

The New Zealand  
Crime and Victims Survey

# Key Findings Booklet

## Cycle 4

November 2020 - November 2021



MINISTRY OF  
**JUSTICE**  
*Tāhū o te Ture*

New Zealand Government



New Zealand  
Crime and Victims **survey**

**HELP CREATE SAFER COMMUNITIES**

# Disclaimer



1. While all care and diligence has been taken in processing, analysing, and extracting data and information for this publication, the Ministry of Justice gives no warranty that it is error free and will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the use directly, or indirectly, of the information in this publication.
2. Data collection was suspended during COVID-19 Alert Levels 4 and 3.
3. This report contains highly aggregated data. No identifiable personal data is included in the report.
4. Count estimates in the text have been rounded to the nearest thousands or hundreds. Percentage and mean estimates have been rounded to the nearest whole number or one decimal place. Graphs and tables provide accuracy to one decimal place. Higher precision may be provided where it is important for the content.
5. Unfortunately, due to a human error in data collection, this report does not include over 200 interviews in Hawkes Bay area. Survey results were revised, amended and re-weighted to maintain accuracy and avoid bias.



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# About this booklet



This booklet provides insights and analysis of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS) results. It is based on the NZCVS Key findings Cycle 4 report.

**The NZCVS is a nationwide, face-to-face, random-sample survey.** Adults aged 15 and over are interviewed about experiences of crime they had over the previous 12 months. This includes incidents reported to the Police and unreported incidents.

**The findings presented in this booklet reflect four years of interviewing.** The focus is on results from Cycle 4, and comparisons with previous cycles. Where stated, data from all four cycles are combined to make results about small groups more reliable. We call this combined data “pooled data”.

	Data collection	Sample size	Response rate
Cycle 1	2018	8,030	81%
Cycle 2	2018 - 2019	8,038	80%
Cycle 3	2019 - 2020	7,425	80%
Cycle 4	2020 - 2021	6,244	76%

**Cycle 4 data was collected after the COVID-19 pandemic began.** In line with the Public Health recommendations, the NZCVS team suspended data collection during Alert Levels 4 and 3. This requirement resulted in multiple fieldwork interruptions during Cycle 4.

**The full Cycle 4 survey findings report and other resources are available on the Ministry of Justice website<sup>1</sup>.** Future in-depth reports using Cycle 4 data will be made available on this site.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvcs/resources-and-results/>

# The extent and nature of crime



In Cycle 4, **29% of adults**<sup>2</sup> had experienced one or more offences over the previous 12 months<sup>3</sup>.

- » **1.2 million adults** experienced about **1.7 million offences** against them and their households. About **68%** were personal offences and **32%** were household offences.
- » The most common offence types were **harassment and threatening behaviour; burglary;** and **fraud and deception**. Together, these made up more than half of all offences.
- » About **15% of adults** experienced one or more personal offences and about **18% of households** experienced one or more household offences.

Over the previous 12 months there were

**29**

personal offences  
per 100 adults



**31**

Household offences  
per 100 households

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this survey adults are people aged 15 and over.

<sup>3</sup> From the date of the interview.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects Cycle 4 results.

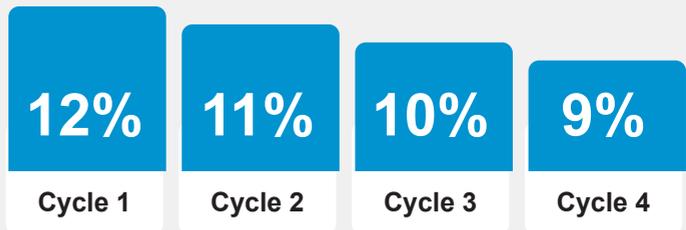
# Changes in victimisation rates



Although the overall level of victimisation did not change, **household offences declined from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4.**

- » Both the number of offences per 100 adults and the proportion of adults victimised **was similar** between Cycles 1 and 4.
- » The percentage of households victimised over the previous 12 months **fell significantly**<sup>4</sup> from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4, from **20%** down to **18%**.
- » This was largely driven by a **decline in burglaries**, which fell significantly from **12%** in Cycle 1 to **9%** in Cycle 4.
- » Although relatively fewer households were burgled in Cycle 4, households that were burgled were **more likely** to experience **multiple burglaries** (see Distribution of crime, page 18).

