

TRADE CAREERS

TradeCareers®

INSIGHTS RESEARCH

Report for the Women
in Trades Collective
(WITC)

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cogo

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Introduction

2020 was a tough year for women. The Covid-19 pandemic threw into stark relief just how vulnerable women's employment, safety and security is within our society. 22,000 women lost their jobs and with it their economic power and security. Because much of women's work requires physical contact with the public – restaurants, stores, childcare, healthcare settings – theirs were some of the first to go.

Pre-existing economic, social, racial and gender inequalities have been accentuated. The rate of unemployment for Māori and Pasifika women was higher among the population before the virus, and now it is even worse.

At the same time the male dominated building, construction and infrastructure sector has boomed. Over 5 billion dollars has been earmarked for large scale projects across the country, New Zealanders are investing in their homes, and with the housing crisis looming large, state housing projects are being enacted.

This is compounded by an unprecedented workforce shortage within the construction, building and infrastructure sector.

There are simply not enough tradespeople to help New Zealand build back better. Government initiatives including free training for apprenticeships are on offer and while there is interest from record numbers of people, the percentage of women entering the trades workforce has not moved significantly enough to make an impact.

The question is 'why?'

As powerful as patriarchy is, it's just a story. One that we can change.

At present there are only 1,653 women in apprenticeships and managed apprenticeships in the construction and infrastructure sector. This is an overall percentage of 3.2% of the total 35,428 people who enrolled between the start of 2019 and now in construction and an overall percentage of 10.21% in the infrastructure of the total enrolments to date.

Trade Careers project's aim is to connect women whose jobs have been impacted by COVID-19 to employment in safe, female-friendly trade workplaces.

Trade Careers is funded by the Tertiary Education Commission as part of the WDC/Transitional ITO COVID-19 Response Projects Fund. The purpose of the fund is to enable Transitional Industry Training Organisations (Transitional ITOs) and Workforce Development Councils (WDCs) to lead COVID-19 response projects that support the recovery of industry from the impacts of COVID-19.

Trade Careers is a joint initiative led by BCITO, Connexis, Competenz and Skills. These four TITOs are responsible for the building, construction and infrastructure sectors. Representatives from these TITOs make up the women in trades collective.

The Trade Careers project has been divided into three phases. The project has been undertaken between January and September 2021.

In the first phase we developed our project scope and plan, including establishing our kaupapa and advisory board.

In the second phase we sought to understand more about the 22,000 women who have lost their jobs and ascertain what barriers and opportunities they experience when entering the trades. We also sought to understand what barriers and opportunities exist within this post pandemic environment for employers hiring or not women. To do this we worked with Cogo to deliver nationwide surveys and focus groups.

The third phase — is our pilot programme. Our research identified employers and women are keen to connect with each other but are at a loss at how to do so.

Employers don't speak 'women' and the women don't speak 'trades'.

Phase three of Trade Careers is focussed on addressing this fundamental issue through targeting three key areas; connections, community, and communications.

From June—September we developed and ran a pilot programme with the aim of connecting the women and the employers who responded to our Phase 2 surveys.

Our goal is to create a 'new normal' for the trades which redefines the industry as inclusive for women.

Phase three of Trade Careers looked towards creating a values driven culture centered on respect. At the heart of this is manaakitanga.

Our pilot programme which took place from July—August 2021 worked with 45 women and 31 employers. The aim was to work towards establishing collaborative values and practical solutions that are applicable to everyone working in the industry and enable both women and employers to feel safe and supported on their journeys.

We did this by :

- Creating a six week online career reboot programme.
- Developing online toolkits for women and employers that answer the key areas of interest as identified in our research.
- Creating and filming 7 full length episodes in which 'Dave' and 'Kura' go on a journey to get it right for women on site.
- Filming 11 case studies of industry experts and tradespeople.
- Writing specialised content.
- Hosting a matching event for women and employers in Auckland — this was planned for August 25 but had to be held online due to COVID restrictions.
- And conducted a development project for Māori and Pasifika lead content creation, addressing the unique experiences and needs of these communities.

This report shares the detailed data and insights we have gathered during Phase two. Cogo were engaged by the TradeCareers project to deliver new research to support the strategy and implementation plan to increase the number of women entering the trades, specifically those who have lost their jobs or who are underemployed due to COVID-19.



Liz, Qualified Roof Installer

Many people have been involved in delivering this project.

Trade Careers is managed by a small project team:

Kelly Bennett – Project owner
Tessa Waters and Angela Meyer – Project Managers
Emma Donnelly – Project Coordinator
Morgana Watson – Iwi Liaison
Sam Utai – Pasifika Liaison
Amanda Williams – Employer Liaison
Faye McNeil – Video Production by Executive Beige
Tania Domett and Dr Jennie Coker – Cogo

Trade Careers has been funded by the Tertiary Education Commission Transitional ITO COVID-19 Response Projects Fund. It is an initiative of the Women in Trades Collective – consisting of BCITO, Connexis, Competenz, and Skills, the four ITO's responsible for the building, construction and infrastructure sectors.

Women in Trade Collective:

Kelly Bennett – BCITO
Jude van Wichen Miller – Skills
Sarah Peldmanis – Competenz
Taniya Scott and Prue Feely – Connexis

Toolkit development:

Sue McNabb – Learning and Development Consultant
Ben Woodward – Copywriter
Gillian Brookes – Flexible Work Consultant
Kristy Christensen – Consultant
Tessa Waters – Script writer and plays the character “Dave”.
Akin – Website development and design.

We are guided by Te Roopu Tautoko:

Stuart Lawrence – Chair Māori & Pasifika Trades training
Laisa Pickering – Ultimate Ambassador Connexis
Colleen Upton – NAWIC Trades Representative
Elizabeth Cramer Roberts – Apprentice Electrician
Amanda Williams – BCITO business development advisor
Ana Morrison – DCE Partnerships & Equity, Te Pukenga
Josh Williams – Principal Consultant, Skills
Kylie Taffard – Chairperson Women in Trades NZ, HOD Careers Whangārei Girls High School, and EdD candidate.
Hoe Ākau – Education Mentor at the Mind Lab and PhD candidate
Sarah Toase – NAWIC Wellington Chapter Chair

We are grateful to the many trailblazing tradeswomen who have shared their stories that have shaped this project and will inspire the many women career seekers that follow them.

Kat Kawai, Joy Malu, Tegan Williams, Jazz Gregg-Schofield, Liz Watson, Billie McDonnell, Vee Vunga Ungounga, Nikita Porthouse, Jordy Holt, Grace and Holly Ferndale, Andrew Bellamy and Marc Rudolf.

We are supported by industry who have responded to the survey, watched the videos and shared the messaging. Without the support of trade associations, industry bodies, employers; large, medium and small the project would not have experienced the success it has.

In particular we recognise Myles Sellers who passed away on June 2, 2021. Myles' enormous support and passion for this project and his commitment to increasing the participation of women in the trades will be greatly missed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Vee, Leading Hand



The Trade Careers project was launched in 2021 by the Women in Trades Collective to ensure the pathway to the trades as a career change option for women is as accessible as possible. Cogo were engaged to deliver new research that would support the Project's strategy and implementation plan to increase the number of women entering the trades, specifically those who have lost their jobs or who are underemployed due to COVID-19.

Using online surveys and focus groups to gather data, Cogo's research design centred on the following areas of inquiry:

For the women:

- What do women need and want from paid work, particularly those whose employment was negatively impacted by COVID-19?
- How do New Zealand women perceive the trades as a career option?
- What might make the trades appealing to women?
- What might make the trades unappealing to women?
- Who are the women who are interested in the trades?

For the trades employers:

- How have things changed for trades employers as a result of COVID-19?
- What is trades employers' position on hiring women?
- What appeals to trades employers about hiring women?
- What are the barriers for trades employers?
- Who are the trades employers interested in employing women?



Nikita, Billie and Jazz

Research results – “The Women”

Cogo received 2,254 online survey responses from women eligible to work in the trades in New Zealand.

- The sample showed good regional representation with 30% from the Auckland region, 14% from the Wellington region, 13% from Canterbury, 9% from the Waikato region, and the remaining 35% of respondents from all other regions throughout New Zealand.
- Survey respondents came from a wide range of age groups, with 70% of the sample aged 35+ years.
- 72% of respondents identify as New Zealand European or Pākehā, 23% as New Zealand Māori, 9% as European and 5% Pacific Peoples or Pasifika. All other ethnicities were selected by 2% or less of respondents.

Current employment status

62% of the sample are currently in paid work. Most commonly, women are working between 31 and 40 hours each week (45%). 24% are working more than 40 hours per week, 15% are working 21–30 hours and 16% work 20 hours or less.

- 90% of women not currently in paid work would like to be, and 79% of these women are currently looking for paid work (indicating that barriers to looking for paid work exist for some of these women).
- Over half (54%) of those who are currently looking for work would like to work full time. 47% of women currently in paid work would like to do more hours, with 61% of these women wanting to do 40 or more hours per week. Over half (52%) of the women in our sample do not have dependants.
- 38% of our total sample (856 respondents) have seen COVID-19 impact their employment status, reporting one or more of the following, “I lost one or more jobs”, “I now receive less income from my paid work” and/or “I now work less hours”. 34% of wāhine Māori in our sample were negatively impacted by COVID-19 in terms of their paid

work, and 46% of Pasifika women.

- Of the women whose employment was negatively impacted by COVID-19, 43% are no longer in paid work. 94% of these women not currently in paid work would like to be.
- The following groups within our sample are more likely to have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 in terms of their paid work: Aucklanders, Pasifika women, those earning the minimum wage.

What women need and want from paid work

Having a “*Good, supportive boss*” and “*Good, supportive colleagues/workmates*” are the two most important things that enable women to be able to do the hours of paid work that they do, or would like to do (selected by 86% and 83% of respondents respectively). Third and fourth most important are: “*Good health & safety policies in the workplace*” (70%), and “*Being able to work flexible hours*” (57%). For the 476 wāhine Māori in our sample, and the 107 Pasifika women, “*The workplace is respectful of people’s culture e.g. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating*” replaces “*Being able to work flexible hours*” as the fourth most important aspect of work.

How do women currently perceive the trades as a career option?

Women told us that these aspects of employment are the four most important things for them to be able to do the hours of paid work that they do, or would like to do: “*Good, supportive boss*”, “*Good, supportive colleagues*”, “*Good health & Safety policies in the workplace*” and “*Being able to work flexible hours*” Figure 18. Yet their perceptions of the trades are that they do not “*Provide a supportive working environment*” (only 14% believe they would), do not “*Provide a healthy work environment*” (only 12% think they would), and do not “*Provide a comfortable work/home life balance*” nor “*Have flexible working hours*” (only 16% believe they would).

What might make the trades appealing to women?

Those negatively impacted by COVID-19 showed an extremely high likelihood of considering applying for a job in the trades, if they knew it could provide them with the things that they selected as being important to them e.g. “*Good, supportive boss*”, with 60% saying they would be “*Highly likely*” to consider applying. This equates to 445 of our respondents negatively impacted by COVID-19 reporting being “*Highly likely*” to consider applying for a job in the trades if they knew it could deliver what they needed from their employer. The following groups reported an even higher likelihood of applying: wāhine Māori, those currently on minimum wage, and women living in the Waikato region.

Based on focus group data, the following make the trades appealing for women:

- Being outdoors, not in an office
- Pushing stereotypes about appropriate roles for women
- Refuting the perception that tradespeople have to be physically strong
- Being a role model for others
- Having good physical and mental health
- Being self-sufficient
- Creating something tangible
- Stability of employment
- Being able to transfer their skills

What might make the trades unappealing to women?

Interest levels in a free apprenticeship were much lower than interest in applying for a job in the trades. It would appear to be a bigger challenge going forward to get women to apply for apprenticeships than it might be to get them to apply for jobs in the trades.

Based on focus group data, the following make the trades unappealing for women:

- Being on a lower rate of pay
- Length of time for training
- Not knowing where to start, “*getting a foot in the door*”
- Finding the required flexibility in roles in the trades (particularly for women with childcare responsibilities)
- Discrimination, bullying and harassment in the workplace



Billie, Apprentice Plumber

Research results — “The Employers”

Cogo received 207 online survey responses from individuals currently working in jobs in the trades in New Zealand, 74% with some level of responsibility for hiring tradespeople.

- Respondents to the employer survey were well-distributed throughout the New Zealand regions, and split relatively evenly between males and females (51% and 49% respectively).
- Respondents came from a range of sectors, most commonly Residential construction (40%), Electrical, Plumbing and Gasfitting (23%), and Commercial construction (13%)
- We heard from trades employers from a range of business sizes (30% of respondents came from businesses with five or less people working in them, 35% in businesses with six to 19 people, 18% 20 to 200 people and 15% from the largest business size of over 200 people).
- The impact of COVID-19 on the businesses surveyed was mainly positive, with 42% having gained more work, 22% taking on more staff and 28% having taken on one or more apprentices as a result of COVID-19.

Workplace environment and culture in the trades

- One or more benefits/options were available in the majority of workplaces - most commonly, a reliable vehicle to get to and from work (57%) and perks like free food, coffee (43%). Workplace offerings around flexibility, however, were less common – just 34% of workplaces currently provide a choice of start and finish times, 24% offer shifts during school/daycare hours, 15% give people the option to work from home, 10% offer job-sharing arrangements, 8% evening/night shifts, and 6% provide the option to bring children to work.
- The larger businesses (100+ people) are more likely to offer evening/night shifts (28% compared to 8% of the whole sample) and are more likely to provide the option of working from home (38% compared to 15% of the whole sample). However, these large

businesses are no more likely than the smaller businesses to offer a choice of start and finish times (36%), shifts during school/daycare hours (26%), or job-sharing arrangements (10%).

- 70% of respondents “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that their workplace is respectful of people’s culture, but 20% “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that inappropriate jokes and/or negative comments are tolerated about Sexuality, 19% agree that they are tolerated about Women, 16% about Age, 14% about Ethnicity, 14% about Religion, 11% about Mental wellbeing, and 8% about Disability.

Position on hiring women tradespeople

- Only 41% said that their business has ever taken on a female apprentice and just 55% of businesses have any women tradespeople working in their business.
- 79% of respondents are interested in taking on a female apprentice in the future, with larger businesses more likely to be interested in taking on a female apprentice – 96% of businesses with 100 or more people saying they would be interested, compared to 70% of business with 5 or less people.

What appeals to employers about hiring women as tradespeople — “the opportunities”?

Based on focus group data, the following make hiring women as tradespeople appealing for employers:

- Women are lighter on the tools
- Women are better at completing tasks and have more attention to detail
- Women are more dedicated, with something to prove
- Women are good at customer service and better at time management
- Women tend to ask questions and suggest new ways of doing things that are often better
- A good attitude is the main attribute employers are looking for; skills can be taught
- Having women in the workplace changes the workplace environment for the better

What would need to change in the workplace to hire women – “the barriers”?

Almost half of respondents to the employer survey (48%) agree that hiring and supporting women tradespeople is a challenge because it would be hard to accommodate pregnant women in the workplace and 46% because the workplace can be physically challenging. 28% believe that hiring and supporting women tradespeople would be challenging because facilities for women are difficult to set up, 22% because the workplace can be emotionally challenging, and 19% because the hours are long and inflexible.

Focus group data gives further insights into these challenges:

- Some employers believed physical strength can be an issue for women, but others did not
- Women employees will often experience harassment/bullying, however some believe that workplace cultures are changing
- Women are considered to require a certain personality type in order to succeed
- Many employers believe that women will require more flexibility because many women have families, but some point out that increasingly, so do men. In any case, some employers are offering flexible working arrangements
- It is hard to attract women into the trades
- Women may need to be paid more than apprentice rates
- It is hard to accommodate pregnancy in the workplace, however injury often needs to be accommodated and this is no different

Research findings

“The Women”

The trade careers project online survey heard from 856 women who have had their employment negatively impacted by COVID. Given that the women more likely to be impacted by the pandemic were: Aucklanders, those currently on the minimum wage, and Pasifika women, the Trade Careers project should consider prioritising these demographic groups with future activities and interventions.

Based on what women have told us they need and want from paid work, the key areas that employers in the trades need to deliver on if they are going to appeal to women, and successfully bring them into roles in the trades, are: providing a supportive working environment, good health and safety policies in the workplace, offering flexible working arrangements and ensuring that their workplace is respectful of people’s culture.

Those women negatively impacted by COVID-19 showed an extremely high likelihood of considering applying for a job in the trades if they knew it could provide them with the things that are important to them. Given that the women who showed an even higher likelihood of applying are wāhine Māori, those currently on minimum wage, and women living in the Waikato, again the Trade Careers project should consider prioritising these demographic groups with future activities and interventions.

“The Employers”

The impact of COVID-19 on the businesses surveyed has been mainly positive, with many having gained more work and taken on more staff as a direct result, supporting the view that the trades would be a positive option in terms of work likely being available in the industry on a long-term basis.

Workplace offerings around flexibility were relatively uncommon. Given the importance of flexibility to some

women, trade businesses will need to consider options around shifts, job shares and so on if they want to be able to attract larger volumes of women (rather than just those for whom flexibility is not important).

The following results – 20% “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that inappropriate jokes and/or negative comments are tolerated about sexuality, 19% agree that they are tolerated about women – indicate that workplace culture, and the ability to make women feel safe and included in the workplace, including culturally-safe, will be a critical area to consider when trying to successfully attract and retain women in jobs in the trades.

79% of respondents are interested in taking on a female apprentice in the future, with larger businesses more likely to be interested. Although this may indicate that the larger businesses will be more open and ready to hire women and take on female apprentices, it is possible that larger businesses may also struggle more than smaller businesses to shift workplace cultures and processes with a larger volume of staff already in place.

Bringing “The Women” and “The Employers” together

The Cogo research has identified distinct areas for Trade Careers to focus on in order to make the pathway to employment more accessible:

Communication & information about what skills trades employers need

Women have skills that they have developed through work and life experience that they hope could be transferable to a job in the trades. They are concerned that employers may not recognise them, however the main issue is that they are unsure what employers are looking for and what skills are required of a job in the trades.

