

## Gender Equality at Work 2020

### Excerpt: Youth labour market

#### Key outtakes:

1. In 2013 and 2019 young men's full-time employment contracted, being the first time this has occurred outside of a year with at least one quarter of negative economic growth;
2. At times during the decade, young men's part-time employment grew as strong or stronger than young women's;
3. The majority of jobs being created for young people are part-time; and,
4. With young women's full-time employment growing strongly, this could offset traditional financial security concerns.

*For the purposes of this document "youth", "young" and "younger" etc refers to those aged 15-24 years or younger.*

*All data is sourced from ABS 6202 and 6291.*

Throughout the decade, young women have strongly entered the labour market. Women aged 15-24 effectively equal men of that age group in working.

As you will read, a shift in the broader labour market for men and women is highlighted amongst younger workers.

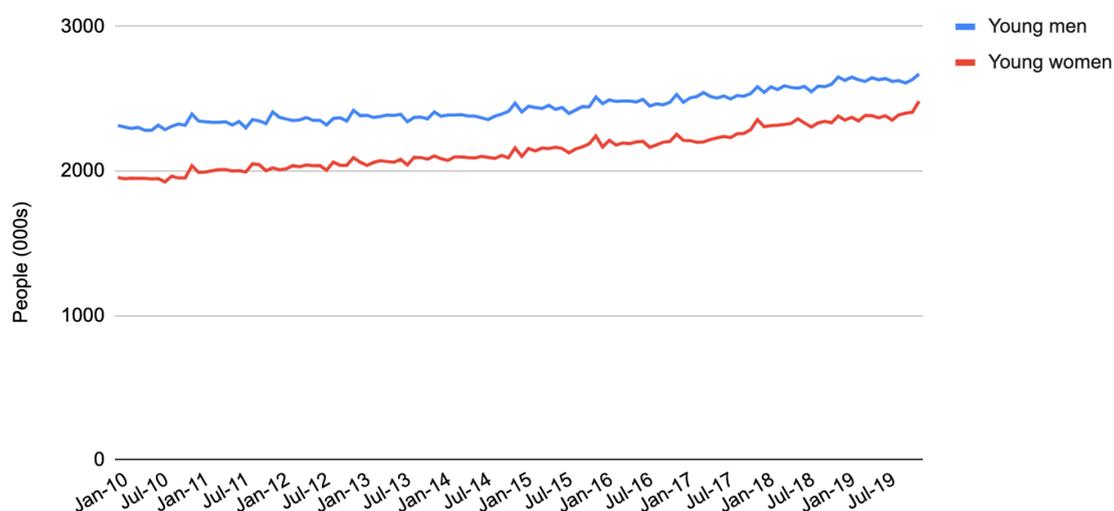
I outline the changes in the youth labour market across the last decade and describe their emergence and longer-term impacts.

In the last decade, the number of young people working increased by 885,000 to over 5 million, an increase of 17.16 per cent. 174,300 of these people began working in 2019.

Of those who started working in the past decade, 59.67 per cent, or 528,100, were women.

Much of this divergence in young men and women working was in the past year, with 130,500 newly employed young women starting in 2019.

