between 18.9% and 25.6%. This suggests there is still work to be done to help hospitality and tourism employees realise the learning that such employment can provide.

Permanent part-time workers (49.8%) and casuals (48.7%) were significantly less positive about training than permanent full-time employees (62.8%). A significant lack of training opportunities was demonstrated in this data.

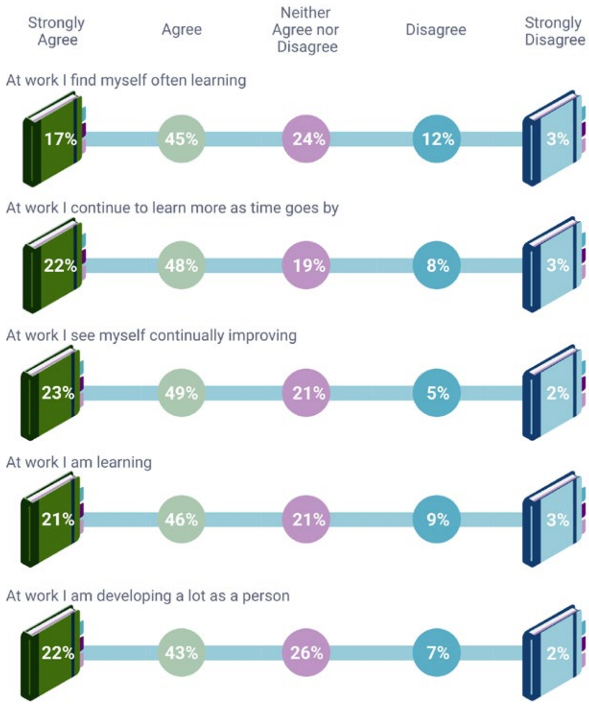
A clear message is being sent about most respondents' desires for further development (59.7%), with only 14.4% overall saying they did not want further training and development.

The percentage of respondents who identified as neurodiverse who agreed they wanted more training was 70.2% (n = 106) compared to those who identified as neurotypical (56.7% n = 439). By business type, the highest agreement for more training was by those working in fast food (65.7%).

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored approximately 10% lower (52.5%) than large organisations (100+ people) (62.1% agreement).

FIGURE 19.

Learning and developing at work



Notes: N = 984; 983; 982; 982; 983.

Promotion

Regarding opportunities for promotion, 47.7% of respondents said they believed there were opportunities for them to be promoted (Figure 20). This is an improvement from 2022, when 42.2% of respondents reported they believed there were promotion opportunities.

The one age group that was more optimistic about promotion opportunities was those aged 25–34 (53.5%), while only 27.9% of those aged 55–64 years agreed there were opportunities for promotion. The belief that there were opportunities for promotion did diminish with age, with just 27.9% of those aged 55–64, and 37.8% of those aged 65 years plus agreeing with the question.

FIGURE 20.

Promotion opportunities

Notes: Opportunities (N=1,026); Likely to get promoted (N = 1,027).

Of concern is that approximately half of respondents (48.2%) believed they would get promoted or get more pay as they became more skilled at their jobs. However, this again shows a considerable improvement from the 2022 He Tangata report, where only 39.4% of respondents felt improvements in skill would lead to promotion and higher pay. Lack of clarity regarding promotion and pay advancement can impact motivation to undertake further learning at work.

Those with the highest levels of uncertainty regarding the relationship between skills, promotion, and pay were respondents 45 years and older. For those 25–35 years, 56.3% agreed that they were likely to get promoted or get more pay as they became more skilled at their jobs.

Small organisations (1–5 people) scored approximately 10% lower (41.6%) for agreement than larger organisations of 50–99 people (53.3%) and 100+ people (48.5%).

Thriving at work: The vitality dimension

Vitality represents a sense that one is energised and has a zest for work. Firstly, just over half of respondents (55.3%) agreed that they felt alive and vital at work (Figure 21), with a clear minority (17.2%) disagreeing and the rest unsure (27.5%). The lowest in agreement were those aged younger than 25 years (42.1%) and then those aged 25–34 years (54.0%). The highest scoring group were those 65 years or older (78.3%).

