



New Zealand
Crime and Victims **survey**

HELP CREATE SAFER COMMUNITIES

Key findings – Cycle 5 report

Descriptive statistics

June 2023

Results drawn from Cycle 5 (2021/22) of the
New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey

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Foreword



Kia ora koutou

I am pleased to present our latest annual key findings report of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS) Cycle 5. This report is based on data collected between November 2021 and November 2022

Last year was the fifth year of NZCVS data collection. Over the five years of the survey, we consistently observe that the majority of New Zealanders, around 69%, experienced no crime in the 12 months prior to participating the survey. This trend continued in Cycle 5.

While the amount of most crimes remains steady, in Cycle 5 we did observe an increase in fraud and deception, 10% of adults up from 6% of adults last year. Unfortunately, we continue to see that some New Zealanders are disproportionately impacted by crime and victimisation. This includes Māori and the LGBT+ community.

The results gathered further our understanding of crime and victimisation in New Zealand. NZCVS is New Zealand's only comprehensive source of data about victims of crime, and in particular unreported crime. Each year's findings inform interventions across the justice sector and beyond. Now that we have five years of NZCVS data, I am excited about the possibilities for us to uncover trends and richer insights in future reports.

Behind each survey there are real people with real experiences of crime and victimisation in New Zealand. Of course, a survey like this cannot reflect the entire effects of these experiences across families, whānau and communities. We, therefore, take seriously our responsibility to honour those experiences by making use of the evidence collected here to monitor and improve the justice system and enhance the wellbeing of all New Zealanders.

Many people made this survey possible. Thank you to the Research and Evaluation team at the Ministry of Justice who designed and analysed it, and the government agencies, non-governmental organisations and academics who reviewed it and provided feedback. Thank you to Reach Aotearoa for the thousands of interviews conducted.

Most of all, thank you to the 5,326 people who shared with us their experiences of crime and victimisation. We know that these stories are not always easy to tell, but the gift of insight you have given us to help create safer neighbourhoods and communities is invaluable.

Ngā mihi



Andrew Kibblewhite

Secretary for Justice and Chief Executive

Key findings

Almost one in three New Zealander adults (31%) experienced crime over the last 12 months

- The proportion of adults experiencing crime is consistent with previous years.
- 367,000 households (19%) experienced one or more household offences, up from 18% in Cycle 4 (2021).
- 705,000 adults (17%) experienced one or more personal offences, up from 15% in Cycle 4 (2021).

However, victims experienced more incidents of crime compared to previous years.

- Overall, New Zealanders experienced 2,466,000 incidents of crime (77 offences per 100 adults) in the last 12 months.
- Households experienced 619,000 household incidents (32 offences per 100 households) in the last 12 months.
- Adults experienced 1,847,000 personal incidents (44 offences per 100 adults) in the last 12 months.

The increase in incidents were primarily driven by an increase in the amount of fraud and deception offences.

- The incidence and prevalence rates of fraud and deception significantly increased from Cycle 4 (2021).
- Fraud and deception was the most common type of offence, followed by burglaries and physical offences¹:
 1. fraud and deception – 510,000 offences (experienced by 10.2% of adults), up from 288,000 offences (experienced by 6.2% of adults) in Cycle 4
 2. burglaries – 288,000 offences (experienced by 9.6% of households), down from 289,000 offences (experienced by 9.3% of households) in Cycle 4
 3. physical offences – 253,000 offences (experienced by 2.2% of adults), up from 209,000 offences (experienced by 2.5% of adults) in Cycle 4.

People who identify as LGBT+², separated adults, and Māori were significantly more likely to experience at least one crime.

- People who identified as LGBT+ were most likely experience at least one crime (52%), followed by separated adults (45%) and Māori (37%).
- Females were more likely to have experienced intimate partner violence than males (24% versus 10%) and sexual assault (36% versus 13%) in their lifetimes.
- People aged 65+ (19%) were significantly less likely to experience crime than the New Zealand average (31%).

¹ Physical offences include robbery and non-sexual assault.

² LGBT+ is a demographic group that includes transgender people and people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or having another sexual identity.

- Adults living in the main urban centres were at no higher risk of experiencing crime than the average New Zealander (Auckland, 32%; Wellington, 29%; and Canterbury, 32%), but people in the rest of the South Island were significantly less likely to be victims of crime (24%).

A small number of highly victimised individuals experienced most offences.

- There were 163,000 adults who experienced more than four or more offences (highly victimised) in the last 12 months. This represents 4% of all adults and 13% of all adults who experienced crime.
- Despite only being 4% of the population, highly victimised adults experienced 56% of all offences in the last 12 months, up from 47% of all offences in Cycle 4 (2021).
- This was particularly acute for interpersonal violence³. Individuals who have experienced more than one incident of interpersonal violence make up 2.5% of the adult population but have experienced 87% of all interpersonal violence offences.

Adults who experienced crime reported a smaller proportion of incidents to the Police, but there was an increase in the proportion of victims who reported at least one offence to the Police.

- The proportion of crime incidents reported to the Police was 19%, down from 25% in Cycle 4 (2021).
- The proportion of victims who reported at least one offence to the Police was 35%, up from 33% in Cycle 4 (2021).
- People were more likely to report household offences (34%) to the Police than personal offences (14%).
- The main contribution to the decrease in reporting rates was the reporting behaviour of highly victimised individuals (those who experience 4 or more offences over the last 12 months) who reported smaller proportion of offences to the police. They reported 16% of all offences to the Police in Cycle 5 compared to 25% in Cycle 4 (2021).
- Non-highly victimised adults also contributed to a small decrease in reporting rates (22% compared to 24% in Cycle 4). This reflects the increase in the amount of fraud and deception experienced in Cycle 5 which has a low reporting rate.

³ Interpersonal violence includes sexual assault; other assault; harassment and threatening behaviour; robbery. It also includes damage of personal or household property if the victim knows the offender.

Executive summary

This report highlights the main findings from Cycle 5 of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS) conducted between November 2021 and November 2022. It compares the findings from Cycle 5 data with those from Cycle 4 (November 2020 to November 2021) and Cycle 1 (2018 – the baseline year).⁴ It also comments on key statistical trends.

The NZCVS is the most comprehensive source of data on adult victims of crime⁵ in Aotearoa New Zealand. In New Zealand, only about a quarter of crime is reported to the Police; so the NZCVS gives us more accurate data on the nature and volume of crime.

The survey also provides rich information about people who experience crime and how patterns of victimisation in New Zealand vary by region and demography.

The NZCVS covers household offences (burglary, theft and property damage, and trespass) and personal offences (fraud and deception, cybercrime, sexual assault, harassment and threatening behaviour, assault, robbery, and theft and damage). The survey does not cover crime against businesses including ramraids. If, however an individual experienced interpersonal violence in their place of work this would still be covered by the survey. The NZCVS also does not cover homicide (due to very low volumes), “victimless” crime (such as drug use), and traffic offences.

The Covid-19 pandemic impacted the number of people who responded to the survey. We usually sample 8,000 New Zealanders and achieve a response rate of 80%. In Cycle 5, we interviewed 5,326 New Zealanders and had a response rate of 71%. This declining response rate is a trend consistent across all New Zealand agencies who conduct surveys.

Despite this, our overall response rate is still good and allows us to produce high quality estimates for most offence types. Unfortunately, it has affected our ability to report data on some of the less common offence types. Where this is the case, we have used data from all five cycles to improve coverage of these offence types.

Since it was established in 2017, the NZCVS has significantly increased what we know and understand about crime and victimisation. Many government agencies and non-governmental organisations use it to help them develop their policies and interventions.

All four NZCVS cycles have used consistent methodology, so we can now compare five years of data, which represents almost 35,000 interviews with New Zealanders about their experiences of crime. This means we can accurately analyse changes to the levels of crime and victimisation since we started collecting NZCVS data in March 2018. See Section 1 for more information about the NZCVS.

⁴ In this report we use these terms interchangeably: 2018, Cycle 1 and base year; 2021, Cycle 4 and previous year; and 2022, Cycle 5 and current year.

⁵ We classify adults as people aged 15 years and over.

About this report

This report presents the most noteworthy results derived from Cycle 5. It has seven sections.

Section 1 “About the NZCVS” explains the objectives and scope of the survey and how the results are reported.

Section 2 “Crime in New Zealand” analyses measures of victimisation by offence types and offence groups.

Section 3 “Who experiences crime” describes the demographic groups that have significantly high or low risks of victimisation, compared with the New Zealand average.

Section 4 “Interpersonal violence and violence by family members” examines findings about violent offences, including sexual and other assault, robbery and harassment. It also analyses violence by family members, acts of controlling behaviour, and lifelong experience of sexual violence and intimate partner violence.

Section 5 “Distribution of crime” focuses on victims who experienced more than one crime incident (multiple victimisations) or more than one incident of a particular type of offence (repeat victimisation). It gives demographic information for people who are highly victimised.

Section 6 “Reporting to the Police” analyses changes to the proportion of incidents reported to the Police (reporting rates) and the proportion of victims who report at least one incident to the Police (reporting prevalence).

Section 7 “Perceptions of safety” analyses how adults from different demographic groups perceive their safety, and how people’s perceptions of safety are changing.

This report focuses on the overarching findings and trends that may inform policies and strategic decisions in the justice sector. We have only included graphs and tables that support these key findings. All observations and graphs in the report are based on the NZCVS [data tables](#), which are available on the [NZCVS resources and results](#) web page.

For information on the survey methodology, refer to the [NZCVS Cycle 5 methodology report](#).

Professional researchers and statisticians can apply for unit-level data analysis in the Stats NZ Integrated Data Infrastructure.

In addition to this report, a report that [Compares victimisation before and during the COVID-19 pandemic](#) is available.

If you are reading the NZCVS report for the first time, we recommend that you refer to [About the NZCVS Cycle 5 reports](#) to help you understand how the results are presented.

Impact of COVID-19 on Cycle 5 data collection

Due to COVID-19 limitations, Cycle 5 of the NZCVS involved fewer interviews (5,326) and resulted in a lower response rate (71%) compared to Cycle 4 (6,244 interviews and 76% response rate) and Cycle 1 (8,030 interviews and 81% response rate).

The smaller sample size and lower response rate have increased the level of statistical uncertainty related to specific findings. A higher level of statistical uncertainty means less confidence that the finding about a group is an accurate reflection about a population. If the level of statistical uncertainty is too high, the NZCVS suppresses values. The smaller sample size in Cycle 5 resulted in more values being suppressed than in previous cycles. The smaller sample size also makes it less likely that differences between values (such as a value compared between Cycle 5 and another cycle, or a Cycle 5 value from one demographic group compared with the national average) will be statistically significant. Consequently, caution is needed when interpreting some results.

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Survey participants

We would like to thank the 5,326 New Zealanders who took part in the survey and shared their stories.

Service provider

We appreciate the interviewing and data management that Reach Aotearoa (former CBG Health Research Ltd) did, which made this survey possible.