Total employed, January 2010 - December 2019

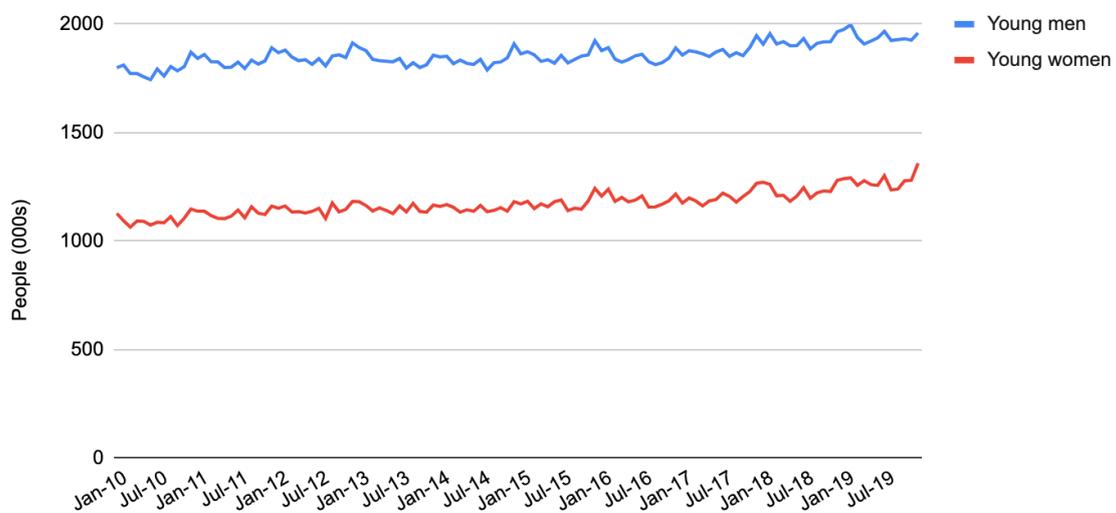


55.88 per cent, or 494,500, of jobs created for young people were part-time.

In 2019, young men's full-time employment declined by 17,400 jobs. There was also a contraction for young men's full-time jobs in 2013, which seems to be the first time this has happened outside of a year which recorded at least one quarter of negative economic growth.

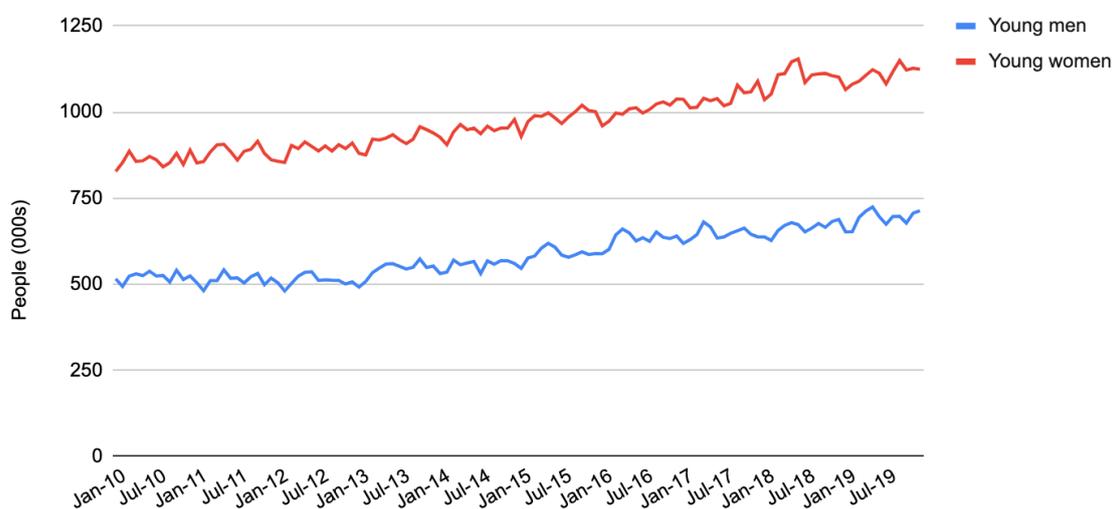
However, 71,200 full-time jobs were created for young women in that same year. The full-time jobs created for young women in 2019 represent 30.76 per cent of all full-time jobs created for young women across the decade.

Total full-time employed, January 2010 - December 2019



In 2019, youth part-time employment grew by 120,400 people, or 24.34 per cent of all part-time jobs created in the decade. Across the decade, young men's part-time jobs grew as strong or stronger than young women's, in 2019 this was an increase of 61,300 people for young men compared to 59,200 people for young women.

