

# EDUCATION, LEARNING AND SKILLS

## A SNAPSHOT OF WHERE WE ARE TODAY

### 1. A LOOK AT OUR COUNTRY AND OUR BIGGEST CITY

Tāmaki Makaurau  
Auckland is one of  
the **most diverse**  
cities in the world.

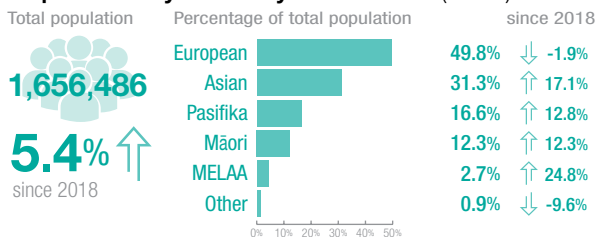
**180+**

ethnicities call  
Auckland home.<sup>1</sup>

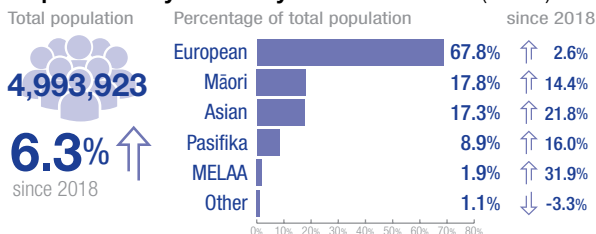
**42%**

of Auckland's  
residents were  
born overseas.<sup>1</sup>

#### Population by ethnicity – Auckland (2023)<sup>2</sup>



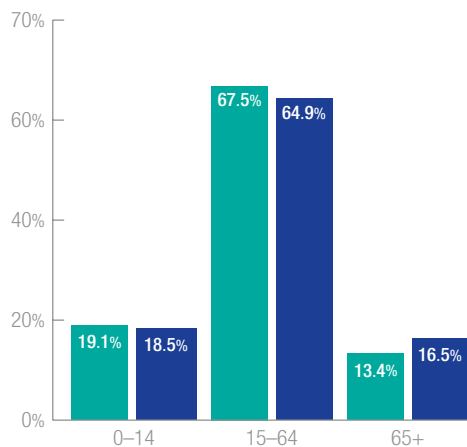
#### Population by ethnicity – Aotearoa NZ (2023)<sup>2</sup>



#### Population by broad age group<sup>3</sup>

Percentage of total (as at 30 June 2023)

Auckland | Aotearoa NZ

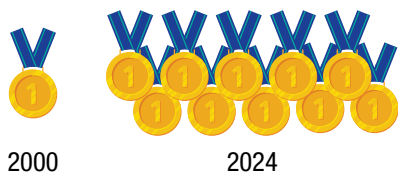


### 2. IS EDUCATION KEEPING UP?

How did we go from being **3rd** in **maths achievement** in 2000 to **22nd** in 2024?

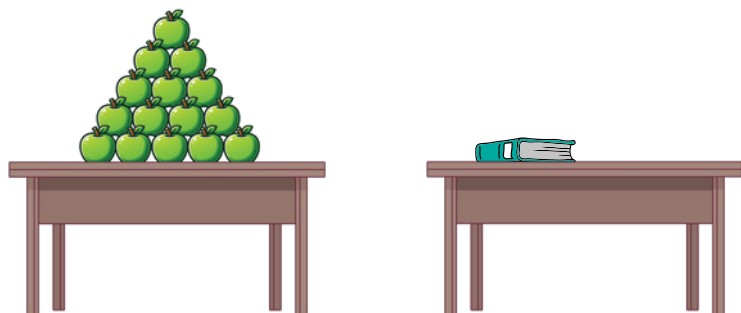


Aotearoa NZ earned **1 gold medal** at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney. We earned **10 gold medals** at the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris.



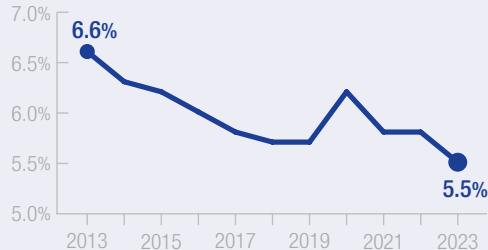
Why can't our **academic achievements** keep pace with our athletic successes?

Apple has produced **16 generations** of the iPhone since 2007. In that same time period, there have been **no substantive changes** made to the NZ Curriculum.

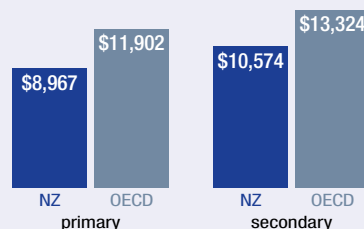


Aotearoa NZ is becoming wealthier. Is education paying the price?

