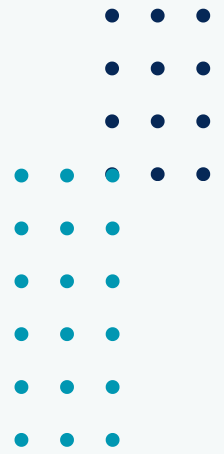


# ANNUAL SUMMARY 2023-24



## Wellington Regional Economic Development Plan 2022 – 2032

REFRESHED IN 2024

 **Wellington**  
Regional Leadership Committee

HIGHLIGHTS FROM YEAR  
TWO AND THE LATEST  
REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

Prepared by

**WellingtonNZ**

## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN OVERVIEW

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The Wellington Regional Economic Development Plan 2022-2032 (REDP) guides the long-term direction of our economy. WellingtonNZ are driving implementation on behalf of the Wellington Regional Leadership Committee (WRLC).

The WRLC brings councils, iwi and central government together to take collective responsibility for our shared challenges and achieve better outcomes for our communities across the Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua region.

The vision of the REDP is to build a future-focused, creative, sustainable and thriving region for all to be proud of. It aims to help create some of the 100,000 decent jobs\* our region will require in the next 30 years as our population grows. It also aims to improve quality of life by supporting our region to be more productive, resilient, inclusive and sustainable with thriving Māori and Pasifika communities.

The plan is focused on four key sectors where initiatives can have an influence:

1. Screen, creative and digital;
2. Science, technology, engineering and high-value manufacturing;
3. Visitor economy; and
4. Primary sector, food and fibre.

It also supports and advocates for four key enablers that sit across these:

1. Māori economic development;
2. Skills, talent and education;
3. Water accessibility and security; and
4. Resilient infrastructure.

The REDP includes 31 regionally significant initiatives that aim to address issues and opportunities identified. The second year of implementation has seen many initiatives reach the delivery stage, despite a challenging operating environment and economic uncertainty.

Collectively, the REDP initiatives are providing real opportunities for businesses to grow and developing our skilled future workforce. WellingtonNZ acknowledge the passion and commitment of all the leads and key partners involved in delivering these initiatives, as well as the individuals and organisations participating in each initiative.

The REDP has recently been refreshed to reflect the latest context and refined initiatives. The refresh enabled the plan to remain a living document and emphasised the value of working as a region to implement priorities. Further scoping will continue in the year ahead to identify future initiatives for consideration.

Highlights from implementation over the past year are outlined in this annual summary, alongside the latest data snapshot to monitor our regional performance. Continuing to collaborate with individuals and organisations throughout our region in the years ahead will enable the vision and aims of the REDP to be realised. Visit [WellingtonNZ.com/redp](https://WellingtonNZ.com/redp) to find out more or contact the programme team.

**WELLINGTON REGIONAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
MONITORING AND REPORTING SUMMARY 2023-24

**MONITORING METRICS:** Indicators used to monitor progress against our strategic objectives

**REGIONAL INDICATORS:** Indicators monitored at a regional level

**QUALITY OF LIFE**

**Overall satisfaction with life**  
Measuring the overall satisfaction with life of residents provides an indication on social well-being. Biennial results - 2022 vs. 2020.

AIM TO GROW

**88%** Satisfied in Wellington Region ▼ **1%\***

**The ability of income to meet every day needs**  
Monitoring the percentage of residents' ability to meet every day needs with their income provides an indication of the social and economic health of our region's residents. Biennial results - 2022 vs. 2020.

AIM TO GROW

**54%** Could meet needs in the Wellington Region ▼ **2%\***

**EMPLOYMENT**

**Total Employment**

The total employment across our region provides an indication of our regional economic performance. Annual figure - Year to March 2023 vs. March 2022. Additional employment figures follow from page 18.

GROW 100K IN 30 YEARS

**334,834** Total Employment ▲ **2.9%**

**GDP per capita**

is used to capture the average economic wellbeing of our region overtime. Annual figure - Year to March 2023 vs. March 2022.

AIM TO GROW

**\$87,535** GDP per Capita ▲ **0.4%**

**TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY:** Indicators monitored at a growth corridor level

**Population**

Monitoring growth is important for understanding the infrastructure and resource needs of our region. Change is between 2018 and 2023 census results.



**36,693** Horowhenua ▲ **10%**

**55,914** Kāpiti Coast ▲ **4%**

**59,445** Porirua ▲ **5%**

**202,689** Wellington ▼ **0%**

**107,562** Lower Hutt ▲ **3%**

**45,759** Upper Hutt ▲ **4%**

**11,811** Sth Wairarapa ▲ **12%**

**10,107** Carterton ▲ **10%**

**27,678** Masterton ▲ **8%**



**The average income per capita**

determines the average per-person income and evaluates the standard of living of our population. Annual figure - Year to March 2024 vs. March 2023.

**\$42,912** Horowhenua ▲ **8.3%**

**\$53,387** Kāpiti Coast ▲ **7.7%**

**\$54,089** Porirua ▲ **7.4%**

**\$66,405** Wellington ▲ **5.8%**

**\$54,603** Lower Hutt ▲ **1.1%**

**\$55,425** Upper Hutt ▲ **0.8%**

**\$56,609** Sth Wairarapa ▲ **7.2%**

**\$51,525** Carterton ▲ **7.2%**

**\$47,171** Masterton ▲ **8.3%**



## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN INITIATIVE SUMMARY 2023-24

WellingtonNZ are working alongside the lead for each initiative in the REDP to champion implementation, providing connections, advocacy and resourcing wherever possible.

Feedback from initiative leads and participants includes:

***"This is exactly the kind of thing our region needs. We have untapped potential here and this is how you foster our potential, through education and professional development. I appreciated the mix of students, recent graduates and professionals. I am of the view that we can learn from everyone and this 'mixed' environment was great. I was really impressed at the quality of the ideas and pitches overall."*** – Screen Accelerator Project participant

***"Working alongside experienced professionals in your field exposes you to insights and knowledge that you wouldn't typically encounter in a classroom setting, which is so crucial when starting in the engineering industry. I have gained valuable skills relevant to my mechanical engineering degree, such as CAD design and understanding of design processes. It's been a real confidence booster."*** – Patrick Eir, Summer of Engineering intern

***"This one day workshop was one of the most profound learning experiences I've attended in the last 5 years. The quality of the talent and Joe's experience working in super successful and high growth startup businesses is exactly what startup audiences in Wellington and NZ need to hear. Thank you Wellington NZ for making this happen."*** – Tech Leadership Series participant

***"It was comforting to hear some of the growth stories and what the presenters' teams experienced. Gave me comfort that we are on the right track and the challenges/opportunities we are working through are normal in the start-up space."*** – Growth Jam attendee

***"We had a really great time, learnt a lot and gained so much motivation to keep doing all the things we are doing by being with a group of people who care about the same things we do!"*** – LoCarb visitor economy sustainability programme attendee

***"What a beautiful kit. The students were very engaged in watching how rapidly the beans changed by simply adding water. In Maths, we were also looking at repeating patterns so the life cycles of the apple and the bean connected and related easily to this kaupapa."*** – Wilford School year 2-3 teacher on House of Science

***"The hands-on help that Mayors Taskforce for Jobs Coordinator has given to my son has been fantastic. He has achieved so much – Learner Driver Licence, barista training and now work experience using his barista training at a café. I just can't say enough positive things about MTFJ, my son is now happier, he has built some confidence in himself and now has a sense of purpose."*** – Parent of a Kāpiti Coast Skills and Education Hub learner

***"Hearing speakers experiences, especially about where they started and where they ended up. Hearing the positives and negatives and advice is helpful. Activities allowed us to connect with people we might not have met."*** – Pasifika networking series attendee

***"Students started to understand STEM and realised that there are jobs out there that are fun and are achievable. Students understood what subjects they liked that were apart of STEM"*** – STEM mentorship programme mentor

Initiative leads have reported a total of 338 jobs created over the past year. This figure does not reflect the indirect impact of initiatives that are supporting businesses to grow and developing our workforce.



**WELLINGTON REGIONAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
SECTOR INITIATIVE OUTCOMES 2023-24

Highlights from Screen, STEM, visitor economy and primary sector initiatives are captured below. More detail is available on page 7-11.



