Future of household labour force statistics

The Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) is to produce a timely, relevant, and comprehensive range of statistics relating to the employed, unemployed, and those not in the labour force (NILF) who make up New Zealand’s working-age population using international standards and guidelines. Information from the HLFS is used to develop and monitor labour market and social policy, support research, and help inform on the health and general well-being of the New Zealand economy.

Updating the HLFS following the census

- Revised estimated resident population figures are used to rebase the HLFS estimates.
- Regional benchmarks will be introduced.
- A new sample of dwellings is obtained.

The new HLFS sample design

- Prioritises national estimates by moving to proportional allocation to regions.
- Targets estimates of lower socio-economic outcomes using the New Zealand Deprivation Index groupings.
- Has a new overlap control method including management of overlap with selected surveys from other organisations.
- Lowers the rate of over-sampling of main urban areas, which provides better national estimates while still managing costs of collection.

Timing of sample introduction

Households stay in the HLFS for two years. Each quarter, one-eighth of sampled households are rotated out and replaced by a new set of households.

Future design of the HLFS

The future HLFS will include periodic content, ad hoc topics, and supplements. This new approach will make us more flexible and responsive in meeting user needs, and allow us to collect a wider range of information without significantly increasing respondent burden.

Regional benchmarks

For the coming HLFS population rebase, we will improve our estimation methodology by implementing regional population benchmarks. The new benchmarks will improve coherence between our HLFS estimates and our subnational population estimates.