Education spending as a percentage of GDP<sup>4</sup>



Aotearoa NZ's spending per student is below average (2021)<sup>5</sup>

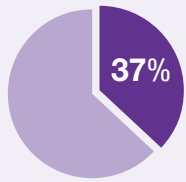


All figures are expressed in USD calculated using purchasing power parity exchange rates.

### 3. COST OF EDUCATION

#### What impact does cost have?

Aotearoa NZ has some of the **highest childcare costs** in the western world.



In 2022, a **typical NZ couple\*** spent **37%** (over a **third**) of their disposable income on early childhood education.<sup>6</sup>

\*Defined as a couple earning average wages with two children under age 5.

#### Yet investment in ECE is still vital!

Children who do not attend ECE regularly are less prepared for school than those who do attend regularly.

Attending ECE regularly can help children feel confident and curious, giving them a strong foundation for future learning through the development of essential skills in languages, maths and science.<sup>7</sup>

**Education remains inaccessible** to children living in hardship in Aotearoa NZ.

**21%**

of our children faced food insecurity in 2023, leading to academic delays of up to four years for some of them.<sup>8</sup>

The **digital divide** has an impact on education.

**35%**

of households earning less than \$50,000 per year did not have access to a digital device suitable for learning in 2022.<sup>9</sup>

The digital divide is not just about who has access to digital tools; it's also about who can use them safely and effectively.



The **long-term cost of poor education** is a low-skilled, overworked and underpaid workforce.<sup>10</sup>

**WE WORK MORE BUT WE PRODUCE LESS!**

New Zealanders work longer

**34** hours / week

compared with

**32** hours / week

in other OECD countries



New Zealanders produce less

**\$68** output / hour

compared with

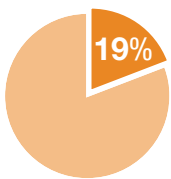
**\$85** output / hour

in other OECD countries



### 4. ATTENDANCE AND ATTITUDE

#### Is education valued in Aotearoa NZ?



**81%** of **school-aged children** were enrolled at school in 2021, meaning that **19%** (nearly a **fifth**) were not.<sup>11</sup>

Only **58%** of **learners** attended more than **90%** of the available half-days in Terms 1–2 in 2019.<sup>12</sup>

**22%**

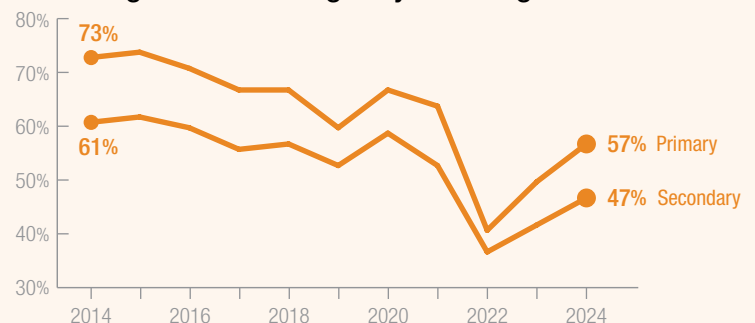
of **learners** don't think school is that important for their future.<sup>12</sup>

**33%**

of **learners** don't think going to school every day is important.<sup>12</sup>

#### Attendance was falling before COVID!

Percentage of learners regularly attending school<sup>13</sup>



**41%**

of **parents** are comfortable with their children missing a week or more of school per term.<sup>12</sup>

**One week per term equates to one whole year of missed education by age 16!**

**67%**

of **parents** would keep their children at home for family, cultural or special events.<sup>12</sup>

**35%**

of **parents** would take their children out of school for holidays or sporting events.<sup>12</sup>

# 5. ACHIEVEMENT AND APTITUDE

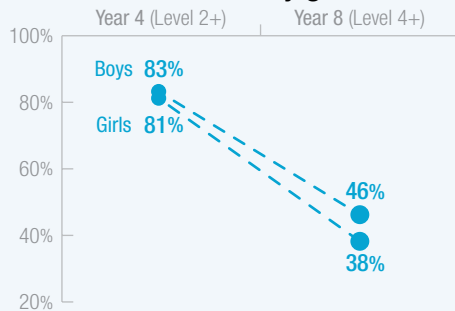
## We know we have a problem!

New data shows that **78%** of **Year 8 students** are behind in maths according to NZ Curriculum expectations whilst **63%** are more than a year behind.<sup>14</sup>

### National achievement standards<sup>15</sup>

The **National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA)** tracks the maths and statistics achievements of students in Years 4 and 8 across Aotearoa NZ.