Total part-time employed, January 2010 - December 2019



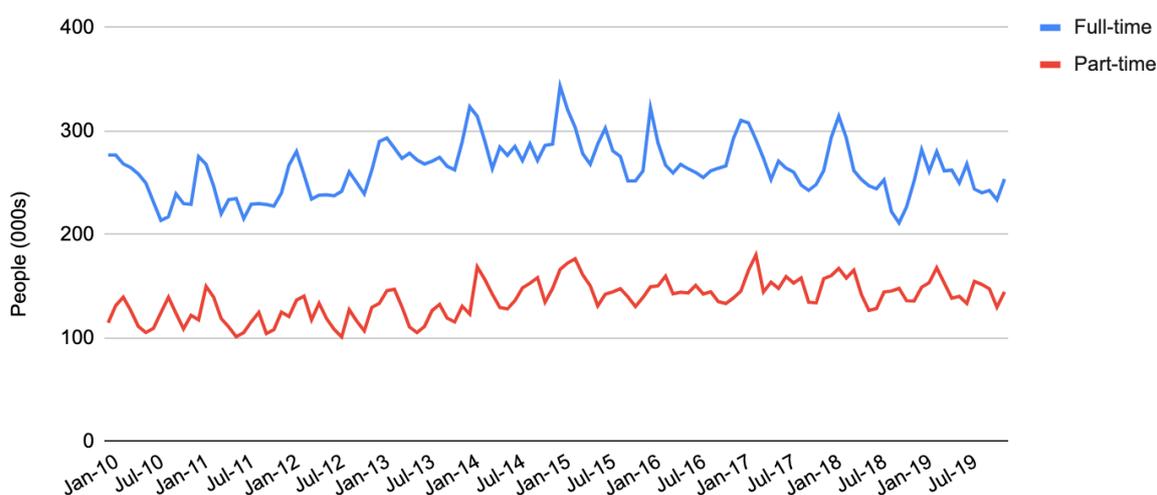
Over the decade, while young men's employment grew less than young women's (197,900 people compared to 296,700 people) it did grow faster at a rate of 27.73 per cent compared to 26.39 per cent.

Of young people who are unemployed, there has been a noticeable drop in those looking for full-time work.

In January 2010, there were 276,800 young people looking for full-time work in December 2019 that was 253,700 people, a drop of 9.11 per cent.

Men's reduction here was less dramatic, at 0.13 per cent, compared to women's, at 23.27 per cent.

Types of work young unemployed people are searching for, January 2010 - December 2019



For young people looking for part-time work over the decade, this grew by 20.66 per cent. This was driven primarily by young men, at 24.09 per cent, than young women, at 17.17 per cent.

As mentioned, these trends magnify what is occurring in the labour-market-at-large: an increase in part-time work for men, an increase in full-time work for women and a shift for unemployed people to search for part-time work.

These statistics and trends suggest three things are occurring for young people in the labour market:

1. Men's future employment is distinctly less stable than women's;
2. Industries which once offered full-time work are moving to part-time opportunities; and
3. With more full-time work, women's financial security may be more established.

Young people are starting their careers in a changing labour market, and establishing norms that are seen across the wider workforce.

This impact is being felt mostly by young men whose work seems to be more prone to casualisation. It is concerning that young men's work is increasingly precarious,

suggesting a lack of adaptability and retraining of staff to new technologies in industries which employ young men. However, this does also show an openness by young men to consider non-traditional ways of working.

With two full years (2013 and 2019) recording a contraction in full-time jobs for young men, which seem to be the first time this has happened outside of economic downturn, this suggests that young men are distinctly feeling a burden of the changing labour market.

Young women tend to have more stability and, if this continues, could result in greater financial security. This is likely to be the result of educational outcomes.

Largely, this data is good news which shows a greater openness by young men and women to shed gender expectations of work and income to be more applicable to their lives as it stands (assuming people are willing participants in these changes). It is hopefully a good sign that increasing numbers of young women in full-time employment for financial security.

When compared against the labour-market-at-large, younger workers seem to be embedding trends emerging for the wider workforce.

**Disclosure:**

This is an excerpt of "Gender Equality at Work 2020", the full document will be released in advance of International Women's Day 2020.

This is part of a periodic analysis of various workplace and economic issues of contemporary national and industry interest. All efforts are made to present the evidence as impartial, independent, fair and not misleading.

The author, Conrad Liveris, is a corporate adviser and economist, focusing on the labour market and workplaces. Considered one of Australia's leading employment and workplace experts, he works closely with decision-makers across sectors on a range of HR, management and economic issues. He is alumni of the US State Department's programs and the UN, and is an Associate Fellow of the Royal Commonwealth Society (London). He completed his Bachelor of Arts at the University of Notre Dame Australia, a Master of Commerce at Curtin University and has received scholarships for management education at the Governance Institute of Australia and the University of California, Los Angeles.