Trades employers appear to be hiring people mostly according to whether they have the “right attitude” as opposed to a particular skillset, which ought to make

it easier for women with no prior trades experience to access work. As well, employers who have hired women have positive stories to tell about the attributes that women bring to the job, which make them in many cases want to hire women over men.

Opportunities to provide better communication and information about what skills trades employers are looking for should be explored; the positive experiences many employers have had hiring women should also be communicated.

Recruitment pathways

Women find it difficult to access information on how to go about getting into the trades and employers are finding it difficult to recruit women.

New recruitment pathways for the particular cohort of women that this study focussed on should be explored. These would likely benefit all women seeking to join the trades (even the women who occupy 3% of trades roles found it difficult to break into the industry).

Remuneration

Women are attracted by the stability of employment in the trades, but some are worried about what they may earn as new entrants to the industry. The idea of an apprenticeship does not appeal for most women. Many trades employers appear to be able to recognise older women’s life experience and work experience gained in other industries and pay them a higher rate than a school-leaver, for example.

Removing the word “apprenticeship” from any initiatives aimed at older women should be considered; as well the project should consider working with employers around what appropriate pay rates for these new employees could be. Trades employers would also likely be encouraged by financial incentives to hire more women, e.g. a subsidy scheme aimed at increasing women’s participation in the trades.

Workplace environment & culture

We know that having a supportive workplace environment with good health and safety practices is important to women. Many women are concerned that the workplace environment and culture will be difficult for them and that they will experience bullying and harassment. Similarly, trades employers are concerned about providing a safe and healthy environment for the women that they employ.

Opportunities should be explored to provide training and support for trades employers on how to ensure that women who enter their workplaces will be well-supported, safe and able to thrive.

Flexible working

While many women need to be able to access flexible working arrangements, not all women do. Many women we heard from would like to be in full-time work and over half do not have dependants, especially the older women in our sample. In any case, some trades businesses are able to offer flexible working arrangements, and while it appears to be easier for larger trades businesses to offer flexibility, some of the smaller trades employers in the Cogo research were innovative in how they were able to offer this to their employees, with many recognising the benefit to their business bottom line.

Opportunities to provide communication and information to employers about how work schedules could be structured to accommodate their employees' flexible working needs should be explored. As well, the project should consider communicating that flexible working can benefit male employees as well, and that not all employees want and need it.

Safe cultural practices

For wāhine Māori and Pasifika women, a workplace that is respectful of people's culture, e.g. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating, is important for them to be able to participate in paid employment. Most trades employers responding to the Cogo online survey agreed that their workplace is respectful of people's culture, however opportunities to provide cultural responsiveness training and support for trades employers should be explored in order to ensure their workplaces are culturally-safe. This is essential from an equity perspective but will also enable employers to recruit more wāhine Māori and Pasifika women into the trades, whom the research shows have high levels of interest.



BACKGROUND

TradeCareers®



Introduction

To increase the number of women employed in the trades through industry collaboration, in 2020 the Women in Trades Collective (WITC) was formed by industry training organisations BCITO, Connexis, Competenz and Skills. Towards the end of 2020, WITC identified an opportunity to target the 22,000 women who had lost their jobs or who were underemployed due to COVID-19, and encourage them to consider trades as a career pathway.

‘TradeCareers’ was launched to “ensure the pathway to the trades as a career change option for women is as accessible as possible” by bringing about “A multi-pronged strategy and implementation plan to significantly increase the number of women, specifically those who have lost their jobs or who are underemployed due to COVID-19, entering the trades” (WITC Project documentation).

Cogo were engaged to support the Project with new research that would inform strategy development and planning as the team works with trades employers and women to develop innovative solutions to increase women’s participation in the trade workforce post-COVID-19. We were specifically engaged to ensure that the Project would have a deep understanding of the opportunities and barriers that exist for both women entering the trades and their prospective employers.

Central to human-centred design is the theory that in order to design solutions, it is critical to understand the people being designed for. TradeCareers seeks to recruit to the trades a segment of the labour force that the industry knows relatively little about: women who are older, i.e. not school-leavers, with different work and life experiences. As for employers, while research has been done in the past gathering insights from trades employers about women’s participation in the trades (Ako Aotearoa, 2019¹), this work did not include in its focus employers’ perspectives of hiring older women. It was also carried in 2019 and so it was important to understand what the impact of

COVID-19 has been on the industry, particularly with regard to recruiting new employees and taking on apprentices.

Cogo research design & methodology

Our research framework was designed to explore the following research questions.

For the women:

1. What do women need and want from paid work, particularly those whose employment was negatively impacted by COVID-19?
2. How do New Zealand women perceive the trades as a career option?
3. What might make the trades appealing to women?
4. What might make the trades unappealing to women?
5. Who are the women who are interested in the trades?

For the trades employers:

1. How have things changed for trades employers as a result of COVID-19?
2. What are trades employers’ positions on hiring women?
3. What appeals to trades employers about hiring women?
4. What are the barriers for trades employers?
5. Who are the trades employers interested in employing women?

¹ Available here: <https://ako.ac.nz/knowledge-centre/what-are-the-characteristics-of-an-effective-learning-journey-for-women-entering-trades/>

Phase one – online survey data collection and analysis

“The Women” – online survey of women eligible to work in a trade in New Zealand

In collaboration with members of the Women in Trades Collective (WITC), Cogo designed and built an online survey in advanced survey software Alchemer, which enables tailored pathways for survey respondents as they progress through the survey. The survey was hosted on the Trade Careers microsite and heavily promoted as part of a co-ordinated campaign, utilising social media platforms and paid advertising. The target demographic was all women who are eligible to work in a trade in New Zealand and the survey was incentivised with a prize draw of a \$500 Visa Prezzy card.

“The women” online survey data was analysed and is presented in this report for the whole sample, and/or for those women whose paid employment was negatively impacted by COVID-19 (those that lost one or more jobs, lost income and/or lost paid hours of work as a result of the pandemic), as appropriate and where sample allows. The Cogo research was also commissioned to investigate specific groups of women, and as such, we present findings where possible for the following segments:

- Wāhine Māori
- Pasifika women
- “Older” women (originally it was predicted that women 35 years and over would be the focus, but early segmented analysis of key online survey results by age group indicated that a more meaningful target group would be 50+ years due to clearer shifts in the results being seen at this age threshold)

Early analysis of the online survey data also identified another group of interest within the sample, based on promising results around interest in the trades and working preferences. This group is women living in the Waikato region, and we therefore present some results for this segment of the sample.

“The Employers” – online survey of employers in the trades in New Zealand

Again, in collaboration with members of the Women in Trades Collective (WITC), Cogo designed and built an online survey in advanced survey software Alchemer. The survey was hosted on the Trade Careers microsite and promoted by the WITC. The target demographic was those working in the trades who are responsible for hiring new employees and/or taking on apprentices. The survey was incentivised with a prize draw of a \$500 tailgate shout (redeemable via a Visa Prezzy Card).

“The employer” online survey data was analysed and results are presented for the full sample in this report. The sample we achieved also allowed us to present findings for male and female respondents separately, giving some valuable insights into the differences men vs. women employers currently see in the trade industry in New Zealand. Early analysis of the online survey data, in addition to focus group data collected, also identified the need to segment results based on business size; we therefore analysed and present the data for four businesses sizes, where appropriate and as sample allows.

Initial analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collected in the online survey was completed as part of Phase one in order to identify themes in the data to be explored and interpreted during in-depth focus groups in Phase two.

Phase two – focus group data collection

In order to ensure the research engaged with a wide range of women and employers, we carried out two focus groups – one for women and one for trades employers – in four locations in New Zealand: Whangarei, Manukau, Nelson and Dunedin (a total of eight focus groups). Participants in the focus groups for women were recruited via the online survey and were either currently unemployed or considering a career change. Participants in the focus groups for trades employers were also recruited via the online survey, but most were invited through WITC member networks (see Table 1 for numbers of participants across all focus groups). All participants received a koha of \$50 for their time and kai was provided.

Table 1: Focus groups participants

	Women	Employers
Whangarei	6	6
Manukau	10	5
Nelson	6	10
Dunedin	11	7
Total	33	28

Led by Tania Domett from Cogo and Ange Meyer, Project Manager for Trade Careers, each session lasted for approximately one hour. Most focus groups were attended by a Pasifika liaison and a Māori liaison who formed part of the Trade Careers team. Areas of inquiry were designed to explore and interpret the themes identified in the online survey data analysis, however all participants were encouraged to lead the direction of inquiry and to share experiences and opinions around the most important areas of women's participation in the trades to them.

We acknowledge that a limitation of the data gathered from the employer focus groups is that it is likely to be biased towards employers more engaged with the concept of bringing more women into trades in New Zealand.

About Cogo

Founded in 2014, Cogo is an Auckland-based research agency with extensive experience in programme evaluation and insights research. We work with a range of clients from the private, public and NGO sectors, delivering insights that organisations find useful and that provide them with clear direction. We deliver all aspects of the research in-house and customise the design of each project in response to the client's needs.

Collaboration and co-design is a critical part of our process. We know that delivering the best insights depends on developing genuine relationships so we always engage with and involve the organisations that we work with in all stages of the research process. We take time to learn about the organisation and understand exactly how the research we deliver will support their strategic goals. Data collection tools are always reviewed by the organisations we work with, and we work with clients well past the report-delivery stage to support organisations to get the most out of the research and to communicate and act on the results.

Cogo maintain rigorous privacy and confidentiality protocols with respect to how we collect and analyse the information provided by research participants. Online survey data for the Trade Careers project was guaranteed to be completely anonymous, and confidentiality of information provided in focus groups was guaranteed for participants. Online survey participants were offered the opportunity to answer the survey questions *kanohi ki te kanohi* (face-to-face) if they preferred, in line with Kaupapa Māori research methods. All data collected has been used only for the purpose of reporting results for the Trade Careers project and will be destroyed on completion of the project.

RESULTS: THE WOMEN

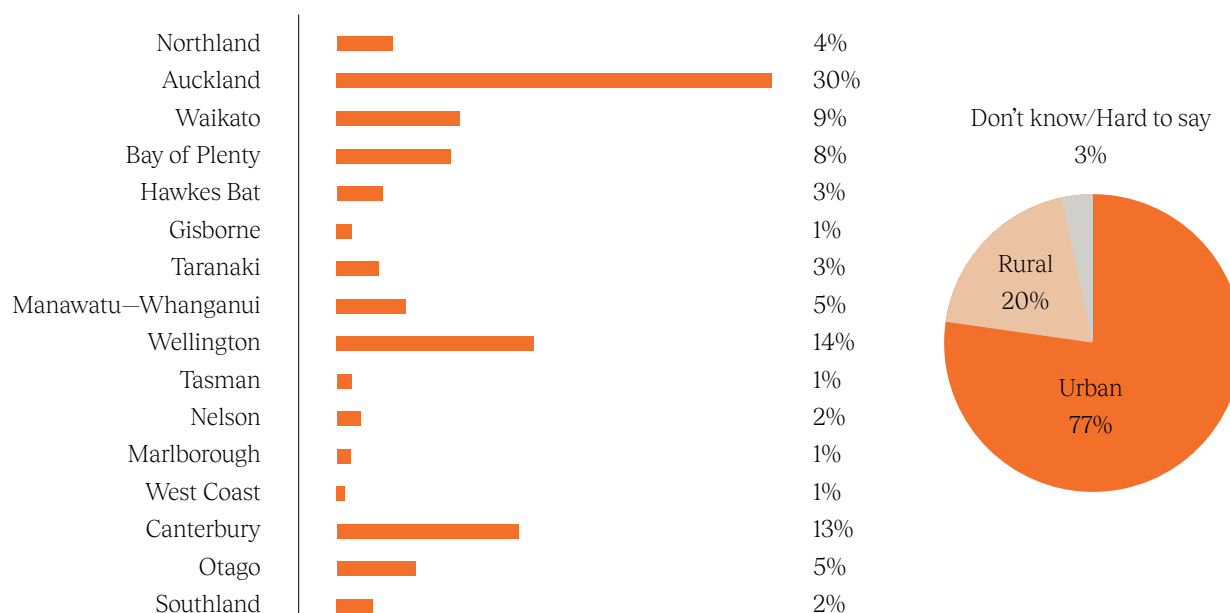
Online survey sample demographics — who did we hear from?

Cogo received 2,254 online survey responses from women eligible to work in the trades in New Zealand (98% identifying as “Female”, and 2% as one or more of the following: Non-binary, Genderqueer, Gender- fluid, Transgender, Intersex). Demographic breakdowns of this sample are presented below. Please note, that due to how research participants were recruited — the call to action was designed to appeal to women who had lost their jobs or who were thinking of retraining and clearly referenced “trade careers”— the survey sample is therefore not intended to be (and unlikely to be) representative of all New Zealand women.

Regional location

The survey sample showed good regional representation with 30% being from the Auckland region, 14% from the Wellington region, 13% from Canterbury, 9% from the Waikato region, and the remaining 35% of respondents from all other regions throughout New Zealand (see Figure 1). 77% of the sample live in urban locations, and 20% live rurally.

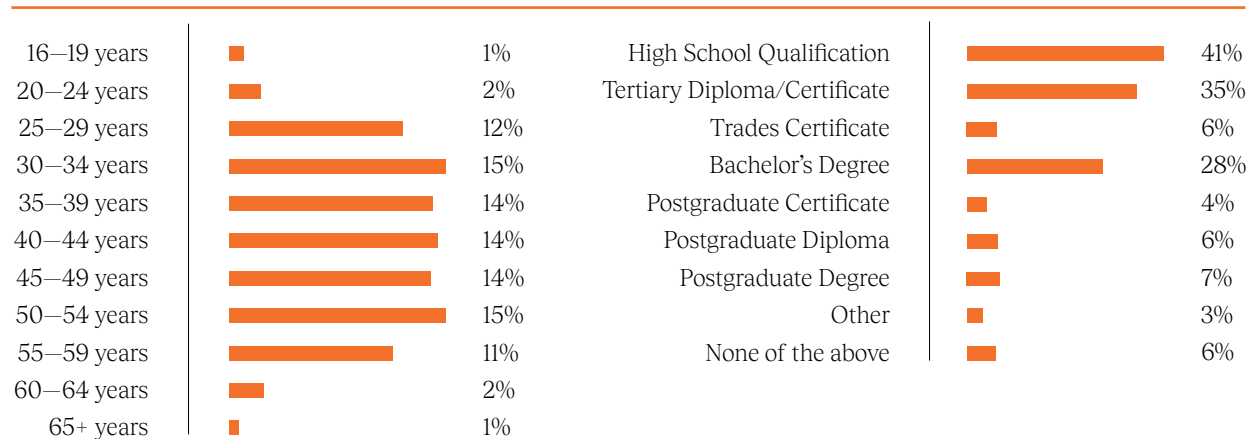
Figure 1: Women’s online survey sample by NZ region, and location type (urban/rural) (n=2,254)



Age

The survey respondents came from a wide range of age groups, as shown in Figure 2. Given that one of the research aims was to gather insights from older women, 70% of the sample being aged 35+ years demonstrates excellent targeting by the project. 19% of the sample are currently studying, mainly at a University, Wānanga, Polytechnic/Institute of Technology (12%), with 4% in Workplace Training and 4% at Other Education Providers (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Women's online survey sample by age (n=2,247) and educational qualification(s) (n=2,221)



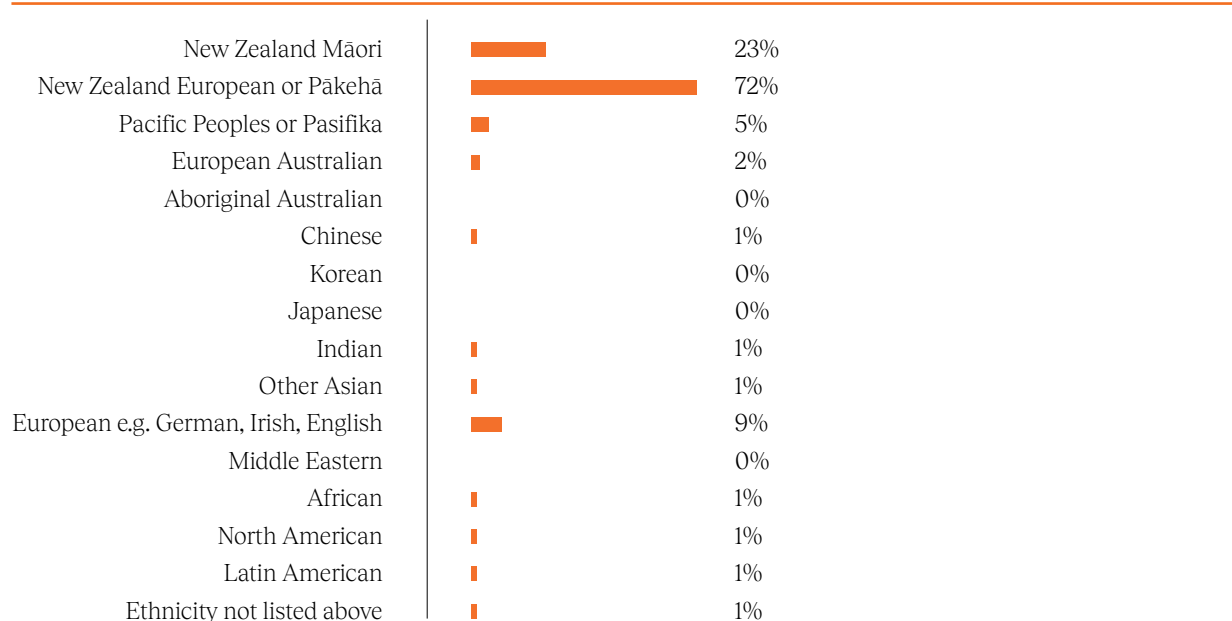
Ethnicity

72% of respondents identify as New Zealand European or Pākehā, 23% as New Zealand Māori, 9% as European and 5% Pacific Peoples or Pasifika (see Figure 3). All other ethnicities were selected by 2% or less of respondents.