#### NMSSA 2022 results by gender



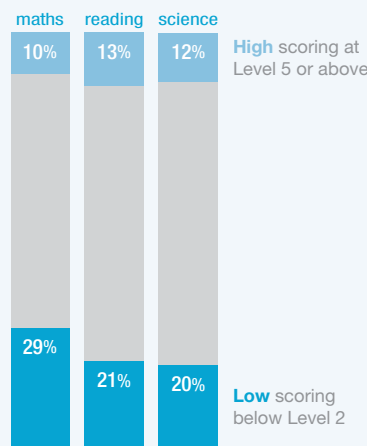
After four years of schooling, our children are **performing worse** in mathematics and statistics than when they started.

But all is not lost, as they are also among the **most creative** in the world.<sup>17</sup>

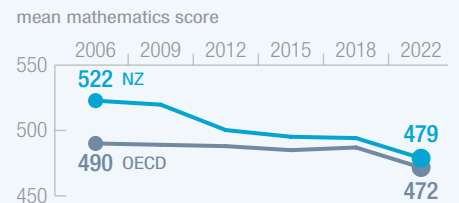
### International achievement standards<sup>16</sup>

The **Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)** tests 15-year-olds globally to determine how well their education prepares them for life after school.

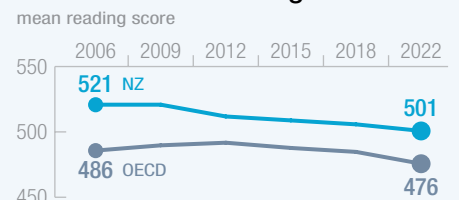
#### Proportions of NZ's high and low performing students (PISA 2022)



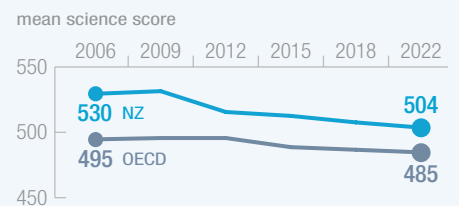
#### Performance in mathematics



#### Performance in reading



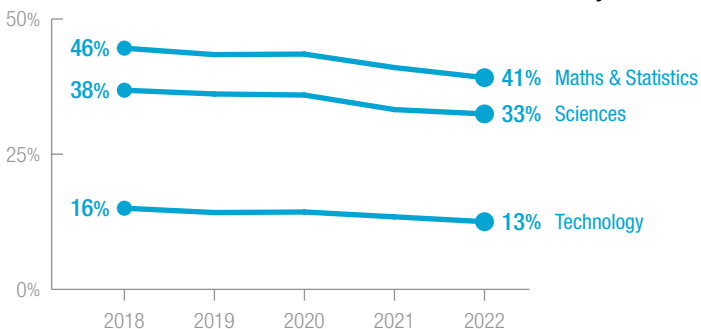
#### Performance in science



### Are we ready for a STEM-driven future?

The challenge we face in Aotearoa NZ is that fewer students are attaining NCEA Level 2 in STEM subjects, even as these skills become increasingly vital to their future in the workplace.

#### NCEA attainment of school leavers in STEM subjects<sup>18</sup>



### Does trades training require greater recognition?<sup>19</sup>

Fifty years ago, only **15%** of **school leavers** went straight into studying for a tertiary degree. Today, about **40%** do.

However, it will take those **tertiary-degree holders** several decades to catch up with their peers who went straight into **apprenticeships** in terms of their earnings and wealth.



**Higher education attainment** increases the likelihood of **being employed**.<sup>20</sup>

**87%** of people with a **tertiary education** are employed.

**77%** of people with a **secondary / certificate education** are employed.

**60%** of people with **no secondary education** are employed.

### A closer look at STEM degree graduates in 2023.<sup>21</sup>

Field	Total	Female	Māori	Pasifika
Information Technology	4,225	34%	9%	6%
Engineering	8,285	22%	19%	10%
Sciences (Natural & Physical)	5,900	65%	10%	7%

# 6. EMPLOYMENT

We must build our education system around the **5 skills** our children need for the future.<sup>22</sup>

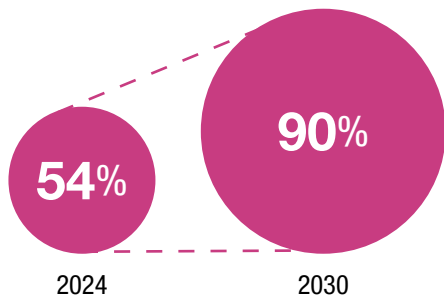
1. CREATIVITY
2. DIGITAL SKILLS
3. COLLABORATION
4. GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP
5. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

Businesses need to invest in up-skilling and/or re-skilling.