**The percentage of households experiencing burglary over the previous 12 months has continued to fall since Cycle 1**



<sup>4</sup> Throughout this booklet, significant changes mean the difference was statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. See the [NZCVS Cycle 4 survey findings: Descriptive statistics](#) report for more information.

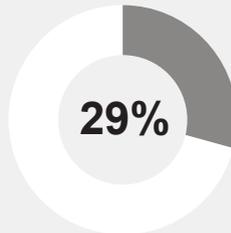
# Who is more likely to experience crime?



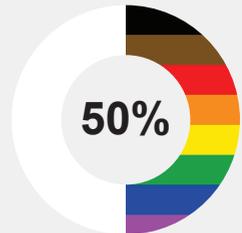
Some population groups were **more likely** to experience crime than the New Zealand average (29%):

- » **Demographic:** Adults aged 15–29 (35%), adults who identify as bisexual (61%), Māori adults (34%) and separated adults (40%)
- » **Economic:** Adults who are not employed and not actively seeking work (39%) and adults who live in multi-person<sup>5</sup> households (40%)
- » **Wellbeing:** Adults who experience high (44%) and moderate (48%) levels of psychological distress

**Half** of all adults with **diverse sexualities** experienced **crime** over the previous 12 months



New Zealand average



Adults with diverse sexualities

<sup>5</sup> Multi-person households refer to any households that are not one-person households or households with any combination of family living within them (including couples), they will often reflect flatting or hostel style housing situations

**Note:** All information on this page reflects Cycle 4 results.

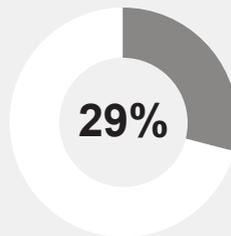
# Who is less likely to experience crime?



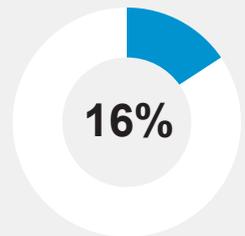
Some population groups were **less likely** to experience crime than the New Zealand average (29%):

- » **Demographic:** Adults aged 65+ (16%) and Asian adults (23%)
- » **Economic:** Adults who are retired (16%) and adults who live in one-person or two-people households (24%)
- » **Geographic:** Adults who live in the Taranaki region (21%) and adults who live in rural areas (24%)

**Older people** (aged 65+) were **almost half as likely to experience crime** compared with the New Zealand average



New Zealand average



Aged 65+

**Note:** All information on this page reflects Cycle 4 results.

# Victimisation by disability status



Groups of **disabled adults** who were **more likely** to be victimised compared to **non-disabled adults** include:

- » **Adults aged 15–29** (55% compared with 35%)
- » **Married adults** (19% compared with 13%; personal offences)
- » **Employed adults** (42% compared with 32%)
- » **Adults living in a couple with children household** (50% compared with 29%)
- » **Adults living in a five or more people household** (55% compared with 33%).