**Hundreds of screen sector jobs**, including 300 each during *Wolfman* and *Time Bandits*



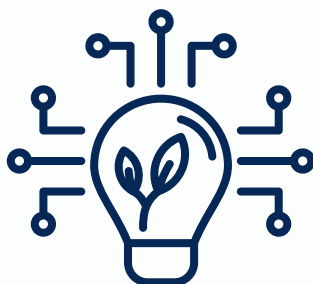
**18 participants developed a new unscripted show** to pitch through the Screen Accelerator Project



**STEM product commercialisation innovation space progressed** to seeking partnerships and investment



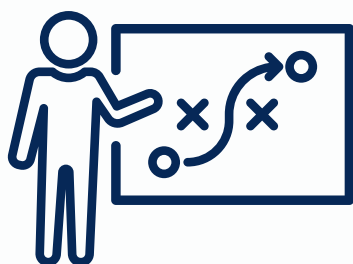
**17 Tech Leadership Series events** held over the past two years, with over 600 attendees



**318 attendees for the Climate Tech Summit & Climate Response Accelerator showcase**



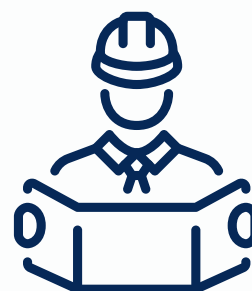
**Tech Hub opened** with nine inaugural businesses



**666 attendees across 14 CHQ startup sessions** and 348 users on the Founder Launch platform



**398 founders coached** via CHQ drop in sessions and Startup Aotearoa



**16 engineering internships** through the Summer of Engineering programme



**65 hospitality businesses** represented on the LoCarb sustainability programme



**Charitable Trust established** for the Wairarapa **Five Towns Trail** Network



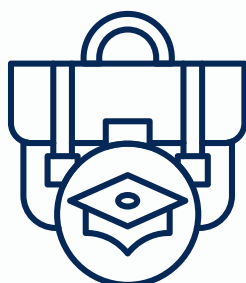
**125 food and beverage cluster members** in Kapiti-Horowhenua

**WELLINGTON REGIONAL  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**  
ENABLER INITIATIVE OUTCOMES 2023-24

Highlights from enabling initiatives across Māori economic development, skills, water and infrastructure, as well as business support, are captured below. More detail is available on page 12-15.



**Opportunities for Impact through Procurement** scoped and actions recommended across four themes



**120+ attendees at Pasifika Networking**  
Series events for students and businesses



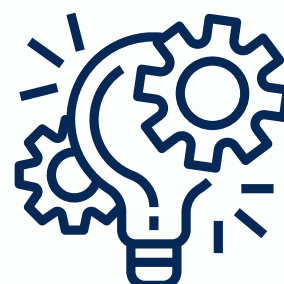
**Online business resource hub** launched



**45% increase** in the reach of House of Science in schools in Wellington city and Porirua



**Doubled Kapiti-Horowhenua** House of Science kit bookings in the April - June quarter



**22 students** becoming problem-solvers through the **E2E-STEAMM** programme



**36 youth supported** through the Kāpiti Coast **skills programme**, creating pathways to employment



**88 individuals** engaged in the Wairarapa **primary sector leadership** programme



**1,500 students** completing **digital fluency** assessments and learning in Wairarapa



**Supported three** Wairarapa summer **water resilience** series events



**Industrial land needs** and potential sites identified



**\$517k contributed** to business **capability** uplift training through the RBPB

Employment  
▲ 8,442  
2022: 8,032



GDP  
\$1,517m ▲  
2022: \$1,385m

Business Units  
3,621 ▲  
2022: 3,615

Wellington is proud to be recognised as a film friendly region. Our regional film office Screen Wellington, part of WellingtonNZ, supports sector development, screen attraction, and film facilitation. REDP highlights from the past year include:

- Showcasing our region to potential productions from around New Zealand and the world, using an experienced Attraction Manager and their sector knowledge to attract productions.
- Securing multiple productions, with each having a significant economic impact. Examples include *Wolfman*, which filmed at Lane Street Studios, creating an estimated 300 jobs over a six-month period. *Red Rocks* created 150 jobs over two months, and *Time Bandits* created over 400 jobs over four months.
- Delivering the Screen Accelerator Project 2024. Tall Poppy Films lead this initiative, which provided 18 screen practitioners at different stages of their career the opportunity to develop their unscripted content ideas under the guidance of Emmy award winning producer Jon Kroll. This led to 12 professional pitches to domestic and international buyers, with multiple negotiations underway.

- Partnering with Women in Film and TV, New Zealand Film Commission and others to host the Canada / NZ Co-Production Summit in Wellington for the first time. This attracted 100 delegates for four days of workshops, development time with the New Zealand Film Commission, attendance at the Animation and Māoriland Film Festivals, and tours of local studios and facilities.
- Confirming a location for the pilot Screen Centre of Excellence. This will provide space for early and emerging screen practitioners, with access to modern facilities and working space at the Massey University National Academy of Screen Arts.

Screen Wellington also deliver the Wellington UNESCO Creative City of Film programme, providing opportunities for youth, Māori and Pasifika storytellers to learn about, make and engage with screen culture.

This year Screen Wellington supported film workshops for Pasifika year 7-10 students - the Alofa Awards recognising Pacific excellence in short films, supported industry events and youth programmes at Māoriland, facilitated internships on locally made Te Reo film *Kōkā*, and sponsored a screening of locally made film *Red, White & Brass* for 700 Pasifika students.



Canadian producers visiting Māoriland during the Co-production Summit



Filming on *Extreme Cake Sports*, developed by Bevin Linkhorn, who participated in the Screen Accelerator Project to pitch internationally



The screen attraction programme helped to secure production of *I, Object* in our region



# Science, technology, engineering and high-value manufacturing (STEM)

Employment  
▲ 29,522  
2022: 28,824

GDP  
\$5,877m ▲  
2022: \$5,153m\*

Business Units  
6,186 ▲  
2022: 6,021

## Science, engineering and high-value manufacturing

The science, engineering and high-value manufacturing sub-chapter focuses on creating visibility for the ecosystem, addressing skills shortages and providing support for emerging companies to commercialise. REDP highlights from the past year include:

- Completing the business case for the STEM Product Commercialisation Innovation Space initiative. This initiative looks to address the lack of suitable lab space in our region. Pro-Dev are leading this initiative and work is underway to seek the investment required to work with a developer on constructing a world-class, purpose-built facility.
- Creating 16 internships for engineering students through the Summer of Engineering programme, led by Summer of Tech. There are many candidates looking for internships in both engineering and technology in the upcoming summer. Any businesses interested in hiring an intern are encouraged to reach out to Summer of Tech now to explore how they can help.

- Scoping a brand and narrative for the STEM Maker Story initiative. A pilot campaign will be delivered in the year ahead, showcasing our region's advanced manufacturing and innovation capabilities both to local youth considering career options, and the rest of Aotearoa and the world.

WellingtonNZ are supporting the STEM sector through 223 different business engagements to access Callaghan Innovation support and funding in 2023/24.

WellingtonNZ's Business Events team facilitated bringing the Life Sciences Summit to our region, gathering over 300 biotech thought leaders together at Tākina Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre. The event was an opportunity to share more about the scale of the sector with Ministers and officials. It also showcased our local biotech organisations through a pre-Summit event to hear from 10 local businesses, and post-Summit tours of Gracefield Innovation Quarter and Malaghan Institute of Medical Research.



The Life Sciences Summit 2024, held at Tākina Wellington Convention & Exhibition Centre



A Summer of Engineering intern gaining real world experience at Clutterbot



Student interns from the Summer of Engineering programme at Clutterbot

The technology sub-chapter focuses on harnessing entrepreneurial talent, addressing skills shortages, upskilling leadership teams and attracting investment.