Given that one of the research aims was to hear from wāhine Māori, oversampling compared to the national population is an excellent result (NZ Māori make up around 17% of New Zealand's population). The resulting sample of 473 responses from wāhine Māori allows us to present findings for these wāhine. We would have liked to have received more responses from Pasifika women (Pasifika make up around 8% of New Zealand's population), however we believe

that some insights are appropriate to take from the the 107 responses that we received and we therefore present limited results for Pasifika, again one of the research aims.

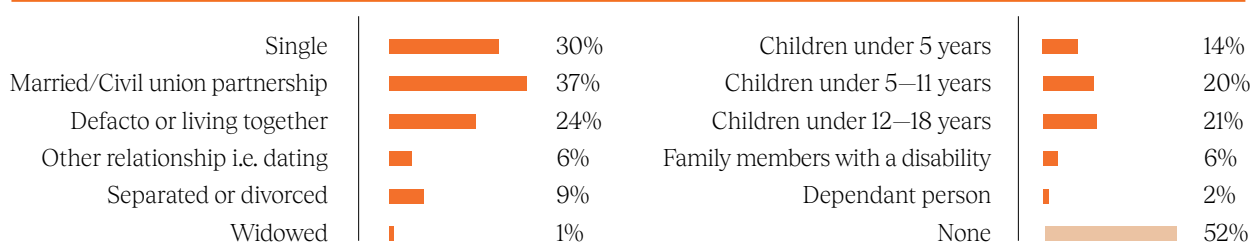
Figure 3: Women’s online survey sample by ethnicity (n=2,099)



Relationship and dependants status

63% of our sample are either married, in a civil union partnership, in a de facto relationship or living together with a partner. Just over half (52%) do not have other people dependent on them for their day- to-day care (see Figure 4).

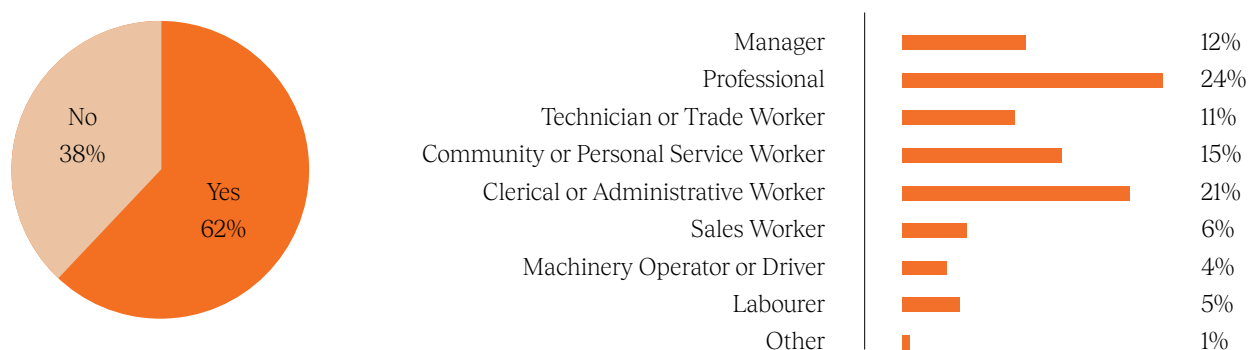
Figure 4: Women’s online survey sample by relationship status (n=1,982) and individuals dependent on them for their day-to-day care (n=2,026)



Current employment status

62% of the sample are currently in paid work, most commonly working as Professionals (24%), Clerical or Administrative workers (21%), and Community or Personal Services Workers (15%) (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Share of women in paid work (n=2,180) and by profession (n=1,355)



Most commonly, women are working between 31 and 40 hours each week (45%, see Figure 6). 24% are working more than 40 hours per week, 15% are working 21–30 hours and 16% work 20 hours or less.

53% of women in paid work report having a flexible arrangement in terms of when they work, while 40% report having a flexible arrangement in terms of where they work (see Figure 7).

Figure 6: Hours worked per week by women currently in paid employment (n=1,355)

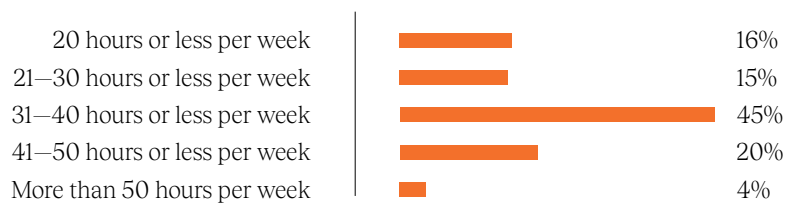
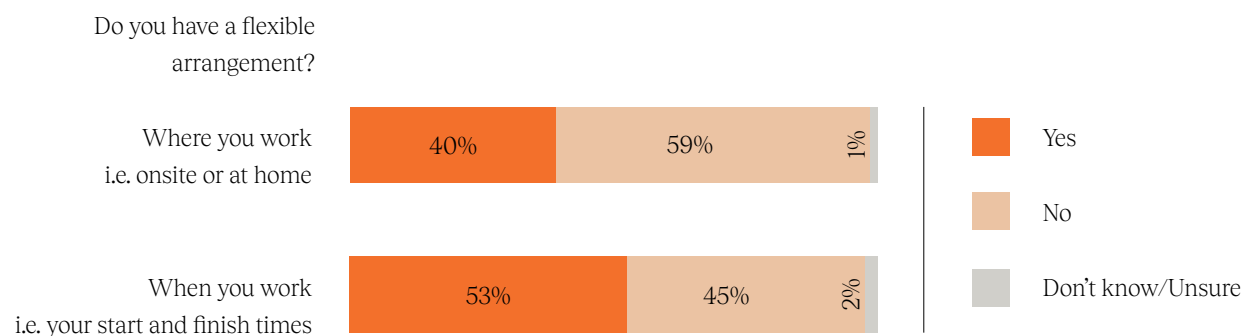


Figure 7: Flexibility in location and time of work (n=1,357)



Just over two-thirds of those in paid work are earning more than the Living Wage, 6% are earning the Living Wage, 16% more than Minimum Wage but less than the Living Wage, and 7% Minimum Wage (see Figure 8). Only 12% of women “Strongly agree” and 30% “Agree” that they are fairly paid for the work that they do, while 24% “Disagree” and 14% “Strongly disagree” (See Figure 8).

90% of women not currently in paid work would like to be, and a fewer 79% of these women are currently looking for paid work, indicating that barriers to

looking for paid work exist for some of these women (see Figure 9). 54% of these women are looking for full-time work, and 56% for part-time work (respondents could select either or both).

Additionally, 47% of women currently in paid work would like to do more hours – with 61% of these women wanting to do 40 or more hours per week, and 26% wanting 30–39 hours. Combining those who are not currently in paid work, but want to be, and those who are but would like more hours, equates to 63% of our sample wanting to do more paid work.

Figure 8: What online survey respondents currently earn, and whether they agree that they are paid fairly for the work that they do (n=1,357)

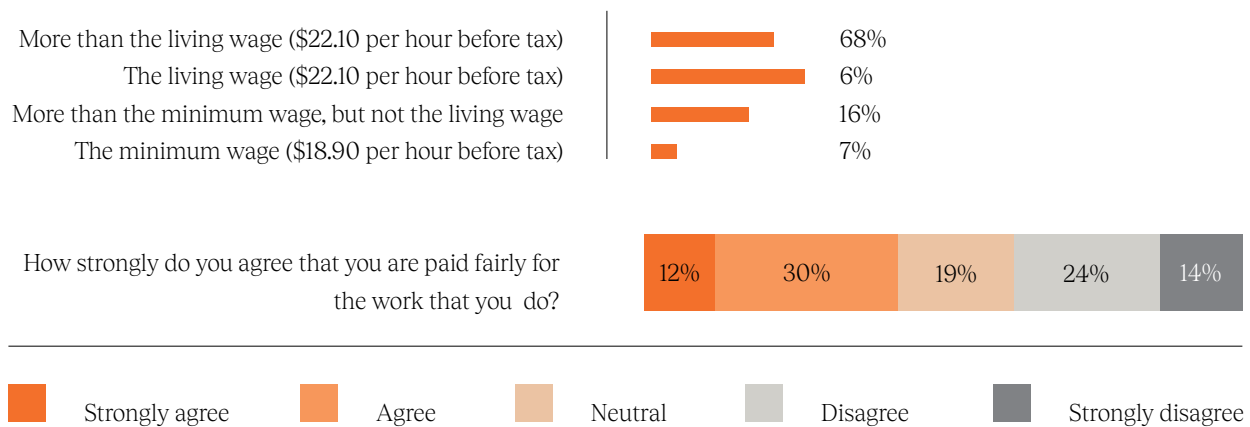
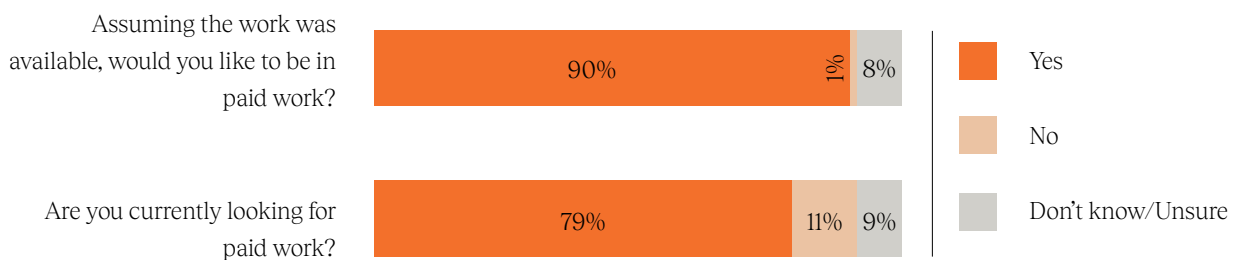


Figure 9: Share of women not currently in paid work wanting to be in paid work (n=823), and share of those looking for paid work (n=744)



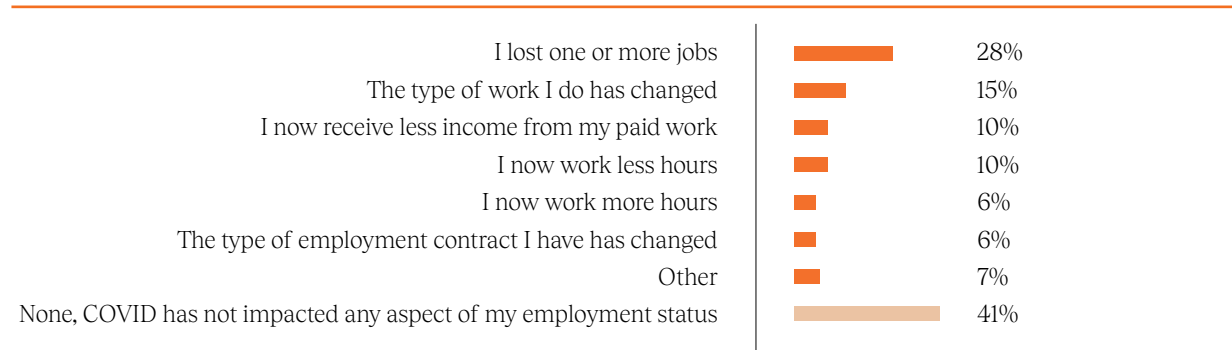
The impact of COVID-19 on paid work

When asked how COVID-19 impacted on their employment status, 59% of the sample report at least one impact of COVID-19 (see Figure 10). For the purpose of analysis, we have taken the 38% (856 respondents) who report one or more of the following,

“I lost one or more jobs”, “I now receive less income from my paid work”, “I now work less hours”, to be the segment: “those negatively impacted by COVID-19”.

34% of wāhine Māori in our sample were negatively impacted by COVID-19 in terms of their paid work, and 46% of Pasifika women.

Figure 10: Impact of COVID-19 (n=2,254)



The demographic breakdowns of the 856 women negatively impacted by COVID-19 in our sample are presented for New Zealand region, Ethnicity, Age group, Dependant status and Education Qualifications in Figure 11 to Figure 15.

Figure 11: NZ region presented for those negatively impacted by COVID-19 (n=856)

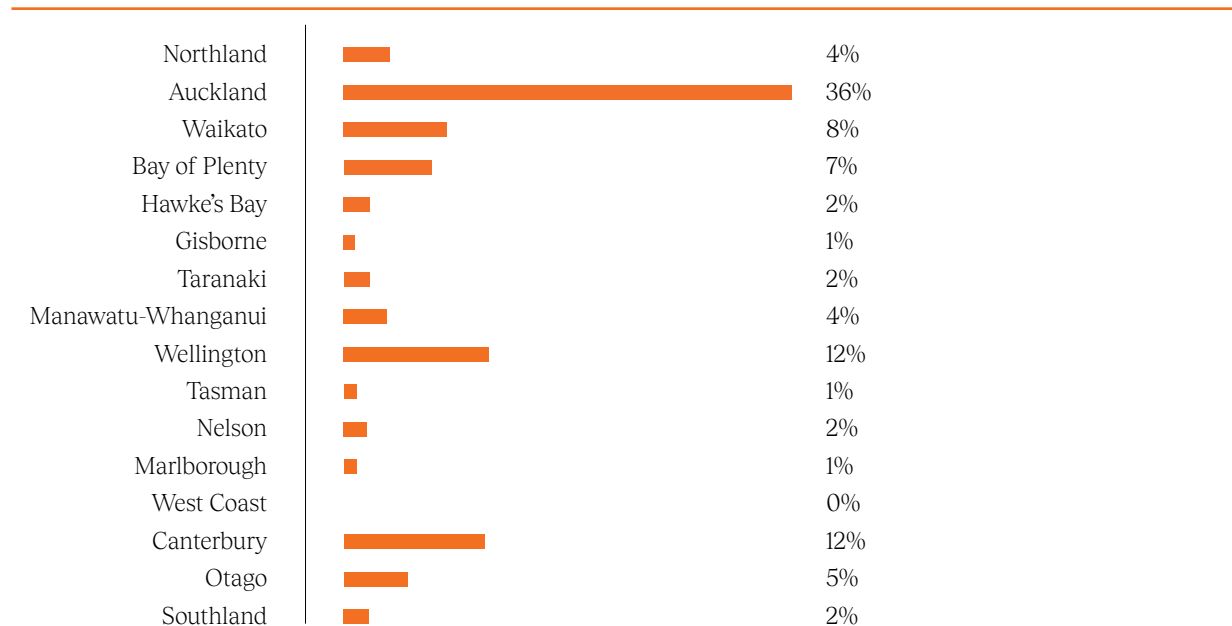


Figure 12: Ethnicity, presented for those negatively impacted by COVID-19 (n=856)

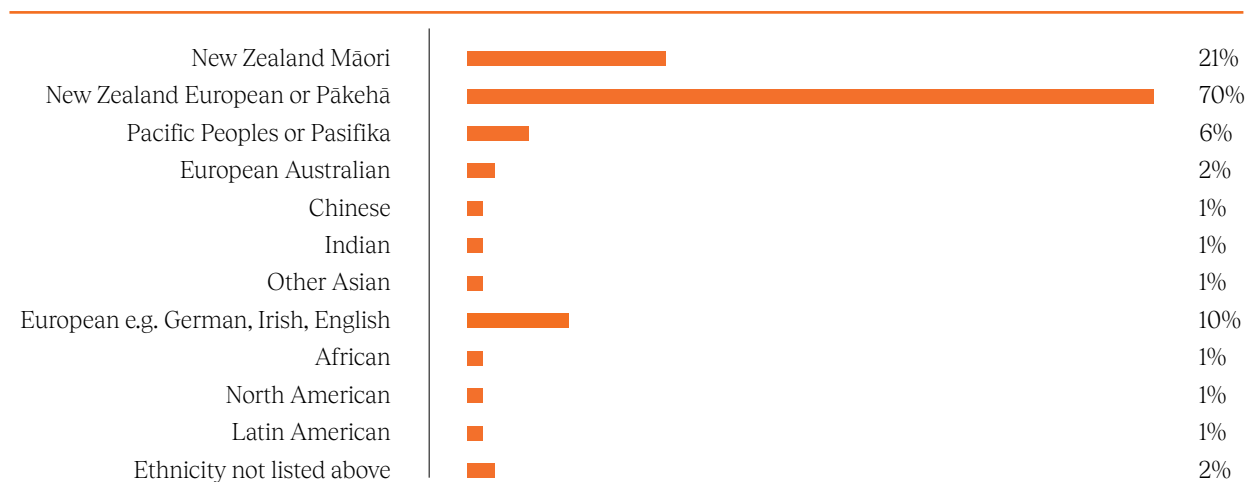


Figure 13: Age group presented for those negatively impacted by COVID-19 (n=856)

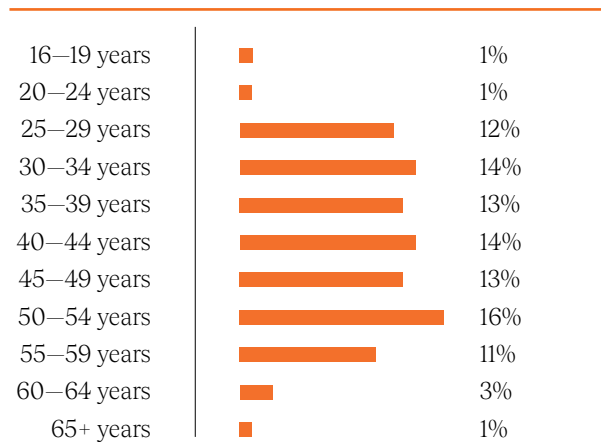


Figure 14: Dependant status for those negatively impacted by COVID-19 (n=856)