**More than half of disabled people aged 15–29 (55%) were victimised within a 12-month period**

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

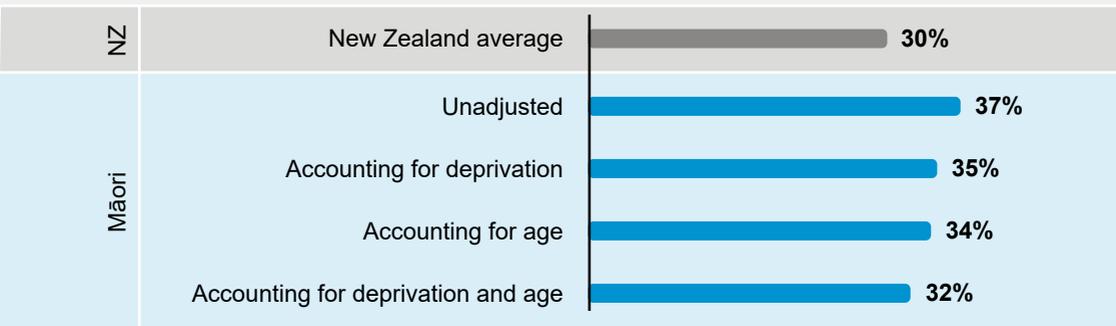
# Accounting for age and deprivation



**Youth and deprivation increase the risk of victimisation.** Taking these factors into account when comparing population groups across Cycles 1–4:

- » **Māori** were **more likely** to be victimised than the New Zealand average (37% compared with 30%). However, Māori tend to be younger and to live in areas with higher deprivation.
- » If **Māori** had the same age and deprivation profile as the overall population, their rate of victimisation decreases to **32%** and is **no longer significantly different** from the New Zealand average.
- » **Disabled adults** were victims of crime **at a similar rate** to the New Zealand average (32% compared with 30%). After **accounting for the older age distribution** of disabled people, they were **more likely** to experience crime (41%).

**If the Māori population had the same age and deprivation profile as the overall population, we would expect a lower rate of victimisation for Māori:**



**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

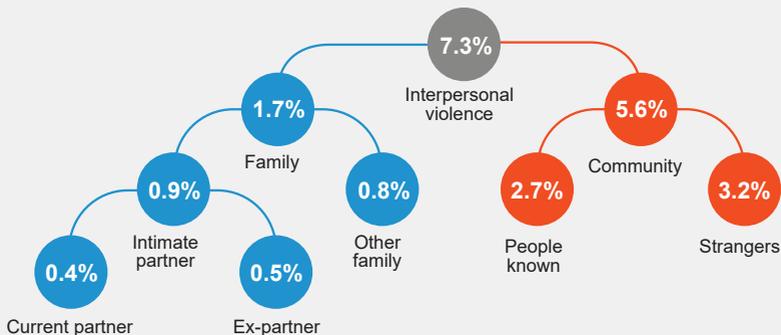
# Interpersonal violence offences



About **292,000 adults** experienced about **748,000 interpersonal violence offences<sup>6</sup>** over the previous 12 months.

- » **7% of adults** experienced one or more interpersonal violence offences.
- » There were **19** interpersonal violence offences **per 100 adults**.
- » **73%** of interpersonal violence offences occurred as part of a **chain of two or more incidents** against the same victim.
- » Population groups who were **significantly more likely** to experience interpersonal violence include: adults aged 15–29, Māori adults, adults with diverse sexualities, disabled adults, separated or divorced adults and adults who have never been married or in a civil union.

## Interpersonal violence offences were more likely to be perpetrated by non-family members



## The percentage of adults experiencing interpersonal violence

<sup>6</sup> In the NZCVS, interpersonal violence offences include sexual assault; other assault; robbery; harassment and threatening behaviour; and household and personal property damage where the offender is known to the victim.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects Cycle 4 results.

# Sexual assault



About **2% of adults** had experienced **sexual assault** ranging from **threats of unwanted touching to forced sexual intercourse**, within a 12-month period.

- » About **1 in 9 people** (11%) with **diverse sexualities** (gay, lesbian, bisexual and others) were sexually assaulted within a 12-month period.
- » **Young females** were at particularly high risk of sexual assault, with **9%** of females aged 15–19 and **7%** of females aged 20–29 affected within a 12-month period.