WellingtonNZ are implementing initiatives through the Tech Strategy and supporting delivery of start-up programmes through subsidiary Creative HQ. REDP highlights from the past year include:

- Opening a Tech Hub at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington. Tenants are from a mix of nine local tech companies and Summer of Tech, with more companies interested in joining. The hub has created a thriving community and will be used for regular events with the wider tech community and students.
- Hosting the Climate Tech Summit for 318 attendees, raising the profile of Clean Tech businesses in our region including nine startups from Creative HQ's Climate Response Accelerator and 10 established businesses.
- Continuing to deliver the Tech Leadership Training Series, totalling 17 workshops and fireside events and over 600 attendees over the past two years. Experts have presented on pricing, people and culture, digital marketing, leadership, growth consulting, sales, capital raising, and product. Recent events include Growth Jam with 253 attendees and the Growth & Product Masterclass with Joe Harris with 40 attendees.

- Scaling up Creative HQ's offering of startup programmes. This includes delivering:
  - 292 coaching sessions through Startup Aotearoa over the past six months
  - 106 drop-in 1:1 sessions with a Creative HQ startup coach
  - 14 capability building sessions for startups to 666 attendees
  - Five additional founder launch modules, reaching 348 users on the Founder Launch platform
  - Four deep-dive On the Business workshops as hands-on support for small groups, with 29 attendees
  - Two accelerators with 14 founders in each, focused on Climate Response and GovTech startups.

WellingtonNZ also coordinated Tech Week activities delivered in May 2024 and partnered with Ministry of Awesome to hold Electrify Aotearoa, a conference empowering women founders, in Wellington for the first time in June 2024, bringing together over 600 founders.

WellingtonNZ continue to promote tech careers to high school students. Recent activities include running a series of webinars followed by a tour of tech businesses for career advisors and subject teachers; organising tech speakers to present in high schools; and facilitating the tech section of the Porirua Careers Expo including four tech talks to showcase local education and careers options.



WellingtonNZ's Tech Sector Lead Rebekah Campbell at the opening of the Tech Startup Hub in Rutherford House



Founders who participated in the Climate Response Accelerator preparing to pitch their startups at the Climate Summit



A panel of tech sector employees speaking at the Porirua Careers Expo





GDP  
**\$4,494m** ▲  
2022: \$4,120m

Employment

**53,382** ▲  
2022: 52,601



Business Units

**7,485** ▲  
2022: 7,464

Our positive reputation as a destination is hard-earned and requires consistent, affirming experiences and a binding vision for all who contribute to how people experience our region. REDP highlights from the past year include:

- Delivering the LoCarb sustainability programme, involving 15 site visits and actions plans to reduce carbon emissions. The programme reached decision makers representing 65 hospitality businesses.
- Undertaking iwi engagement, a funding strategy and associated funding applications for the Civics Experience initiative, creating a foundation to deliver the next phase once funding is secured.
- Establishing the Wairarapa Five Towns Trail Trust as a registered charity and securing a board of Trustees. The Trust will help attract funding for the Trail to implement the ten year masterplan.
- Supporting dark skies product development and connections in the Wairarapa. Highlights include Destination Wairarapa's product development work with Star Safari who are exploring developing a specialised Astro Tourism School and Space Science Centre, creating community awareness through a Dark Sky business connections event, implementing a pilot dark skies business capability building programme with Milky-way.Kiwi Ltd, and establishing a Dark Sky Steering Group to progress initiatives.

- Progress on securing the investment required for stage one of the Porirua Adventure Park, however further support remains critical to starting development.

In addition, WellingtonNZ supported wider visitor economy activities including:

- Facilitating a busy 2023/24 cruise season, with 100 ships and approximately 200,000 passengers.
- Hosting FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 games, generating 100,124 visitor nights and a net benefit of \$24.6m to the city. The tournament provided an important legacy to Wellington with increased visibility and perception of women's sport. Investment in improving facilities like playing surfaces and changing rooms to comply with FIFA requirements took place at Sky Stadium, Martin Luckie, Newtown and Porirua Parks.
- Holding TRENZ in Wellington for the first time. TRENZ facilitates business-to-business travel trade and attracts high quality businesses and representatives. Being the host city provided an opportunity to deliver experiences for buyers from targeted global markets, enabling them to promote our destination to international tourists.



Graze Wine Bar completed the LoCarb visitor economy sustainability programme  
Photo: Celeste Fontein



The Cross Creek to Featherston trail, which will link to the Five Towns Trail  
Photo: Caleb Smith Photography



23 Wellington companies participated at TRENZ, New Zealand's largest international tourism business event held at Tākina in 2024



# Primary sector, food and fibre

Employment  
▲ **13,347**  
2022: 13,125

GDP  
**\$2,007m** ▲  
2022: \$1,901m

Business Units  
**3,483** ▼  
2022: 3,624

The primary sector, food and fibre chapter covers the value chain from producer to final consumer.

Kāpiti Coast, Horowhenua and Wairarapa are responsible for over 90% of food and fibre production in our region, with each having their own focus areas. REDP highlights from the past year include:

- Growing the Kāpiti-Horowhenua food and beverage cluster to 125 members. The collaborative approach of the cluster is enabling members to capture new business opportunities together, attend trade shows, overcome commons issues, connect with supermarkets and hospitality outlets, and utilise shared equipment and infrastructure. Members have opportunities to attend targeted networking functions and capability-building events.
- Establishing a shared food and beverage logistics hub in Paraparaumu, with several businesses using the services in the facility, supporting their growth.
- Exploring options for a food production hub to house multiple producers and provide a commercial kitchen for members of the food and beverage cluster to use.

- Completing engagement to determine food and fibre priorities in the Wairarapa. The insights collected along with a Food and Fibre reference group being established will inform tangible initiatives to deliver in the year ahead.

WellingtonNZ supported wider food and fibre events throughout the region during the year. These included:

- Three workshops in partnership with the Food Innovation Network, sharing resources and support available to support businesses on the food innovation journey.
- Three Foodstuffs Emerging Supplier Forums, helping businesses understand how to get their products into supermarkets and distribution channels.
- An inaugural Wairarapa Food and Fibre Innovation Forum, connecting food, beverage and primary sector producers with the funding and support pathways available. Local businesses and groups like Fernglen Farms, Wairarapa Grain Collective and WheyTech Bionics showcased their businesses through presentations and an 'innovation' themed supper.



Businesses engaging in a food innovation workshop on the Kāpiti Coast



The Kāpiti Food Fair has become an annual highlight, showcasing food and beverage products from around the region and NZ



Attendees networking over supper at the Wairarapa Food and Fibre Innovation Forum

# Māori economic development

The Māori economic development chapter elevates the strategic priorities and values identified in Te Matarau a Māui, the Māori economic development strategy for our region.

REDP highlights from the past year are centred around procurement and include:

- Releasing the Opportunities for impact through social procurement report. The report identifies opportunities for impact across four key themes of collaboration, capability, support and action. It outlines recommendations for each theme and suggests actions that buyer organisations can undertake. The three main actions for the future state are creating networking opportunities to build social capital, establishing a regional working group, and making collaborative change with key stakeholders.
- Developing a kete of fundamental business resources for Māori businesses. These resources have a focus on procurement and options are being explored to make these resources widely available.
- Beginning work on a “warrant of fitness” to support supplier diversity. This will enable businesses to assess their readiness for procurement, and potentially has wider application to accessing capital, expanding into overseas markets, and use by business networks.

Wānanga are being delivered alongside Māori and Pasifika businesses to prioritise the focus areas.

- Contributing to a rōpū led by Wellington City Council to make recommendations related to the Te Upoko o Te Ika Social Procurement Commitment and broader outcomes from social procurement.

Iwi and Māori continue to have a lead role on other initiatives throughout the REDP, including the Porirua Adventure Park, STEM Mentorship Programme, and Ōtaki and Porirua Trusts Board land use feasibility study.

Te Matarau a Māui have recently appointed an inaugural Tumuaki / Chief Executive who will drive implementation of activities from the Te Matarau a Māui strategy.

In addition to these initiatives, WellingtonNZ have a specialist business growth manager with a focus on Pakihi Māori (Māori businesses). They are available to meet with individual businesses across the region and run regular drop-in business clinics, such as at Te Rōpū Pakihi in Ōtaki. This role helps to connect business owners with the right people, advice and resources to enable business growth. From 1 November 2023 – 30 June 2024, WellingtonNZ connected 21 Māori businesses to Callaghan Innovation programmes and 20 Māori businesses to management capability programmes.