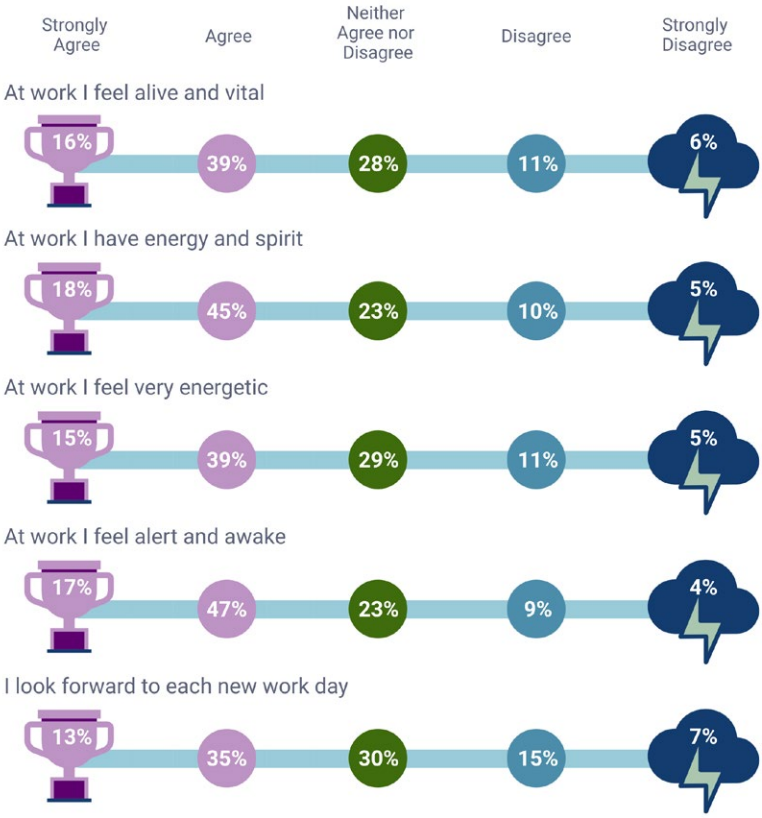
Over 60% agreed that they had energy and spirit at work (62.5%). Pacific Peoples (74.6%) and Indian (77.5%) respondents had higher agreement rates. By age, those aged 55–64 years (73.8%) were the highest group to have energy and spirit at work. Those aged younger than 25 years reported the lowest rate of agreement (48.9%).

Overall, just 54.8% agreed that they felt very energetic at work. The range of agreement was considerable, with those younger than 25 years at 39.3% through to those aged 65 years and older at 75.7%.

Compared to responses regarding being energetic at work, a higher percentage of respondents did report that they felt alert and awake at work (64.2%).

FIGURE 21.

Feelings at work



Notes: N = 982; 983; 980; 983; 981.

It is concerning that fewer than half (48.0%) of respondents reported that they looked forward to each day. Less than a third (31.9%) of respondents younger than 25 agreed with this question. Those aged 65 years and over were most looking forward to each day (70.2%), followed by respondents aged 55–65 (67.8%).

Men were more optimistic about each new workday (53.5%) than women (45.0%). Those of another gender reported the highest rates of indifference (42.9%) or disagreement (42.9%). Ethnicity-wise, the groups that ranked above 50% agreement in terms of looking forward to each new day were Māori (51.6%), Indian (71.4%), Filipino (52.9%), Chinese (58.5%) and Other Asian (76%).

All the thriving at work results suggest that further work could be done in the wellness and development space with hospitality and tourism employees to support them in achieving improved levels of thriving.

6

RESPECT, SUPPORT AND SATISFACTION

Encouragingly, almost three quarters (74.3%) of respondents felt they were treated with dignity and respect by managers/owners, an increase from the 2022 He Tangata report, which showed a 68.8% agreement.

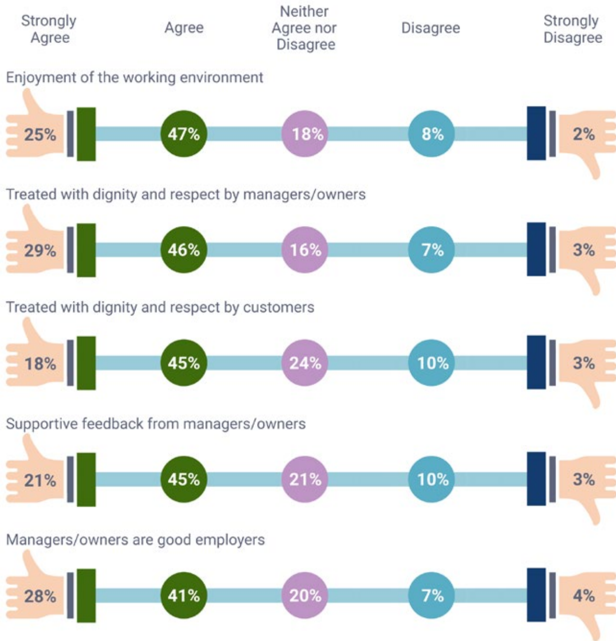
Those working in other tourism (culture and heritage, transport, tourism and travel services) reported the highest agreement (80.1%), compared with fast-food workers (56.9%). Only 9.7% of respondents felt they were not treated with dignity or respect by superiors.

Of those who agreed that they were treated with dignity and respect by managers/owners (74.3%), Filipino respondents reported the highest levels of agreement (80.0%), followed by Indian respondents (78.8%) and Māori respondents (77.5%).

Younger workers under 25 years of age reported the lowest level of agreement (66.4%) for being treated with dignity and respect by managers/owners. Those identifying as another gender (n = 7) all answered that they were treated with dignity and respect by owners/managers, and 74.4% (n = 458) of women and 73.3% (n = 269) of men also agreed.

FIGURE 22.

Dignity, respect and the work environment



Notes: N = 992; 988; 987; 987; 987.

Permanent full-time workers (76.5%) and casuals (77.9%) reported the highest levels of agreement for being treated with respect by managers and owners, followed by permanent part-timers (70.8%) and fixed-term or temporary employees (63.1%).

Compared to the overall agreement for being treated with dignity by owners/managers (74.3%), the overall agreement for being treated with dignity by customers was lower at 62.7%. Fewer than 10% felt they were not treated with dignity or respect, but this time by customers (9.8%). By business type, those working in accommodation (73.4%) and then other tourism (culture and heritage, transport, tourism and travel services) reported the highest agreement (69.4%), compared with fast-food workers (43.8%).