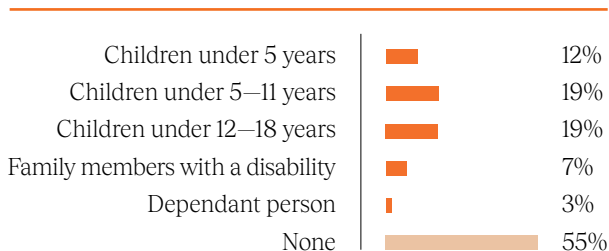
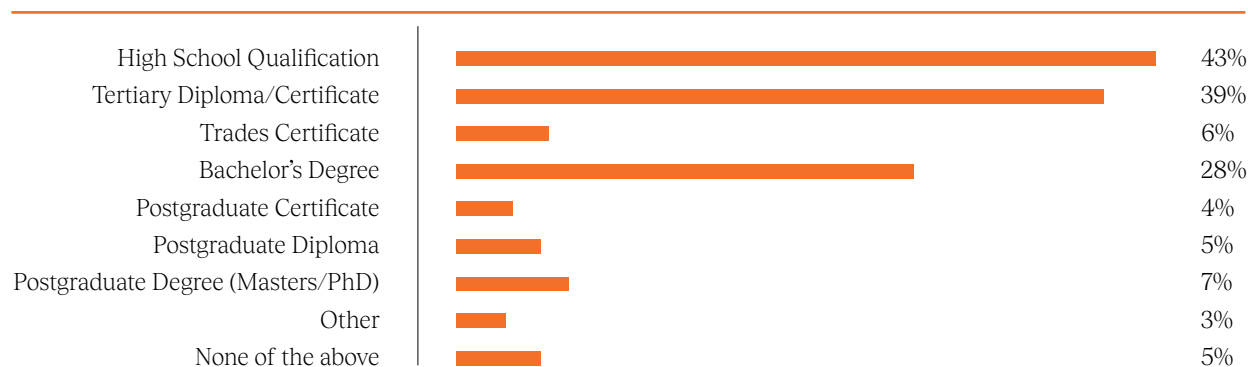


Figure 15: Qualifications held by those negatively impacted by COVID-19 (n=856)



The following groups within our sample are more likely to have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 in terms of their paid work:

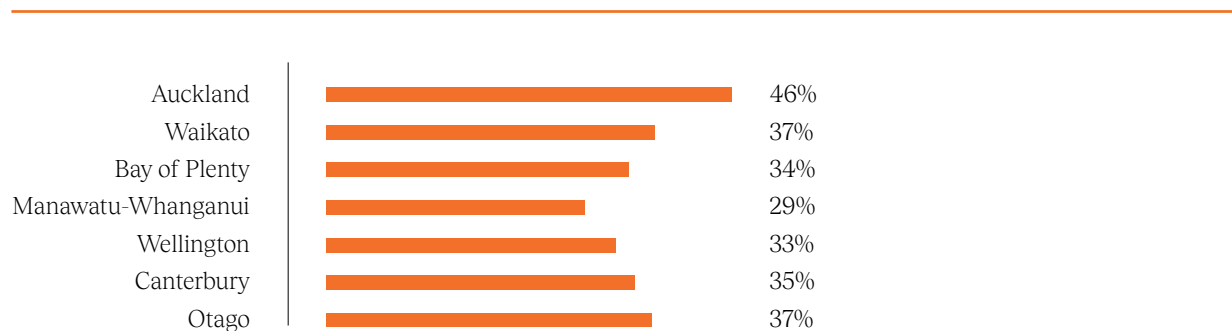
- Aucklanders are more likely to have been negatively impacted than those living in other New Zealand regions (see Figure 16): 46% of respondents living in the Auckland region reported being negatively impacted by COVID-19, compared to 38% of the total sample. The lowest results were seen in the Manawatu-Whanganui region (29%). The higher percentage of Pasifika women impacted (46% compared to 38% of the total sample) will be linked to this finding, as 62% of Pasifika women in our sample live in the Auckland region.
- Those currently earning minimum wage were also

more likely to have been negatively impacted – 57% of these respondents were impacted, compared to just 28% of those currently earning more than the Living Wage (please note we did not collect data on their pay and occupation prior to COVID-19).

- We see no notable difference in the share of respondents being negatively impacted for different age groups, nor those with or without dependants.

Wāhine Māori impacted by COVID-19 are more likely to have one or more people dependent on them for their day-to-day care, mainly children between 5 and 18 years (61% compared to 45% of total impacted sample). Women from the Waikato region negatively impacted by COVID-19 are more likely to have dependants (59%), while women aged 50+ are less likely to have dependants (34%).

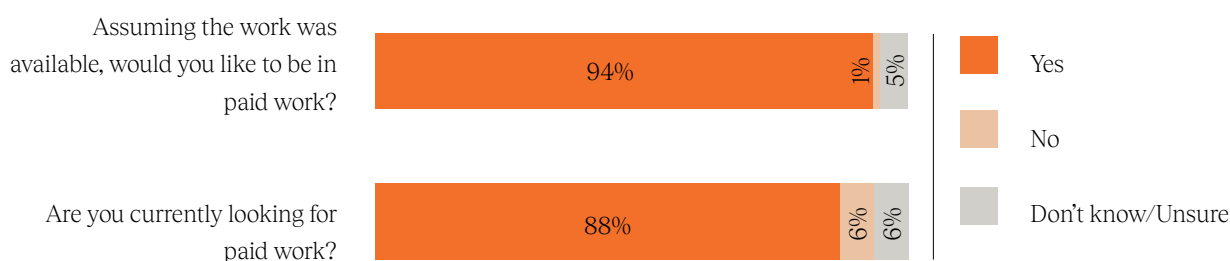
Figure 16: Share of respondents negatively impacted by COVID-19 by NZ region (presented for regions where n>100 only)



Of the women whose employment was negatively impacted by COVID-19, 43% are no longer in paid work. 94% of these women not currently in paid work would like to be, with 88% of those currently looking for paid work – either full-time (59%) and/or part-time (52%). 78% are only looking within their home region, while 19% would be prepared to travel for paid work (3% Don't know/Unsure).

43% of wāhine Māori negatively impacted by COVID-19 are no longer in paid work, and almost all (97%) of this sub-sample would like to be. 89% of those who would like to be in paid work are currently looking – 67% for full-time and 40% for part-time work. These results are not available for Pasifika women as the sample of those impacted by COVID-19 is too small.

Figure 17: Share of respondents negatively impacted by COVID-19, not currently in paid work wanting to be in paid work (n=356), and looking for paid work (n=336)



What women need and want from paid work

Respondents to the online survey were asked “Which of the following is important to you being able to do the hours of paid work that you do, or would like to do?”, and the share of respondents selecting each option are presented in Figure 18. We present these findings for all women in the sample in order to give the best picture available of what makes work “work” for women in New Zealand, but we note that the responses for those impacted by COVID-19 are almost identical to the overall sample, with no more than 3% difference in any option.

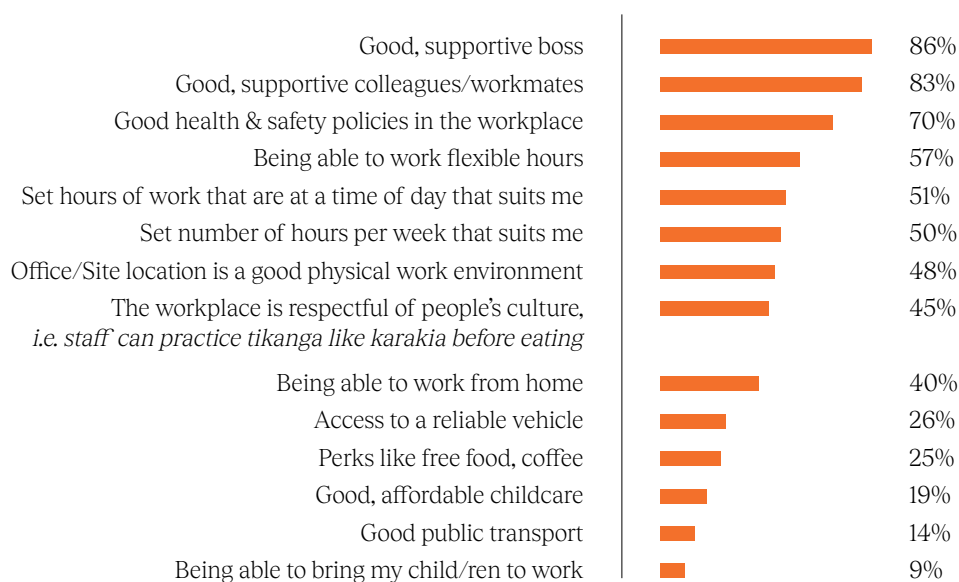
Having a “Good, supportive boss” and “Good, supportive colleagues/workmates” are the two most important things that enable women to be able to do the hours of paid work that they do, or would like to do (selected by 86% and 83% of respondents respectively – see Figure 18). Third and fourth most important are: “Good health & safety policies in the workplace” (70%), and “Being able to work flexible hours” (57%).

Only 9% need to be able to bring their child(ren) to work, just 19% need “Good, affordable childcare”, and only 14% need work to have “Good public transport” available. Despite these percentages being low, for the women selecting these options, not having these aspects in place for any roles advertised would mean that they would not apply (i.e. these are deal breakers, not nice-to-haves).

The 57% saying that “Being able to work flexible hours” is important to them aligns with the 53% of women saying they currently have a flexible arrangement in terms of the hours they work, and the 40% saying “Being able to work from home” is important to them aligns with the 40% saying they have a flexible arrangement in terms of where they work (see Figure 7, p.25).

The top four most selected areas for wāhine Māori in our sample were (n=473): “Good, supportive boss” (84%), “Good, supportive colleagues/workmates” (79%), “Good health & safety policies in the workplace” (71%), and “The workplace is respectful of people’s culture e.g. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating” (61%). “Being able to work flexible hours” is important to 51% of these wāhine, and 12% need to be able to bring their children to work.

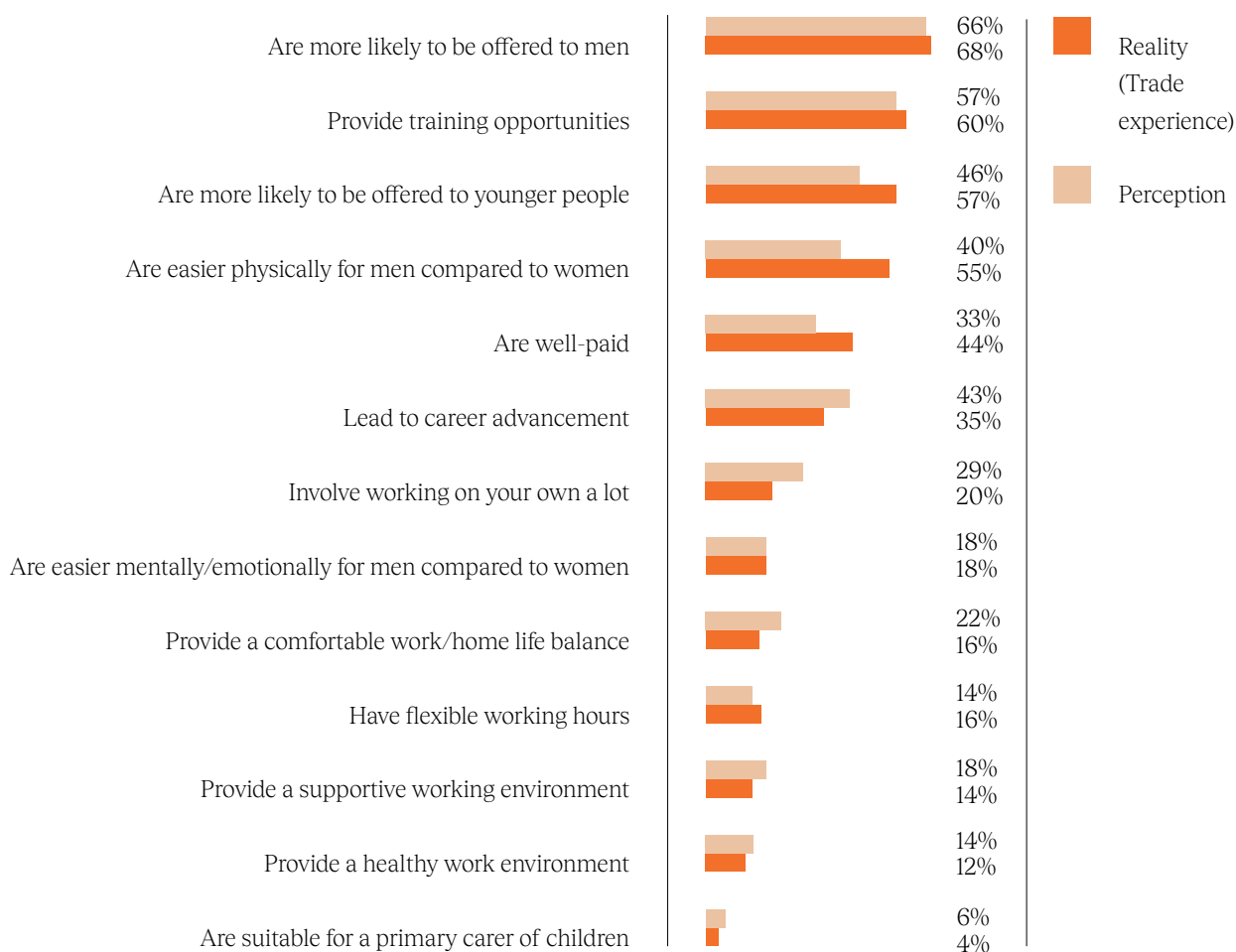
Figure 18: Which of the following is important to you being able to do the hours of paid work that you do, or would like to do? (n=2,101)



The top four most selected areas for Pasifika respondents were (n=107); “Good, supportive boss” (89%), “Good, supportive colleagues/workmates” (87%), “Good health & safety policies in the workplace” (77%), and “The workplace is respectful of people’s culture e.g. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating” (66%). “Being able to work flexible hours” is also important to these women (64% selecting this option), and 18% need to be able to bring their children to work.

Women from the Waikato region, and women aged 50+ years impacted by COVID-19 were both less likely to say that “Being able to work flexible hours” is important to them (51% and 52% respectively, compared, for example, to 64% of women from the Wellington region, and compared to 60% of women aged 30–49 years).

Figure 19: How jobs in the trades are perceived by women not working in the trades (n=2,088), compared to the reality, as reported by women with experience working in the trades (n=161)

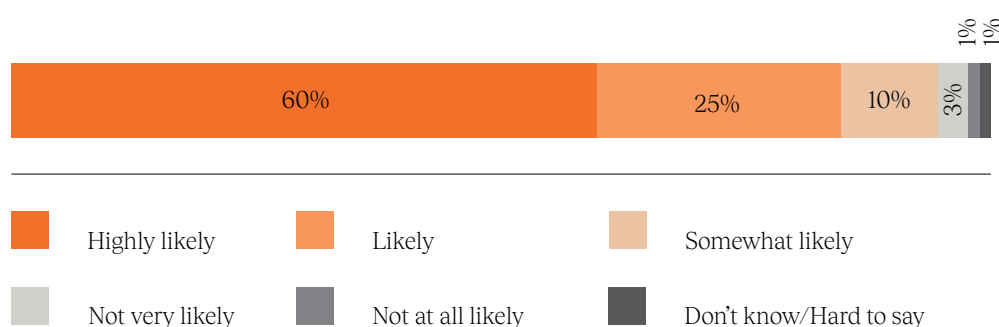


What might make the trades appealing to women – “the opportunities”

Those negatively impacted by COVID-19 showed an extremely high likelihood of considering applying for a job in the trades (see Figure 20), if they knew it could provide them with the things that they selected as being important to them earlier in the survey (see Figure 18, p.27), e.g. “Good, supportive boss”, with 60% saying they would be “Highly likely” to consider applying. This equates to 445 of our respondents negatively impacted by COVID-19 reporting being “Highly likely” to consider applying for a job in the trades if they knew it could deliver what they needed from their employer.

Wahine Māori in our sample impacted by COVID-19 showed high interest in jobs in the trades – 73% of these wāhine said they would be “Highly likely” to apply for a job in the trades if it could provide them with all the aspects of paid work that are important to them. The sample of Pasifika women impacted by COVID-19 is too small to present results. The whole sample of Pasifika women, however, show high likelihood to apply for a job in the trades (68% “Highly likely”), and given that overall levels are higher in those impacted by COVID-19 than not, we would assume that Pasifika women impacted by COVID-19 would be even more likely to apply for a job in the trades if it could deliver what they need.

Figure 20: “If you knew that a job in the trades could provide you with all of the following (listed from their selection in Figure 18 above)... how likely would you be to consider applying?” (those impacted by COVID-19, n=745)



We also note in our sample, these groups of women who have been negatively impacted by COVID-19 and who show a higher likelihood of applying for a job in the trades:

- Those currently on a lower income – 65% of those currently on minimum wage would be “Highly likely” to apply, compared to 51% of those currently earning more than the Living Wage.
- Women from our sample living in the Waikato region were the most likely to say they would apply – 77% “Highly likely” respectively compared, for example, to Auckland where 53% would be “Highly likely”.

Joy, Apprentice Builder



Clear themes were identified in the focus group data, relating to what makes a job in the trades appealing. These are:

1. Being outdoors, not in an office

I can't stand being in an office. I'm better working with my hands and outdoors

(Women's focus group participant, Whangarei).

I'd go mad sitting in an office all day

(Women's focus group participant, Nelson)

It's not worth it, sitting on my butt, getting unwell, unfit, affects your eyes, [being] inside a building with fluorescent lights

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).

2. Pushing stereotypes about appropriate roles for women

I just like it when people think you can't do something, and you know you can

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

3. Refuting the perception that tradespeople have to be physically strong

I think there's a perception out there that women are not strong enough, and I've worked in the outdoors and in heavy... like, I was in the transport industry for some time when I first started working, and lifting heavy things, and to me it's about technique. It's not that you need to be really strong - and you get stronger as you start doing a job, you do need to build up some strength — but it's working smart, because if you're not working smart, you can injure yourself. And men can do that as well, so it's just that we're smart enough to work out how to do things

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin)

We'd be less of an ACC risk. And sometimes bigger isn't better, because we were redoing under a house in Marion Street, and they didn't put the big guy under the house, they put the little guy under the house because the big guy didn't fit

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin)

4. Being a role model for others

For myself, it would be to show my children that you can continue to learn no matter what age you are

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

5. Having good physical and mental health

I think in trades, the physical aspects of it particularly for women, you know — women have more mental health problems than men. Double the number. Young people as well are particularly vulnerable, and part of the problem is the not moving enough, and we're moving into a world where there's more screen-time, less movement. So, I think trades especially for women would be a big boost to mental health because of the physical aspects of it

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

For me, it's the fitness side of it — you can go home at the end of the day knowing you've actually worked out, gotten stronger, gotten better, health-wise. And yeah, the mental side of it, being able to go home and say, "I did that today,"

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

6. Being self-sufficient

And to go home to my whenua and to be able to ask for some land and to be able to do the mahi myself

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

When you're saying about fixing things, I'm doing it all the time, and I love it. It's one of the things that I love doing. And to be able to do that on a daily basis, and to learn a skill. Use the right tools... I'd just be in my element.