Releasing the Opportunities for impact through procurement report



Cover of the Opportunities for impact through procurement report



Launching the NZBN survey at a local Amotai - Meet the Supplier event



# Skills, talent and education

The REDP recognises the important role skills, talent and education play in enabling regional economic development and productivity and includes a range of initiatives to develop our future workforce.

REDP highlights from the past year include:

- Increasing the reach of House of Science by 45% in Wellington city and Porirua, now delivering in 42% of schools in these areas. House of Science also ran a successful campaign to fundraise for the Hutt Valley branch to continue operating in 2025, and support for the Kāpiti-Horowhenua branch led to a doubling of kit bookings in the past three months.
- Completing the pilot E2E-STEAMM programme through the Wellington E2E Centre. The programme is now being delivered to 22 students across three Wellington city schools, from year nine through to tertiary education, developing STEM-focused problem-solvers.
- Hosting Pasifika student networking events at Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington and Whitireia, connecting more than 100 tertiary students with local Pasifika business owners for inspiration on their own futures.
- Creating opportunities for residents to access local training and employment through Kāpiti Coast District Council. This includes partnering with Mills Albert to develop a pilot skills hub focused on the civil construction sector, and delivering a Mayor's Taskforce for Jobs initiative which has so far reached 36 jobseekers, supported participants with driver licencing, provided work experience and training, and placed five youth into local employment.
- Delivering a second Good2Great primary sector leadership programme for 88 individuals, launching the Attract, Connect, Stay project for healthcare workers, and commencing digital fluency assessments and learning to an estimated 1,500 secondary students across the Wairarapa through the Wairarapa Workforce Action Plan.
- Upskilling 70+ jobseekers on writing effective CVs and cover letters, along with wider support to help them secure a role through Business Central's Job Search Connect programme.

Significant focus will be required over the year ahead to attract sponsorships and funding towards ongoing skills initiatives as a long-term investment in our regional workforce. This includes supporting two new skill initiatives in the REDP - Girls who Grow and Tūhura Tech.



Support through the REDP has enabled House of Science to double kit bookings in Kāpiti-Horowhenua in the past three months



A student participating in the Wellington E2E Centre's STEAMM programme



Delivering a Pasifika networking series event to students at Whitireia



# Water accessibility and security

Reliable water means security for businesses to operate and enables quality, quantity and growth of production.

The REDP elevates implementation of the Wairarapa Water Resilience Strategy (WWRS) as a regional priority. Highlights from the past year include:

- Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) established an interim Wairarapa Water Resilience Governance Group, comprising councils and mana whenua.
- Wairarapa Water Users Society and WellingtonNZ's Wairarapa Economic Development Strategy (WEDS) team partnered to deliver three summer field trips showcasing resilient water use solutions for pasture, cropping and horticulture. The events included:
  - Craggy Range Te Muna Vineyard – water use for both frost protection and production, on-site storage, and deep drilling.
  - Turanganui Stud – lamb and beef finishing on chicory and pasture.
  - Glen Eden Farm – an intensive cropping regime including maize, squash, popcorn and clover seed.

- The WEDS team also supported Carterton District Council with securing \$1.75 million co-funding from the Kānoa Regional Strategic Partnerships Fund for the Waingawa Process Water Project. The project aims to increase water resilience in Waingawa industrial park, and enable business development to happen without further pressure on the Waingawa River or Masterton's municipal water supply.

A draft work programme has been developed by GWRC to progress implementation of the WWRS in 2024/25. The work programme provides a holistic approach encompassing all dimensions of the resilience strategy framework (capture, attenuation, allocation, adaptation, and efficiency). This is to be finalised and confirmed by all councils and mana whenua by the end of August 2024. GWRC are recruiting for a Programme Director to drive the next year of implementation.



Participants visit Craggy Range as part of the Summer Water Resilience Series

# Resilient infrastructure

The Future Development Strategy is the regional spatial plan for our Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua region.

It has six strategic directions, including ensuring we have the infrastructure we need to thrive. The REDP aims to complement this by improving our productivity and economic resilience.

The REDP recognises planning to ensure sufficient land is available to support industrial developments over the next 30 years as a regional priority. Highlights from the past year include:

- Engaging with industrial businesses and landowners through workshops, interviews and an online survey to inform the industrial land study. The stakeholder engagement report is available [here](#). It identifies the significance of industrial land uses to our regional economy and the need to allow for continued growth.

- Identifying that 700 hectares of additional industrial land will be needed over the next 30 years. This is equivalent to twice the size of Seaview/Gracefield/Moera.
- Completing spatial analysis of industrial land investigation sites, including considering social and environmental aspects and interventions required to provide the land, and collecting feedback to narrow down the potential sites identified.

Once site selections are finalised, the next step will be for councils to consider undertaking district plan changes to zone land identified for industrial use.

The WRLC have an ongoing role to play in advocating for resilient infrastructure for our region and maximising the economic development benefits from such opportunities.



Cyclists in the Waiu Mountain Bike Park look out towards the Seaview industrial area.  
Photo: Mark Tantrum



# REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

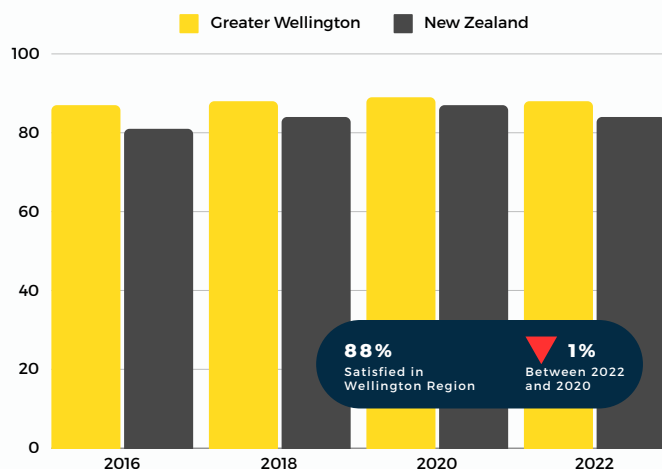
This regional snapshot is provided as an overview of our regional performance since the Regional Economic Development Plan was launched in August 2022.

One crucial measure of our regional performance is the overall satisfaction with quality of life among residents. According to the latest data, 88% of the people living in the Wellington Region reported being content with their quality of life in 2022, which is higher than the national average of 83% for New Zealanders. The Wellington Region experienced a 1% decrease since 2020, while nationally the satisfaction level dropped by 4%. These results were not evenly distributed across the region, although all remained above the national average. Respondents from Porirua indicated lowest satisfaction in the region at 84%.

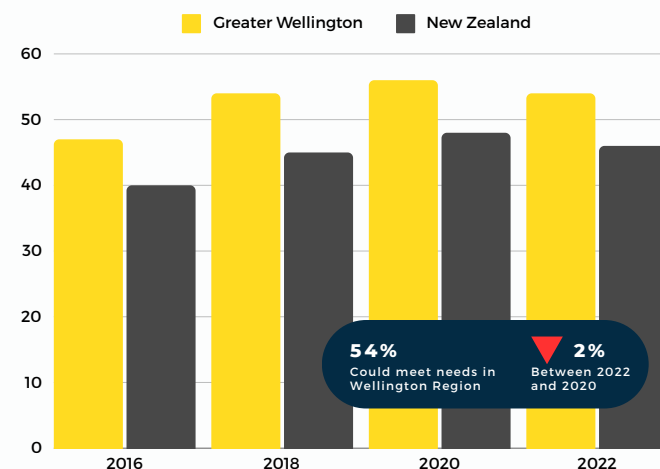
The region continues to record a low ability of income to meet everyday needs. The region experienced a 2% decrease, with only 54% of residents reporting having enough income to cover their requirements in 2022. Given the surging increase in cost of living (6.2% in the 12 months to March 2024) this trend is expected to continue. Despite these challenges, it is worth mentioning that the region maintains a strong advantage over the national averages which was 46% in 2022.

We expect the biennial quality of life measure to be updated in October 2024.