Of those who agreed that customers treated them with dignity and respect (62.7%), Māori respondents reported lower levels of agreement (53.9%), and 32.6% were unsure.

Workers aged 25 or younger had the lowest level of agreement (51.5%) for being treated with dignity and respect by customers. Those who identified as neurodivergent also reported lower levels of agreement (57.3%) for this question. Permanent full-time workers reported the highest levels of agreement for being treated with respect by customers (66.1%), followed by casuals (57.2%), permanent part-timers (55.8%) and fixed-term or temporary employees (52.6%).

■ ENJOYMENT AT WORK

Enjoyment at work is important as employee perceptions of fun at work can improve work attitudes and behaviours, enhance trust in co-workers and managers, increase job satisfaction and engagement, and decrease turnover intentions (Abdelmotaleb, 2024). A high level of enjoyment was notable from the survey, with 72% at least agreeing that they enjoyed their working environment (Figure 22), which is an increase from the 2022 He Tangata report, which showed a level of 69.4% enjoyment. Fewer than 10% said they did not find enjoyment and 18% were unsure.

For all ethnic groups, agreement by respondents that they enjoyed their workplace ranged from 70%–78.4%. The one outlier were Chinese respondents, who agreed at just 60.0%, with a further 29.3% being neutral.

Those in the 45–55 year age group reported the highest levels of enjoyment (81.0%), with 70.1% for 55–64 years, and 86.4% for those aged 65 years and older. By comparison, just 59.5% of those younger than 25 years agreed that they enjoyed their working environment.

While permanent full-time workers, casuals and fixed term/temporary employees all registered around 76% agreement with enjoying the work environment, permanent part-time employees were considerably less happy at 59.7% agreement.

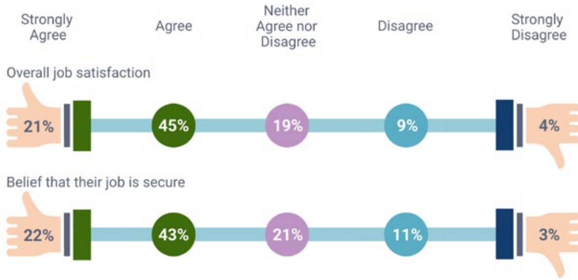
Respondents were asked if they got supportive feedback from managers/owners. As Figure 22 above shows, around two-thirds (66.3%) agreed that this was the case, with low levels of disagreement (13.0%). Once more this shows an improvement on the 2022 results, where 59.3% of respondents felt they received supportive feedback.

There was an association between receiving supportive feedback from a supervisor and age, with higher levels of agreement found among those 45 years and over (76.9%). For those aged younger than 25 years, 60% agreed, 21.7% were unsure, and 18.3% disagreed.

There was clear agreement that respondents perceived managers/owners to be good employers (69.2%), with just 10.7% disagreeing. This shows a modest improvement over the 2022 figures, where 65.0% of respondents felt their managers were good employers. Agreement was lower (61.3%) for respondents who identified as neurodivergent.

FIGURE 23.

Job satisfaction (N = 986) and security (N = 992)



Respondents aged 65 and over had the highest rates of job satisfaction (83.7%; n = 31), followed by those aged 45–54 (74.1%; n = 120). The lowest agreement rate (54.9%) was by respondents younger than 25 years. This was also the case for those who identified as neurodivergent (53.0%). Regarding gender, 67.7% of women, 67.4% of men, and 57.1% of those of another gender all agreed that they were satisfied with their jobs.

Managers/supervisors showed a significantly higher rate of job satisfaction (74.4%) than non-managers (60.9%), with managers being noticeably above the average for all respondents (67.5%) and non-managers being significantly below the average.

When asked about job security, most respondents believed their job was secure (65.1%), with a further 20.9% unsure and 14% disagreeing. The rate in the smallest organisations (1–5 people) was approximately 10% lower at 58.2% agreement compared to large organisations (100+ people) at 68.6% agreement.

Overall job satisfaction

Given the positive ratings for enjoyment of the workplace, treatment at work, supportive feedback and managers/owners as good employers, it is not surprising that over two-thirds of respondents expressed positive overall job satisfaction (67.5%). Only 13.1% expressed dissatisfaction and 9.4% were unsure. Overall job satisfaction increased by approximately 5% from 62.2% in 2022 to 67.5% in 2024.

Job satisfaction agreement was highest for those in other tourism (culture and heritage, transport, tourism and travel services) (81.2%) and lowest for fast food (41.8%). Respondents with permanent full-time and fixed-term/temporary roles had higher rates of job satisfaction (74.2% and 73.7%), compared with casuals (61.1%) and permanent part-time employees (55.8%).

EXTREMELY HIGH
LEVELS OF AGREEMENT

- 91% -

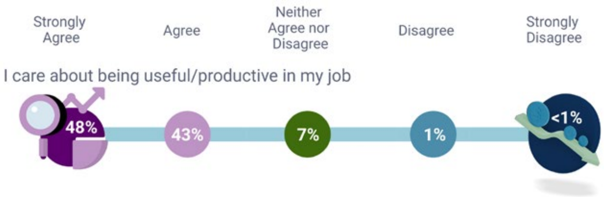
were found when respondents were asked if they cared about being

PRODUCTIVE AT WORK

Of all the questions asked in the survey, this one question the most positive result.