Importing talent will not be an option in the future!

**97%** of **NZ businesses** need to up-skill or re-skill their workforce. Yet only **25%** are doing so.<sup>23</sup>

Proportion of the global workforce in need of up-skilling or re-skilling.<sup>24</sup>



## Educate for tomorrow, not for today!<sup>25</sup>

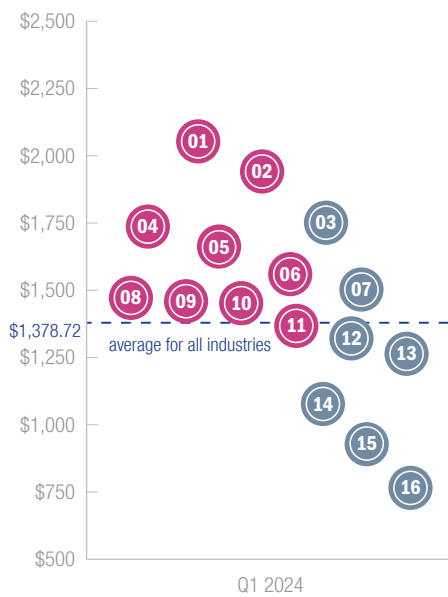
The fastest declining roles driven by technology and digitalisation are clerical and secretarial roles — such as bank tellers, secretaries, security guards, postal workers, data entry clerks and cashiers.

Roles expected to grow the fastest include:

- AI & machine learning specialists
- business intelligence analysts
- data analysts and scientists
- information security analysts
- robotics engineers
- sustainability specialists
- database architects
- agricultural equipment operators

## Average weekly employee wages by industry<sup>4</sup>

STEM industries | non-STEM industries

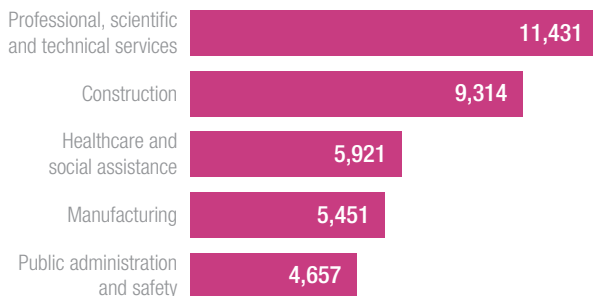


Industry	Wage
01) Finance & insurance	\$2,052.50
02) Utilities	\$1,940.68
03) Public administration & safety	\$1,772.10
04) Forestry & mining	\$1,735.99
05) Info media & telecommunications	\$1,661.86
06) Professional services	\$1,559.30
07) Wholesale trade	\$1,502.09
08) Construction	\$1,471.20
09) Healthcare	\$1,458.73
10) Transport & warehousing	\$1,451.47
11) Manufacturing	\$1,367.14
12) Real estate services	\$1,320.04
13) Education & training	\$1,263.29
14) Arts & recreation	\$1,077.03
15) Retail trade	\$927.48
16) Accommodation & food services	\$765.33

## STEM skills are essential for the top five job-creating professions in Aotearoa NZ.

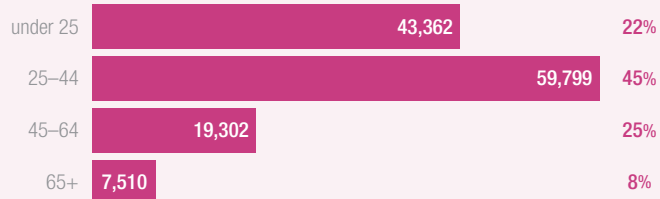
### Top 5 employment-creating industries (April 2022 – March 2023)<sup>26</sup>

Absolute change in filled jobs



## We need to adapt to our nation's changing demographics!

### Migration departures from Aotearoa NZ by age<sup>27</sup> for the year ending June 2024



**36%**

of **NZ business owners** were over 55 in 2023. This could result in the **sale or closure** of over **200,000 businesses** over the next decade.<sup>28</sup>

### WHO IS GOING TO BUY THEM?

For the **full list of references**, scan or click on the QR code at right.



TE HONONGA  
AKORANGA  
COMET



© 2024 Te Hononga Akoranga COMET  
PO Box 3430, Shortland St, Auckland 1010

[cometauckland.org.nz](http://cometauckland.org.nz)

[facebook.com/cometakl](https://facebook.com/cometakl)

[linkedin.com/company/comet-auckland](https://linkedin.com/company/comet-auckland)