**Overall Satisfaction with Quality of Life**  
Greater Wellington Region - excludes Horowhenua



**Ability of Income to Meet Everyday Needs**  
Greater Wellington Region - excludes Horowhenua





## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

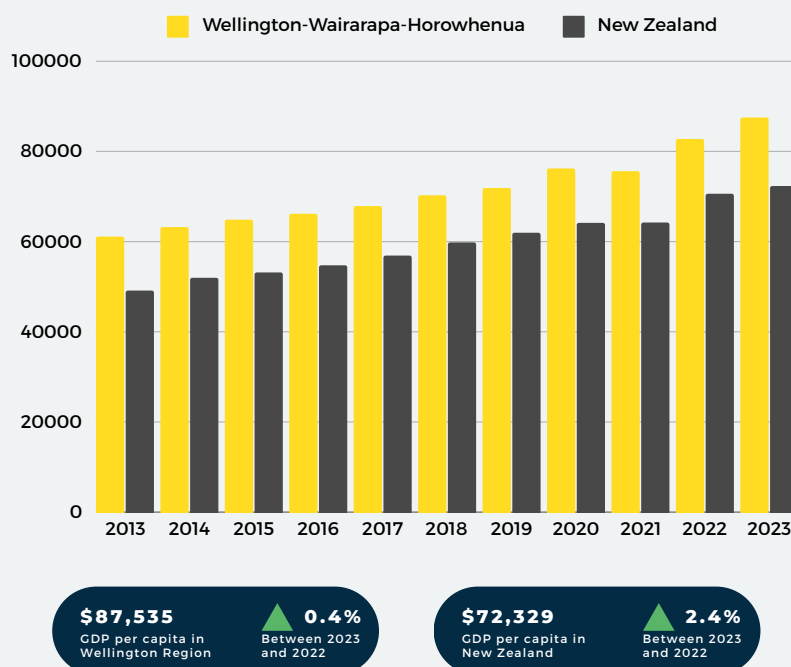
### REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

#### GDP PER CAPITA

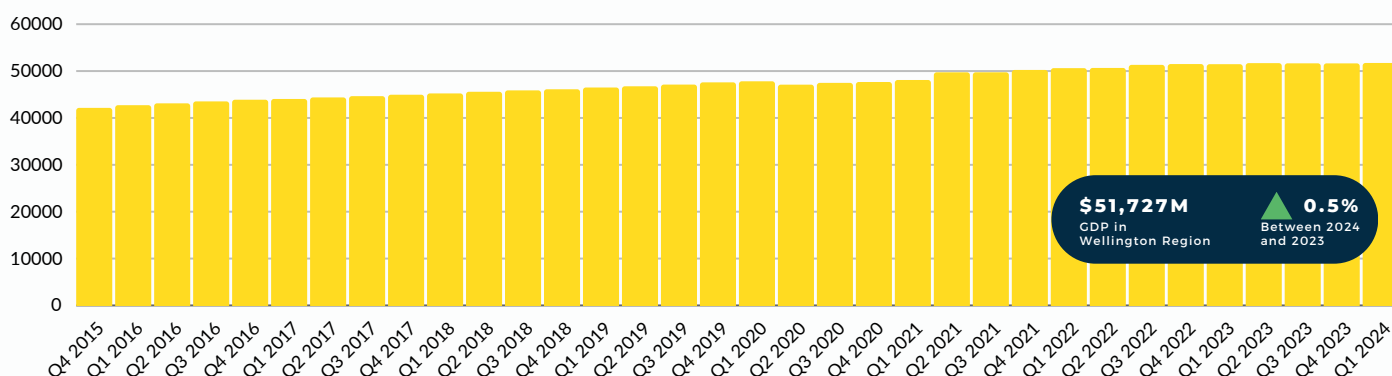
The region experienced a large span between for GDP per capita with Wellington city (\$146,052) the highest nationally, and Horowhenua (\$34,699) the lowest nationally. Encouragingly none of the territorial authorities within the region experienced an annual contraction of GDP per capita as 22 territorial authorities did nationally.

Despite some lower GDP per capita areas within the region, the Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua region maintained a competitive edge nationally with the highest regional GDP per capita.

GDP per capita is reported annually. This is due to population through national population estimates being released annually in June and regional GDP figures being released annually in March.



#### GDP



GDP in the Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua measured a total of \$51,727m in first quarter of 2024, up 0.5% between March 2023 and March 2024. National increases to GDP over the same period were 0.2%, indicating the regional economy is showing relative resilience in the face of challenging economic conditions. The regional growth also out competed other main centres in Q1 of 2024 although conditions are expected to worsen over the rest of 2024.

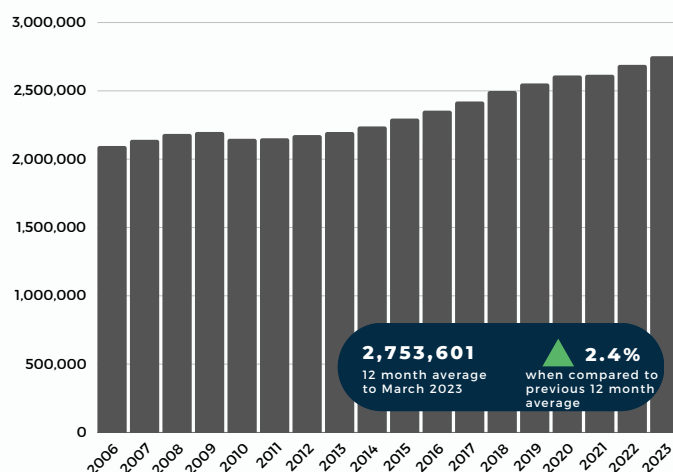
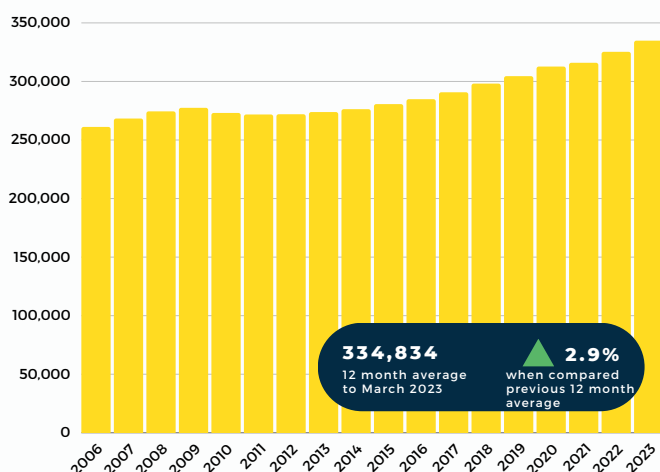
Growth was unevenly distributed over the March 2023 to March 2024 period, with most territorial authorities experiencing a contraction of GDP. Carterton had an annual reduction of 2.1% over the period, South Wairarapa a reduction of 1.5% and Lower Hutt City and Kapiti a 1% reduction. Wellington city had the largest increase over the period at 1.3%.

It should be noted GDP figures are provisional from Q2 2023 and are subject to revision.

# EMPLOYMENT SNAPSHOT

## TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

Total Employment is an annual figure that is produced through Infometrics modelling to include both filled jobs and self-employment. This means it effectively models the total employment of the region.

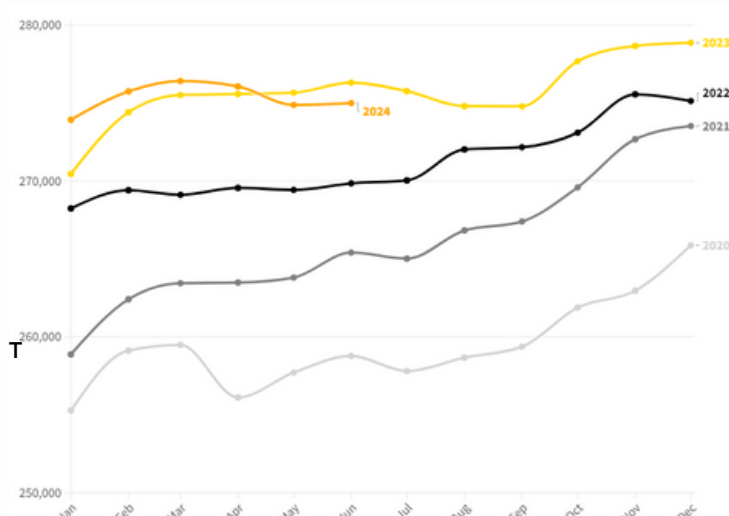


## FILLED JOBS

Monthly employment indicators are a StatsNZ dataset. They only measure filled jobs, not self-employment, and therefore don't measure the total employment of the region. They remain useful as a more regular indication of trends in regional employment.