**Almost two thirds (63%) of sexual assaults were perpetrated by someone the victim already knew:**



**26%**

Perpetrated by family members



**37%**

Perpetrated by someone else the victim already knew



**37%**

Perpetrated by strangers

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

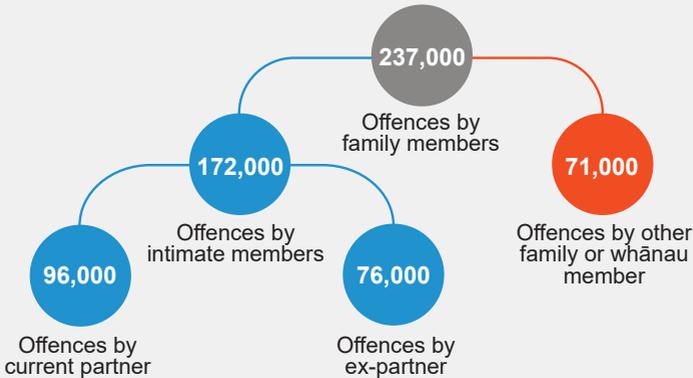
# Offences by family members



Almost **87,000 adults** (2%) experienced **237,000** offences by family members within a 12-month period.

- » **Offending by intimate partners has decreased significantly** between Cycle 3 and Cycle 4; the decrease was driven by the rate of offending by current partners (as opposed to ex-partners).
- » **Females** were **almost four times** as likely as males to have experienced offending by an intimate partner (2.1% compared with 0.6%) and **nearly twice** as likely to have experienced offending by another family or whānau member (1.1% compared with 0.6%).

**Almost three quarters of offences by family members<sup>7</sup> were perpetrated by intimate partners**



## Number of offences by family members

<sup>7</sup> Offences by family members in the NZCVS include episodes of assault, robbery, sexual assault, threats and harassment or property damage, where the perpetrator was a family or whānau member of the victim.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4), except where stated.

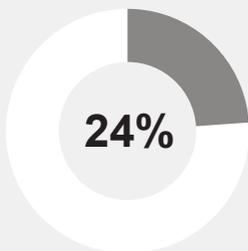
# Lifetime violence



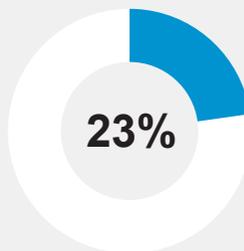
About **29%** of adults experienced **sexual assault** or **intimate partner violence** in their lifetime.

- » About **35% of females** and **12% of males** had experienced **sexual assault** in their lifetime.
- » **Sexual assault** prevalence was **high** in young people, with **18% of adults aged 15–19** already victimised in their lifetime.
- » About **23% of females** and **10% of males** who have ever had a partner had experienced **intimate partner violence** in their lifetime.
- » **Disabled adults** were at elevated risk of having experienced **sexual assault** or **intimate partner violence** in their lifetime, especially when controlling for age (45%).

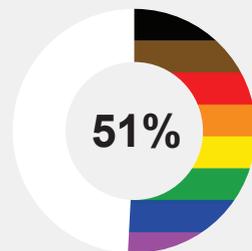
**1 in 2 adults with diverse sexualities had experienced sexual assault in their lifetime**



New Zealand average



Heterosexual



Adults with diverse sexualities

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

# Controlling behaviours



**18% of adults** experienced harm because of a partner, ex-partner, family or whānau members' behaviour.

- » **13% of adults** experienced at least one **controlling behaviour**<sup>8</sup> by a partner, ex-partner, family or whānau member.
- » The **most prevalent controlling behaviour** by a partner, ex-partner, family or whānau member was “kept track of where you went, or who you spent time with”.
- » The **most common harm** experienced because of a partner, ex-partner, family or whānau members' behaviour was “being made to feel ashamed or bad about yourself”.