Contributors

Dr Michael Slyuzberg and Dr Patrick Neilands wrote this report and conducted all the analysis. When the report was published, both authors were employed by the Ministry of Justice Research and Evaluation team.

Peer reviewers

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NZCVS Project team

1 About the NZCVS

The NZCVS is an annual, nationwide, face-to-face, random-sample survey. It involves interviewing adults aged 15 years and over, who live in a private dwelling, about their experiences of crime in New Zealand over the previous 12 months. Their experience includes crime incidents reported to the Police and unreported incidents.

1.1 Survey objectives

The main research objectives of the NZCVS are to:

- measure the extent and nature of reported and unreported crime throughout New Zealand
- understand who experiences crime and the consequences of experiencing crime
- identify which groups face higher risks of experiencing crime
- understand victims' experiences and needs
- measure crime trends in New Zealand
- provide timely and adequate information to support strategic decisions
- significantly shorten the period between collecting data and reporting findings, compared with previous victimisation surveys
- match survey data with relevant administrative records, to provide more comprehensive information for developing policies and making decisions.

1.2 Survey scope

The NZCVS currently provides us with the best estimate of a wide range of personal and household offences that are not captured elsewhere. However, it does not report the total amount of crime in New Zealand, because it does not cover every type of crime (see Table 1-1). Also, the NZCVS is a sample survey⁶ subject to sampling errors (for more details, see [NZCVS Cycle 5 methodology report](#)).

⁶ In contrast with a census of the population, in a sample survey not everyone is asked to give information about their experiences. Also, not every respondent may want to talk about their experiences or remember the incidents they have experienced. Some may provide inaccurate information about incidents, deliberately or because they do not recall them perfectly.

Table 1-1. Crimes and offences covered in the NZCVS

Scope of NZCVS	Types or crimes and offences
What is covered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal offences where the survey respondent was the victim of the crime, regardless of whether the offence was reported to the Police • Household offences where the survey respondent's household was offended against, regardless of whether the offence was reported to the Police
What is not covered^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manslaughter and murder • Abduction • Crimes against children (aged 14 and under) • Traffic offences • "Victimless" crime, where the victim cannot be identified (such as, drug offences) • Commercial and retail crime, bribery and corruption and crimes against businesses or public-sector agencies. This is the case even if the person being interviewed is a business owner. • Crimes against people who do not live in a permanent private dwelling • Crimes against people who live in an institution^b

Notes

- a. Some groups of offences are excluded from the NZCVS. These include offences that are not directly experienced by an interviewee (such as manslaughter or murder); offences that have a very small sample size, so they do not support meaningful statistical analysis (such as abductions); offences that have additional legal restrictions for data collection (such as crimes against children or people living in an institution); or offences that require us to develop different survey tools (such as crimes against businesses).
- b. People who live in a care facility, prison, army barracks, boarding school, or similar institution or non-private dwelling, are excluded from the NZCVS sampling and interviewing process.

1.3 Reporting survey results

This report is part of the annual NZCVS reporting framework presented in Figure 1-1. The current report is based on the fifth year of interviewing (Cycle 5).

The sixth year of interviewing is underway and will be followed by another annual report in 2024.

The NZCVS was incorporated into the Stats NZ Integrated Data Infrastructure from 2018. This makes it possible to analyse the NZCVS data linked to administrative datasets.

Previous NZCVS annual and topical reports, tables and infographics are already available on the [Ministry of Justice website](#).

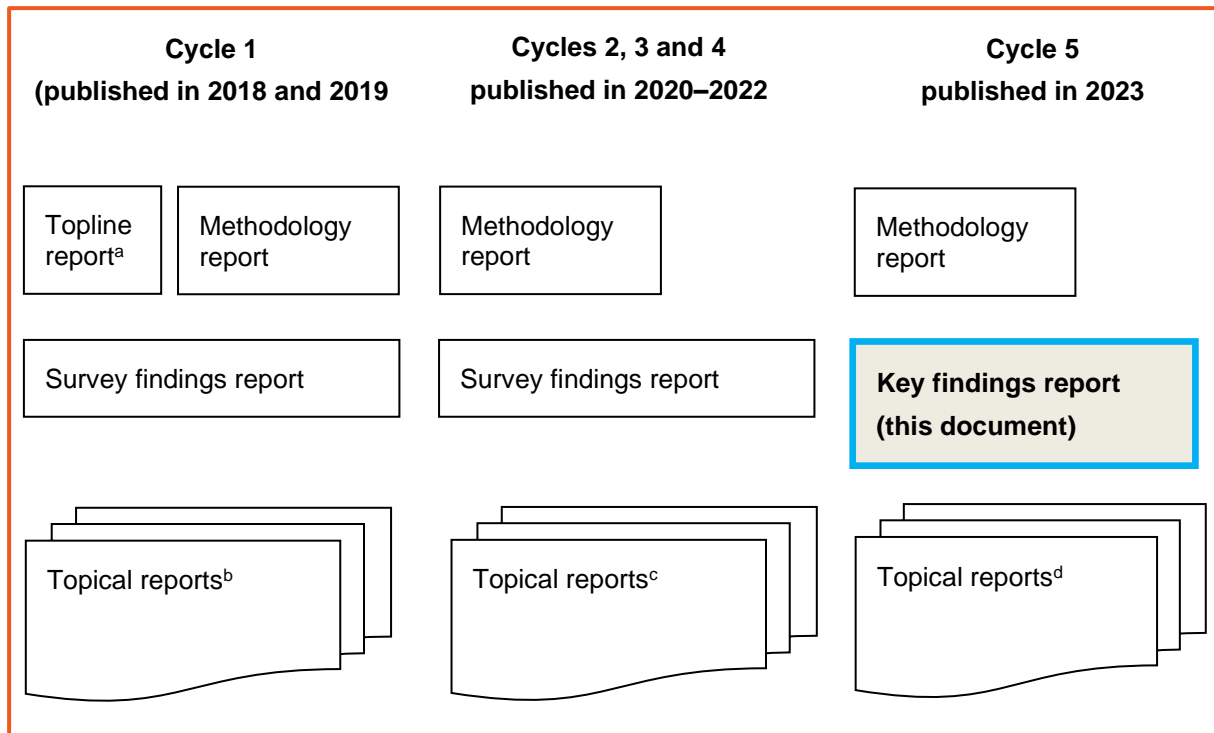


Figure 1-1. NZCVS reporting framework

Notes

- a. Due to resource limitations, we did not produce topline reports after Cycle 1.
- b. Three topical reports were produced covering important findings; highly victimised people; and offences by family members’
- c. Five topical reports were produced covering social wellbeing and perceptions of the criminal justice system; Māori victimisation in Aotearoa New Zealand; victims’ trust and confidence in the criminal justice system; patterns of victimisation by family members and help-seeking by victims; and controlling behaviours and help-seeking for family violence.
- d. One topical report was produced covering comparative analysis of adult victimisation in New Zealand pre-Covid-19 and since the start of Covid-19 pandemic.

2 Crime in New Zealand

The NZCVS gives us information about more crimes against New Zealand adults than administrative data, because it also captures crimes that are not reported to the Police.

This section looks at four measures of victimisation, from Cycle 1 to Cycle 5:

1. the number of incidents of crime experienced by adults in a given cycle (**incidence**)
2. the number of offences per 100 adults or 100 households (**incidence rate**)
3. the number of adults or households who experience at least one crime (**prevalence**)
4. the percentage of adults or households who experience at least one crime (**prevalence rate**).

There are two main ways to measure victimisation. The first is to use incidence and prevalence counts (measures 1 and 3). While count values are intuitive, they can be skewed by factors such as population growth. This means that they are unsuitable for comparing victimisation over time. The second approach is to use incidence and prevalence rates (measures 2 and 4). Rates are unaffected by factors such as population growth, so they are more suited to comparing across different cycles of the NZCVS.

All measures relate to offences experienced during the previous 12 months.

The approach used to calculate the differences in incidence and prevalence rates between Cycles 1 and 5, and Cycles 4 and 5, is described in [About the NZCVS Cycle 5 reports](#).

2.1 Overall victimisation

In the last 12 months, we estimate that 1,278,000 adult New Zealanders (31% of overall adult population) experienced approximately 2,466,000 incidents of crime. Personal offences make up most (75%; up from 68% in Cycle 4) of the crime experienced by New Zealanders: 705,000 adult New Zealanders experienced 1,847,000 personal offences and 367,000 New Zealand households experienced 619,000 household offences (see Figure 2-1).

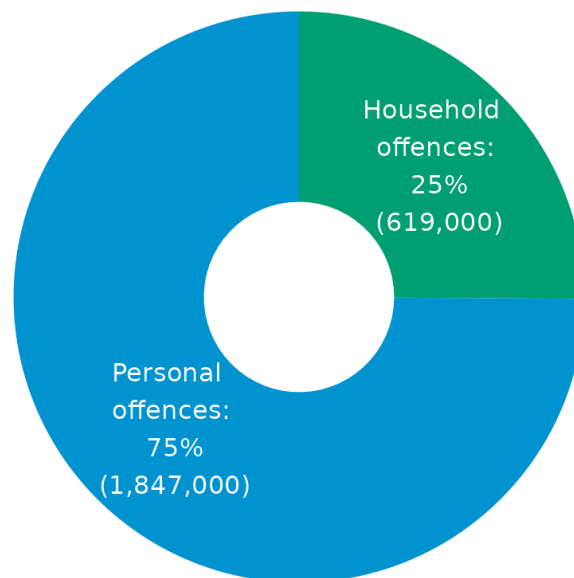


Figure 2-1. Incidents of crime experienced by New Zealanders in Cycle 5

In general, the prevalence rates in Cycles 4 and 5 (Figure 2-2) were similar, but the incidence rates (see Figure 2-3) in Cycle 5 increased, although the increases were not statistically significant. This fits a pattern where approximately the same number of people experienced at least one offence between 2021 and 2022, but the average victim experienced more offences.

In Cycle 5, the overall prevalence rate was 31%:

- 17% of adults experienced at least one personal offence
- 19% of households experienced at least one household offence.

In Cycle 5, the overall incidence rate was 77 offences per 100 adults⁷:

- 44 personal offences per 100 adults
- 32 household offences per 100 households.

⁷ Incidence rates for all offences and personal offences are measured in offences per 100 adults; incidence rates for household offences are measured in offences per 100 households. This reflects which weights are being used to make the survey results representative of New Zealand population.