The region's labour market has been somewhat resilient so far in 2024 although May saw figures drop below the previous years figures for the same month. The number of job advertisements has also fallen. Seasonally adjusted job vacancies fell in Q1 2024 across both higher and lower-skilled jobs as labour market conditions softened.

Expectations are for the region's employment to continue to drop in the second half of 2024 as a result of public service redundancies and general business uncertainty.



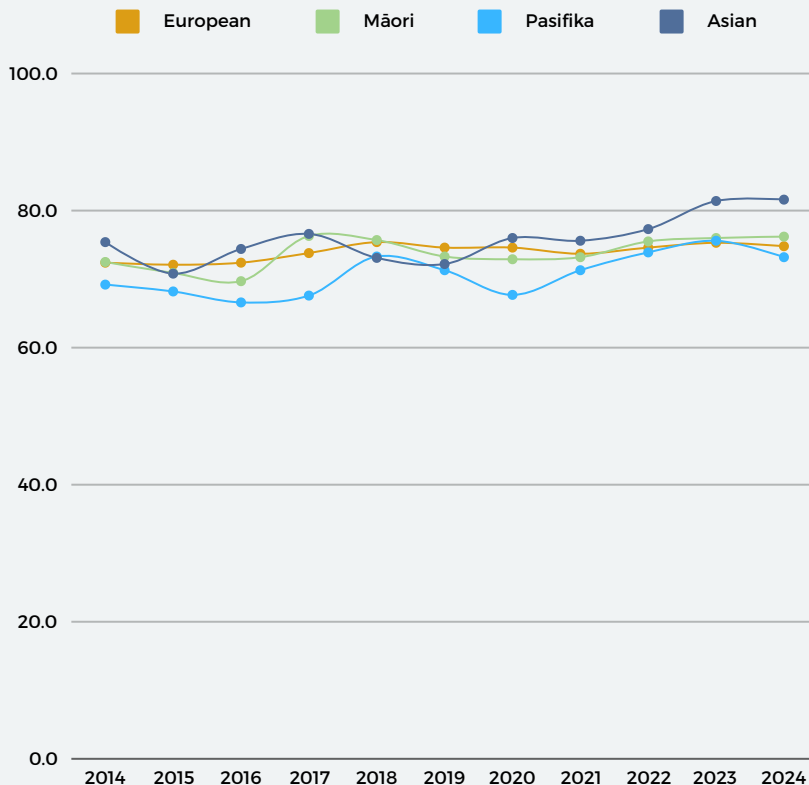
## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN REGIONAL SNAPSHOT

### LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION

The labour force participation rate is determined by dividing the total number of individuals who are employed or seeking employment by the entire working-age population.

Trends since 2020 of those of Asian ethnicity having the greatest labour force participation rate in the region continue. Those of Asian ethnicity in the region are the second largest total labour force after those of European ethnicity. Pasifika populations have experienced a fall in participation rates over the past year despite having the largest gains in the prior four years.

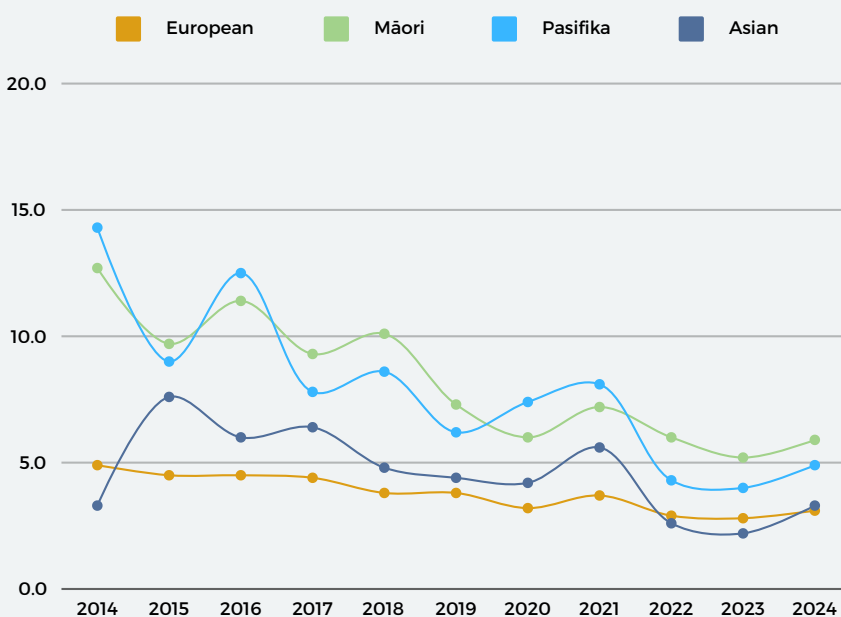
Over the last decade the total labour force has increased in the region substantially - European by 12%, Māori by 17%, Pasifika by 34%, and Asian by 122%. As we work toward creating 100,000 new decent jobs in the next 30 years, the changing demography of the labour force should be considered.



### UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate measures the proportion of the workforce that is not in employment. It is measured as an average over the four quarters of each year.

A clear year-on-year trend of dropping unemployment rates across ethnicities has occurred over the last decade. The tight employment market shows signs of loosening since the second half of 2023. This is reflected in a slight increase of unemployment across all ethnicities in 2024. Looking beyond the economic headwinds, positive signs are shown by the closing of gaps between ethnicities and their unemployment rates. Over the last decade the gap has fallen to less than 3%.





# 2023 CENSUS

The Future Development Strategy is a blueprint for regional growth in the Wellington-Wairarapa-Horowhenua region over the next 30+ years and envisages a region that could accommodate another 200,000 people.



The 2023 census results started to be published in May 2024 and will continue with another release later in the year. The initial results focus on the population data obtained from the census as a lot of the other data is now obtained through administrative data means. Note with caution comparing these results with the other subnational population results used in between census as Stats NZ does not adjust census data for undercount, therefore it only provides a partial picture of population.

The total population recorded in the census results for Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua is 557,658, a 3.2% increase (17,856) between Census 2018 and 2023.

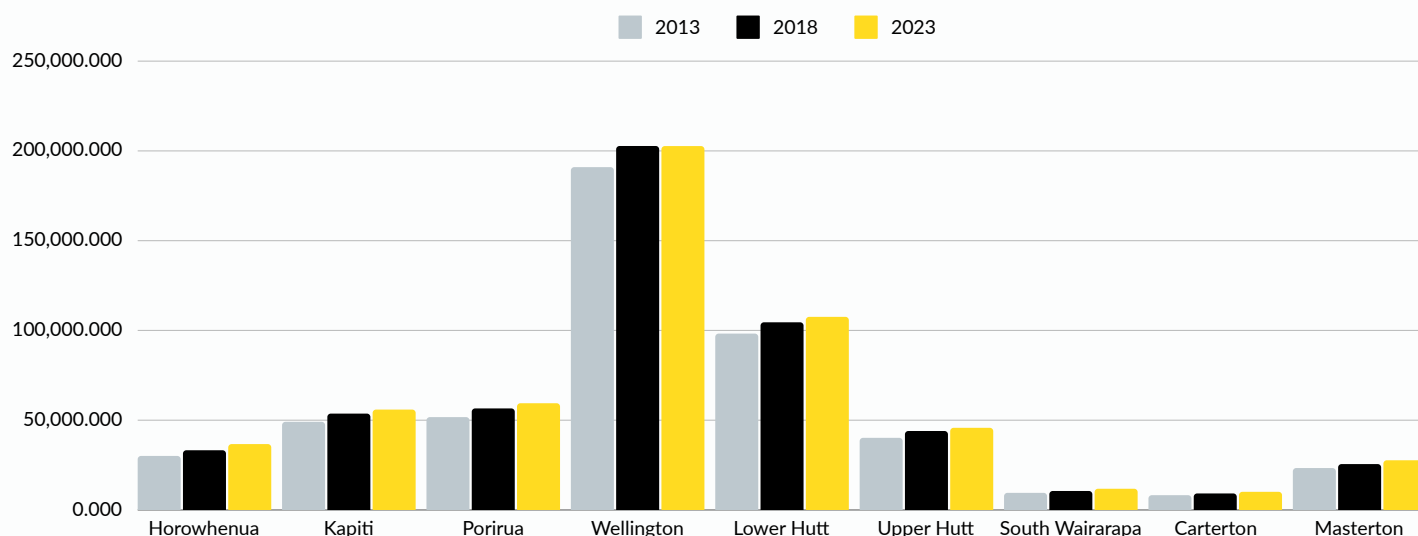
Wellington city was the only territorial authority in the region that experienced a population decrease over the period (48 residents). The areas that experienced the largest population growth were those geographically outlining the region - Horowhenua (10.3%) and Wairarapa (9.4%).