FIGURE 24.

I care about being useful/ productive in my job



Note: N = 986.

High agreement was found across all age groups, with 97.3% agreement by those aged over 65 years and 85.6% for those aged 55–64. Clearly, respondents at all age levels cared about performing well at work. These results should also be considered in line with the results about wanting further development at work.

Strong concern for being in a profitable workplace was also found, **with just over three-quarters (76.1%) of respondents agreeing that profitability mattered.** Only 7.2% of respondents disagreed that profitability mattered. Care for profitability ranged from 61.6% for those under 25 years to 86.6% for those aged 45–54 years. The highest group in agreement (89.1%) were those aged 65 years or older.

Results were also fairly consistent by gender, ranging from men (80.8%), women (73.3%) and another gender (71.4%). Large organisations had the lowest rates of 'strongly agree' with this statement (100+; 30.8%) compared with 49% in organisations with 6–19 people.

FIGURE 25.

I care about my organisation being profitable

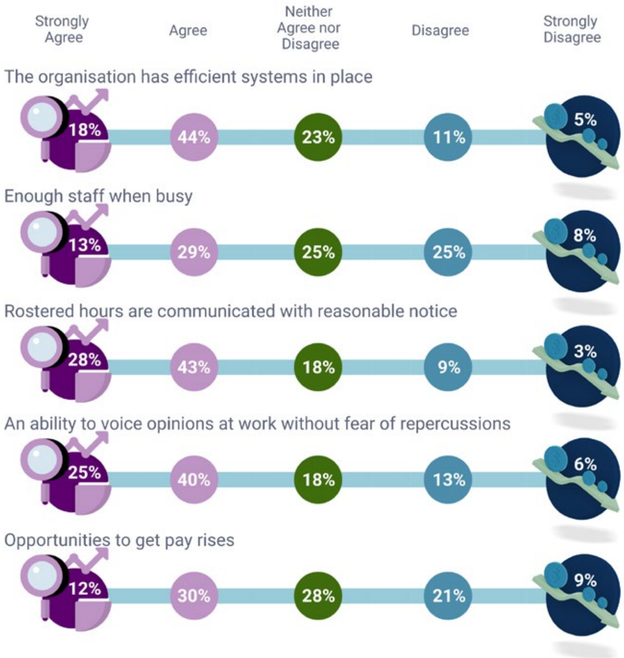
Note: N = 986.

Compared with the questions about performance and profitability, there were lower levels of agreement (61.7%) when respondents were asked whether their organisation had efficient systems. Fewer than half of respondents agreed they had enough staff when busy (42.1%).

While it is encouraging that 71.0% of respondents agreed that rostered hours are communicated with reasonable notice (compared to 67.9% in 2022), there is still room for improvement on this front.

FIGURE 26.

Organisational efficiency and communication



Notes: N= 985; 992; 992; 987; 991.

Almost two-thirds of respondents agreed that they had the ability to voice their opinions at work without fear (64.3%). By comparison, only 59.9% of respondents in the 2022 survey felt they could speak freely. By business type, those working in other tourism (culture and heritage, transport, tourism and travel services) reported the highest agreement (73.1%) with their ability to voice their opinions, as opposed to fast-food workers (39.7%).

There is an association between voice and age, with younger workers agreeing to a lower degree (52.7%). This increased with age, with those aged 65 and older having the most ability to voice their opinions at work (80.0%). Fixed-term/temporary workers reported the highest ability to voice opinions (73.7%), followed by permanent full-time employees (69.7%) and casual workers (63.7%). Permanent part-timers showed the lowest levels of ability to voice their opinions (52.8%).

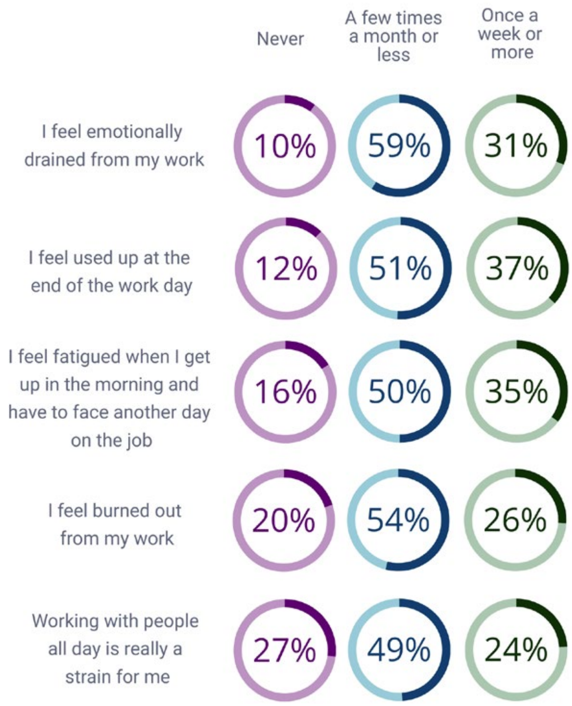
7

SAFETY, BULLYING AND BURNOUT

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach et al., 2016) is a scientifically developed measure of burnout and is used widely in research studies around the world. The five main questions from the inventory listed below were used to calculate emotional exhaustion. The higher the mean score, the higher the emotional exhaustion.