**The three most common controlling behaviours by a partner, ex-partner, family or whānau member were:**



**11%**

Kept track of where they went, or who they spent time with



**5%**

Pressured you into work or study, or pressured you not to work or study



**3%**

Monitored or restricted access to things like your phone, the internet or transport

<sup>8</sup> A standalone report on controlling behaviour is scheduled for release later in 2022.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from Cycle 4.

# Impact of COVID-19 pandemic



The scale of **overall victimisation** has **remained stable** before and during the pandemic across all victimisation measures.

- » The percentage of adults experiencing offences by intimate partners **significantly decreased** since the start of the **pandemic**.
- » Prevalence rates for burglaries, household property damage and overall household offences **significantly reduced** after the start of the pandemic.
- » Offences by family members overall, interpersonal violence and personal offences **did not change significantly** since the start of the pandemic.

**People living in the most deprived areas<sup>9</sup> were less likely to experience crime following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic**

Pre-pandemic  
prevalence rate  
**36%**



During-pandemic  
prevalence rate  
**29%**

<sup>9</sup> The most deprived areas are areas that have the most socioeconomically deprived scores measured by the New Zealand Index of Deprivation 2018 (NZDep 2018) – NZDep2018 quintile 5.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data broken down into pre and during the pandemic time periods.

# Reporting to the Police



**Household offences (37%)** were almost **twice as likely** to be reported as **personal offences (20%)**.

- » Only **8% of sexual assaults** and **9% of fraud and cybercrime** incidents were reported to the Police.
- » Only **15% of incidents** perceived to be driven by **discrimination** towards the **victim's sexuality** were reported to the Police.
- » Reporting rates did not vary much across population groups. However, offences against **adults who are studying** and those **living in the least deprived areas<sup>10</sup>** were **less likely** to be reported.

**25%**

of all offences were reported to the Police

**75%**

of all offences were **NOT** reported to the Police



**80% of Motor vehicle thefts** were reported



**98% of Cybercrimes** were **NOT** reported

<sup>10</sup> The least deprived areas are areas that have the least socioeconomically deprived scores measured by NZDep2018 – NZDep2018 quintile 1.

**Note:** The bottom infographic reflects Cycle 4 results, all other information on this page reflects pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

# Reasons for not reporting



The **most common** reason for not reporting offences to the Police was that it was **too trivial, there was no loss or damage, or it was not worth reporting (46%)**.

- » The second most common reason for not reporting, “**police couldn’t have done anything**”, was given for **23%** of unreported offences.
- » For offences like **interpersonal violence, sexual assault** and **offences by family members** the reasons given for not reporting were **more likely** to involve **reasons of a personal nature** such as
  - “Private/personal/family or whānau matter”
  - “Dealt with the matter myself/ourselves”
  - “Fear of reprisals/would make matters worse”
  - “Shame/embarrassment/further humiliation”
  - “Didn’t want to get offender into trouble”

**Of all offences by family members not reported to the Police**



**24%**  
were **NOT** reported  
because of  
**“shame/embarrassment/  
further humiliation”**

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

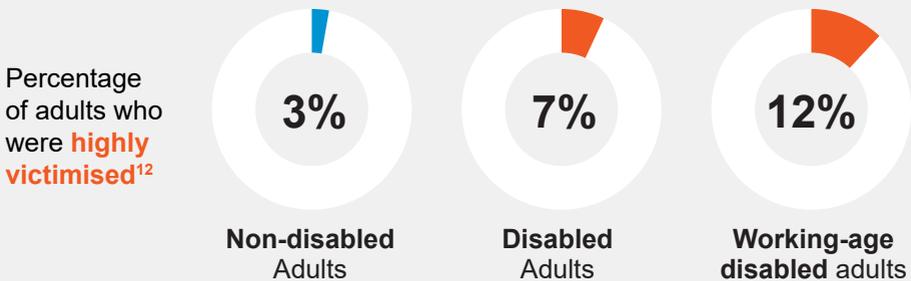
# Distribution of crime



Just over 2% of adults experienced 39% of all crime incidents.