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

In the last fifteen years I bought my own home, you know, it's very old and there's a lot of work and that's how I developed a liking for carpentry, and living on my own, and never having to ask a man for help. I've also been a regular at the men's shed, where I've been able to use their tools to finish off things I need to do

(Women's focus group participant, Nelson).

First of all I see a problem. I try to figure out how to solve it, and I like the hands on approach and the learning how to make something, to solve a problem, to learn to use the tools correctly, and I watch professionals oh is that how it's done? I betcha I can do that. That kind of self sufficiency
(Women's focus group participant, Nelson).

The thing that is really attractive about it is that I would be able to be self-employed, and I can see there's a real hole in the market where people are crying out – home-owners – to get things done, and all the builders are on the site at the hospital. There's all these little jobs around, and that would be me, going to people's houses and doing stuff instead of being on a big worksite, that wouldn't interest me at all.
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).

7. Creating something tangible

I'm in marketing. So, I feel that when I've done my fair share of spreadsheets during the day, I am just ticking boxes at the end of the day. I want to be able to go home knowing that I've actually created something that's lasted, or fixed something that was formerly broken. To think that I've actually made some kind of contribution, rather than just ticking boxes
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

8. Stability of employment

It's a stable income, there will always be a job. You always need sparkies, plumbers, builders, whatever, or maintenance – not even just the building new stuff, it's maintaining what's already there, both residential, commercial and industrial stuff. There's always something that needs those people
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

That's why I wanted to start in the industry, just job stability. Knowing there's always a job going...especially how it's going with the market how it is, there's always going to be some form of construction
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).

9. Being able to transfer their skills

One skill that I find pretty much every woman I know has is mental work, being able to think about other tasks while you're still doing something, so, planning ahead, being able to actually prioritise what you've got to do and figuring out what you've got to prepare for the next job, while still actually working, you're not having to sit and think. So, I think that's a transferable skill that we all have
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

And also, just the warmth that a female brings, you know, on a worksite there are guys that don't actually care if you hurt yourself, apart from the paperwork side of it. But we just bring that, and we'll share our food, or just things like that – we have more compassion. And delegating jobs, we do that a lot more than men. Knowing how much time we've got before we've got to leave, just preparing, we are the multi-taskers, prepping the night before, things like that. We think about everything
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

I think it is amazing what's transferable, you know, some of us, we bring up families, all sorts of different experience – be it office, or not – and then there's, "Hang on, I was a team leader at [place of employment] for ten years, I forgot about that,". I ran a floor, so yeah. It's just interesting
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

If you go back to like, Second World War when women had to take over those jobs, you know, there was a point where they realised that women were much, much more efficient. Something to do with the female brain, just being able to task, and just concentrate, and it's something that men procrastinate more than women, it's a misconception about women are like and women's personalities. You actually look at getting women into those kind of roles, and we have been proven to be much, much more efficient. And men may argue that, "Well, we're stronger, we can do more," but actually a woman can get to about within 10% of a man's strength if they work hard enough, and it wouldn't take that long for women to get the actual physical power to be, you know.
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

Reckon it would actually bring down costs in the industry, not necessarily because women are going to be paid less, but because we actually get the job done, and quicker and more efficiently. We're more time efficient, and beneficial to employers in that way, so even if we're a little bit weaker, that's going to be offset by the fact that we concentrate and get the job done.

(Women's focus group participant, Manukau)

Having the existing skills that I have already recognised, because when you walk into a new job, you get the job because you have a certain set of skills, but you have other skills that are applicable or transferable, and they don't often get recognised and they don't get taken into professional development.

(Women's focus group participant, Whangarei).

Yes it's just that little bit more of a step, to meet them part way and ask if they recognise these skills in the women before they go a step further. Because unless the mind is open to receive the fact that women are capable, if you bind up all the things of evidence, does the employer understand that there is an equality there, that we are on the same level as everyone?

(Women's focus group participant, Nelson).

10. On hiring older women

I think it's nice to hire an older woman because, you know, we've been there done that with the kids, and the maternity leave, and the playschool, and the snotty noses and everything, and we're there actually to get a career at work now.

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin)

I think, too, with us more senior members of society, rather than the teeny-boppers, we don't screw around, we just get stuck into it. We know what we're doing, we look after things, we're respectful of our equipment, and everything like that.

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin)

I think that definitely you show from your dedication to study that you are committed to what you're doing, especially later in life, that's a huge decision to retrain, so if

you're doing it you're fully committed. It's not a half-assed, "Oh I'm just doing it because I've got nothing else to do."

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin)

And we're more fun, let's be honest, because by the time we get to this age we can at least match the guys sarcastically and generally we can keep up and throw back what they give.

(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).



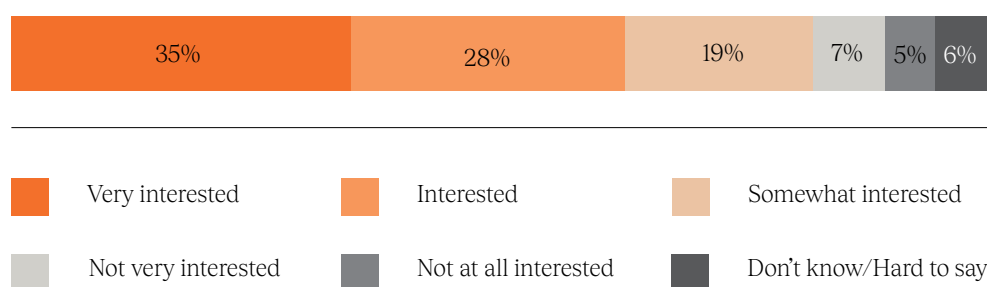
Nikita, Plumber

What might make the trades unappealing to women – “the barriers”

Compared to interest levels in applying for a job in the trades (see Figure 20), interest levels in a free apprenticeship were much lower, with just 35% saying they are “Very interested” and 28% “Interested” (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: “How interested are you in taking up a free apprenticeship where you are earning while you learn on the job?” (those impacted by COVID-19, n=786)

Figure 21: “How interested are you in taking up a free apprenticeship where you are earning while you learn on the job?” (those impacted by COVID-19, n=786)



Although level of interest in apprenticeships for the whole sample of women was low compared to interest in applying for a job in the trades, we note that 48% of wāhine Māori in our sample negatively impacted by COVID-19 would be “Very interested” in taking up a free apprenticeship in the trades. Again, the sample of Pasifika women impacted by COVID-19 is too small to present results but the whole sample of Pasifika women showed high interest levels in apprenticeships (51% “Very interested”), and given that overall interest levels are higher in those impacted by COVID-19 than not, we would assume that Pasifika women impacted by COVID-19 are likely to show even higher interest levels.

We also note these groups of respondents being more interested in apprenticeships:

- Those currently on a lower income – just 24% of those currently earning more than the Living Wage would be interested, compared to 51% of those earning Minimum Wage.
- Women from our sample living in the Waikato region were the most likely to say they would be interested – 49% “Very interested” compared, for example, to Auckland where 28% are “Very interested”.
- Older women were less likely to be interested in an apprenticeship than younger women (just 30% of women 50+ years being “Very interested” compared to 45% of women under 30 years).

A lower interest in taking on an apprenticeship compared to applying for a job in the trades was also seen in the focus group data, e.g. being on a lower rate of pay and the length of time for training did concern many women. The following other clear themes were identified:

1. Being on a lower rate of pay

That's my life at the moment, and just week by week, just knowing that this thing that I'm doing with learning Te Reo is massive. Yeah, that's a biggie for me, especially probably near the end of the year. I have five children, and rent to pay and stuff, it's like "Ah, my pockets are empty." But my heart is full. But yeah, it's pretty tough
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

2. Length of time for training

Yeah, what if the training was shorter? Four years is a bit long, I'm forty-four soon, so now I'll be forty-eight by the time I've finished, now what I can do?
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

The flipside of that is that the working life-span's going to get longer, innit. When I think about 25 years of teaching, I'm like, "No, I want out, now". I've got another twenty years, so it's time to change.
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

3. Knowing where to start. How do women get their foot in the door?

I think on that point, the shopping around part, I feel like there'll be a really strong place for, like, a recruitment person who is woman-focused, and they're placing you somewhere where you know you're going to be valued, rather than you just searching and you're getting the role maybe because you're female and they need to fill their particular diversity box. And you don't know what you're getting into straight out of your qualification, or whatever
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin)

But I think it's not that well known... to get in as a woman is quite hard, or it definitely was
(Women's focus group participant, Whangarei)

4. Flexibility, childcare

But it's also learning how to get into a trade with work-friendly hours for little ones, because not all day care or after school programs are that easily adaptive. Auckland was perfect. It would have been 7 to 7. I could have done all the hours. But yeah but here there's not that many options with childcare, or if your kids aren't in school
(Women's focus group participant, Whangarei).



5. Discrimination, bullying and harassment in the workplace.

Because it gets you, and so you need that support, structure, from the beginning knowing that someone's not watching over you, waiting for you to make a mistake so they can say, "Oh, you see! We told you.". It becomes difficult to constantly prove yourself, or having to prove yourself
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

But it's a very different world and you know if you're working there's a lot of that butting heads, friction stuff, and I don't want anything to do with a workplace where I have to be aggressive all the time.
(Women's focus group participant, Nelson).

You had to have that real attitude that the men had, you had to be able to take the piss all of the time, and be that jokey, you know. I enjoy that as much as the next person, but you feel like you sort of are on guard a bit, that you have to take it on the chin all the time
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).

I just think it appears to be really male-dominated. And I've worked in male-dominated places all my work-life, basically, and it just seems a bit tiring. And also, women employers- like, I would jump at the chance to get an apprenticeship if there was a woman employer that I could go and do it with, like a small business
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).

On a positive note, I mean the reason I'd like to get into it is because I actually find all the fellas on the building site really, really nice to work with, because sometimes in an all-female environment it can be the opposite
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).

I think if you're good at what you do, you earn respect. That's the same in any sort of business. If you are good at what you do, you take pride in what you do, yeah
(Women's focus group participant, Manukau).

I think how that will change is that when there are more women in the trades, and you don't actually go with the blokey way of talking, and that sarcastic shit, and actually counter them when they do stuff and say stuff that's sexist or derogatory, or anything, and just put a boundary on it really early on, and say, "I'm not putting up with that stuff.". And you can do it in a really light-hearted way, but just like, "You don't treat me like that."
(Women's focus group participant, Dunedin).



Tegan, Painter & Tradeswoman of the Year



RESULTS: THE EMPLOYERS

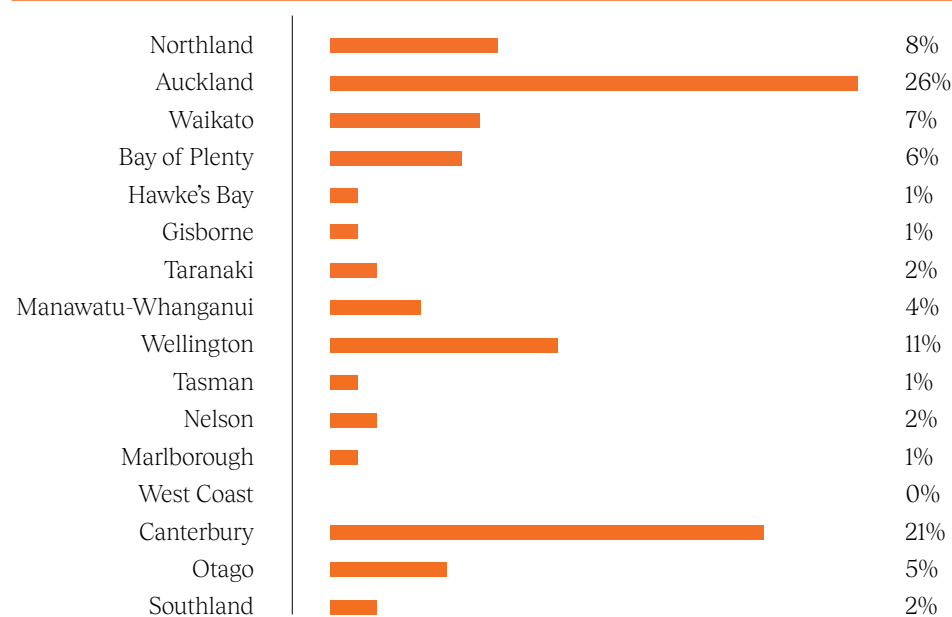
Online survey sample demographics — who did we hear from?

Cogo received 207 online survey responses from individuals currently working in jobs in the trades in New Zealand.

Regional location

26% of responses came from individuals working in the trades in the Auckland region, 21% in Canterbury and 11% in the Wellington region, with the rest mainly working in other regions in New Zealand (see Figure 22).

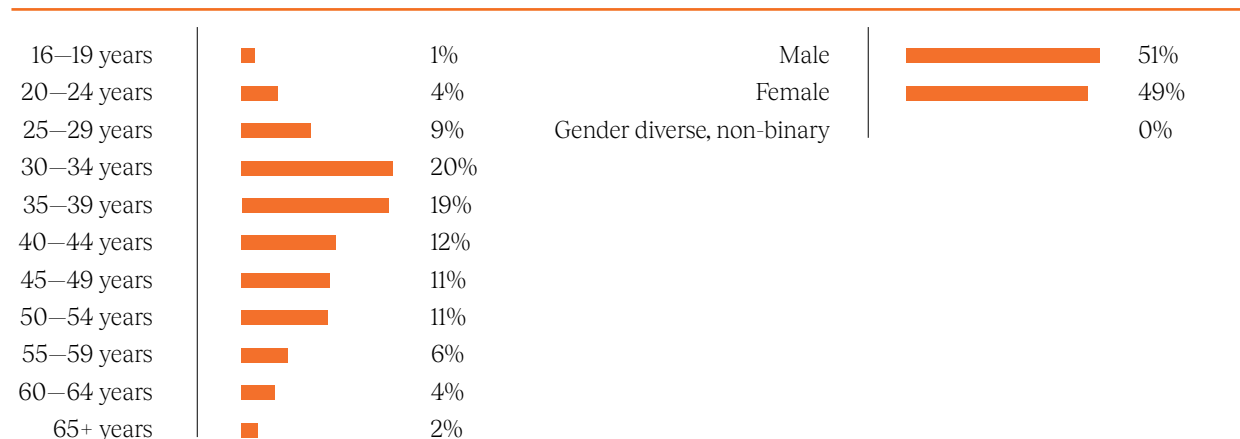
Figure 22: Employer survey sample by New Zealand region (n=207)



Age and gender

Respondents came from a range of age groups, but most commonly 30–34 years (20%) and 35–39 years (19%), and all respondents identified exclusively as Male (51%) or Female (49%) (see Figure 23).

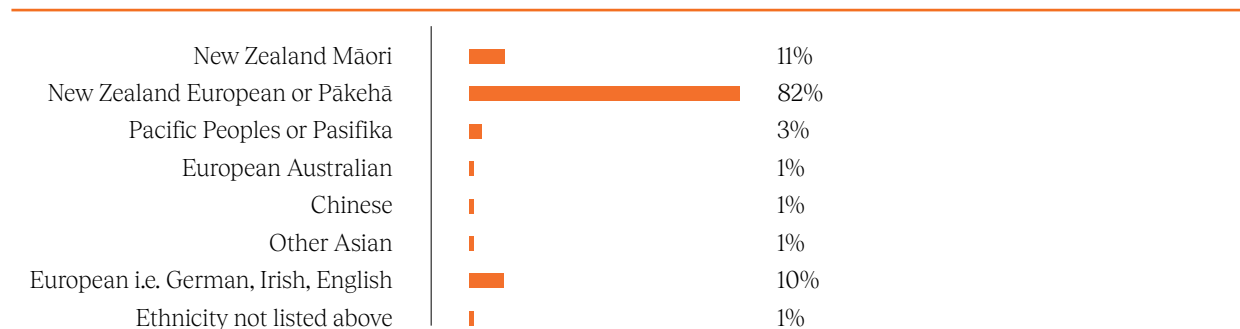
Figure 23: Employer survey sample by age and gender (n=207)



Ethnicity

Our sample of employers was predominantly New Zealand European or Pākehā (82%), 11% being New Zealand Māori and 10% European (see Figure 24).