FIGURE 27.

Feelings about work



For the emotional exhaustion sub-scale of the MBI-GS, the mean score for all respondents was 17.71 (SD = 8.2). The lowest possible score is 0 and the highest possible score is 30. There were significant variations in burnout when cross-tabulated with various demographic criteria.

Manager/supervisor vs front-line

Table 7 shows front-line staff reporting higher levels of burnout than managers and supervisors.

TABLE 7.

Burnout scores for managers and non-managers (N = 979)

	Mean	n	Standard deviation
Manager	16.9	479	8.0
Non-manager	18.5	500	8.3

ROLE

Table 8 shows that amongst the front-line staff, fast-food workers had the highest burnout score (22.6), followed by chefs (21.5), and security/door staff (20.2). Customer-facing hospitality jobs were high scoring with waiters (18.8), bar staff (18.7) and baristas (19.4) all above the average score of 17.71. Kitchen hands (19.2) and cleaners (19.1) also scored above-average levels of burnout. Tourism roles all returned below-average burnout scores, with the office and administration roles showing the lowest levels of emotional exhaustion, with scores between 14.4 and 17.6. Tour guides scored the lowest levels of burnout, with a score of 12.5.

TABLE 8.

Burnout scores by role (N = 478)

Role	Mean	n	Standard deviation
Fast-food worker	22.6	87	7.9
Chef	21.5	22	6.4
Security/door staff	20.3	4	11.8
Gaming operator	19.8	4	14.1
Barista	19.4	20	7.5
Kitchen hand	19.2	33	7.5
Cleaner	19.1	14	8.5
Wait person/food and beverage attendant	18.9	63	8.2
Bar person	18.7	27	7.8
Front office	18.6	33	8.8
Tourism sales/service	17.6	19	8.9
Transport	15.9	9	8.5
Housekeeping	15.6	30	9.2
Administration	15.5	39	6.5
Airline cabin crew	15.3	3	2.1
Regional tourism organisation employee	14.7	7	7.0
Tourism business operator	14.6	5	7.9
IT, finance and marketing	14.4	14	5.0
Tour guide	12.5	6	7.3
Other	17.6	39	8.9

Table 9 shows that respondents who reported being neurodivergent scored higher levels of emotional exhaustion than respondents who reported being neurotypical. Interestingly, those who were unsure if they were neurodivergent also reported higher than-average levels of burnout.

TABLE 9.

Burnout scores for neurodivergent and neurotypical respondents (N = 978)

Neurodiversity	Mean	n	Standard deviation
Yes	21.9	147	8.8
No	16.6	740	7.6
Unsure	20.0	91	8.9

Table 10 shows that female respondents (18.2) scored higher levels of burnout than male respondents (16.7). Interestingly, those who identified as another gender reported the highest levels of burnout of any survey respondents (24.7; n = 7).

TABLE 10.

Burnout scores for neurodivergent and neurotypical respondents (N = 978)

Gender	Mean	n	Standard deviation
Male	16.8	363	8.2
Female	18.2	608	8.1
Another gender	24.7	7	7.1

There was a clear relationship between youth and higher burnout, with the youngest cohort (25 years and younger) scoring almost double (21) the burnout score of the oldest cohort (65 years and over at 11.9).

TABLE 11.

Burnout scores by age (N = 977)

Age	Mean	n	Standard deviation
< 25	21.0	234	8.2
25–34	18.6	277	7.9
35–44	16.8	227	8.2
45–54	14.9	119	7.1
55–64	14.6	84	6.9
65+	11.9	36	6.6

The results from the 2024 survey indicate burnout steadily reduced with increased tenure. The cohort with the shortest tenure (less than 1 year in the sector) scored higher (18.1) than the cohort with long service (more than 20 years at 15.9).

TABLE 12.

Burnout scores by years of working in the sector (n = 979)

Tenure	Mean	N	Standard deviation
Less than 1 year	18.1	92	9.2
Between 1 and 3 years	18.9	261	8.0
Between 3 and 5 years	18.0	188	7.8
Between 5 and 10 years	17.2	201	8.0
Between 10 and 20 years	16.8	136	8.6
More than 20 years	15.9	101	7.8

Interestingly, mid-size SMEs (20–49 people) showed the highest level of burnout (18.7), while micro-organisations (1–5 people) showed the lowest (15.9).

TABLE 13.

Burnout scores by organisational size (N = 979)

Organisational size (people)	Mean	n	Standard deviation
1–5	15.9	130	8.198
6–19	17.7	301	8.026
20–49	18.7	252	8.143
50–99	17.8	142	8.353
100+	17.5	154	8.344

Permanent full-time employees (17.0) and casuals (17.8) had similar scores, while contractors (13.2) showed significantly lower levels of burnout. Permanent part-time employees showed increased levels of burnout (19.4), but fixed-term and temporary workers showed the highest levels of burnout (21.8).

TABLE 13.

Burnout scores by employment type (N = 879)

Employment type	Mean	n	Standard deviation
Permanent part-time with employer	19.4	233	8.1
Permanent full-time with employer	17.0	530	7.9
Casual/on-call with employer	17.8	75	8.5
Fixed-term or temporary	21.9	19	7.5
Contractor	13.3	17	8.0
Don’t know/ Unsure	22.8	5	9.4

Figure 28 shows that 79.0% of respondents knew who to talk to about health and safety issues.