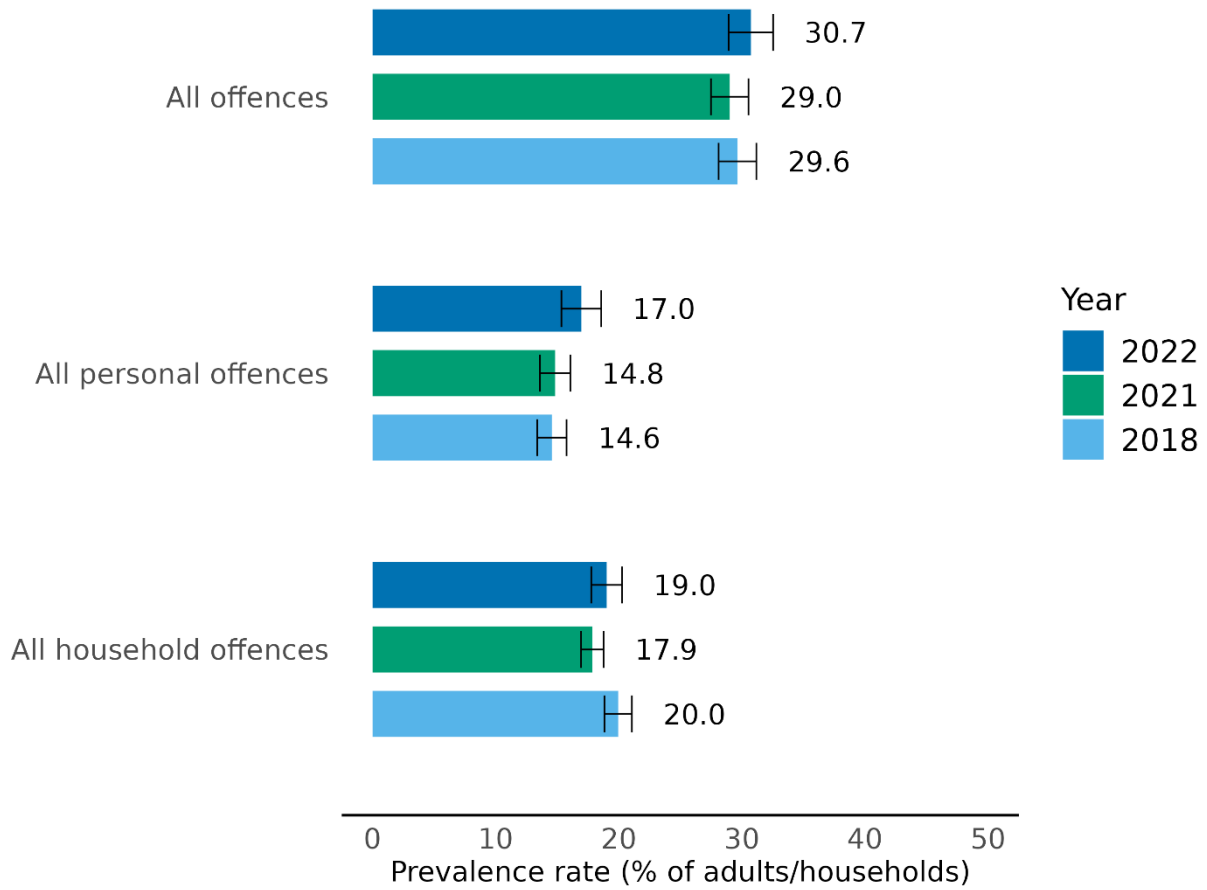


Figure 2-2. Prevalence rates of personal, household and all offences in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Notes

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Prevalence rates for all offences and personal offences are measured in % of adults; prevalence rates for household offences are measured in % of households.

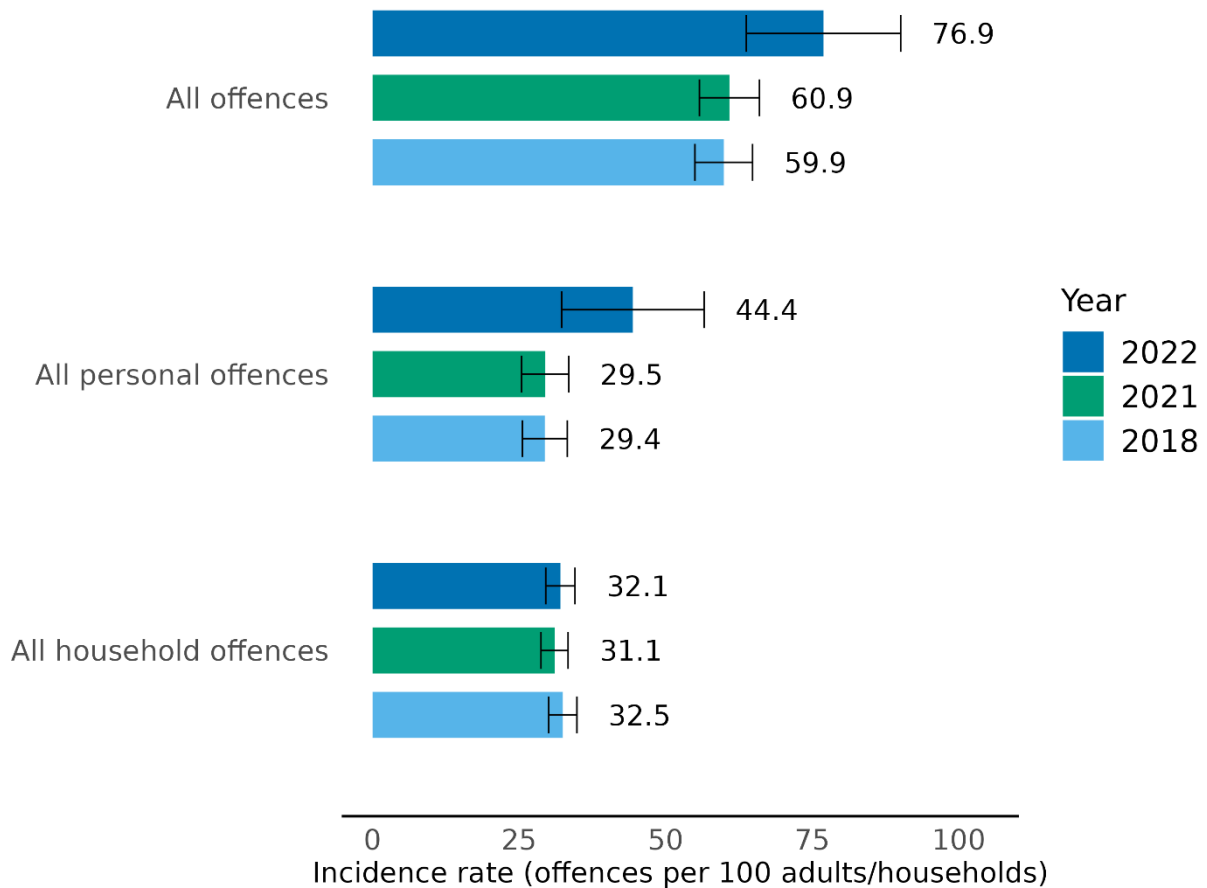


Figure 2-3. Incidence rates of personal, household and all offences in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Notes

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Incidence rates for all offences and personal offences are measured in offences per 100 adults; incidence rates for household offences are measured in offences per 100 households.

2.2 Offence types

This section looks at the scale of different types of offence between Cycle 1 and Cycle 5, using the same four measures of victimisation: incidence, incidence rate, prevalence and prevalence rate.

Incidence

Fraud and deception was the most common type of offence (510,000 offences) in Cycle 5, followed by burglary (288,000 offences) and physical offences⁸ (253,000 offences) (see Table 2-1 and Table 2-2). Fraud and deception was the only offence type that had a significantly higher incidence in 2022 than in 2021. It increased from 288,000 offences (7.2 offences per 100 adults) in 2021 to 510,000 offences (12.3 offences per 100 adults) in 2022.

⁸ Physical offences include robbery and non-sexual assault.

Table 2-1. Household incidence rates, by offence type and cycle

Type of household offence	Number of offences per 100 households (+/- 95% confidence interval)		
	Cycle 1 (2018)	Cycle 4 (2021)	Cycle 5 (2022)
Burglary	17.5 (+/- 1.8)	16.0 (+/-1.5)	14.9 (+/- 1.7)
Property damage (household)	2.6 (+/-0.6)	2.2 (+/-0.6)	3.3 (+/-1.1)
Damage to vehicle	2.3 (+/- 0.5)	2.4 (+/-0.4)	3.0 (+/-0.6)
Trespass	2.3 (+/-0.5)	3.5 (+/-1.2)	3.0 (+/-0.8)
Household theft (except vehicle)	3.0 (+/-0.6)	2.7 (+/-0.6)	2.5 (+/-0.6)
Theft (from vehicle)	2.0 (+/-0.4)	1.7 (+/-0.4)	1.7 (+/-0.4)
Interference with vehicle	0.6 (+/-0.3)	0.6 (+/-0.2)	0.8 (+/-0.3)
Bicycle theft	0.5 (+/-0.2)	0.3 (+/-0.1)	0.6 (+/-0.3)

Table 2-2. Personal incidence rates, by offence type and cycle

Type of personal offence	Number of offences per 100 adults (+/- 95% confidence interval)		
	Cycle 1 (2018)	Cycle 4 (2021)	Cycle 5 (2022)
Fraud and deception	6.9 (+/-1.0)	7.2 (+/-1.2)	12.3 (+/-1.8) ^{a b}
Physical offences	5.9 (+/-1.5)	5.2 (+/-1.6)	6.1 (+/-2.3)
Cybercrime	3.1 (+/-0.7)	2.5 (+/-0.8)	2.4 (+/-0.7)
Personal theft and property damage	2.1 (+/-0.6)	1.9 (+/-0.8)	1.4 (+/-0.4)
Harassment and threatening behaviour	7.1 (+/-2.2)	7.6 (+/-2.4)	S ^c
Sexual assault	4.2 (+/-1.1)	5.0 (+/-1.7)	S ^c

Notes

- a. Current year (2022) is statistically different from previous year (2021).
- b. Current year (2022) is statistically different from baseline year (2018).
- c. Value has been suppressed (S) due to a high level of statistical uncertainty.

Prevalence

Of all household offences, burglary had the highest prevalence (experienced by 186,000 households) in Cycle 5 (see Table 2-3 and Table 2-4). Of all personal offences, fraud and deception had the highest prevalence (experienced by 423,000 adults), followed by harassment and threatening behaviour (experienced by 120,000 adults). The increased

prevalence of fraud and deception in 2022 was the only increase that was statistically significant: 423,000 adults (10.2%) experienced at least one fraud and deception event compared with 248,000 adults (6.2%) in 2021.

Table 2-3. Household prevalence rates, by offence type and cycle

Type of household offence	% of households that experienced at least one offence (+/- 95% confidence interval)		
	Cycle 1 (2018)	Cycle 4 (2021)	Cycle 5 (2022)
Burglary	12.1 (+/-0.8)	9.3 (+/-0.7)	9.6 (+/-0.9) ^a
Damage to vehicle	2.1 (+/-0.5)	2.3 (+/-0.4)	2.5 (+/-0.4)
Vehicle theft	1.5 (+/-0.3)	1.6 (+/-0.4)	2.1 (+/-0.5)
Household theft (except vehicle)	2.0 (+/-0.4)	2.1 (+/-0.4)	2.0 (+/-0.4)
Property damage (household)	1.9 (+/-0.4)	1.5 (+/-0.3)	1.9 (+/-0.4)
Theft (from vehicle)	1.8 (+/-0.4)	1.7 (+/-0.4)	1.7 (+/-0.4)
Interference with vehicle	0.6 (+/-0.3)	0.6 (+/-0.2)	0.8 (+/-0.3)
Bicycle theft	0.5 (+/-0.2)	0.3 (+/-0.1)	0.5 (+/-0.2)

Notes

a. Current year (2022) is statistically different from baseline year (2018).

