

# ANZ Insight: A downturn felt unevenly

5 November 2020



This is not personal advice. It does not consider your objectives or circumstances. Please refer to the Important Notice.



## Contact

Liz Kendall for more details.

## A downturn felt unevenly

### Bottom line

- The COVID-19 downturn has had uneven impacts. Some areas of the economy are doing well, while other pockets are struggling, including those in tourism-exposed industries, education and horticulture.
- Job losses are rising, with the brunt of that felt predominantly by women so far. This reflects industry-specific impacts but also a disproportionate skew towards women losing their jobs. The pattern is stark. We aren't talking about the loss of a few hours here and there.
- The impact of the downturn also looks set to broaden and worsen, and women remain particularly vulnerable – more so than in previous recessions. But for some, the impact of the crisis is already well and truly clear.

*The following article was originally published on [Stuff](#).*

### A downturn felt unevenly

The economic downturn caused by COVID-19 has had an uneven impact, in part reflecting the unprecedented nature of the crisis. The housing market and many domestic-orientated industries are doing well. And for many households and businesses, the economic downturn has so far had little impact on job security, incomes, or spending. For some, the increased prevalence of flexible and remote working has even brought a welcome breath of fresh air.

But some pockets of the economy have been hit relatively hard. Those industries exposed to tourism have seen unprecedented challenges, despite a cushion from the captive domestic tourism market through winter and the wage subsidy. The international education industry is facing a massive hole, and industries like horticulture reliant on overseas labour are facing significant problems. The impact on the labour market has been uneven too, with 31,000 fewer people in employment compared with March – and a massive blow has been seen in retail, accommodation and food services in particular (where there are now 29,000 fewer people employed than in March).

### Women more affected

But the uneven impact hasn't just been by industry. Job losses are [unfortunately rising](#), and so far the impact of that has been felt disproportionately by women.

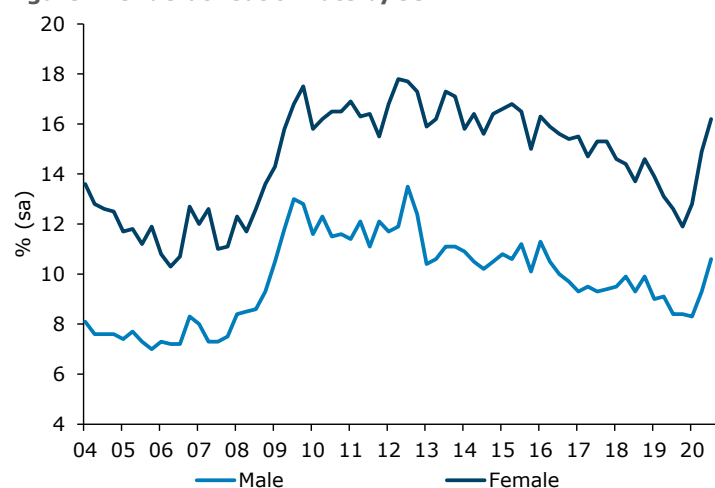
Since March, women have experienced 71% of the decline in employment (with 22,000 fewer women employed). Some of this may be voluntary, with 4,000 fewer women in the labour force, who are no longer ready, willing, or able to work. For these women, retirement, working in the home or other unpaid work may be a preferred option. But others may not be participating because they are discouraged about their job prospects. This possibility is concerning, particularly if it becomes entrenched and productive workers, income potential and valuable skills are lost.

The "voluntary" dynamic is only a modest part of the story at best.

The fact is: we know that there are now many more women who are not in work but would like to be. The number of women who meet the definition of 'unemployed' – ready, willing and able to work – has increased by 19,000 since March. This has seen the female unemployment rate rise from 4.4% to 5.8% (compared with an increase from 4.1% to 4.8% for men).

In addition to the extra 19,000 women who are now unemployed relative to March, there are also more women in employment who would like to work more hours but can't (23,000 women). Taking this into account, the female underutilisation rate is sitting at 16.2%, compared with 10.6% for men (figure 1).

**Figure 1. Underutilisation rate by sex**



Source: Stats NZ

Women tend to work in lower-paid jobs on average, with average hourly earnings about 10% lower than those for men (not adjusting for job type and the like). That means that the income effects of this crisis have been uneven too. In aggregate, incomes have been cushioned by things like the wage subsidy and the blow has been nowhere near as bad as it could have been. But some people are nonetheless much worse off than they were before, and so far the impact appears to be skewed towards those with lower-paid jobs.

### Why have women been so significantly affected?

There appear to be two parts to the story (figure 2).