- » 38% of victims experienced **two or more incidents** over the previous 12 months. These victims experienced the majority (73%) of all crime incidents.
- » **Offences by family members** were the **most repeated** offence type across the four cycles. About **40%** of the victims of offences by family members experienced repeat events, and these victims experienced **79%** of all offences by family members.
- » **Vehicle offences** were the **most likely** to be one-off incidents across the four cycles, with **81%** occurring as one-off events.
- » There was a **significant increase** in the proportion of repeat burglaries in Cycle 4 (63% compared with 40% for Cycle 3).

**Working-age<sup>11</sup> disabled adults were four times more likely to be highly victimised than non-disabled adults**



<sup>11</sup> Working-age refers to people between the ages of 15 and 64.

<sup>12</sup> Highly victimised adults are those who have experienced four or more offences within a 12-month period.

**Note:** The second and third bullet points and the infographic relate to pooled data (Cycles 1–4); all other information relates to Cycle 4 results.

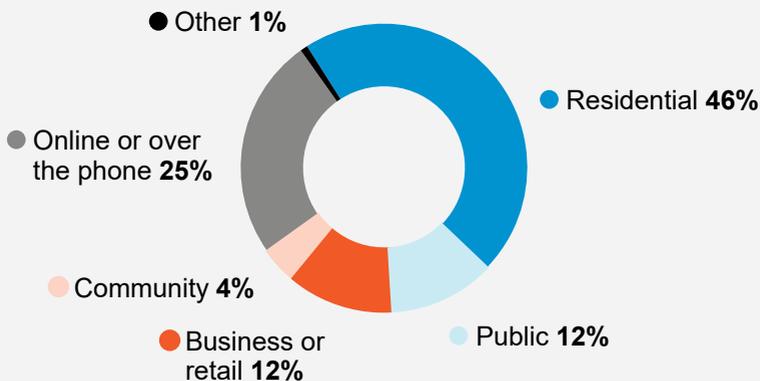
# Crime scene



**Almost half** of all contact offences (49%) involved a **male offender and a female victim**. This proportion increases to **52%** for interpersonal violence, **69%** for offences by family members and **73%** for sexual assault.

- » **More than half** (55%) of vehicle offences, **16%** of interpersonal violence offences and **21%** of physical assaults/robberies happened in **public areas**.
- » **A third** (32%) of sexual assaults, **18%** of interpersonal violence offences, and **18%** of thefts/damages and vehicle offences happened in **business or retail areas**.
- » **12%** of all **non-sexual assault incidents** involved the **use of a weapon**.

**Offences were most likely to occur in residential settings followed by online or over the phone**



**Location of offences against New Zealand adults**

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

# Consequences of crime



**One in 11 incidents (9%) resulted in injury.**

- » The proportion increases to **21%** for interpersonal violence offences, **29%** for offences by family members<sup>13</sup> and **49%** for non-sexual assaults.
- » **10%** of offences resulted in **time taken off work** by the victim. This proportion increased to **18%** for vehicle offences.

**Victims' were injured in every third offence by current intimate partners**



**9%**

All offences



**21%**

Interpersonal  
violence offences



**29%**

Offences by  
family members



**35%**

Offences by  
current partners

**Percentage of incidents resulting in injury**

<sup>13</sup> Offences by family members also include non-physical offence types including threats and harassment and property damage.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–4).

# Perceptions of safety



**1 in 20 adults** reported feeling unsafe when with their family or whānau.

- » **Females** and **disabled adults** were **more likely** to feel unsafe in general and with family or whānau.
- » Those **separated or divorced**, and **those living in one-parent-with-child(ren)** households were **less likely** to feel safe.
- » Adults who were **not employed and not actively seeking work** were **twice as likely** to feel unsafe with family or whānau.