Table 2-4. Personal prevalence rates, by offence type and year

Type of personal offence	% of adults who experienced at least one offence (+/- 95% confidence interval)		
	Cycle 1 (2018)	Cycle 4 (2021)	Cycle 5 (2022)
Fraud and deception	5.3 (+/-0.6)	6.2 (+/-0.9)	10.2 (+/-1.4) ^{a b}
Physical offences	2.9 (+/-0.5)	2.5 (+/- 0.5)	2.2 (+/- 0.4)
Harassment and threatening behaviour	2.9 (+/-0.6)	2.8 (+/-0.6)	2.9 (+/-0.6)
Cybercrime	2.7 (+/-0.6)	2.0 (+/-0.5)	2.1 (+/-0.6)
Sexual assault	2.0 (+/-0.5)	2.1 (+/-0.4)	2.0 (+/-0.6)
Personal theft and property damage	1.6 (+/-0.4)	1.5 (+/-0.5)	1.2 (+/-0.4)

Notes

a. Current year (2022) is statistically different from previous year (2021).

b. Current year (2022) is statistically different from baseline year (2018).

2.3 Broad offence groups

This section looks at the scale of victimisation across four broad offence groups:

1. interpersonal violence⁹
2. fraud and cybercrime
3. theft and damage¹⁰
4. vehicle.¹¹

In Cycle 5, consistent with other years, interpersonal violence had the highest incidence rate of the four broad offence groups (see Figure 2-4), followed by fraud and cybercrime. There was a substantial, but not statistically significant, increase in interpersonal violence between Cycle 4 (19 offences per 100 adults) and Cycle 5 (29 offences per 100 adults). In contrast, the increase in fraud and cybercrime between Cycle 4 (10 offences per 100 adults) and Cycle 5 (15 offences per 100 adults) was statistically significant and driven by an increase in fraud and deception offences. The changes to theft and damage offences and vehicle offences were minimal between Cycles 4 and 5.

Fraud and cybercrime had the highest prevalence rate in Cycle 5 (12%); this was significantly higher than in Cycle 4 (8%). It was the only broad offence group to see a significant change in prevalence rates between 2021 and 2022 (Figure 2-5). Like the significant increase to the incidence rate, the change to the prevalence rate was driven by fraud and deception offences. In contrast to the incidence data, the number of people who experienced at least one act of interpersonal violence decreased slightly between Cycle 4 (7.3%) and Cycle 5 (6.4%).

The prevalence and incidence data suggests that there has been an increase in both the number of adults experiencing at least one act of fraud and cybercrime and the number of offences experienced by fraud and cybercrime victims.

In contrast, there were fewer adults who experienced at least one act of interpersonal violence in Cycle 5 compared to Cycle 4 but these victims experienced more incidents of interpersonal violence in Cycle 5. This pattern can also be seen when looking at repeat victimisations (when an individual experiences more than one incident of the same offence type). In both Cycle 4 and Cycle 5, individuals who experienced more than one incident of interpersonal violence made up 2-3% of the adult population. However, in Cycle 5, repeat victims experienced 86% of all offences compared to 73% of all offences in Cycle 4.

⁹ Interpersonal violence includes sexual assault; other assault; harassment and threatening behaviour; robbery. It also includes damage of personal or household property if the victim knows the offender.

¹⁰ Theft and damage includes theft, except motor vehicle theft; damage of household and personal property, if the victim knows the offender; and unlawful takes, converts or interference with a bicycle.

¹¹ Vehicle includes theft, unlawful takes or converts of a motor vehicle; theft from a motor vehicle; unlawful interference or getting into a motor vehicle; and damage to a motor vehicle.

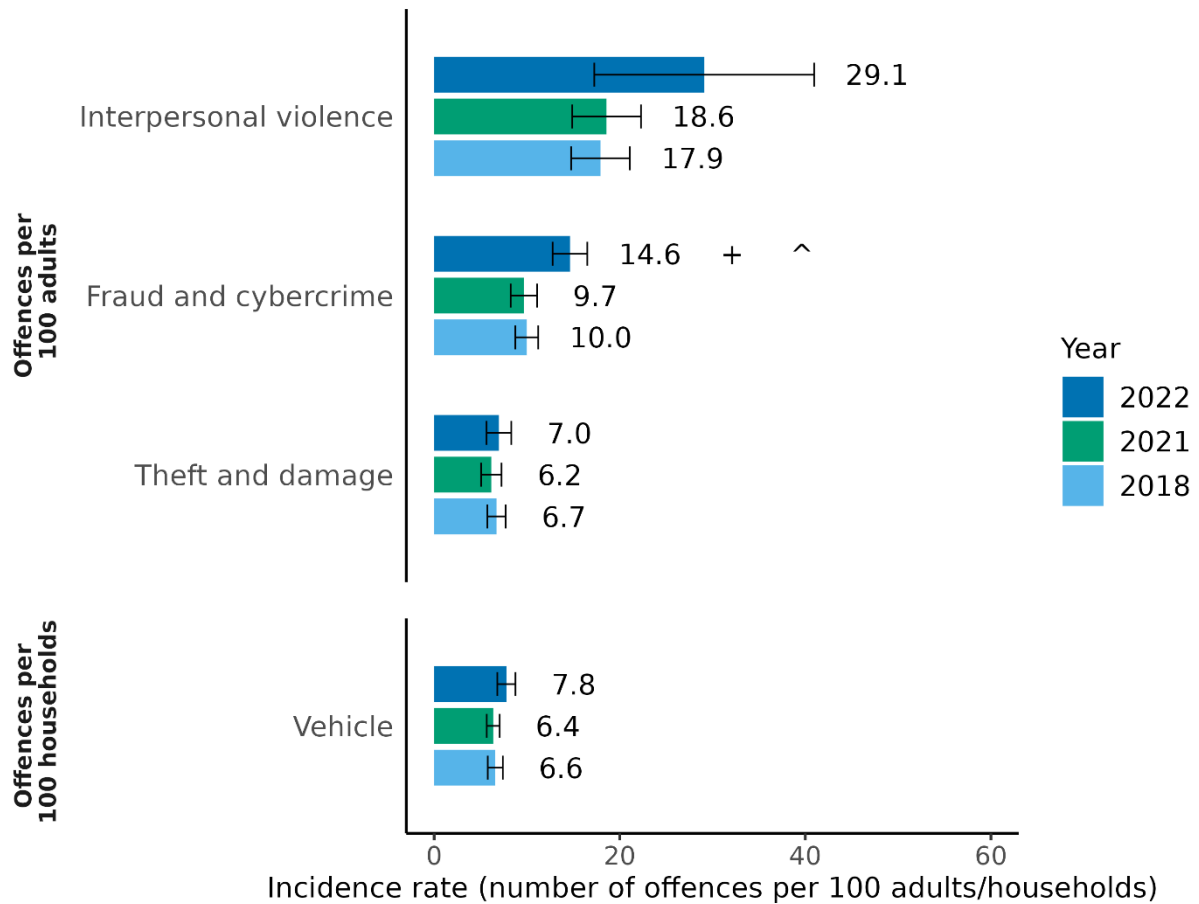


Figure 2-4. Incidence rates of broad offence types in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Notes

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

The incidence rate of fraud and cybercrime was significantly higher in the current year (2022) compared with the previous year (2021) and the baseline year (2018). These differences are statistically significant.

+ = difference from the previous year is statistically significant

^ = difference from baseline year is statistically significant

Incidence rates for interpersonal violence and fraud and cybercrime are measured in offences per 100 adults; incidence rates for theft and damage and vehicle offences are measured in offences per 100 households.

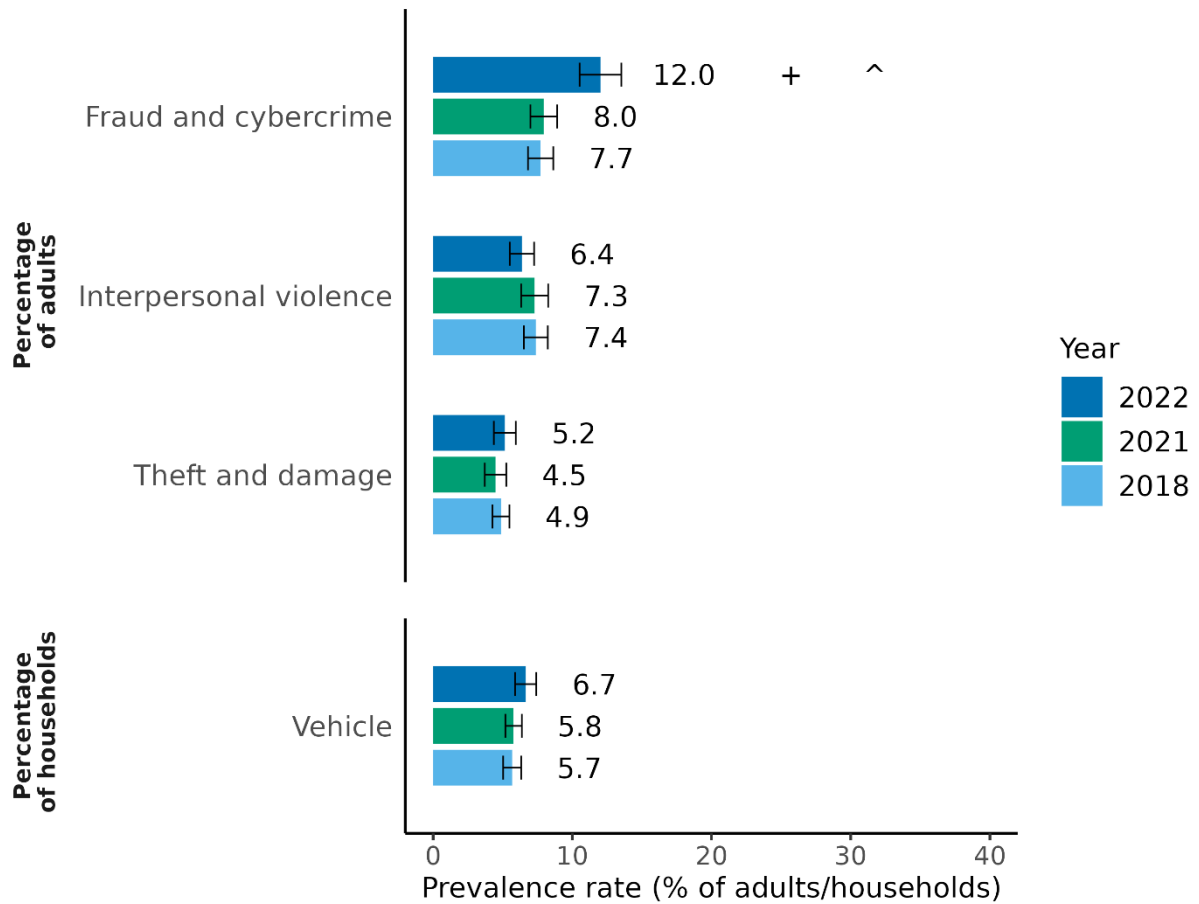


Figure 2-5. Prevalence rates of broad offence types in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Notes

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

The prevalence rate of fraud and cybercrime was significantly higher in the current year (2022) compared with the previous year (2021) and the baseline year (2018). These differences are statistically significant.