Pacific (83.3%) and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (86.4%) respondents were more certain than other ethnic groups about who to talk to regarding health and safety issues.

Younger workers were less likely to know who to talk to about health and safety in their workplace. For those under 25 years, just 68.3% answered 'yes', compared with 21.7% who answered 'no', and 10.0% who answered unsure.

FIGURE 28.

Do you know who to talk to about health and safety issues in your workplace? (N = 974)

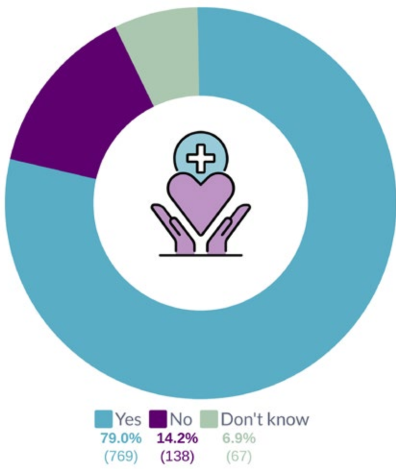


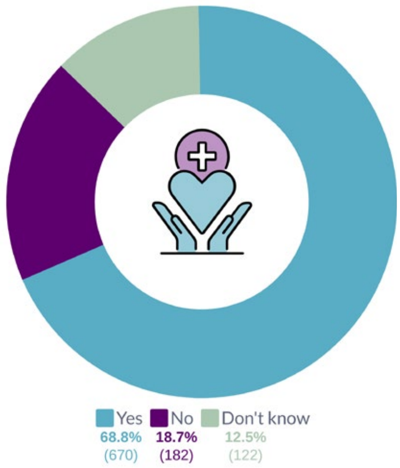
Figure 29 shows that just over two-thirds of respondents (68.8%) felt that health and safety risks were effectively managed in their workplaces.

This indicates a modest improvement on the 2022 He Tangata results, which showed that 64.7% of respondents felt that health and safety risks were effectively managed in their workplaces.

Chinese respondents agreed at a lower level (46.3%).

FIGURE 29.

Do you feel that health and safety risks are managed effectively in your workplace? (N = 974)



■ BULLYING OR HARASSMENT AT WORK

Experiencing bullying or harassment

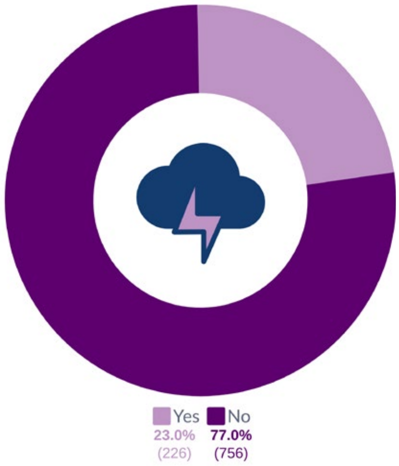
As Figure 30 shows, 23.0% of respondents personally experienced bullying or harassment in their workplace in the last 24 months, while 77.0% of respondents did not. This was fairly consistent across gender (Yes, for 21.6% of males and 23.8% of females). The 2022 He Tangata report returned almost identical results.

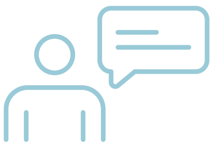
Māori respondents reported the highest rates of bullying or harassment (31.5%; n = 28). Small organisations (1–5 people) had the lowest rates of experiencing bullying or harassment (14.5%), rising steadily to 28.5% in 20–49 people organisations, and then falling back to 21.4% in organisations with 100 people or more.

Fixed-term/temporary workers showed the highest levels of experiencing bullying or harassment (36.8%) compared to rates around the low 20s for all other employment agreement types.

FIGURE 30.

Have you personally experienced bullying or harassment in your workplace in the last 24 months? (N = 982).





Just 17.0% of tourism, travel and accommodation workers reported experiencing bullying or harassment in the past 24 months, compared to 23.0% of hospitality workers.

The types of tourism and accommodation businesses that reported the highest levels of harassment were water transport and cruises (25.0%), adventure and outdoor (24.2%), attractions, conferences and events (19.4%), tour services (19.2%), and accommodation (18.6%). The business types with the lowest rates of reported bullying or harassment were culture and heritage (0%), regional tourism organisations (4.5%), and travel agencies (8.0%).

In hospitality, the business types with the highest levels of reported bullying or harassment were casinos (62.5%), chartered clubs (50.0%), fast food (37.7%), restaurants (25.7%), and bars/pubs/nightclubs (25.4%). Business types with the lowest rates of reported bullying or harassment were cinemas (0%), cafes (22%) and catering/events (25%).

Witnessing bullying or harassment

In 2024, 32.4% of respondents reported witnessing bullying or harassment. By comparison, 33.9% of respondents in 2022 reported witnessing abuse.

Regarding having witnessed bullying or harassment of others in their workplace of others, Māori and Pacific Peoples reported the highest levels of agreement, at 42.7% and 42.9%, respectively. Small organisations (1–5 people) had the lowest rates of witnessed bullying or harassment at 19.2%, with the rest of the organisational sizes returning around 30% agreement.