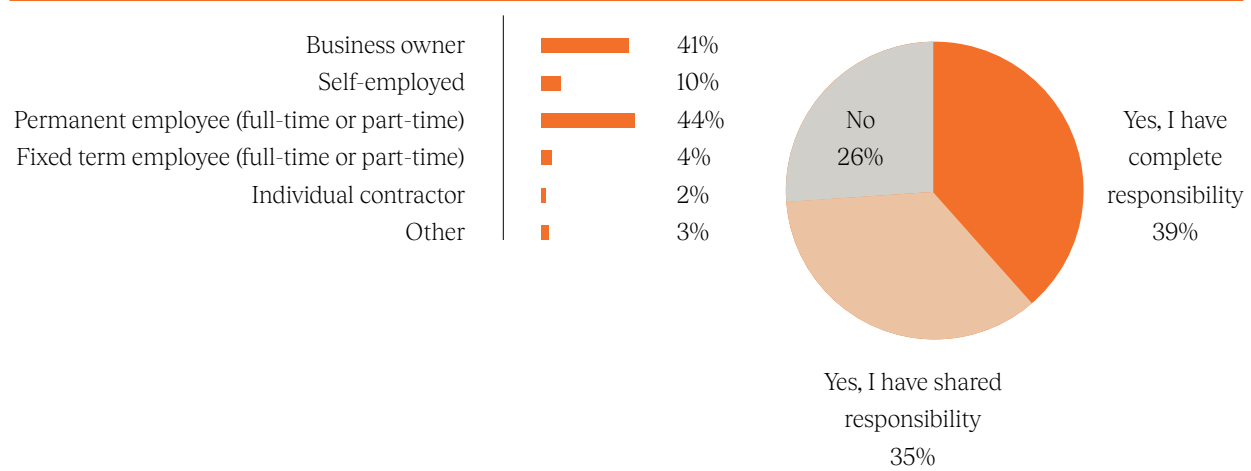
Figure 24: Employer survey sample by New Zealand ethnicity (n=207)



Current employment status

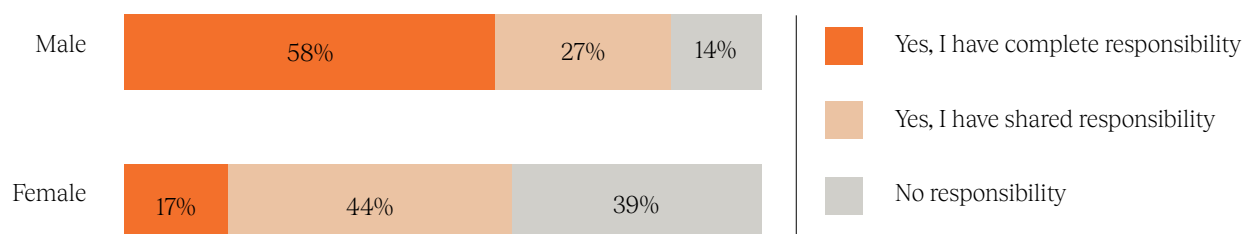
Respondents to the employer survey were most commonly permanent employees (full-time or part-time – 44%), or business owners (41%) with complete or shared responsibility for hiring tradespeople (39% and 35% respectively) (see Figure 25).

Figure 25: Employer survey sample by respondent position in the business, and by responsibility for hiring tradespeople (n=207)



Despite approximately half of the Employer survey sample being female, the roles of these women in the business differ to the male respondents, with 62% of male respondents being Business owners or Self-employed compared to 37% of female respondents. 58% of male respondents report having complete responsibility for hiring tradespeople compared to just 17% of female respondents (see Figure 26).

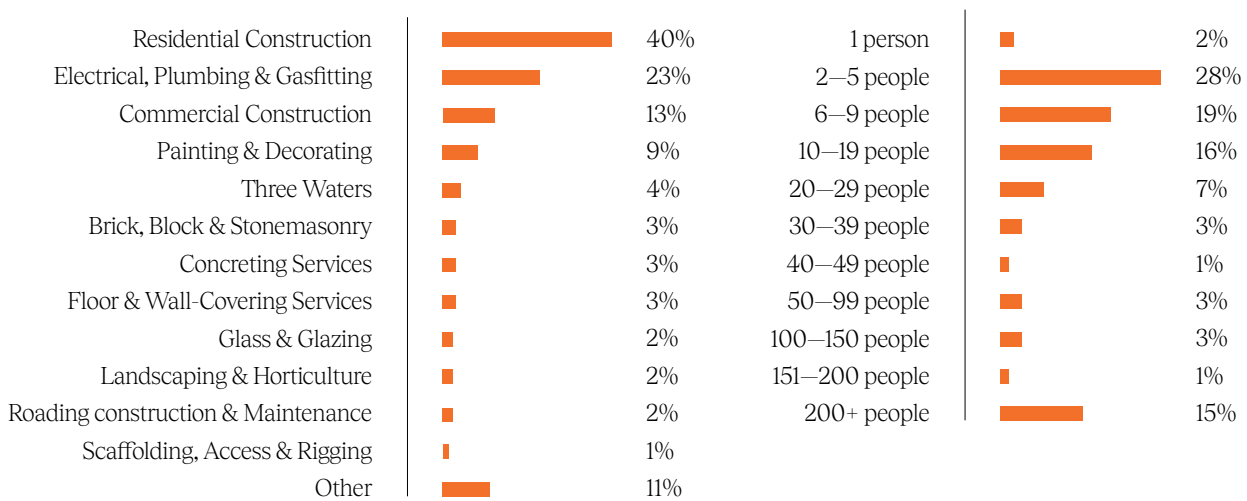
Figure 26: Responsibility for hiring tradespeople by gender (n=207)



Trades sector and size of business

Respondents came from a range of trades, but most commonly Residential construction (40%), Electrical, Plumbing and Gasfitting (23%), and Commercial Construction (13%) (see Figure 27). 30% of respondents came from businesses with five or less people working in them, 35% in business with six to 19 people, 18% in business with 20 to 200 people, and 15% from the largest business size of over 200 people.

Figure 27: Employer survey sample by main trade(s) and business size (n=207)

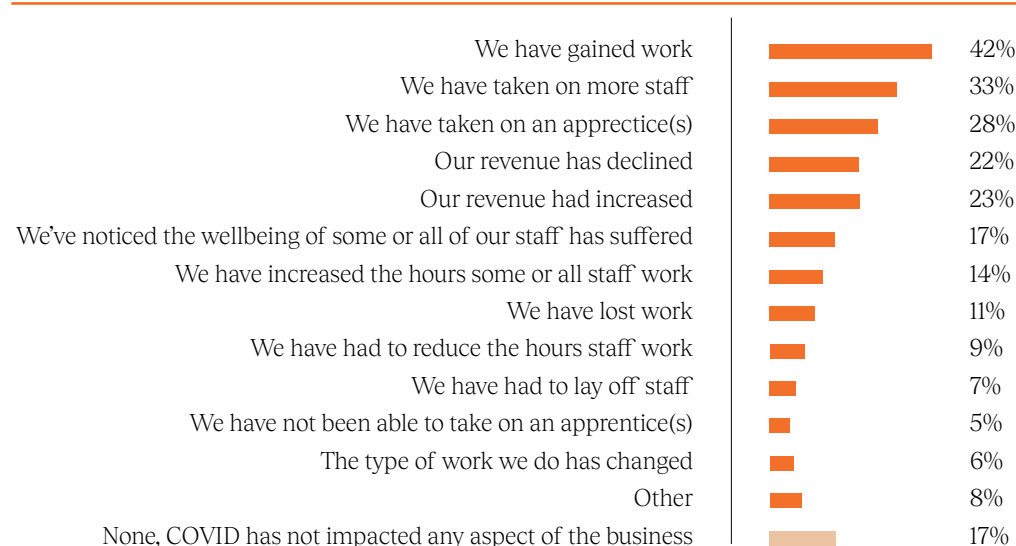


Sarah, CE of the Crane Association

The impact of COVID-19 on trades businesses

83% of respondents to the employer survey reported some impact of COVID-19 on their business. Most commonly, these were positive impacts, with 42% having gained more work, 22% taking on more staff and 28% having taken on one or more apprentices as a result of COVID-19 (see Figure 28). 28% report one or more of the following main income-related negatives (“We have lost work”, “Our revenue has declined”, “We have had to lay off staff”, “We have had to reduce the hours staff work”).

Figure 28: Impact of COVID-19 on business (n=207)



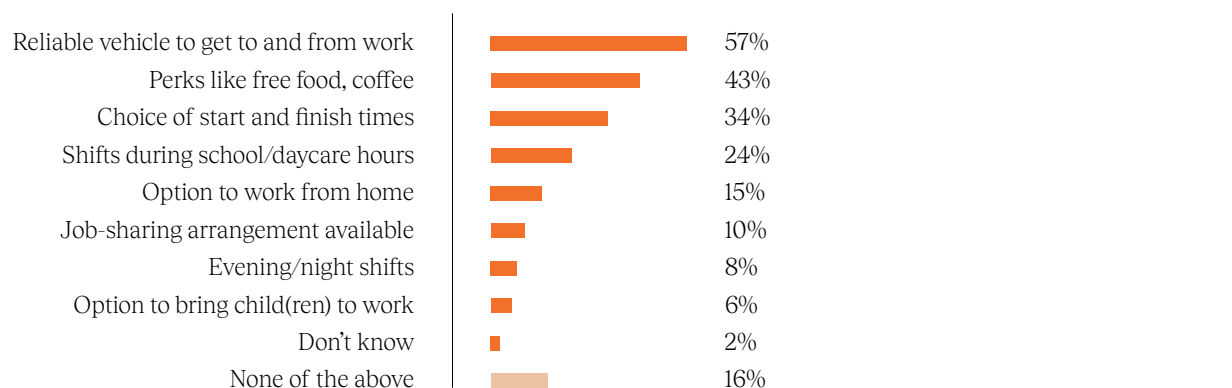
Workplace environment and culture in the trades

When asked what is available in their workplace for some or all trade roles, one or more benefits/options were available in the majority of workplaces (84%). These were, most commonly, a reliable vehicle to get to and from work (57%) and perks like free food, coffee (43%) (see Figure 29). In terms of flexibility, just 34% of workplaces currently provide a choice of start and finish times, 24% offer shifts during school/daycare hours, 15% give people the option to work from home, 10% offer job-sharing arrangements, 8% evening/night shifts, and 6% provide the option to bring children to work.

The largest businesses (100+ people) are more likely to offer evening/night shifts (28% compared to 8% of the whole sample) and are more likely to provide the option of working from home (38% compared to 15% of the whole sample). However, these large businesses

are no more likely than the smaller businesses to offer a choice of start and finish times (36%), shifts during school/daycare hours (26%), or job-sharing arrangements (10%).

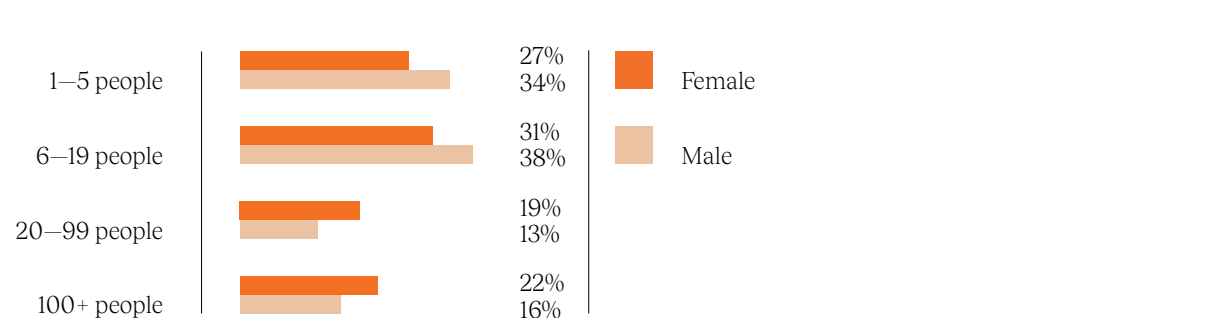
Figure 29: Which of the following are available at your workplace for some or all trade roles? (n=207)



With 57% of women wanting flexible hours, and 51% wanting set hours of work at a time of day that would suit them, it would currently be hard to accommodate these women into jobs in the trades without changing these workplace offerings. Given this, it is not surprising that the female respondents to the employer survey are more likely to work in

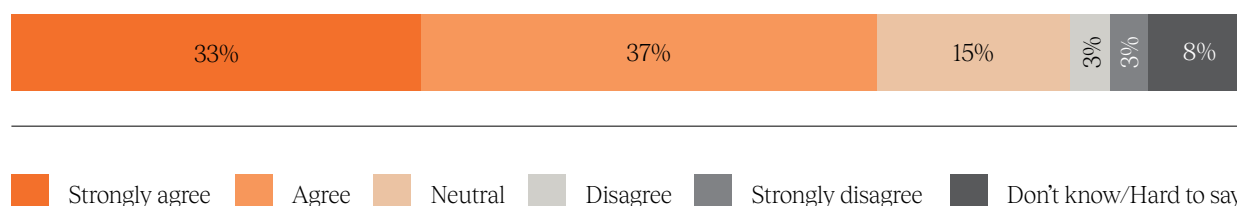
the larger businesses (those with 100+ people and 20 - 99 people) than the male respondents, and male respondents are more likely than females to work in the smaller businesses (19 people or less), as shown in Figure 30. 23% of men said their workplace had “None of the above” benefits/options listed available, while just 10% of women said the same.

Figure 30: Business size by gender (n=207)



When asked about their workplace culture, 70% of respondents “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that their workplace is respectful of people’s culture (see Figure 31), with no notable difference between male and female respondents or clear trend in relation to business size.

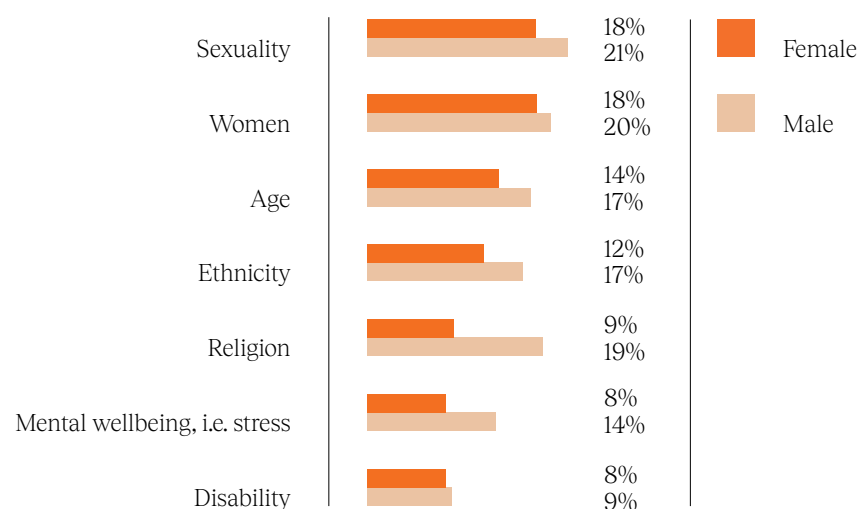
Figure 31: How strongly do you agree that your workplace is respectful of people’s culture i.e. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating and/or food and eating spaces are kept separate from toilet area? (n=207)



However, 20% “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that inappropriate jokes and/or negative comments are tolerated about Sexuality, 19% agree that they are tolerated about Women, 16% about Age, 14% about Ethnicity, 14% about Religion, 11% about Mental wellbeing, and 8% about Disability. Male respondents were slightly more likely to agree, for all aspects of identity, that inappropriate jokes and/or negative comments are tolerated in their workplace than

female respondents — particularly around Religion (19% of men agree, compared to 9% of women), and mental wellbeing (14% of men compared to 8% of women) (see Figure 32).

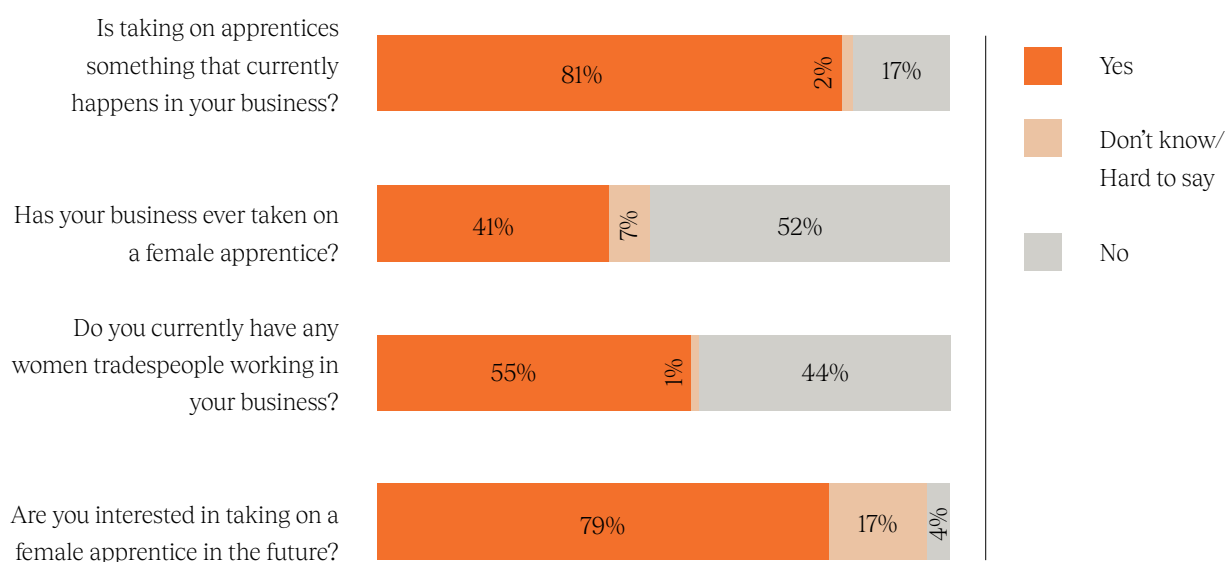
Figure 32: How strongly do you agree that inappropriate jokes and/or negative comments are tolerated in your workplace about: (n=207)



Position on hiring women tradespeople

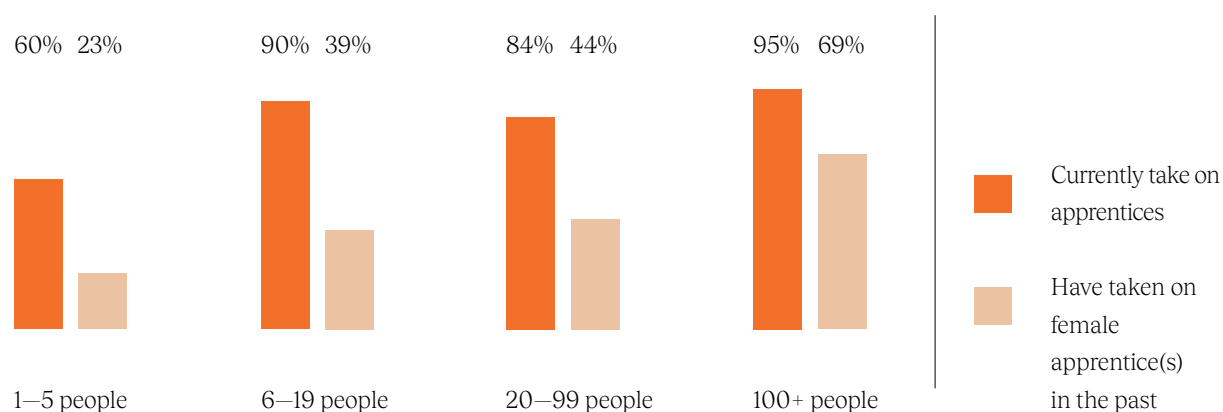
Despite 81% of respondents reporting that their business currently takes on apprentices, only 41% said that their business has ever taken on a female apprentice and just 55% of respondents report having any women tradespeople working in their business (see Figure 33). 79% of respondents are interested in taking on a female apprentice in the future, 17% said “Don’t know/Hard to say”, and just 4% would not be interested.