+ = difference from the previous year is statistically significant

^ = difference from baseline year is statistically significant

Prevalence rates for interpersonal violence and fraud and cybercrime are measured in % of adults; prevalence rates for theft and damage and vehicle offences are measured in % of households.

3 Who experiences crime

In this section we discuss the circumstances and characteristics (demographic factors) of the people most likely to experience crime. These demographic factors include:

- personal attributes, such as gender, age, ethnicity, sexual identity, disability and marital status
- economic and household factors that describe people's economic situation and living arrangements, such as whether someone lives in their own home, and lives alone or with others
- geographic factors (based on regional council boundaries) that describe people's location
- wellbeing factors, such as life satisfaction, perceived safety, and level of psychological distress.

We look at these factors for all offences combined. Where relevant we also look at them for personal offences, household offences, burglary, trespass and these broad offence groups: fraud and cybercrime, interpersonal violence, theft and damage, and vehicle.

In the graphs, tables and infographics, all statistically significant differences are indicated in orange.

3.1 New gender, sex and variations of sex standard

Recently, Stats NZ reviewed and revised its data standard on gender, sex and sex characteristics,¹² to better reflect the gender diversity in New Zealand. Consequently, we have updated the NZCVS gender and sex standards to align with the Stats NZ new standard.

In line with the new standard, the NZCVS now refers to male and female as genders rather than biological sexes. NZCVS users may be concerned that using a gender variable instead of a sex variable could result in large discrepancies between the estimates of victimisation for males and females in Cycle 5 compared with data from past cycles. However, after we assessed the difference in prevalence and incidence rates between male and female (gender) and male and female (biological sex), we found only a negligible difference (see Table 3-1).

Aligning with the Stats NZ standard also gives us the opportunity to identify the impact of crime and victimisation on our transgender community. However, small sample sizes mean that estimates of victimisation for transgender adults are currently suppressed.

¹² For more information, refer to the [Stats NZ website](#).

Table 3-1. Offence prevalence rates in Cycle 5, by sex and gender

Gender and sex category	% of adults/households that experienced at least one offence (+/- 95% confidence interval)		
	Offence type		
	All offences	Personal offences	Household offences
Male (sex)	30.0 (+/-2.7)	16.7 (+/-2.2)	18.1 (+/-1.7)
Male (gender)	29.9 (+/-2.7)	16.7 (+/-2.2)	18.1 (+/-1.7)
Female (sex)	31.5 (+/-2.3)	17.2 (+/-2.1)	19.8 (+/-1.6)
Female (gender)	31.5 (+/-2.3)	17.2 (+/-2.1)	19.8 (+/-1.6)

3.2 Demographic trends

While all New Zealanders face some risk of crime, this risk is not evenly distributed throughout the population. Some groups and communities are much more at risk of experiencing crime than others. By understanding which groups are particularly vulnerable, we can do more to reduce the likelihood of victimisation in New Zealand.

The following graphs show which demographic groups¹³ experience a significantly higher prevalence rate for all offences (see Figure 3-1) and personal offences (see Figure 3-3), or a significantly lower prevalence rate for all offences (see Figure 3-2) and personal offences (see Figure 3-4).

In general, Māori, LGBT+¹⁴ adults were more likely to experience crime in Cycle 5, as are adults experiencing a moderate to high level of psychological distress or having a low perceived level of safety. People who are least likely to experience crime include those who identify as Pacific peoples, adults aged 65 years or older, retired adults, adults living in a couple-only household, or adults who report high life satisfaction.

¹³ Demographic groups refer to groups of people with a common personal factor, economic and household factor or wellbeing factor.

¹⁴ LGBT+ is a demographic group that includes transgender people and people who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or having another sexual identity.

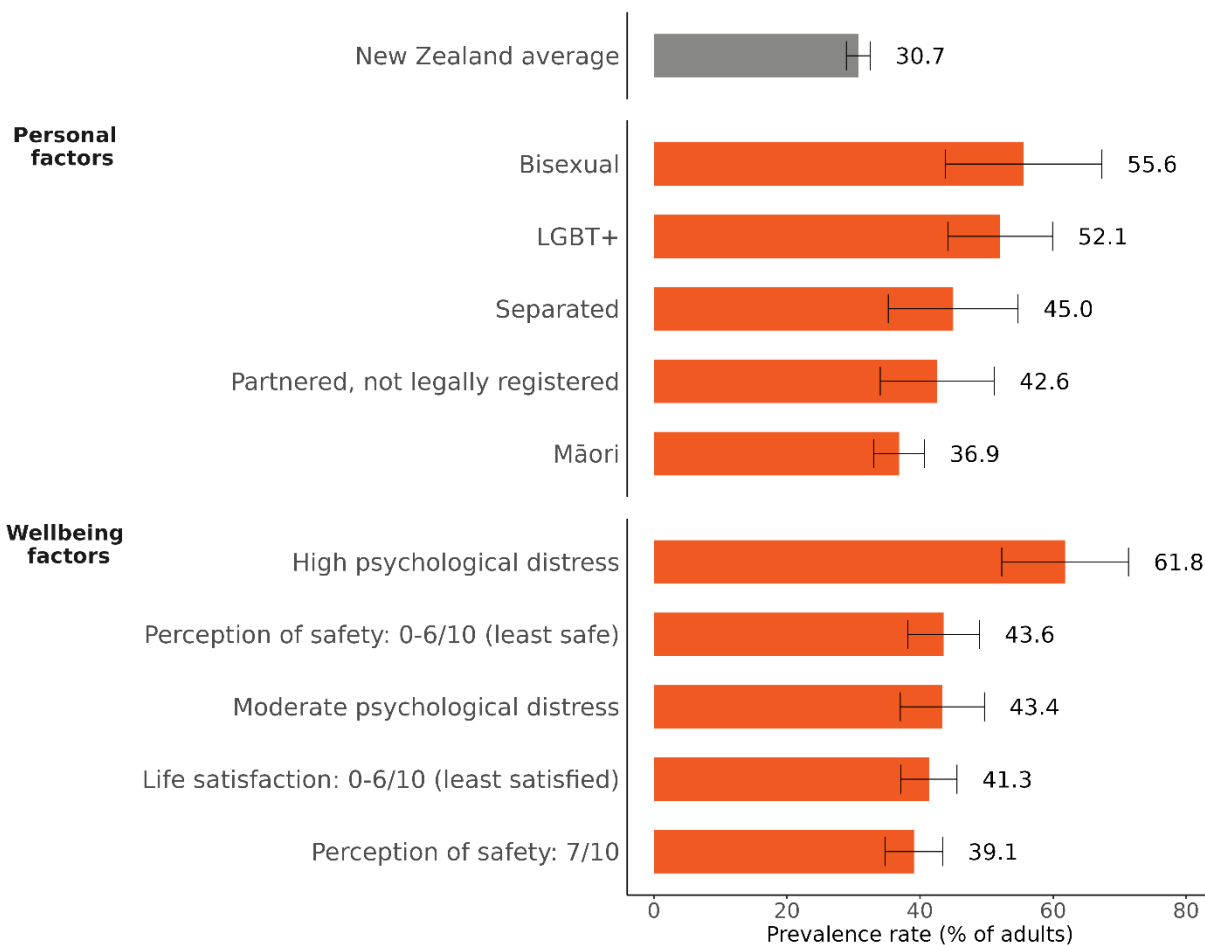


Figure 3-1. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for all offences, for demographic groups that experience a significantly higher offence prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Bisexual adults are a sub-section of the LGBT+ adults. Prevalence rate for bisexual adults is shown in addition to the overall LGBT+ data due to the high level of victimisation in bisexual adults.



Figure 3-2. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for all offences, for demographic groups that experience a significantly lower offence prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

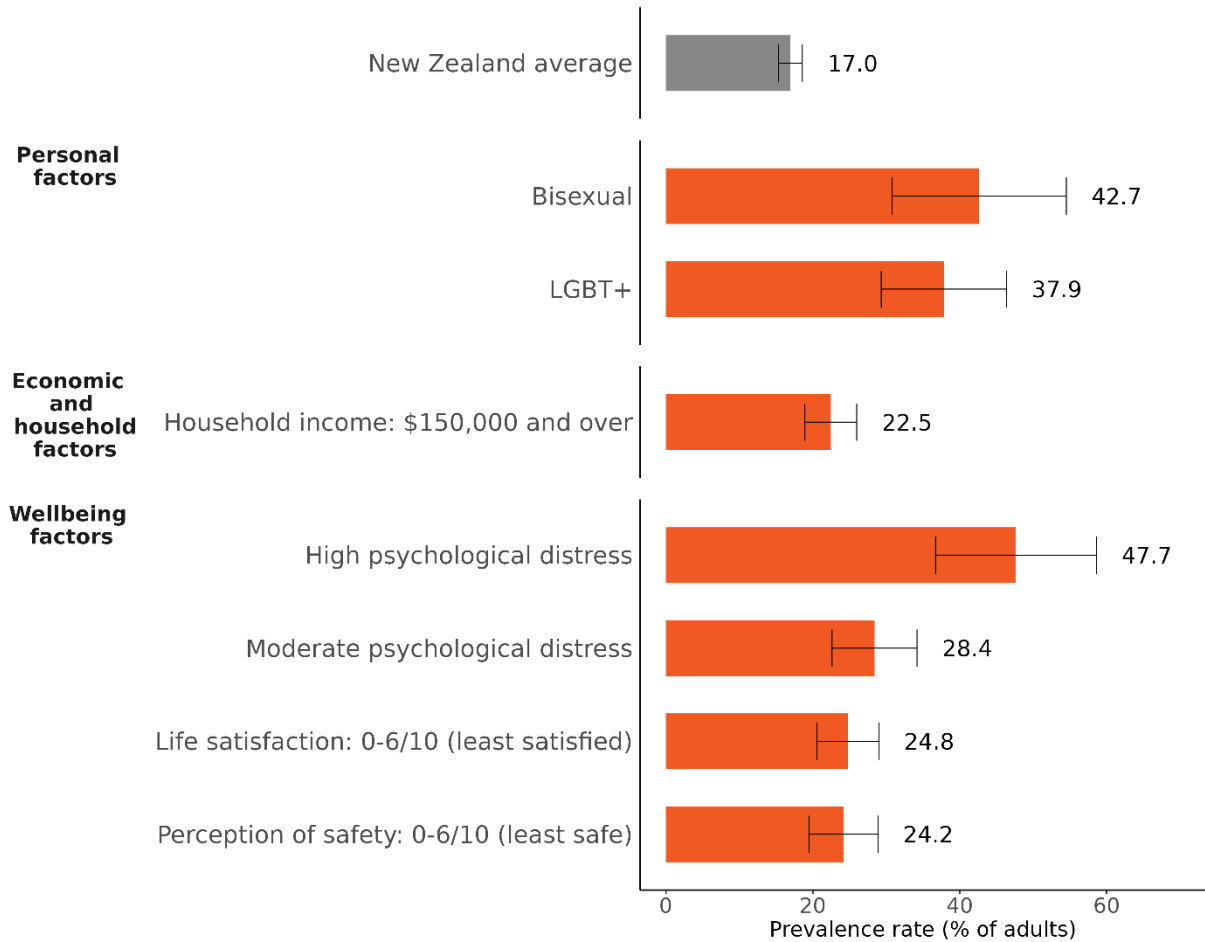


Figure 3-3. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for personal offences, for demographic groups that experience a significantly higher offence prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Bisexual adults are a sub-section of the LGBT+ adults. Prevalence rate for bisexual adults is shown in addition to the overall LGBT+ data due to the high level of victimisation in bisexual adults.