Main offenders

In 2024, the main offenders of the reported bullying or harassment were owners/managers/supervisors in 38.6% of cases, co-workers/other employees in 35.0% of cases, and customers in 26.0% of cases.

8

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

For the first time in this report series, employees were asked about the importance of environmental sustainability when making employment decisions. As shown in Figure 31, 58.2% agreed that it was an important factor when deciding to work for an employer, while 14.1% stated that it was not important. A sizeable group answered as neutral (27.7%). By business groups, the highest agreement rate was found in those working in accommodation (65.1%). Larger organisations (50–100+ people) showed a 10% higher rating than small organisations (49 employees and fewer).

FIGURE 31.

Environmental concerns

Notes: N = 992; 989.

The consideration of environmental sustainability as an important factor when making employment decisions differed by age. Those aged 25–34 years reported the highest rates of agreement (68.0%), followed by individuals 35–44 years (61.4%) and then 45–54 years (58.7%). Importance was lower for those aged younger than 25 years (51.0%), followed by individuals 55–64 (45.4%) and then those 65 years or older (43.2%). Results did not differ substantially by gender, with 56.9% of men, 59% of women and 57.2% of those of another gender all agreeing on environmental sustainability matters.

TABLE 15.

Environmental sustainability is important to me when considering working for an employer (by age)

Age (years)	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree	Disagree	Strongly dis-agree	Total
<25	16.5%	34.5%	34.2%	10.1%	5.1%	237
25–34	21.4%	46.6%	18.5%	9.3%	4.3%	281
35–44	20.6%	40.8%	27.2%	7.5%	3.9%	228
45–54	18.2%	40.5%	27.3%	11.6%	2.5%	121
55–64	12.8%	32.6%	37.2%	15.1%	2.3%	86
65+	18.9%	24.3%	35.1%	13.5%	8.1%	37

Respondents were also asked if they considered that good environmental sustainability practices existed in their workplace. Similar to the question on the importance of environmental sustainability practices, just 56.8% agreed that such practices were good (Figure 31). The highest level of agreement was found in those working in accommodation (71%). Larger organisations (50–100+ people) showed a 10% higher rating than smaller organisations (49 employees and fewer).

9

CONCLUSION

Hospitality and tourism are significant parts of the New Zealand economy. Examining the experiences of those working in and across hospitality and tourism is important to determine how the hosts to the world themselves are feeling on a range of employment dimensions.

As this report highlights, the 2024 Hospitality and Tourism Employment Survey generated results that show the sector is somewhat at a crossroads.

Many results show how employers have rebounded to provide rewarding employment experiences. Employees felt a sense of revitalisation overall in their work and workplaces. Overall job satisfaction has increased 5.0% from 2022

Of concern is that turnover intention at the job level in the next 12 months has increased. Over half (61.0%) of respondents were either intending to leave their job (31.7%) or were unsure if they would leave (29.3%). A similar picture was found in 2022, with 59.2% of respondents saying they either expected to leave their current job (27.6%) or were unsure about leaving (31.6%).

Of those intending to leave their job in the next 12 months, only 18.3% intended to leave the hospitality and tourism sector altogether in the next 12 months, compared with 33.7% in 2022. Of those wanting to change their job, 51.7% did not want to leave the sector (30.0% were unsure), as compared to 2022, where just 18.9% did not want to leave the sector (with 47.4% unsure).

Work is still required to address pay levels, vitality, and learning at work. While 89.9% of respondents reported that they have the skills to do their jobs with confidence, over half (59.7%) want further training and development.

Key data from the report shows significant improvement across many employment measures compared to 2022. However, there remain 'pockets' of concern: young, female, neurodiverse, front-line workers in small hospitality organisations reported the least positive results. There were also key differences between hospitality and tourism employees. Tourism employees reported lower turnover intention, higher wages, greater job satisfaction and lower levels of burnout, bullying, and harassment. The data suggests that larger organisations and tourism businesses provide better working environments compared with smaller hospitality organisations.

If we had a magic wand....

Overall, this report provides evidence for further efforts and interventions in some key areas:

- Resources for supporting small organisations to improve conditions and experiences for young employees. As hospitality and tourism work is often the first job for many young workers, policy and resources applied here could make a strong impact.
- Resources and policy focussed on improving clear job and career progression. Employees were found to have concerns about insufficient training, progression to senior and better-paid roles as their skills increased, and a lack of general support for pursuing pathways to success.
- Concentrating resources into the areas of pay, bullying or harassment, and employment conditions could provide rich dividends in terms of lowering the high rates of turnover intention that drain so many skilled hospitality and tourism workers from the sector.

In closing, we feel it is important to finish with the words of an employee who explains:

As hospitality is one of the few industries left which can't be overtaken by technology, human intervention to determine a level of service gives a unique advantage for providing a homely experience to our guests. It is also one of the oldest surviving industries with rich cultural influence. Financially it's a major contributor to the GDP of several nations and employment in individual cities. It also provides a unique experience to understand the psychology of the guests and how people behave.