Figure 33: Current position on/experience of taking on apprentices and women into jobs in the trades (n=207)



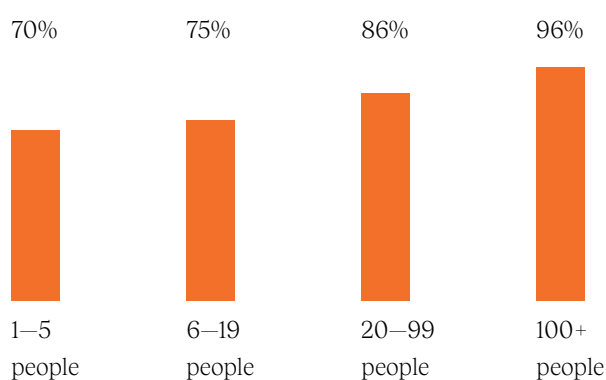
When split by business size, sample sizes are small, but there appears to be a trend where respondents from the smaller businesses are less likely to take on apprentices – just 60% of respondents from businesses of five or less people saying that it is something they currently do, compared to 95% of respondents from businesses with 100 or more people (see Figure 34). 69% of respondents from businesses with 100+ people report that their business has taken on a female apprentice in the past, compared to 44% from businesses with 20–99 people, 39% from businesses with 6-19 people and just 23% from businesses with 1–5 people.

Figure 34: Current position on taking on apprentices, and past incidence of taking on female apprentices, by business size (n=207)



Similarly, the larger the business, the more likely they are to be interested in taking on a female apprentice – 96% of businesses with 100 or more people saying they would be interested, compared to 70% of business with 5 or less people (see Figure 35).

Figure 35: Interest in taking on female apprentices in the future, by business size (n=153)



48% of female respondents said that their business has taken on a female apprentice in the past, compared to 33% of male respondents, while 76% of female respondents currently have women tradespeople working in the business compared to just 34% of male respondents. This result will predominantly be explained by the fact that female respondents are more likely to work in the larger businesses, however

as not all female respondents reported having women tradespeople in their business, despite the strong response from women to the survey, this shows that these female respondents are not all working as tradespeople in these trade businesses.

Andrew, Master Joiner



What appeals to employers about hiring women – “the opportunities”

Clear themes were identified in the focus group data, relating to what makes hiring women appealing.

These are:

1. A good attitude is the main attribute employers are looking for; skills can be taught

As long as you're willing to learn how to use hand tools, and sort of know what the hand tools are, you can sort of teach a lot of the skills, but they do have to have a degree of mathematics and stuff like that. There's going to be a lot of that in it, in our trade

(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

She was so keen. She came with nothing, she knew nothing. But again, her partner's a builder, so she had that idea. Learning wise I think she's picking it up a lot quicker than the guys, because she wants it. That's the difference

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

You can train skill but you can't train attitude, that's what we've found

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

To be honest, young males have got a lot of maturing to do when they leave school – and we find that in their early twenties, we're their parent, we're their boss, we're their everything, and to try and coach them along, and you put up with a lot of crap as an employer. The females we have found have actually brought less of that, so we look at it and go, “Well, if they've got those core skills and motivation and the passion,” and the females applying, we've found that they haven't been born into the trade, but they've got a passion and an interest so actually, often they turn out to be really good

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

I'd love to work with, you know, forty-year-olds, fifty-year-olds, already out in the workforce looking for a change as opposed to a school-leaver. Because you're not having to be the parent

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

And yeah, a lot of those stereotypes sort of make it hard sometimes, but you get the really good ones – like our road-marking foreman, he's got a young girl with him at the moment – and she is amazing. I'll try hire her this year, but you know, she's just flourishing because she's willing to get involved, she wants to learn, she brings an attitude that's just, “I'm going to do it,” and the other guys are just picking up on that as well

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

But the biggest skill of all is their attitude, anything after that it's easy as

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

I would hire based on, “Where's your moral compass at? Tell me, are you going to get out of bed in the morning and get to work on time without being hounded to do so? Are you going to be presentable? Are you going to be ready to work, are you willing to work hard, and are you willing to learn? Are you willing to receive feedback?”. If you tick all of those boxes, you've got the job. If you haven't got the skills, don't worry, we'll teach you, but the people off the shelf to slot into the job just don't exist anymore... you've got to go into it deliberately prepared, ready with an understanding, and start advertising as such. To say, “Look, hey, don't worry if you don't have the skills, don't worry if you don't have the experience, if your attitude's in the right place, come talk to us.”

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

We actually find now that we're employing for more other attributes, we look at, you know, we can teach anyone the job, but those key skills like motivation and reliability and all those sorts of things

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

2. Women are lighter on the tools

Well, we've had [name], our experience with her, she's a bit different from some of the boys, she's not as hard on some of the gear and not as rough, and she's quite detail-oriented
(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

I think as well, women are a lot gentler on the gear as well, yeah, they just seem to care a little bit more
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin)

3. Women have good attention to detail

Well, I think it is that attention to detail, and the different perspective and the way the rest of the workforce changes, it's different from when you've only got males there
(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

It was really good having the females against the blokes, because they tended to cross the t's and dot the i's, especially on the academic side of things, so they created a bit of competitiveness and it was really good. The results that were coming up were fantastic, and all the ones we've had going through have turned out really good tradespeople, or moved into excavating, or to a different part of the electrical industry. So, I'd encourage women to get involved
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

I find we've got quite a few women now, in our workplace, and they're just a bit more methodical, follow instructions better, follow our processes better
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

They're ahead with attitude, they're ahead with detailing, they're ahead with preparation, I mean, they both before they leave at night they actually spend 5 minutes preparing for the next day, so they just come in and get into it
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

I usually find when you ask guys to do it, they'll do it half-heartedly, and you go and check and you'll find they've not done it properly. And you say to them "Come on I've told you..." When you tell her to do something, it's perfect. I mean, she'll listen to the spec. So she's got an eye for detail. And I think that's a difference for women. They're more

pedantic about getting it right. And it's the same when it comes to documenting

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

4. Women are more dedicated, with something to prove

The one thing with both the girls, they took home offcuts of power-point cable, wire strippers and things, and they just go home and practice at it at night. So, they were more dedicated, and I think they wanted to prove a point a little bit

(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

5. Good at time management

When you get on the job, you must assess the time that you believe you're going to do it in. There's no use turning up to a job and saying, "Oh well, might be here tomorrow, might be here the next day," that doesn't work in business. I think maybe the women are better at that
(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

6. Women are better at completing tasks

But females just take care with everything they touch, you know, they see jobs all the way through
(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei)

7. Good at customer service

And also you'll find women can be a good point of contact for a client, sometimes men don't always have a filter that they need, where women can sometimes smooth things over a bit, so in this industry that's probably a role, and people are screaming out for it
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

8. Women ask questions and suggest new ways of doing things that are often better

[A female employee] puts another perspective on it... why don't we try this way? Normally, you'd say no, we've always done it this way. She's actually saying we could document this easier and save time by doing this and she's actually putting a lot of ideas in

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

They're really good at covering all bases. Whereas men can be a little bit forgetful because they're just so caught up in the moment, you know, so we've got those females behind them saying, wait, hold up, have you checked this, this, this and this? So we find that just having enough females to balance out the males in the workplace makes us more functional in the region.

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

Girls seem to have a wee bit more self preservation about them. Less willing to take the risks that we don't want

people to take in our industry, you know, whereas blokes are a bit more gung-ho and "she'll be right", whereas if you've got somebody level-headed going, "I'm going to die if I do that, let's not do that, let's think about how we might do this differently", 99 times out of a 100 on a site all you need is somebody to say that, just somebody to say, "That doesn't look good, that doesn't feel right," and to have a think. There's a real stereotype in our industry of the macho male, and it's breaking that down and having a bit of a balance, and we haven't really got the balance right at the moment, yeah

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin)

9. Change the workplace environment for the better

Yeah there's guys who don't like what men are saying, but they don't know how to say "can you stop talking about that" or "I don't wanna hear about that", but when there's a woman on site they tend to think "oh I shouldn't be saying that"

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).



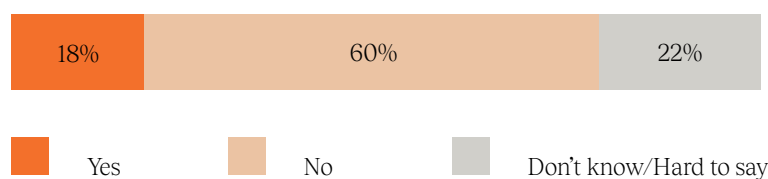
Marc, Painter and Decorator

What would need to change in the workplace to hire women — “the barriers”

Those that reported having female apprentices and/or tradespeople working in their business were asked whether there had been any challenges to hiring and supporting these women in their workplace. Over half of (54%) answered “No”, but female respondents were less likely than male respondents to think this was the case (49% of female respondents saying that there had been no challenges compared to 61% of male respondents).

60% of respondents whose businesses had not previously taken on a female apprentice believe that nothing would need to change in their business in order to hire and successfully support a female apprentice in the future (see Figure 36). 18% said they thought something would need to change, while 22% answered “Don’t know/Hard to say”. Male and female respondents gave very similar responses to this question, but the smaller businesses (5 or less people) are more likely to say they need to make changes in order to be ready - 25% answering “yes”, 54% “No”, and 21% “Don’t know/Hard to say”.

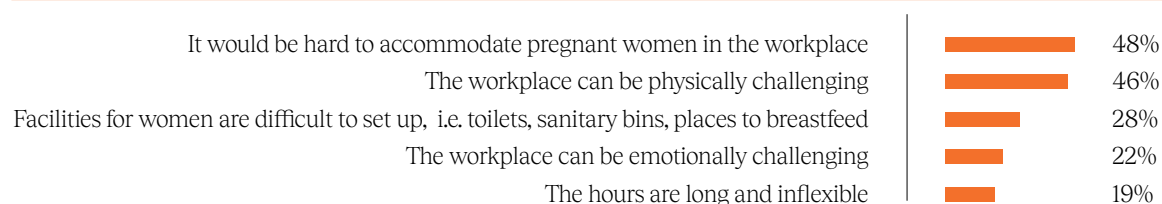
Figure 36: To hire and successfully support a female apprentice, would anything need to change in your business? (n=123)



Respondents were presented with some of the commonly-perceived barriers to hiring women into the trades and asked how strongly they agreed. Almost half of respondents (48%) either “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that hiring and supporting women tradespeople is a challenge because “it would be hard to accommodate pregnant women in the workplace” and 46% because “the workplace can be physically challenging” (see Figure 37). 28% believe that

hiring and supporting women tradespeople would be challenging because “facilities for women are difficult to set up”, 22% because “the workplace can be emotionally challenging”, and 19% because “the hours are long and inflexible”. These results show that the commonly-perceived barriers to hiring women, although present in the industry to some extent, are not beliefs held by all employers.

Figure 37: Challenges for employers in hiring and supporting women tradespeople — share of respondents saying they “Strongly agree” or “Agree” (n=207)



Respondents from the largest businesses again see fewer challenges — just 21% of respondents from businesses with 100+ people believing it would be hard to accommodate pregnant women in the workplace, 24% that the workplace can be physically challenging, and 13% that facilities for women are difficult to set

up (see Figure 38). Please note, while we acknowledge that the sample sizes are small, particularly for the largest two businesses sizes (n=32 for 20–99 people, and n=39 for 100+ people), we believe that it was important to show the difference between these two larger groups in these results.

Figure 38: Challenges for employers in hiring and supporting women tradespeople — share of respondents saying the “Strongly agree” or “Agree” — by business size (n=207)





Commonly-perceived barriers to hiring women in the trades were also discussed in the employer focus groups, with the following themes evident:

1. Physical strength

Some participants in the employer focus groups expressed concerns about physical strength being a limitation of women tradespeople. However the main view was that this was not, or at least shouldn't be an issue:

So, we have found limitations with [name], she's quite slight, she's quite small, but you can work around that. We've got bigger guys, we've got bigger apprentices, and you just manage the jobs. But no, she's not disadvantaged as opposed to the rest of the apprentices, so she's good. She's good for crawling into houses and getting under rooves
(Employer focus group, Manukau).

But that whole thing about lifting, oh my lord, like health and safety you're not allowed to lift heavy stuff anyway, it's all bloody lifting, that's just bollocks, absolute bollocks
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

I don't know how you change that mentality, but the older builders - and I'm picking on builders, just because I know from my own experience - are really hard to change. "Chicks shouldn't be in this industry," "Chicks can't do this, can't do that," but on the flip side of that sometimes men can't do that either. So why are we being stereotyped that we can't do that?
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

You know, lifting is not a problem, in our trade we lift a lot of cabinets and things like that, these days with bloody lifts and techniques to lifting, and we just get those practices in place, with health and safety you're not allowed to carry any more than however many kilos anyways, so all those things, there's actually no excuses to not have a woman in trade, there's none at all
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

2. Concerns about having to support women employees with harassment/bullying

Employers believe that women employees will often experience harassment/bullying however others believe that workplace cultures are changing:

I just didn't feel comfortable sending her there... because of what she'd be exposed to, you know, you still have the nudey calendars on the wall, just all those attitudes. So I made the decision, albeit a foolish one to not even consider a female apprentice, which I do regret
(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

With the bigger companies we've found that there's been some girls go in there, and they've just been treated terribly. It's almost like the smaller companies are better for females to go into than the big ones. So, you're really lucky when you're in a situation like that, where everyone works together really well, because otherwise you're just the girl on the end of the broom cleaning up after everyone's mess. Or the derogatory comments that are thrown, it's pretty hard. Especially construction, it's very hard.
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin)

Some employers believe that if the manager or owner leads by example, then that puts a stop to bullying and harassment in the workplace:

Because I'm very hands on and actually on site a lot, my husband and I we are definitely leading by example. You know, if you want to be a sexist git we'll pull you up for it, and the women know when we employ them that we've got their back, any comment that might offend you that to everyone else is "oh just a joke", well if it offends you, you let us know and we'll have a word to them, we'll deal with it pretty much. And so we've never had any issues
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

Cause I'm not leading it anymore, when I was leading it they were very boy-ish, but as soon as [participant's wife] came in they had to sharpen up, and they do sharpen up, so it's effectively where your leader is. It starts at the top, it's got to filter down
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

The managers on site are very good at setting boundaries, and there's no gender stereotyping as well. So, no matter if you're male or female, if you're doing something wrong, you will get pulled up for it

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

But agree it comes down to leadership from top, it's down to them as employers ...

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

3. The belief that only women with a certain personality type will succeed

Most employers believe that women have to be very confident and thick-skinned if they want to work in the trades:

So out of the five of them, four of them are quite forthright, you know, they can speak their minds, and they know what they're saying. And they're focused and I think that those personality traits would really help a woman. And the other ones not doing so well. She's a bit quiet, she's a bit shy, she's unsure of herself. She's not doing as well

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei)

We had a lady, she started out probably 10 years ago, as a construction worker. She's now a project manager, and she's probably one of our toughest in the team. She grew up in that, you know, had to be tough, you had to be strong, you had to be confident. And none of the guys will question her.... I'm not going to say she wanted to be, she probably had to be in that environment

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

I think you're right with you know, you've got to pick the right sort of personality. Because obviously, most of the trades, you've got to stick up yourself. We have guys which are a bit more, I would say mellow. But he gets treated [better] because he's a guy. So it doesn't kind of get picked on. But the females, they've got to kind of show themselves, they want to try and prove themselves

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

Oh a bit of bull-dog probably, one that can stand up for themself and with the physicality of the work, and like you said before, to tell the guys to shut up and that sort of thing

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

Yeah, it does change the dynamic a little bit, not too much, she gives as good as she gets basically

(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

That's the thing, I think, once you have females on the tools and in the working environment, it does change the culture. Some of those early women in the trades probably were forging a way, they did have to have that tougher skin and that, but it is definitely changing. You're right, there is still banter, still a bit of that goes on, but most of our girls — we have got a few that are probably more girly-girls and that than the earlier girls we employed — and they're still fitting in well, where I think twenty years ago a woman that started then wouldn't have fit into that environment then

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

4. It would be difficult to offer flexibility — many women have families

Many employers believe that women will require more flexibility because many women have families, but some point out that increasingly, so do men. In any case, some employers are offering flexible working arrangements:

Hopefully, I don't get things wrong, but you see a lot of women driving trucks in the workforce, so if an older woman came along and- the only thing we'd think about is whether — if she got — if she had a family. But then again, most times you can work around things. And what we're finding now is that guys take as much time off work for their families, so, that is definitely changing.

(Employer focus group participant, Manukau).

The guys with the bigger firms have a got a little bit more flexibility.

(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

It depends how big the company is. I think with smaller teams you know, we're under-resourced as it is
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).

We sometimes have barrier around working hours, like school drop-offs and things like that where females often seem to be the ones that are doing that, and our business, we start at six and they might be working until six, and you can't leave to drop kids off or pick them up
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

No, I offer flexible hours. I say you can do four days a week at 10 hours if you want. Or you can do 5 at 8. Or 4 and 8 even if you want. I'd prefer they be refreshed and not bored. It can be mundane, the same thing over and over every day, it can bring you down. So you can give them flexible hours, and that fits into their lifestyle as well.
(Employer focus group participant, Whangarei).