Figure 3-4. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for personal offences, for demographic groups that experience a significantly lower offence prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Multi-way demographic analysis

In Cycle 5, victimisation trends are distributed differently when we combine demographic factors. Accounting for multiple demographic factors helps us understand which demographic groups are at risk of victimisation. It can also indicate what drives the victimisation risk in different demographic groups.

For example, disabled adults experience an offence prevalence rate of 32%, which is not significantly more than the New Zealand average offence prevalence rate (31%). However, the average age of disabled adults is higher than the average age of all adults. Our findings suggest that older people are less likely to be victims of crime than younger people.

The difference in the age distribution of disabled adults and the general adult population obscures an important difference in victimisation rates. Pooled data from 2018 to 2022, standardised for age, reveals that disabled adults are significantly more likely to experience

victimisation (adjusted offence prevalence rate is 40%) than the New Zealand average offence prevalence rate (31%).

Similarly, after adjusting the data for Māori for age and deprivation (adjusted offence prevalence rate is 32%), Māori are no longer significantly more likely to be victims of crime than the general adult population.

Multi-way analysis of the NZCVS data, which is correlational by its nature, can help us better understand what factors most contribute to victimisation; this has important implications for developing policies. Whether a demographic group's estimates are adjusted, and which factors we used to make this adjustment is based on expert advice.

Geographic factors

In general, in Cycle 5, where New Zealanders live had little effect on the likelihood of them experiencing crime (see Figure 3-5). Adults living in the largest urban areas (Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury) experienced offence prevalence rates of 32%, 32% and 29% respectively, which is approximately the same as the offence prevalence rate for the general population (31%). The only region that had a significantly lower offence prevalence rate than the general population was Rest of South Island excluding Canterbury (24%).

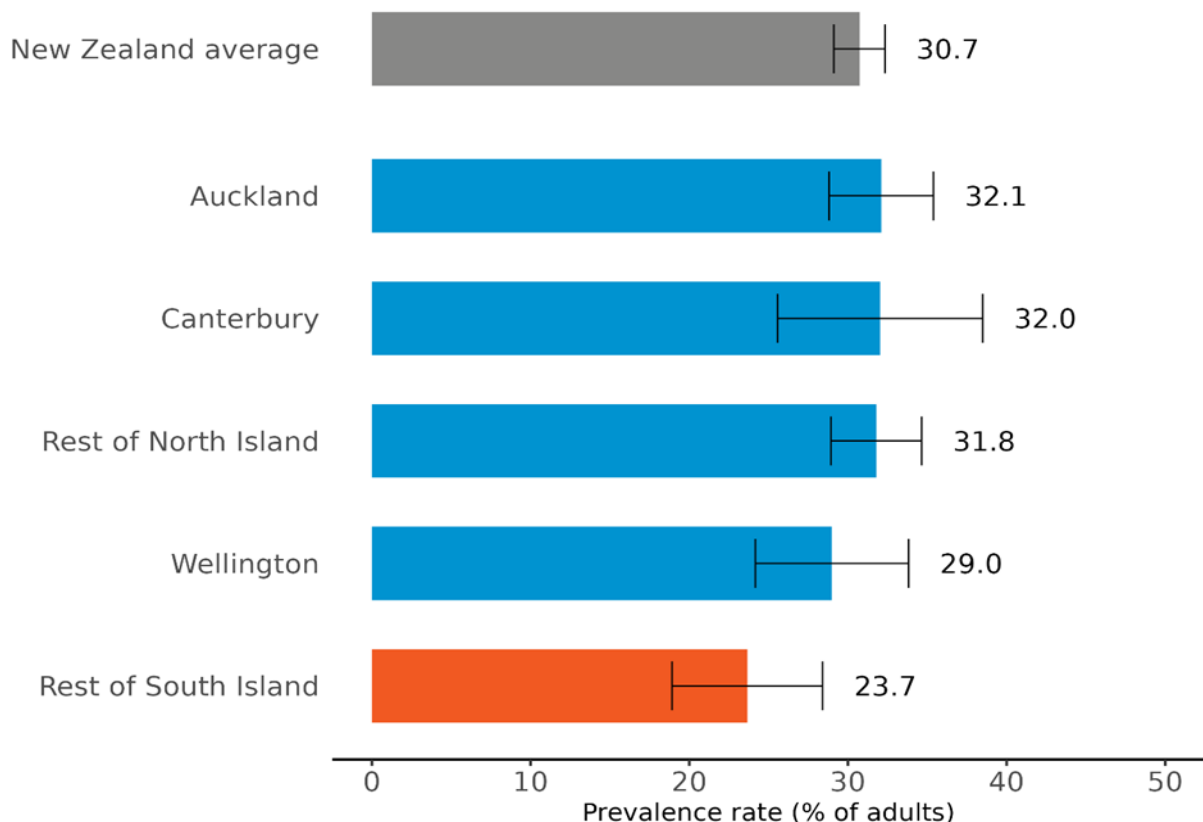


Figure 3-5. Prevalence rates in Cycle 5 for all offences, by geographic region

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; blue bars represent demographic factors that are not statistically different from the average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Pooled data from Cycle 1 to Cycle 5 shows us that New Zealanders are most likely to experience victimisation at home (46% of all incidents). The next most likely location is online or over the phone (26% of all incidents). The least likely place to experience victimisation is in a community area (3% of all incidents).

4 Interpersonal violence and violence by family members

The offences covered in this section were reported by a relatively small number of survey respondents.¹⁵ This means that there is less certainty about the accuracy of some estimates for Cycle 5, so these have been suppressed.

The NZCVS does not cover every type of family violence and sexual violence against adults. It focuses on sexual assault, not necessarily by family members, and offences by family members.

4.1 Interpersonal violence

The NZCVS defines interpersonal violence as sexual assault, other assault, robbery, harassment and threatening behaviour. Damage to household and personal property is also included in interpersonal violence when the offender is known to the victim.

In Cycle 5, 6.4% of respondents experienced at least one act of interpersonal violence. Like the overall differences between Cycle 4 and Cycle 5, the incidence of interpersonal violence in Cycle 5 was greater than in Cycle 4, but this difference was not statistically significant. There was a small decrease in the prevalence rates.

In Cycle 5, there were 1,211,000 offences of interpersonal violence (29 offences per 100 adults) compared with 745,000 offences in Cycle 4 (19 offences per 100 adults). In contrast, the prevalence of interpersonal violence decreased slightly: 266,000 adults (6.4%) experienced interpersonal violence in Cycle 5 compared with 292,000 adults (7.3%) in Cycle 4.

These trends suggest that while the number of adults experiencing interpersonal violence decreased between cycles, the average victim of interpersonal violence experienced more incidents in Cycle 5. Table 4-1 shows which demographic groups experienced a significantly higher prevalence rate of interpersonal violence than the New Zealand average, and Table 4-2 shows the demographic groups that experienced a significantly lower prevalence rate of interpersonal violence.

¹⁵ The pooled dataset contains 664 respondents who experienced sexual assault in the previous 12 months, and 723 who experienced an offence by a family member.

Table 4-1. Cycle 5 prevalence rate for interpersonal violence, for demographic groups that experience a significantly higher prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Demographic group	% of adults who experienced at least one interpersonal violence incident (+/- 95% confidence intervals)
New Zealand average	6.4 (+/-0.9)
Experiencing high level of psychological distress	31.5 (+/-10.6)
Experiencing moderate level of psychological distress	19.2 (+/-5.4)
LGBT+	17.8 (+/-5.9)
Separated	16.7 (+/-5.6)
Partnered, not legally registered	14.3 (+/-6.1)
Life satisfaction is 0–6/10 (least satisfied)	13.0 (+/-2.7)
One parent with child(ren) household	12.5 (+/-4.4)
Perception of safety is 0–6/10 (least safe)	12.0 (+/-3.3)
Never married or in civil union	11.3 (+/-2.6)
15–29 years old	11.0 (+/-2.5)
Māori	10.7 (+/-2.3)
Private rented accommodation	10.2 (+/-2.3)
Cannot meet unexpected expense of \$500	10.2 (+/-2.9)
Non-partnered	9.2 (+/-1.9)

Table 4-2. Cycle 5 prevalence rate for interpersonal violence, for demographic groups that experience a significantly lower prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Demographic group	% of adults who experienced at least one interpersonal violence incident (+/- 95% confidence interval)
New Zealand average	6.4 (+/-0.9)
Partnered, legally registered	4.3 (+/-1.0)
Married/civil union/de facto	4.3 (+/-1.0)
Experiencing low level of psychological distress	4.3 (+/-0.8)
Two-people household	4.1 (+/-1.3)
Life satisfaction is 10/10 (most satisfied)	3.1 (+/-1.5)
Couple-only household	3.0 (+/-1.0)
Personal income is \$20,001–\$30,000	3.0 (+/-1.3)
Perception of safety is 10/10 (most safe)	2.8 (+/-1.3)

4.2 Sexual assault

The NZCVS defines sexual assault as any unwanted sexual act. This includes forced sexual intercourse or other sexual act, unwanted sexual touching, and face-to-face threats of a sexual nature that frightens the respondent. Even if the offender was unsuccessful, incidents of this nature are still considered as sexual assault.

Compared with Cycle 4, the prevalence of sexual assault in Cycle 5 decreased slightly. In Cycle 5, 81,000 adults (2% of respondents) experienced at least one sexual assault compared with 84,000 adults (2.1% of respondents) in Cycle 4.

We have suppressed the incidence of sexual assault in Cycle 5, due to a high level of statistical uncertainty in the estimates. However, pooled data from Cycle 1 to Cycle 5 suggests that, on average, there are 204,000 sexual assault offences in a 12-month period. This means that between 2018 and 2022, on average, there were five incidents of sexual assault per 100 adults.