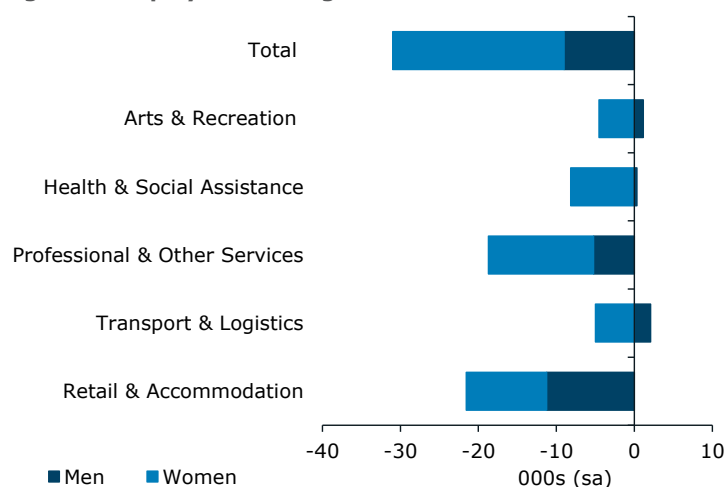
First, it partly reflects industry impacts of this crisis. A greater number of retail, accommodation and food services jobs are held by women (56% pre-COVID), making them more vulnerable to the industry-specific effects of the crisis. Healthcare and social assistance jobs have also been hard hit, with more jobs in this industry held by women (83%).

Second, in a number of other industries – transport and logistics, arts and recreation services, and professional and other services – job losses have been felt disproportionately by women. It's possible that this reflects the nature of the jobs held by women in these industries, but it's hard to say how much that might matter. Regardless, the point stands: women have been more affected, and the pattern is stark.

It is also worth noting that job losses are not being felt more acutely by young people who are working part time, for whom, say, an after-school job may not matter all that much from a wellbeing perspective. Younger people (15-24 year olds) are now less likely to be employed (especially teenagers). But this has been seen alongside a significant increase in young people who are now choosing not to work while they study, rather than an increase in unemployment.

Job losses have also been dominated by those working full time, with an increase in part-time employment since March. For affected women, the impact of job losses do not appear to be at the margin, a few hours here or there. There has been a decline in employment amongst people working 30 hours a week or more.

**Figure 2. Employment changes in selected industries since March by sex**



Source: Stats NZ, ANZ Research

Note: Industry series have been seasonally adjusted by ANZ Research

### So, where to next?

Going forward, unemployment is expected to [rise further](#) – and women remain particularly vulnerable, more so than in previous recessions. The fact is: the impact of the closed border on industries related to tourism has not yet been fully seen, with the lack of international visitors over summer where the rubber really meets the road. Add to that the fact that many workers in vulnerable industries continue to be supported by the wage subsidy and it paints a worrying picture.

For anyone, losing one's job can be immensely challenging – personally and financially. Income strains are a potential pressure point in the months ahead. Those whose jobs are directly affected, or who face worse job prospects, may curb spending, and broader business activity will likely to suffer as a result. This may see labour market impacts of the recession broaden and worsen. It's hard to say how much – the outlook is so uncertain – but we think the unemployment rate could rise to 7½% by the end of next year. The Government will provide an offset to the economic hit with fiscal spending on the likes of infrastructure, but these jobs may not be those that women are looking for, meaning the return to work could be slower for women too.

Although New Zealand has been relatively fortunate through the current downturn, and our economy has bounced back, the outlook remains challenging. And it is worth remembering that for some – so far, women in particular – the impact of the crisis is already well and truly clear.



## Contact us

---

### Meet the team

We welcome your questions and feedback. Click [here](#) for more information about our team.



**Sharon Zollner**  
Chief Economist

Follow Sharon on Twitter  
[@sharon\\_zollner](#)

Telephone: +64 27 664 3554  
Email: [sharon.zollner@anz.com](mailto:sharon.zollner@anz.com)

General enquiries:  
[research@anz.com](mailto:research@anz.com)

Follow ANZ Research  
[@ANZ\\_Research](#) (global)



**David Croy**  
Senior Strategist

Market developments, interest rates, FX, unconventional monetary policy, liaison with market participants.

Telephone: +64 4 576 1022  
Email: [david.croy@anz.com](mailto:david.croy@anz.com)



**Susan Kilsby**  
Agricultural Economist

Primary industry developments and outlook, structural change and regulation, liaison with industry.

Telephone: +64 21 633 469  
Email: [susan.kilsby@anz.com](mailto:susan.kilsby@anz.com)



**Liz Kendall**  
Senior Economist

Research co-ordinator, publication strategy, property market analysis, monetary and prudential policy.