But that's changing, I think you're finding a lot more males in the work environments now are doing school drop-offs and pick-ups and stuff like that
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

There's some trades, yep, where [flexibility] is going to be a lot harder. I think the flipside is if you're not willing to let people do that as an employer, then you're restricting your market even further
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

5. Employers are finding it hard to attract women into the trades

Many employers report how few women apply to work in the trades, and relay the challenges they face trying to recruit them:

I'd say the same as for us as well. We don't get woman applying through the traditional methods
(Focus group participant, Whangarei).

An example of how the traditional methods may not be accessible for most women is demonstrated in this view from an employer focus group participant:

We get a very small number of female applicants though, and often, unfortunately, they don't have that same background that a lot of our male applicants have. They haven't necessarily been in the garage with their Dads, mucking around in the workshop, or they haven't done the subjects at school, and I completely agree it's too late to talk to people in Year 12 or 13, they've already done years of study. The aim is to get the best applicant, so the female applicants are just at a disadvantage from the get-go because they don't have those years of school, and years of, you know...

Other employers in our focus groups were more open however:

Maybe it's just giving them some sort of resource. If I phone up a building company and I don't want to sound like a total pillock, what are the things I should ask? What sort of tools do I need to have, what's health and safety policy, is it contract, is it employment, will you give me a trial period? Some basic questions
(Employer focus group participant, Nelson)

What we're finding now is there's not enough information out there to explain what the trades are for people who are falling out of a job and want something different, and that information around transition, and what that looks like – actually what the roles are, and what we want them to do. I think there's a lot of lack of information around that
(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin)

10. Concerns about remuneration expectations

Some employers were concerned that older women would require more money than a starting rate:

One thing that we haven't really discussed is probably the wages for when they're starting out, because we're paying training wages which is lower than minimum wage. And it's fine for someone straight out of school, and one of our boys we took on, he didn't even have a bank account

when he started out with us, so when he got his first pay, he went out and blew it all in the first week, and it was a lot to him, but it wouldn't be a lot to someone in different circumstances just because the wages are lower

(Employer focus group, Manukau).

Other employers however, felt this wasn't an issue and that they could pay older women more:

So, what we've done with people that came from other professions, whether they be male or female, we won't start them on the bottom wage. We won't treat them as a new apprentice that's coming out of school, they've been in the workforce, so we'll start them higher up

(Employer focus group participant, Dunedin).

We have also discussed that at work too, and bringing somebody in of an older age group they come with so many more life skills that they're actually worth paying more money, so you're happy to pay a 40 year old labourer, 25, 26 dollars an hour, because they're bringing in the life skills that sort of different things.

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson)

We had our adult apprentice that we put on a higher rate than we would put our school leavers on, because it's life experience, yeah, a bit more responsibility, you would hope a little bit more common sense

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson)

11. Concerns about women becoming pregnant

Many employers believe it would be hard to accommodate pregnancy in the workplace, however others point out that injury often needs to be accommodated and this is no different:

P1: But in saying that, if you do have a woman who's doing a really physical job and she got pregnant at what point do you have to stop her even though she's only eligible for maternity leave at a certain rate... at what point do people feel uncomfortable you know. Jenny's lifting these huge things and she's got a tummy like that but she's still 2 months from...

P2: But surely you could move her into a different role. Like same as in any company, when someone's got an injury you put them into another role...

(Employer focus group, Whangarei)

We've done some numbers a few months ago, myself and another guy, he's been employing women for five, ten years, he's got five in the factory at the moment and he worked out that if they get pregnant and they have their maternity leave and a lot of them come back within three months when the baby goes to nursery, and he actually did the numbers and he said that we're actually still doing very, very well, because the efficiency that they bring to what they're doing, he's had three women go on maternity leave and he said he'd still employ, they're still more efficient and their whole attitude to the whole thing, there's not a barrier at all, zero, and he'd still encourage everyone to take them on.

(Employer focus group participant, Nelson).



Colleen, CEO of Hutt Gas and Plumbing

RESEARCH FINDINGS

“The Women”

The trade careers project online survey heard from 856 women who have had their employment negatively impacted by COVID (34% of the online survey sample). Women more likely to be impacted by the pandemic were: Aucklanders (46% of these women being negatively impacted by COVID-19), those currently on the minimum wage, and Pasifika (although this is likely due to 62% of our Pasifika sample living in Auckland). The Trade Careers project should consider prioritising these demographic groups with future activities and interventions.

90% of the women we heard from who are not in paid work would like to be, and over half (54%) of those who are currently looking for work would like to work full time. 47% of women currently in paid work would like to do more hours, with 61% of these women wanting to do 40 or more hours per week. Over half (52%) of the women in our sample do not have dependants.

Having a “Good, supportive boss”, “Good, supportive colleagues/workmates”, “Good health and safety policies in the workplace”, and “Being able to work flexible hours” are the top four important things that enable women to be able to do the hours of paid work that they do, or would like to do. For the 476 wāhine Māori in our sample, and the 107 Pasifika women, “The workplace is respectful of people’s culture e.g. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating” replaces “Being able to work flexible hours” as the fourth most important aspect of work. Yet, women’s perception of the trades are that they do not provide a supportive working environment (only 14% believe they would), do not provide a healthy work environment (only 12% think they would), and do not provide a comfortable work/home life balance nor have flexible working hours (only 16% believe they would). The perception of women with no experience of the trades that they do not provide a supportive nor healthy work environment, nor a comfortable work/home life balance and flexible working is close to reality as reported by our sample of 161 tradeswomen. These are therefore key areas that employers in the trades need to deliver on if they are

going to appeal to women, and successfully bring them into roles in their trades.

Those negatively impacted by COVID-19 showed an extremely high likelihood of considering applying for a job in the trades if they knew it could provide them with the things that are important to them, 85% would be either “Highly Likely” (60%) or “Likely” (25%) to consider applying. Certain groups within our sample reported even higher likelihood of applying for a job in the trades if it could deliver what they need – 73% of wāhine Māori would be “Highly likely” to apply, those currently on minimum wage (65% “Highly Likely”), and women living in the Waikato region (77% “Highly likely” compared, for example, to Auckland where 53% would be “Highly likely”). These results again demonstrate the demographic groups the Trade Careers project should consider prioritising with future activities and interventions.

Interest levels in a free apprenticeship were much lower than interest levels in applying for a job in the trades, with just 35% of women impacted by COVID-19 saying they are “Very interested” in taking up a free apprenticeship (compared to 60% of these women being highly likely to consider applying for a job in the trades). Interest levels in apprenticeships were nonetheless higher for wāhine Māori in our sample (48% “Very interested”). Additionally, women from the Waikato region showed a higher interest in apprenticeships (49% “Very interested”), as did those currently earning Minimum Wage (51%). Unsurprisingly, older women were less likely to be interested in an apprenticeship than younger women (just 30% of women 50+ year being “Very interested” compared to 45% of women under 30 years). It would therefore be a bigger challenge going forward to get these women to apply for apprenticeships than it would be to get them to apply for jobs in the trades.

Based on focus group data, the following make the trades appealing for women:

- Being outdoors, not in an office
- Pushing stereotypes about appropriate roles for women
- Refuting the perception that tradespeople have to be physically strong
- Being a role model for others
- Having good physical and mental health from working outside
- Being self-sufficient, not needing to rely on others to fix things
- Creating something tangible
- Stability of employment
- Being able to transfer their skills
- Based on focus group data, the following make the trades unappealing for women:
- Being on a lower rate of pay
- Length of time for training
- Not knowing where to start, “getting a foot in the door”
- Finding the required flexibility in roles in the trades (particularly for women with childcare responsibilities)
- Discrimination, bullying and harassment in the workplace

As well as noting that some groups of women are more interested than others in taking up positions in the trades, we also see some demographic groups displaying behaviours and/or preferences that make them more likely to integrate into jobs in the trades successfully, given the known realities of jobs in the trades (in their current form). We base this analysis on the information about the reality of working in jobs in the trades according to women tradies- i.e. the knowledge that generally, jobs in the trades do not currently offer high levels of flexibility in terms of hours (just 14% of women tradies reporting this to be true in their experience), rarely “Provide a supportive working environment” (18%) or “Provide a healthy work environment” (14%), and are not considered by many to be “...suitable for a primary carer of children” (6%). We therefore looked to identify groups of women

negatively impacted by COVID-19 who are less likely to place importance on “Being able to work flexible hours”, lower importance on having a “Good, supportive boss”, and “Good, supportive colleagues/workmates”, and groups of women less likely to have dependants to support the Trade Careers project to target their initial activities and interventions. Key groups aligning more closely than others with these criteria include:

- Wāhine Māori in our sample are less likely to say that flexible working hours are important to them (51% compared to 57% for full sample). However, 61% of wāhine Māori impacted by COVID-19 have dependants – higher than 45% of full sample impacted.
- Respondents from the Waikato region are also less likely to say that flexible working hours are important to them (51% compared, for example, to 64% of those from the Wellington region). Again, however, a higher percentage than the full sample (59% compared to 45%) have dependants.
- Women aged 50+ years are less likely to require flexibility – 52% wanting flexible hours and 36% the option to work from home, compared to those aged 30–49 years (61% wanting flexible hours and 44% the option to work from home). Only 34% in this age group have dependants, compared to 48% of the full sample.

Kat, Managing Director Tairāwhiti Contractors



“The Employers”

Cogo received 207 online survey responses from individuals currently working in jobs in the trades in New Zealand, 74% with some level of responsibility for hiring tradespeople. Respondents were well-distributed throughout the New Zealand regions, and split relatively evenly between males and females (51% and 49% respectively). The roles held by women and men within these businesses, however, were notably different – with women less likely to have responsibility for hiring tradespeople and less likely to be business owners than men.

Respondents came from a range of sectors, most commonly Residential construction (40%), Electrical, Plumbing and Gasfitting (23%), and Commercial Construction (13%), and from a range of business sizes (30% of respondents came from businesses with five or less people working in them, 35% in business with six to 19 people, 18% 20 to 200 people and 15% from the largest business size of over 200 people).

The impact of COVID-19 on the businesses surveyed has been mainly positive, with 42% having gained more work, 22% taking on more staff and 28% having taken on one or more apprentices as a result of COVID-19, supporting the view that the trades would be a positive option in terms of work being likely to be available in this industry on a long-term basis.

One or more benefits/options were available in the majority of workplaces – most commonly, a reliable vehicle to get to and from work (57%) and perks like free food, coffee (43%). Workplace offerings around flexibility, however, were less common just 34% of workplaces currently provide a choice of start and finish times, 24% offer shifts during school/daycare hours, 15% give people the option to work from home, 10% offer job-sharing arrangements, 8% evening/night shifts, and 6% provide the option to bring children to work. Given the importance of flexibility to some women, trade businesses may need to consider options around shifts, job shares and so on if they want to be able to attract larger volumes of

women (rather than just those for whom flexibility is not important).

The larger businesses (100+ people) are more likely to offer evening/night shifts (28% compared to 8% of the whole sample) and are more likely to provide the option of working from home (38% compared to 15% of the whole sample). However, these large businesses are no more likely than the smaller businesses to offer a choice of start and finish times (36%), shifts during school/daycare hours (26%), or job-sharing arrangements (10%). Given this, it is not surprising that the female respondents to the employer survey are more likely to work in the larger businesses (20+ people) than the male respondents, and male respondents are more likely than females to work in the smaller businesses (19 people or less). With 57% of women in our sample wanting flexible hours, and 51% wanting set hours of work at a time of day that would suit them, it would currently be hard to accommodate these women in jobs in the trades without changing these workplace offerings.

70% of respondents “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that their workplace is respectful of people’s culture, but 20% “Strongly agree” or “Agree” that inappropriate jokes and/or negative comments are tolerated about Sexuality, 19% agree that they are tolerated about Women, 16% about Age, 14% about Ethnicity, 14% about Religion, 11% about Mental wellbeing, and 8% about Disability. The three most important things for women in the workplace are having a “Good, supportive boss” (86%), “Good, supportive colleagues/workmates” (83%) and “Good health & safety policies in the workplace” (which should include mental and emotional health & safety, 70%). This indicates that improving workplace culture, including the capacity to make women feel safe and included in the workplace, including culturally-safe, will be a critical area to consider when trying to successfully attract and retain women in jobs in the trades.

81% of respondents report that their business currently takes on apprentices (more so in larger businesses than smaller), but only 41% said that their business

has ever taken on a female apprentice and just 55% of businesses have any women tradespeople working in their business. This is despite half of the sample being women, indicating that many women currently working in trade businesses are not tradespeople.

79% of respondents are interested in taking on a female apprentice in the future, with larger businesses more likely to be interested – 96% of businesses with 100 or more people saying they would be interested, compared to 70% of business with 5 or less people. 60% of respondents from businesses that had not previously taken on a female apprentice believe that nothing would need to change in their business in order to hire and successfully support a female apprentice in the future, with the smaller businesses (5 or less people) being more likely to need to make changes in order to be ready. Although this may indicate that the larger businesses will be more open and ready to hire women and take on female apprentices, it is possible that larger businesses may also struggle more than smaller businesses to shift workplace cultures and processes with a larger volume of staff already in place.

Almost half of respondents to the employer survey (48%) agree that hiring and supporting women tradespeople is a challenge because it would be hard to accommodate pregnant women in the workplace and 46% because the workplace can be physically challenging. 28% believe that hiring and supporting women tradespeople would be challenging because facilities for women are difficult to set up, 22% because the workplace can be emotionally challenging, and 19% because the hours are long and inflexible. Although these results show that not all employers see the same challenges to hiring and supporting women, these are all key areas in which trades would need to be offered support in order to overcome these barriers.

Focus group data gives further insights into these perceived challenges:

- Some employers believed physical strength can be an issue for women, but others did not
- Women employees will often experience harassment/bullying, however some believe that workplace cultures are changing
- Women are considered to require a certain personality type in order to succeed
- Many employers believe that women will require more flexibility because many women have families, but some point out that increasingly, so do men. In any case, some employers are offering flexible working arrangements
- It is hard to attract women into the trades
- Women may need to be paid more than apprentice rates and this concerns some
- It is hard to accommodate pregnancy in the workplace, however injury often needs to be accommodated and this is no different

However, clear themes also emerged in the focus group data around the appeal of hiring women:

- A good attitude is the main attribute employers are looking for; skills can be taught
- Women are lighter on the tools
- Women are better at completing tasks and have more attention to detail
- Women are more dedicated, with something to prove
- Women are good at customer service and better at time management
- Women tend to ask questions and suggest new ways of doing things that are often better
- Having women in the workplace changes the workplace environment for the better

Bringing “The Women” and “The Employers” together

The Cogo research has provided insights into the opportunities and barriers that exist for women who are interested in the trades, and for employers who may be looking to hire them. We have also identified the demographic groups that, based on the research, are more interested in the trades and who would arguably have a better chance of succeeding given what they need in paid employment and the currently environment in many trades workplaces.

The Cogo research has further identified distinct areas for Trade Careers to focus on in order to make the pathway to employment more accessible:

Communication & information about the skills that trades employers need

Women have skills that they have developed through work and life experience that they hope could be transferable to a job in the trades. They are concerned that employers may not recognise them, however the main issue is that they are unsure what employers are looking for and what skills are required of a job in the trades.

Trades employers appear to be hiring people mostly according to whether they have the “right attitude” as opposed to a particular skillset, which ought to make it easier for women with no prior trades experience to access work. As well, employers who have hired women have positive stories to tell about the attributes that women bring to the job, which make them in many cases want to hire women over men.

Opportunities to provide better communication and information about what skills trades employers are looking for should be explored; the positive experiences many employers have had hiring women should also be communicated.

Recruitment pathways

Women find it difficult to access information on how to go about getting into the trades and employers are finding it difficult to recruit women.

New recruitment pathways for the particular cohort of women that this study focussed on should be explored. These would likely benefit all women seeking to join the trades (even the women who occupy 3% of trades roles found it difficult to break into the industry).

Remuneration

Women are attracted by the stability of employment in the trades, but some are worried about what they may earn as new entrants to the industry. The idea of an apprenticeship does not appeal for most women. Many trades employers appear to be able to recognise older women’s life experience and work experience gained in other industries and pay them a higher rate than a school-leaver.

Removing the word “apprenticeship” from any initiatives aimed at older women should be considered; as well, the project should consider working with employers around what appropriate pay rates for these new employees could be. Trades employers would also likely be encouraged by financial incentives to hire more women, e.g. a subsidy scheme aimed at increasing women’s participation in the trades.

Workplace environment & culture

We know that having a supportive workplace environment with good health and safety practices is important to women. Many women are concerned that the workplace environment and culture will be difficult for them and that they will experience bullying and harassment. Similarly, trades employers are concerned about providing a safe and healthy environment for the women that they employ.

Opportunities should be explored to provide training and support for trades employers on how to ensure that women who enter their workplaces will be well-supported, safe and able to thrive.

Flexible working

While many women need to be able to access flexible working arrangements, not all women do. Many women we heard from would like to be in full-time work and over half do not have dependants, especially the older women in our sample. In any case, some trades businesses are able to offer flexible working arrangements, and while it appears to be easier for larger trades businesses to offer flexibility, some of the smaller trades employers in the Cogo research were innovative in how they were able to offer this to their employees, with many recognising the benefit to their business bottom line.

Opportunities to provide communication and information to employers about how work schedules could be structured to accommodate their employees' flexible working needs should be explored. As well, the project should consider communicating that flexible working can benefit male employees as well, and that not all employees want and need it.

Safe cultural practices

For wāhine Māori and Pasifika women, a workplace that is respectful of people's culture, e.g. staff can practice tikanga like karakia before eating, is important for them to be able to participate in paid employment. Most trades employers responding to the Cogo online survey agreed that their workplace is respectful of people's culture, however opportunities to provide cultural responsiveness training and support for trades employers should be explored in order to ensure their workplaces are culturally-safe. This is essential from an equity perspective but will also enable employers to recruit more wāhine Māori and Pasifika women into the trades, whom the research shows have high levels of interest.



Jordy, Apprentice builder

Jazz, Electrician