When we examined the pooled data, certain demographic patterns emerge. Table 4-3 shows which demographic groups were more likely to experience at least one incident of sexual assault than the New Zealand average.

Table 4-3. Prevalence and incidence rates for sexual assault in Cycle 1 to Cycle 5, for demographic groups that experience a significantly higher prevalence rate than the New Zealand average

Demographic group	Prevalence rate	Incidence rate
	(% of adults who experienced at least one incident)	(Number of offences per 100 adults)
	(± 95% confidence interval)	
New Zealand average	2.0 (±0.2)	5.0 (±1.2)
Experiencing high level of psychological distress	11.7 (±2.6)	35.0 (±9.9)
LGBT+	10.2 (±2.0)	27.9 (±9.4)
Experiencing moderate level of psychological distress	5.1 (±1.1)	S ^a
15–29 years old	4.8 (±0.7)	11.1 (±2.3)
Separated	4.7 (±1.6)	10.2 (±3.7)
Never married or in civil union	4.5 (±0.7)	11.3 (±2.5)
Not employed, studying	4.4 (±1.7)	8.7 (±3.9)
Life satisfaction is 0–6/10 (least satisfied)	4.4 (±0.9)	11.2 (±2.9)
Perception of safety is 0–6/10 (least safe)	4.1 (±0.9)	11.2 (±2.6)
Other multi-person household	3.7 (±0.6)	8.1 (±1.9)
Not employed, not actively seeking work	3.5 (±1.2)	S ^a
One parent with child(ren)	3.4 (±0.9)	11.0 (±5.4)
Māori	3.2 (±0.5)	8.3 (±1.9)
Cannot meet an unexpected expense of \$500	3.1 (±0.6)	8.3 (±2.3)
Private rented accommodation	3.0 (±0.5)	6.6 (±1.4)
Women	3.0 (±0.4)	8.1 (±2.2)
Limited or very limited ability to make a \$300 non-essential purchase	2.9 (±0.6)	S ^a
Cannot make a \$300 non-essential purchase	2.9 (±0.6)	8.1 (±2.5)
Life satisfaction is 7/10	2.9 (±0.6)	6.6 (±1.8)
Perception of safety is 7/10	2.9 (±0.6)	7.0 (±3.0)

Note

a. Value has been suppressed (S) due to a high level of statistical uncertainty.

Several demographic groups were significantly less likely to be victims of at least one sexual assault than the New Zealand average. Each of these groups had a prevalence rate of less than 1% (rounded):

- men
- people over 40 years
- Asian people
- married adults
- widowed adults
- adults who live in a couple-only household or a couple-with-children household
- people who own their own home
- people who have a personal income of over \$60,000
- people who have no limits to purchasing a non-essential item for \$300
- people experiencing low psychological distress
- people who scored life satisfaction as 9/10 or 10/10
- people whose perceptions of safety is 10/10.

4.3 Offences by family members

The NZCVS defines an offence by a family member as one where the offender was, or has been, a family or whānau member. Offences by family members include robbery, assault (except sexual assault); sexual assault; harassment and threatening behaviour; damage to motor vehicles; and damage to property.

The offences by family members covered by the NZCVS are a subset of family violence by adult New Zealanders. Family violence encompasses a wider range of experiences than the NZCVS. For more details, refer to the Family Violence Act 2018.

In Cycle 5, 74,000 adults in New Zealand (1.8%) experienced some form of offence by a family member, compared with 68,000 adults (1.7%) in Cycle 4 (see Figure 4-1). The prevalence rate of all offences by family members was similar in Cycle 4 and Cycle 5 (see Figure 4-2); however, the trends for intimate partner offences and other family or whānau offences were different.

Between Cycle 4 and Cycle 5, the number of victims of intimate partner violence rose from 35,000 adults in New Zealand (0.9%) to 56,000 (1.4%), but this increase was not statistically significant. In contrast, the number of victims of other family or whānau offences decreased from 34,000 adults in Cycle 4 (0.9%) to 20,000 adults (0.5%) in Cycle 5. This decrease was not statistically significant.

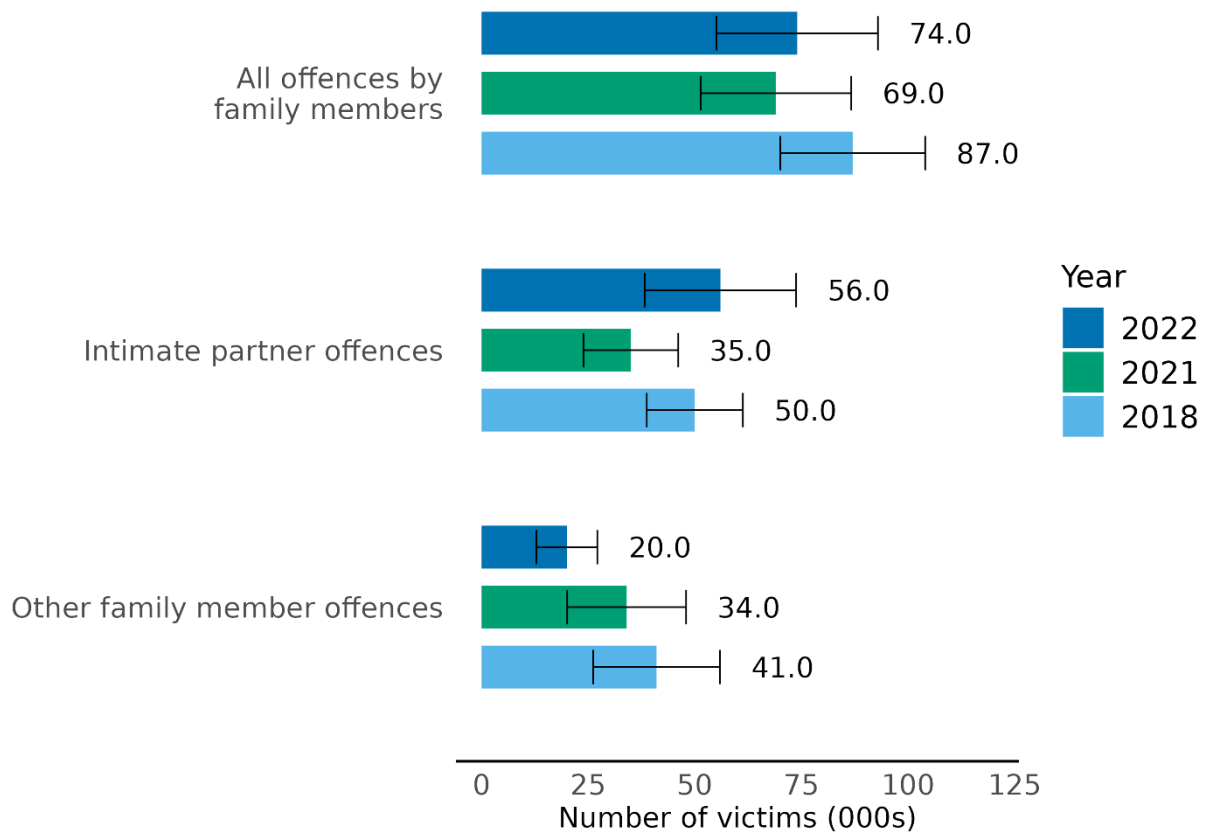


Figure 4-1. Number of victims of offences by family members, in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

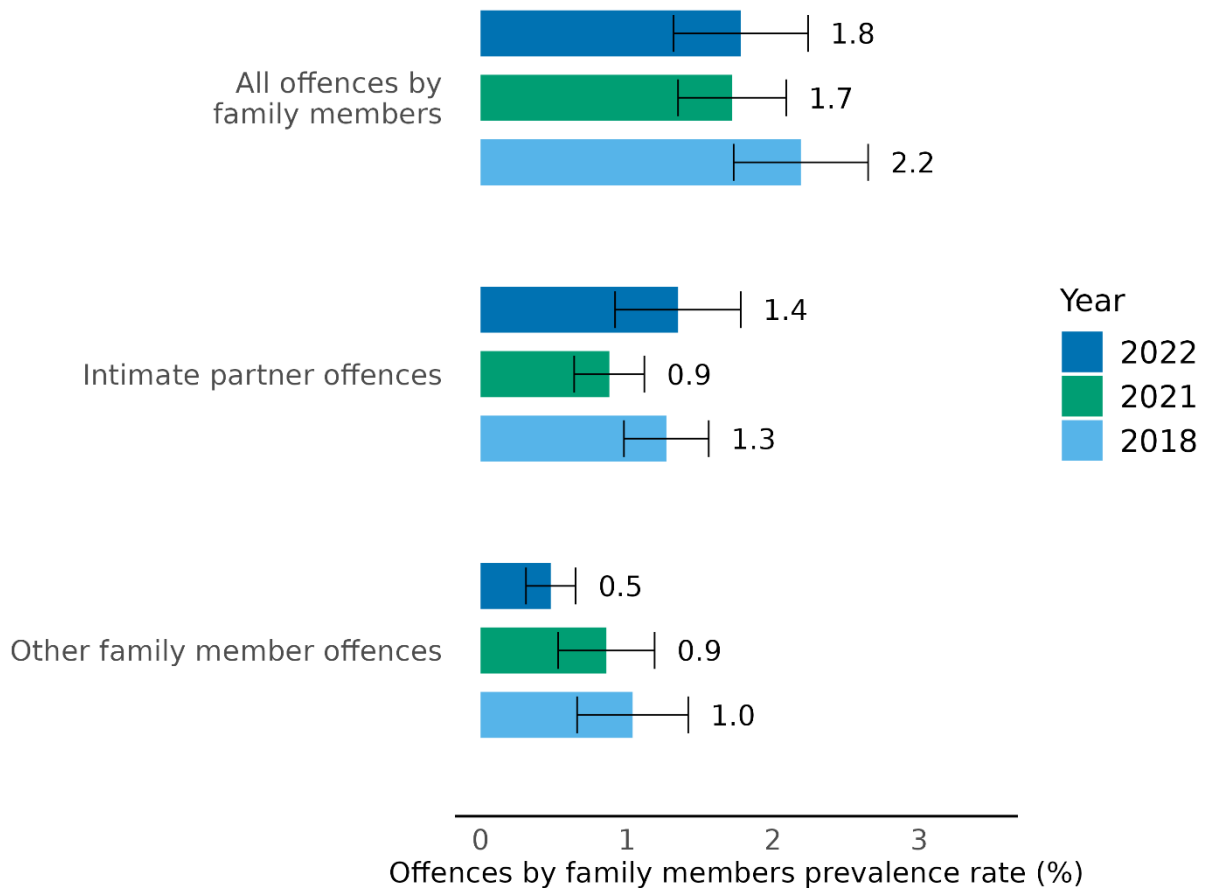


Figure 4-2. Prevalence rates of offences by family members, in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Offences by family members are clearly gendered forms of victimisation. Pooled data from 2018 to 2022 reveals that 3% of the female population experience offences by a family member compared with 1% of the male population. Respondents who identify as Māori were significantly more likely to experience an offence by a family member (5.2%) than the New Zealand average (1.8%). This trend is more acute when broken down by gender: 6.9% of female Māori experienced some form of offence by a family member between 2018 and 2022.