Telephone: +64 27 240 9969  
Email: [elizabeth.kendall@anz.com](mailto:elizabeth.kendall@anz.com)



**Miles Workman**  
Senior Economist

Macroeconomic forecast co-ordinator, fiscal policy, economic risk assessment and credit developments.

Telephone: +64 21 661 792  
Email: [miles.workman@anz.com](mailto:miles.workman@anz.com)



**Kyle Uerata**  
Economic Statistician

Economic statistics, ANZ proprietary data (including ANZ Business Outlook), data capability and infrastructure.

Telephone: +64 21 633 894  
Email: [kyle.uerata@anz.com](mailto:kyle.uerata@anz.com)



**Natalie Denne**  
PA / Desktop Publisher

Business management, general enquiries, mailing lists, publications, chief economist's diary.

Telephone: +64 21 253 6808  
Email: [natalie.denne@anz.com](mailto:natalie.denne@anz.com)



## Important notice

**This document is intended for ANZ's Institutional, Markets and Private Banking clients. It should not be forwarded, copied or distributed. The information in this document is general in nature, and does not constitute personal financial product advice or take into account your objectives, financial situation or needs.**

This document may be restricted by law in certain jurisdictions. Persons who receive this document must inform themselves about and observe all relevant restrictions.

**Disclaimer for all jurisdictions:** This document is prepared and distributed in your country/region by either: Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (ABN11 005 357 522) (**ANZ**); or its relevant subsidiary or branch (each, an **Affiliate**), as appropriate or as set out below.

This document is distributed on the basis that it is only for the information of the specified recipient or permitted user of the relevant website (**recipients**).

This document is solely for informational purposes and nothing contained within is intended to be an invitation, solicitation or offer by ANZ to sell, or buy, receive or provide any product or service, or to participate in a particular trading strategy.

Distribution of this document to you is only as may be permissible by the laws of your jurisdiction, and is not directed to or intended for distribution or use by recipients resident or located in jurisdictions where its use or distribution would be contrary to those laws or regulations, or in jurisdictions where ANZ would be subject to additional licensing or registration requirements. Further, the products and services mentioned in this document may not be available in all countries.

ANZ in no way provides any financial, legal, taxation or investment advice to you in connection with any product or service discussed in this document. Before making any investment decision, recipients should seek independent financial, legal, tax and other relevant advice having regard to their particular circumstances.

Whilst care has been taken in the preparation of this document and the information contained within is believed to be accurate, ANZ does not represent or warrant the accuracy or completeness of the information. Further, ANZ does not accept any responsibility to inform you of any matter that subsequently comes to its notice, which may affect the accuracy of the information in this document.

Preparation of this document and the opinions expressed in it may involve material elements of subjective judgement and analysis. Unless specifically stated otherwise: they are current on the date of this document and are subject to change without notice; and, all price information is indicative only. Any opinions expressed in this document are subject to change at any time without notice.

ANZ does not guarantee the performance of any product mentioned in this document. All investments entail a risk and may result in both profits and losses. Past performance is not necessarily an indicator of future performance. The products and services described in this document may not be suitable for all investors, and transacting in these products or services may be considered risky.

ANZ expressly disclaims any responsibility and shall not be liable for any loss, damage, claim, liability, proceedings, cost or expense (Liability) arising directly or indirectly and whether in tort (including negligence), contract, equity or otherwise out of or in connection with this document to the extent permissible under relevant law. Please note, the contents of this document have not been reviewed by any regulatory body or authority in any jurisdiction.

ANZ and its Affiliates may have an interest in the subject matter of this document. They may receive fees from customers for dealing in the products or services described in this document, and their staff and introducers of business may share in such fees or remuneration that may be influenced by total sales, at all times received and/or apportioned in accordance with local regulatory requirements. Further, they or their customers may have or have had interests or long or short positions in the products or services described in this document, and may at any time make purchases and/or sales in them as principal or agent, as well as act (or have acted) as a market maker in such products. This document is published in accordance with ANZ's policies on conflicts of interest and ANZ maintains appropriate information barriers to control the flow of information between businesses within it and its Affiliates.

Your ANZ point of contact can assist with any questions about this document including for further information on these disclosures of interest.

**Country/region specific information:** Unless stated otherwise, this document is distributed by Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited (**ANZ**).

**Australia.** ANZ holds an Australian Financial Services licence no. 234527. For a copy of ANZ's Financial Services Guide please [click here](#) or request from your ANZ point of contact.

**Brazil, Brunei, India, Japan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Switzerland, Taiwan.** This document is distributed in each of these jurisdictions by ANZ on a cross-border basis.