A change of demographic is seen across the region with the relative population increase of Māori higher than the total population increases - in some cases as much as six times higher. The Pasifika populations have flourished as well, increasing across the region at a rate higher than the average population increase in all territorial authorities excluding Kāpiti Coast.

## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

### TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY LEVEL

#### TOTAL POPULATION

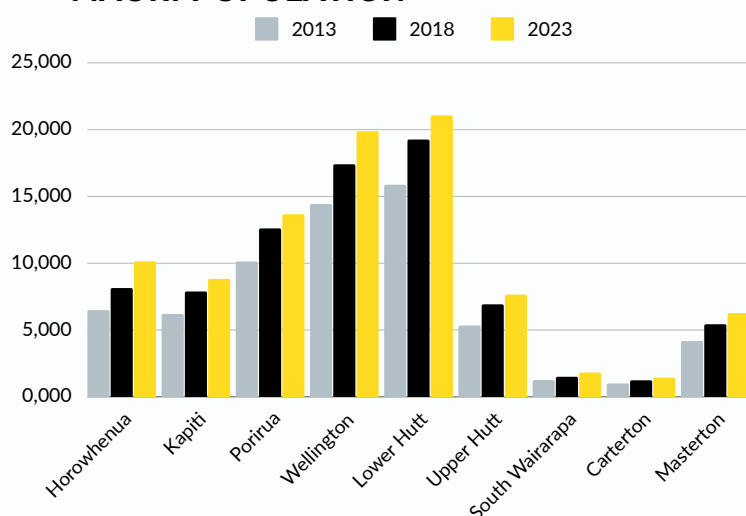


Changes in an area's population are driven by two factors: natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (arrivals minus departures). A strong regional economy with plentiful job opportunities will help our region retain its population and attract new residents from other regions and abroad.

Whilst Wellington city remains almost half of our entire regional population, it experienced the only

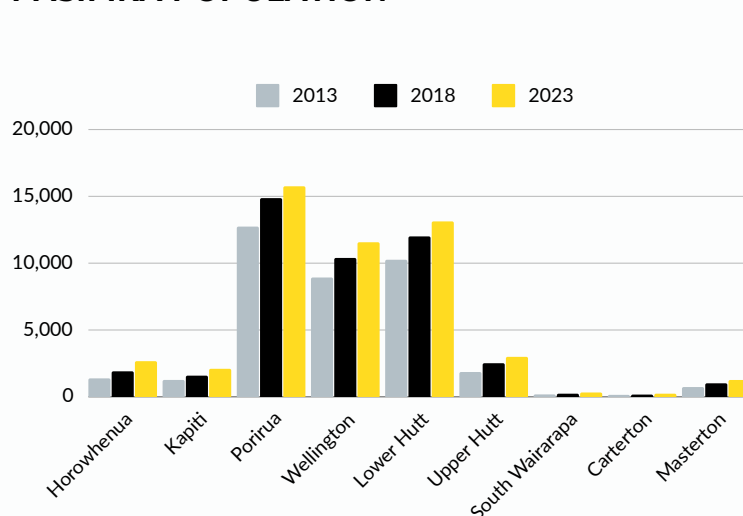
drop in population between census periods. Wellington city's drop in population is predominately driven by a recurrent negative internal migration, that is migration from Wellington city to other areas within the country. Some of this is absorbed by the region but Wellington city has the smallest portion (47%) of major centres where internal migrants stay within the region after moving out of the most populous city.

#### MĀORI POPULATION



All territorial authorities in our region experienced an increase in Māori population between census periods. The gap between Māori populations across the region is a lot closer, the largest population being Lower Hutt. Porirua experienced the largest percentage increase at 23%.

#### PASIFIKA POPULATION



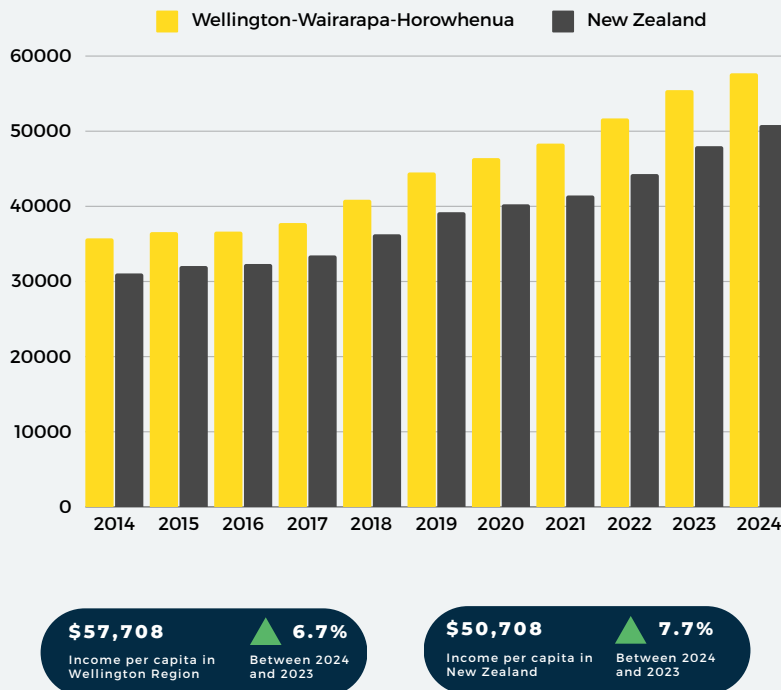
The majority of the Pasifika population within the region is focused in the central territorial authorities between Porirua, Lower Hutt and Wellington City.

## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY LEVEL

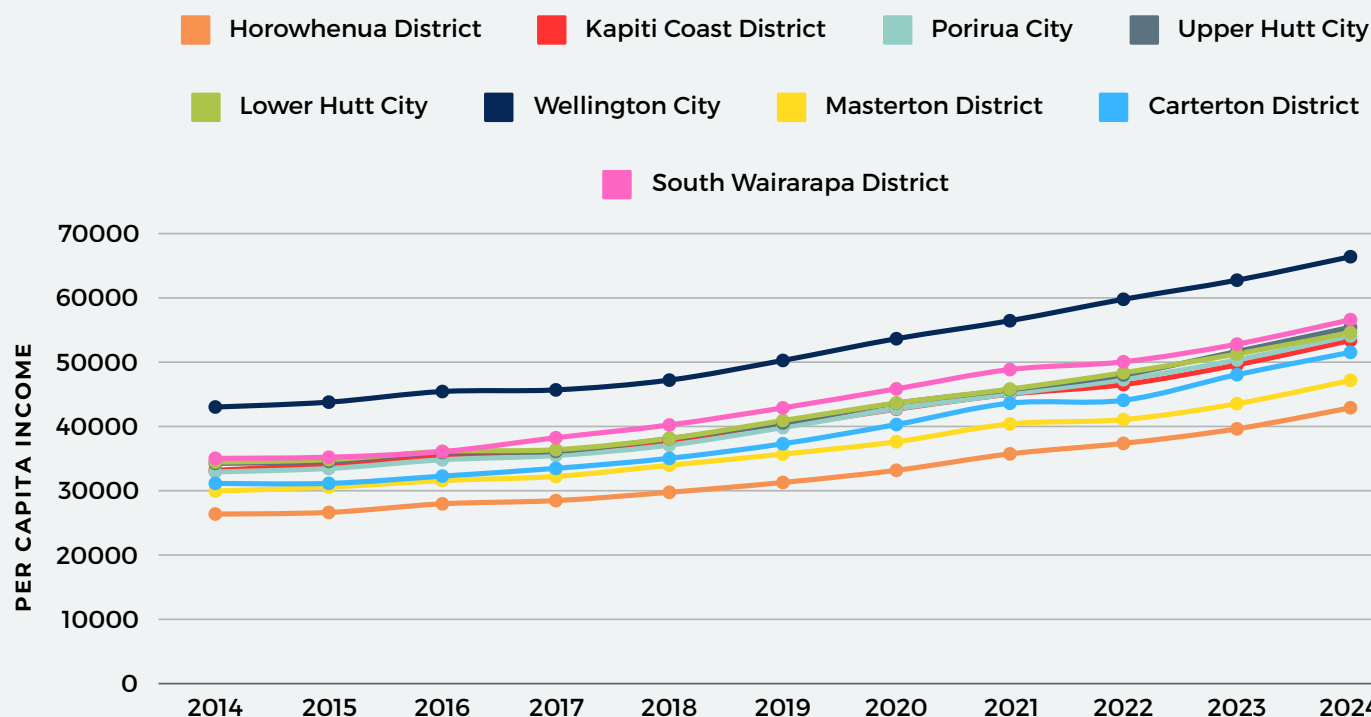
### PER CAPITA INCOME - NATIONAL COMPARISON

Per capita income serves as a widely used indicator of the overall living standard. It takes into account all sources of income within a household as well as the size of the household itself. In the Wairarapa-Wellington-Horowhenua region, the per capita income reached \$57,708 in 2024, considerably above the national average which stood at \$50,708.

This was not universally distributed with Horowhenua (\$42,912) and Masterton (\$47,171) coming in below the national average, however both had a strong annual increase of 8.3% from the previous year as they close the gap on the national average. Wellington City had the highest per capita income in the region (\$66,405), however Wellington had the lowest annual change of the territorial authorities at 5.8%.



### PER CAPITA INCOME - TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY LEVEL





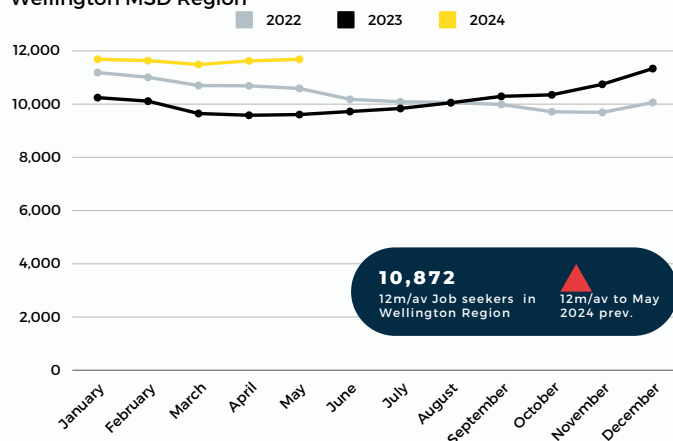
## WELLINGTON REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY LEVEL

### WORK-READY JOB SEEKERS - NATIONAL

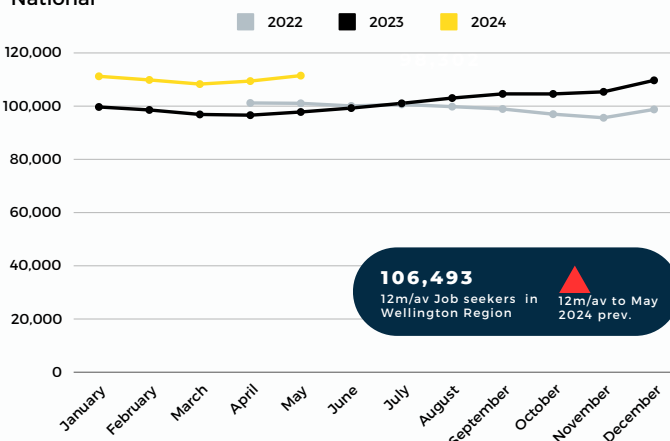
The Work Ready Job Seeker benefit caters to individuals actively seeking employment or getting ready to enter the job market. It extends its support to those who can only commit to part-time work or who face temporary barriers to job searching due to health conditions, injuries, or disabilities.

Along with the job advertisements falling, the number of work-ready jobseekers have increased both nationally and in the region. Jobseeker applicants are coming from a particularly low base due to the strong and prolonged job market meaning rises are not above long-term historical averages.

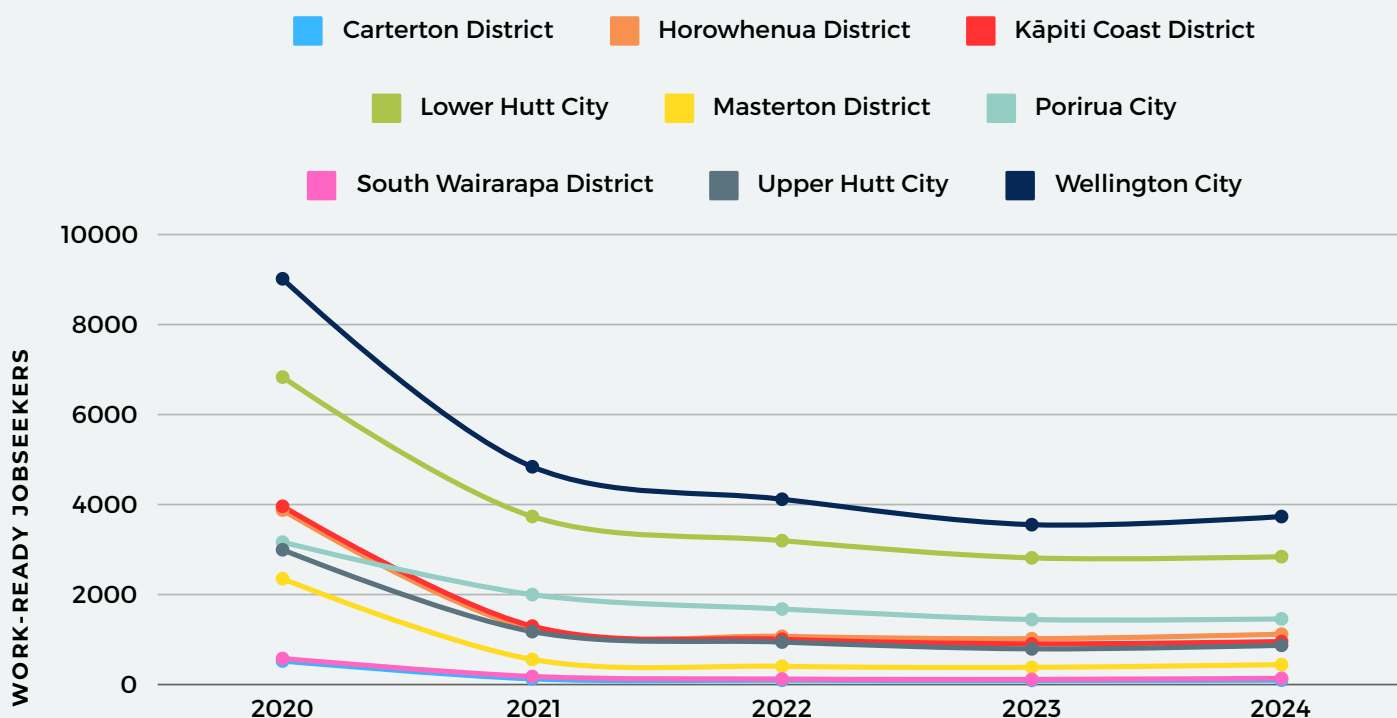
**Work Ready Jobseekers**  
Wellington MSD Region



**Work Ready Jobseekers**  
National



### WORK-READY JOB SEEKERS - TERRITORIAL AUTHORITY



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