▪ REFERENCES

Abdelmotaleb, M. (2024). Exploring the effect of perceived fun at work on hospitality employees' behaviors in and out of work. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 36(7), 2214–2231. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2023-0139

Baum, T., Mooney, S. K. K., Robinson, R. N. S., & Solnet, D. (2020). Covid-19's impact on the hospitality workforce – New crisis or amplification of the norm? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(9), 2813–2829. https://doi.org/10.1108/ijchm-04-2020-0314

BDO New Zealand. (2024). *Tourism budget 2024*. https://www.bdo.nz/en-nz/microsites/budget-2024/tourism%E2%80%8B-hospitality

Doocey, M. (2024, February 29). *Tourism data shows determination of sector* [Press release]. https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/tourism-data-shows-determination-sector

Ioannides, D., Gyimóthy, S., & James, L. (2021). From liminal labor to decent work: A human-centered perspective on sustainable tourism employment. *Sustainability*, 13(2). https://doi.org/10.3390/su13020851

Kānoa – Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit. (2024). *Regional infrastructure fund*. https://www.growregions.govt.nz/new-funding/regional-infrastructure-fund

Maslach, C., Jackson, S. E., & Leiter, M. P. (2016). *Maslach burnout inventory manual* (4th ed.). Mind Garden.

Porath, C., Spreitzer, G., Gibson, C., & Garnett, F. G. (2012). Thriving at work: Toward its measurement, construct validation, and theoretical refinement. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 33(2), 250–275. https://doi.org/10.1002/job.756

Restaurant Association of New Zealand. (2024, July 28). 2024 *Restaurant Association Hospitality report*. https://www.restaurantnz.co.nz/product/2024-restaurant-association-hospitality-report-copy/

Stats NZ. (2024). *Tourism satellite account: Year ended March 2023*. https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/tourism-satellite-account-year-ended-march-2023/

Tourism New Zealand. (2024). *Tourism impact*. https://www.tourismnewzealand.com/insights/tourism-impact/

Williamson, D., & Harris, C. (2019). Talent management and unions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management,* 31(10), 3838–3854. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2018-0877

Williamson, D., & Harris, C. (2022). From corporatist consensus to neo-liberal revolution: A gendered analysis of the hotel workers union and its impact on (un) sustainable employment practices in the New Zealand hotel sector, 1955–2000. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism,* 30(12), 2878–2894. https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2021.1928146

Williamson, D., & Harris, C. (2024). So how did we get here? A historical case study of migrant employment in the New Zealand hotel sector. *Labour History,* 125–144. https://doi.org/10.3828/labourhistory.2024.29

Williamson, D., & Rasmussen, E. (2022). *He Tangata: A research report on tourism and hospitality employment conditions in New Zealand*. https://www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/26204-he-tangata-tourism-and-hospitality-workforce-survey

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to thank the following people for their important contributions to this report:

The MBIE Team

Andrew Lavery (Academic Consulting)

Alexandra Turcu (New Zealand Policy Research Institute - AUT)

NZ Chefs Association

Unite Union

Hotel Council Aotearoa

Tourism Industry Aotearoa

Hospitality New Zealand

Travel Agents' Association New Zealand

Restaurant Association of New Zealand

Regional Tourism New Zealand

Pacific International Hotel Management School

Appendix 1: Location of work (N = 1029)

Location	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Northland	22	2.1
Auckland	373	36.2
Coromandel/Bay of Plenty	47	4.6
East Cape/Gisborne	21	2.0
Taranaki/King Country	28	2.7
Wellington/Wairarapa	96	9.3
Manawatū-Whanganui	42	4.1
Marlborough/Nelson/Tasman	43	4.2
Hurunui/Kaikoura	4	0.4
West Coast	9	0.9
Christchurch/Canterbury	143	13.9
Mackenzie/Timaru/Waitaki	14	1.4
Queenstown/Wanaka/Central Otago	40	3.9
Dunedin/Otago	34	3.3
Southland/Clutha	25	2.4
Transient (I move locations often)	7	0.7

Appendix 2: Business type employed in

Business type	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Adventure and outdoor	33	3.2
Air transport	18	1.7
Attractions, conferences and events	37	3.6
Culture and heritage	9	.9
Land transport	22	2.1
Regional tourism organisations	22	2.1
Water transport and cruise	9	0.9
Tour services and services to tourism	27	2.6
Travel agency	27	2.6
Accommodation (hotels, motels, hostels, holiday parks, lodges)	288	27.9
Restaurants	111	10.8
Cafes	104	10.1
Fast food or takeaways	158	15.3
Bars/pubs/nightclubs	63	6.1
Chartered clubs	4	0.4
Catering	26	2.5
Event venues	26	2.5
Cinemas	8	0.8
Casinos	8	0.8
Other	32	3.1

Appendix 3: Main role (Non-managerial; n = 503)

Role	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Wait person/food and beverage attendant	68	13.5
Bar person	28	5.6
Fast-food worker	92	18.3
Barista	23	4.6
Chef	23	4.6
Kitchen hand	35	7.0
Front office	35	7.0
Housekeeping	32	6.4
Cleaner	15	3.0
Gaming operator	4	.8
Security/door staff	4	.8
Tourism business operator	5	1.0
Tourism sales/service	19	3.8
Tour guide	6	1.2
Regional tourism organisation employee	7	1.4
Administration	39	7.8
Airline cabin crew	3	.6
Transport	9	1.8
Other	41	8.2
IT, finance, and marketing	15	3.0


FERGBURGER
GLAMOUR KILLS
CREATE DESTROY REBUILD