**Cambodia.** This document is distributed in Cambodia by ANZ Royal Bank (Cambodia) Limited (**ANZ Royal Bank**). The recipient acknowledges that although ANZ Royal Bank is a subsidiary of ANZ, it is a separate entity to ANZ and the obligations of ANZ Royal Bank do not constitute deposits or other liabilities of ANZ and ANZ is not required to meet the obligations of ANZ Royal Bank.

**European Economic Area (EEA): United Kingdom.** ANZ is authorised in the United Kingdom by the Prudential Regulation Authority (**PRA**) and is subject to regulation by the Financial Conduct Authority (**FCA**) and limited regulation by the PRA. Details about the extent of our regulation by the PRA are available from us on request. This document is distributed in the United Kingdom by Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited ANZ solely for the information of persons who would come within the FCA definition of "eligible counterparty" or "professional client". It is not intended for and must not be distributed to any person who would come within the FCA definition of "retail client". Nothing here excludes or restricts any duty or liability to a customer which ANZ may have under the UK Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 or under the regulatory system as defined in the Rules of the Prudential Regulation Authority (**PRA**) and the FCA. ANZ is authorised in the United Kingdom by the PRA and is subject to regulation by the FCA and limited regulation by the PRA. Details about the extent of our regulation by the PRA are available from us on request.

**Fiji.** For Fiji regulatory purposes, this document and any views and recommendations are not to be deemed as investment advice. Fiji investors must seek licensed professional advice should they wish to make any investment in relation to this document.

**Hong Kong.** This publication is issued or distributed in Hong Kong by the Hong Kong branch of ANZ, which is registered at the Hong Kong Monetary Authority to conduct Type 1 (dealing in securities), Type 4 (advising on securities) and Type 6 (advising on corporate finance) regulated activities. The contents of this publication have not been reviewed by any regulatory authority in Hong Kong.

**India.** If this document is received in India, only you (the specified recipient) may print it provided that before doing so, you specify on it your name and place of printing.

**Myanmar.** This publication is intended to be general and part of ANZ's customer service and marketing activities when implementing its functions as a licensed bank. This publication is not Securities Investment Advice (as that term is defined in the Myanmar Securities Transaction Law 2013).



## Important notice

**New Zealand.** This document is intended to be of a general nature, does not take into account your financial situation or goals, and is not a personalised adviser service under the Financial Advisers Act 2008 (**FAA**).

**Oman.** ANZ neither has a registered business presence nor a representative office in Oman and does not undertake banking business or provide financial services in Oman. Consequently ANZ is not regulated by either the Central Bank of Oman or Oman's Capital Market Authority. The information contained in this document is for discussion purposes only and neither constitutes an offer of securities in Oman as contemplated by the Commercial Companies Law of Oman (Royal Decree 4/74) or the Capital Market Law of Oman (Royal Decree 80/98), nor does it constitute an offer to sell, or the solicitation of any offer to buy non-Omani securities in Oman as contemplated by Article 139 of the Executive Regulations to the Capital Market Law (issued vide CMA Decision 1/2009). ANZ does not solicit business in Oman and the only circumstances in which ANZ sends information or material describing financial products or financial services to recipients in Oman, is where such information or material has been requested from ANZ and the recipient understands, acknowledges and agrees that this document has not been approved by the CBO, the CMA or any other regulatory body or authority in Oman. ANZ does not market, offer, sell or distribute any financial or investment products or services in Oman and no subscription to any securities, products or financial services may or will be consummated within Oman. Nothing contained in this document is intended to constitute Omani investment, legal, tax, accounting or other professional advice.

**People's Republic of China (PRC).** This document may be distributed by either ANZ or Australia and New Zealand Bank (China) Company Limited (**ANZ China**). Recipients must comply with all applicable laws and regulations of PRC, including any prohibitions on speculative transactions and CNY/CNH arbitrage trading. If this document is distributed by ANZ or an Affiliate (other than ANZ China), the following statement and the text below is applicable: No action has been taken by ANZ or any affiliate which would permit a public offering of any products or services of such an entity or distribution or re-distribution of this document in the PRC. Accordingly, the products and services of such entities are not being offered or sold within the PRC by means of this document or any other document. This document may not be distributed, re-distributed or published in the PRC, except under circumstances that will result in compliance with any applicable laws and regulations. If and when the material accompanying this document relates to the products and/or services of ANZ China, the following statement and the text below is applicable: This document is distributed by ANZ China in the Mainland of the PRC.