**Half** of adults who had been victimised over the previous 12 months had **low feelings of safety** (between 0 and 6 out of 10) when with their **family or whānau**



**Note:** All information on this page reflects either pooled data (Cycles 1–4) or Cycle 4 results (see [NZCVS Cycle 4 survey findings: Descriptive statistics](#) report for more information).

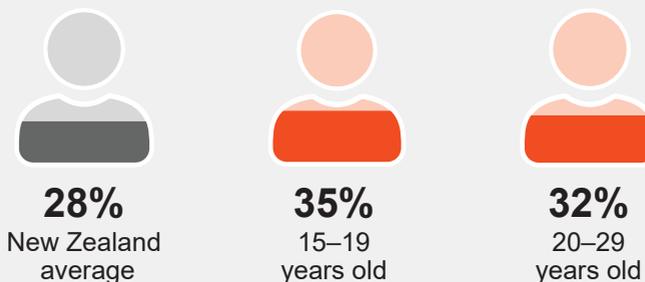
# Perceptions of safety continued



Victims are **more concerned** about **safety** than non-victims, both in general and when with their family or whānau. Highly victimised adults<sup>14</sup> have the highest level of safety concern.

- » The two age groups that **felt most safe** were those **aged 15–29** and **65+**. The 65+ age group is relatively less victimised than other age groups, so their higher confidence is not surprising. Those aged 15–29 however, felt relatively safe despite being at higher risk of victimisation.
- » **Bisexual adults** felt less safe in general and when with family or whānau compared with the New Zealand average.
- » Those living in the rural areas were **relatively more confident** about their safety in general and when with their family or whānau.

**Young people (aged 15–29) feel safer on average despite having a higher risk of victimisation:**



**Percentage of adults who rated their feeling of safety as 10 out of 10**

<sup>14</sup> Those who experienced four or more incidents over the previous 12 months.

**Note:** All information on this page reflects either pooled data (Cycles 1–4) or Cycle 4 results (see [NZCVS Cycle 4 survey findings: Descriptive statistics](#) report for more information).

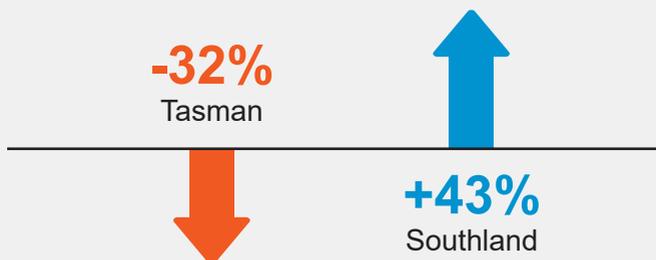
# Changes in perceptions of safety



There are **no significant changes** in the overall feeling of safety and in the feeling of safety with family or whānau over time.

- » Adults living in the Southland region have seen a **significant increase** in high feelings of safety from **31%** in Cycle 1 to **74%** in Cycle 4.
- » Chinese adults saw an over **50% reduction** in the likelihood of having a high feeling of safety, from **32%** in Cycle 1 to **15%** in Cycle 4.
- » Adults living in the Nelson region feel **less safe** with family or whānau in Cycle 4 compared with Cycle 3.
- » Adults living in one-parent-with-child(ren) households were **less likely** to report feeling unsafe with family or whānau in Cycle 4 compared with Cycle 3.

The **Tasman region** saw a **32% decrease** in high feelings of safety (10 out of 10) since Cycle 1, but the **Southland region** saw a **43% increase**



**Changes in high feelings of safety (10 out of 10) since Cycle 1**

# More information



All observations in this booklet are based on the **NZCVS Cycle 4** survey findings report and data tables. These documents and other resources are located on the **NZCVS** pages of the Ministry of Justice website below.

 [justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvs/resources-and-results/](https://justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvs/resources-and-results/)

If you have any feedback or questions about NZCVS results, please email us at [nzcvs@justice.govt.nz](mailto:nzcvs@justice.govt.nz)