**Qatar.** This document has not been, and will not be:

- lodged or registered with, or reviewed or approved by, the Qatar Central Bank (**QCB**), the Qatar Financial Centre (**QFC**) Authority, QFC Regulatory Authority or any other authority in the State of Qatar (**Qatar**); or
- authorised or licensed for distribution in Qatar,

and the information contained in this document does not, and is not intended to, constitute a public offer or other invitation in respect of securities in Qatar or the QFC. The financial products or services described in this document have not been, and will not be:

- registered with the QCB, QFC Authority, QFC Regulatory Authority or any other governmental authority in Qatar; or
- authorised or licensed for offering, marketing, issue or sale, directly or indirectly, in Qatar.

Accordingly, the financial products or services described in this document are not being, and will not be, offered, issued or sold in Qatar, and this document is not being, and will not be, distributed in Qatar. The offering, marketing, issue and sale of the financial products or services described in this document and distribution of this document is being made in, and is subject to the laws, regulations and rules of, jurisdictions outside of Qatar and the QFC. Recipients of this document must abide by this restriction and not distribute this document in breach of this restriction. This document is being sent/issued to a limited number of institutional and/or sophisticated investors (i) upon their request and confirmation that they understand the statements above; and (ii) on the condition that it will not be provided to any person other than the original recipient, and is not for general circulation and may not be reproduced or used for any other purpose.

**Singapore.** This document is distributed in Singapore by the Singapore branch of ANZ solely for the information of "accredited investors", "expert investors" or (as the case may be) "institutional investors" (each term as defined in the Securities and Futures Act Cap. 289 of Singapore). ANZ is licensed in Singapore under the Banking Act Cap. 19 of Singapore and is exempted from holding a financial adviser's licence under Section 23(1)(a) of the Financial Advisers Act Cap. 100 of Singapore.

**United Arab Emirates (UAE).** This document is distributed in the UAE or the Dubai International Financial Centre (**DIFC**) (as applicable) by ANZ. This document does not, and is not intended to constitute: (a) an offer of securities anywhere in the UAE; (b) the carrying on or engagement in banking, financial and/or investment consultation business in the UAE under the rules and regulations made by the Central Bank of the UAE, the Emirates Securities and Commodities Authority or the UAE Ministry of Economy; (c) an offer of securities within the meaning of the Dubai International Financial Centre Markets Law (DIFCML) No. 12 of 2004; and (d) a financial promotion, as defined under the DIFCML No. 1 of 200. ANZ DIFC Branch is regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (**DFSA**). ANZ DIFC Branch is regulated by the Dubai Financial Services Authority (**DFSA**). The financial products or services described in this document are only available to persons who qualify as "Professional Clients" or "Market Counterparty" in accordance with the provisions of the DFSA rules.

**United States.** Except where this is a FX-related document, this document is distributed in the United States by ANZ Securities, Inc. (**ANZ SI**) which is a member of the Financial Regulatory Authority (**FINRA**) ([www.finra.org](http://www.finra.org)) and registered with the SEC. ANZSI's address is 277 Park Avenue, 31st Floor, New York, NY 10172, USA (Tel: +1 212 801 9160 Fax: +1 212 801 9163). ANZSI accepts responsibility for its content. Information on any securities referred to in this document may be obtained from ANZSI upon request. This document or material is intended for institutional use only – not retail. If you are an institutional customer wishing to effect transactions in any securities referred to in this document you must contact ANZSI, not its affiliates. ANZSI is authorised as a broker-dealer only for institutional customers, not for US Persons (as "US person" is defined in Regulation S under the US Securities Act of 1933, as amended) who are individuals. If you have registered to use this website or have otherwise received this document and are a US Person who is an individual: to avoid loss, you should cease to use this website by unsubscribing or should notify the sender and you should not act on the contents of this document in any way. Non-U.S. analysts: Non-U.S. analysts may not be associated persons of ANZSI and therefore may not be subject to FINRA Rule 2242 restrictions on communications with the subject company, public appearances and trading securities held by the analysts. Where this is an FX-related document, it is distributed in the United States by ANZ's New York Branch, which is also located at 277 Park Avenue, 31st Floor, New York, NY 10172, USA (Tel: +1 212 801 9160 Fax: +1 212 801 9163).

**Vietnam.** This document is distributed in Vietnam by ANZ or ANZ Bank (Vietnam) Limited, a subsidiary of ANZ.

This document has been prepared by ANZ Bank New Zealand Limited, Level 26, 23-29 Albert Street, Auckland 1010, New Zealand, Ph 64 9 357 4094, e-mail [nzeconomics@anz.com](mailto:nzeconomics@anz.com), <http://www.anz.co.nz>