Combining gender and other demographic variables also reveals significant disparities in the proportions of other groups of females who experience an offence by a family member. For example, females who identify as LGBT+ (8.2%), disabled females (6.6%), and females under financial pressure (6.5%)¹⁶ are all significantly more likely to experience an offence by a family member than the average New Zealand adult.

Between 2018 and 2022, physical violence was the most common form of violence by a family member. On average, 37,000 adults (0.9%) per year reported experiencing physical

¹⁶ We equate this to females reporting that they cannot afford an unexpected spending of \$500 within a month.

violence from a family member. Threats and harassment was the second most common form of offences. On average, 26,000 adults (0.6%) per year reported experiencing some form of harassment or threat from a family member.

More than one third of offences by a family member (38%) had a very serious impact on the victim (rated 10 on a scale of 0 to 10). Almost one quarter of offences by a family member (23%) resulted in physical injury to the victim, and 8.9% of offences perpetrated by a family member required medical attention.

4.4 Lifetime experience of sexual assault and intimate partner violence

Sections 4.2 and 4.3 discuss sexual assault and offences by family members that occurred in the previous 12 months. This section looks at measures of sexual assault and intimate partner violence across a person's lifetime.

In Cycle 5, 1.1 million adults (27%) reported being the victim of at least one act of sexual assault in their lifetime (see Figure 4-3). The same number had experienced at least one act of non-consensual sexual touching, while 0.6 million adults (16%) had experienced at least one act of forced intercourse.

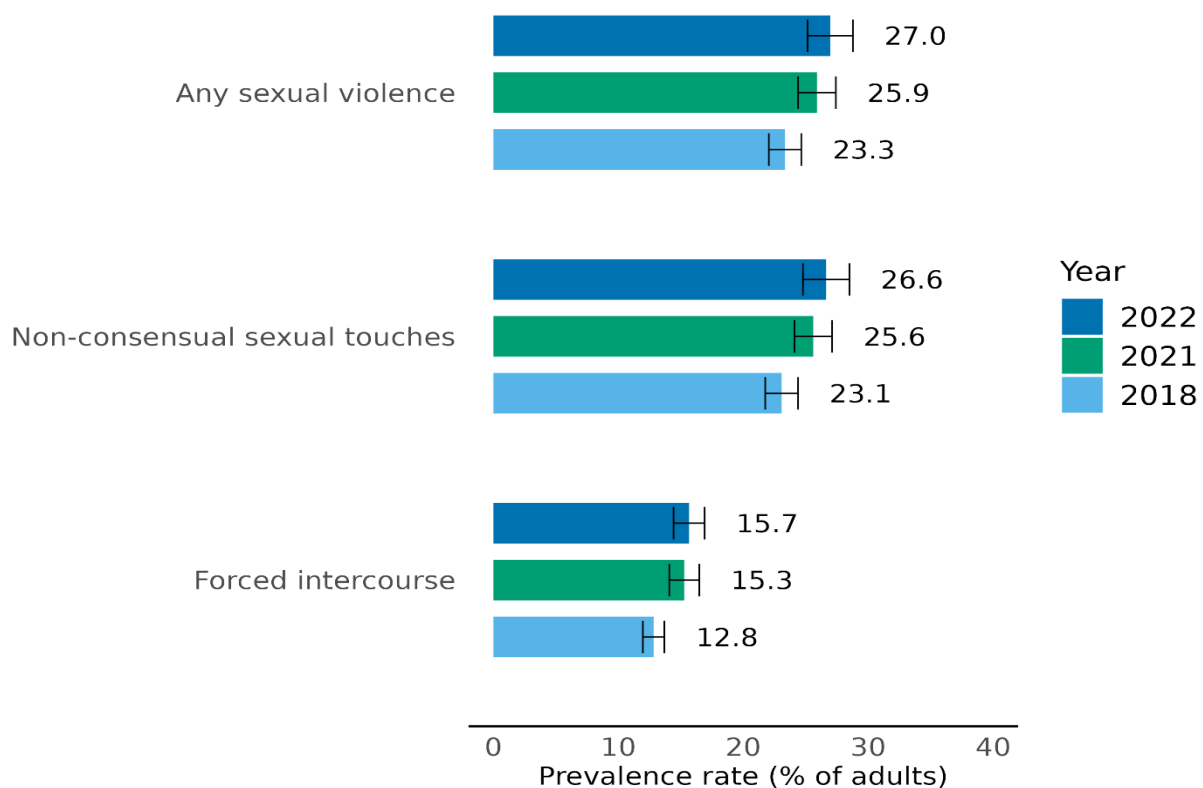


Figure 4-3. Prevalence rates of sexual violence across a lifetime, reported in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

In Cycle 5, 0.7 million adults (18%) reported being the victim of at least one act of intimate partner violence in their lifetime (see Figure 4-4). Half a million adults (15%) reported being the victim of at least one threat of force and violence, and the same number reported experiencing at least one of act of deliberate force or violence in their lifetime.

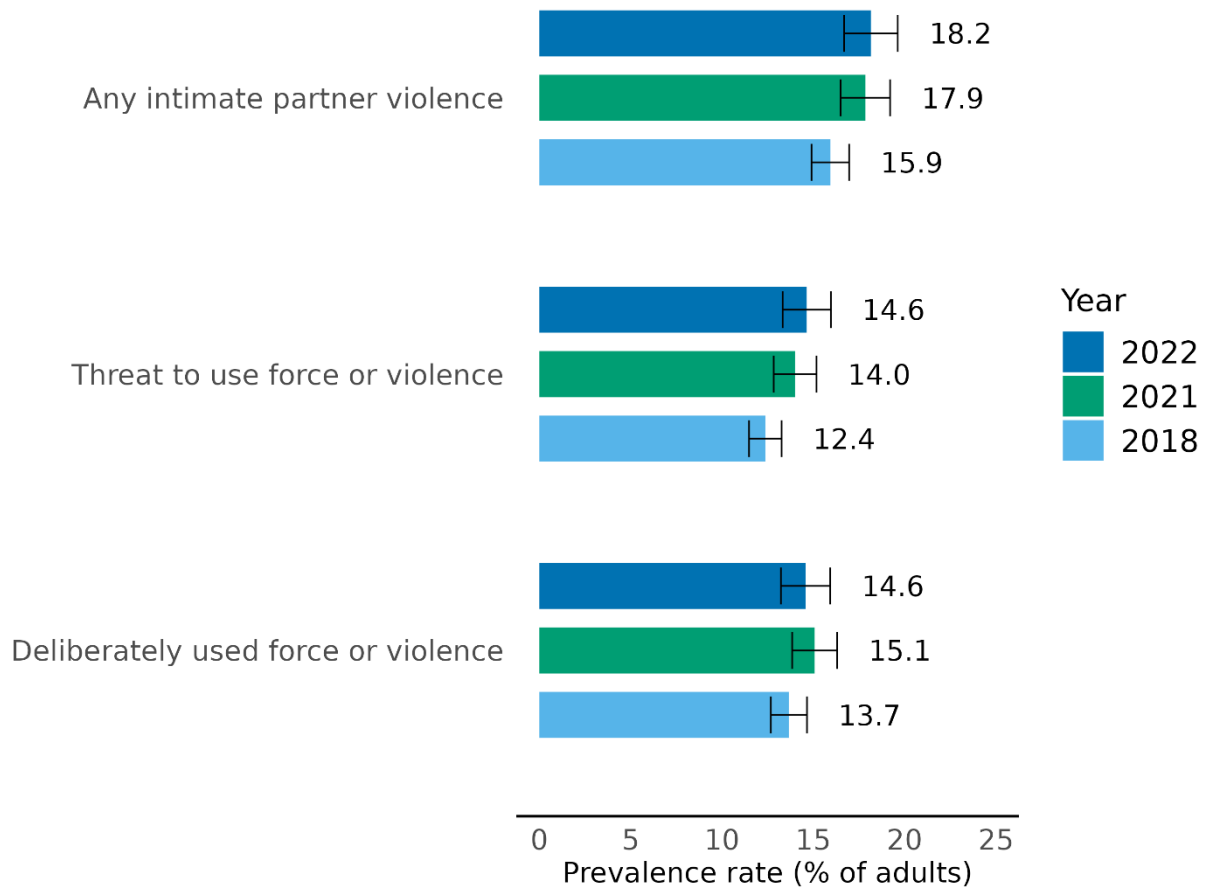


Figure 4-4. Prevalence rates of intimate partner violence across a lifetime, reported in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

In total, in Cycle 5 1.3 million adults (33%) reported they had experienced at least one act of sexual assault or intimate partner violence in their lifetime. There was a significant gender difference in lifetime experience of sexual assault. In Cycle 5, 0.9 million women (46% of adult women) reported experiencing at least one act of sexual assault or intimate partner violence in their lifetime. In contrast, 0.4 million men (19% of all adult men) experienced at least one act of sexual assault or intimate partner violence.

4.5 Controlling behaviours

In Cycle 4, we introduced two sets of questions that attempt to capture people's experiences of controlling behaviour by family members. The NZCVS defines controlling behaviour by a family member as patterns of behaviour used to coerce or control a person, or cause cumulative harm.

The questions we included in Cycles 4 and 5 reflect ways that controlling behaviours can be expressed in a family or whānau relationship.¹⁷ The questions are designed to fill gaps in the survey's measure of family violence, as it is defined in the Family Violence Act 2018.

One set of questions is designed to capture the forms of controlling behaviours that a perpetrator uses, such as financial abuse or keeping track of where a partner goes or who they spend time with.

The other set of questions is designed to capture the harm caused by a perpetrator's behaviour. We recognise that there are diverse controlling behaviours, but these questions capture the intent behind the behaviours and the impact they have on a person's life.

Around 12% of adults reported that in the previous 12 months they had experienced at least one of the acts of controlling behaviour listed in the NZCVS (see Figure 4-5). The most common effects of controlling behaviour were the affected person being made to feel ashamed or bad about themselves (11% of adults) or having to change their routine, behaviour or appearance (10% of adults).

In Cycle 5, approximately 18% of adults reported that in the previous 12 months their behaviour or state of mind had been affected by controlling behaviour (see Figure 4-6). The most common controlling behaviours people had experienced were a perpetrator keeping track of where they went or who they spent time with (experienced by 10% of adults) and pressure related to work or study (experienced by 4% of adults).

The prevalence rates of acts of controlling behaviour (see Figure 4-5) and impact of controlling behaviour (see Figure 4-6) were very similar in Cycle 4 and Cycle 5.

¹⁷ The questions use a frequency scale. If a respondent selects "All of the time", "Most of the time", "Some of the time" or "A little of the time", they are counted as the person having experienced harm or controlling behaviour.

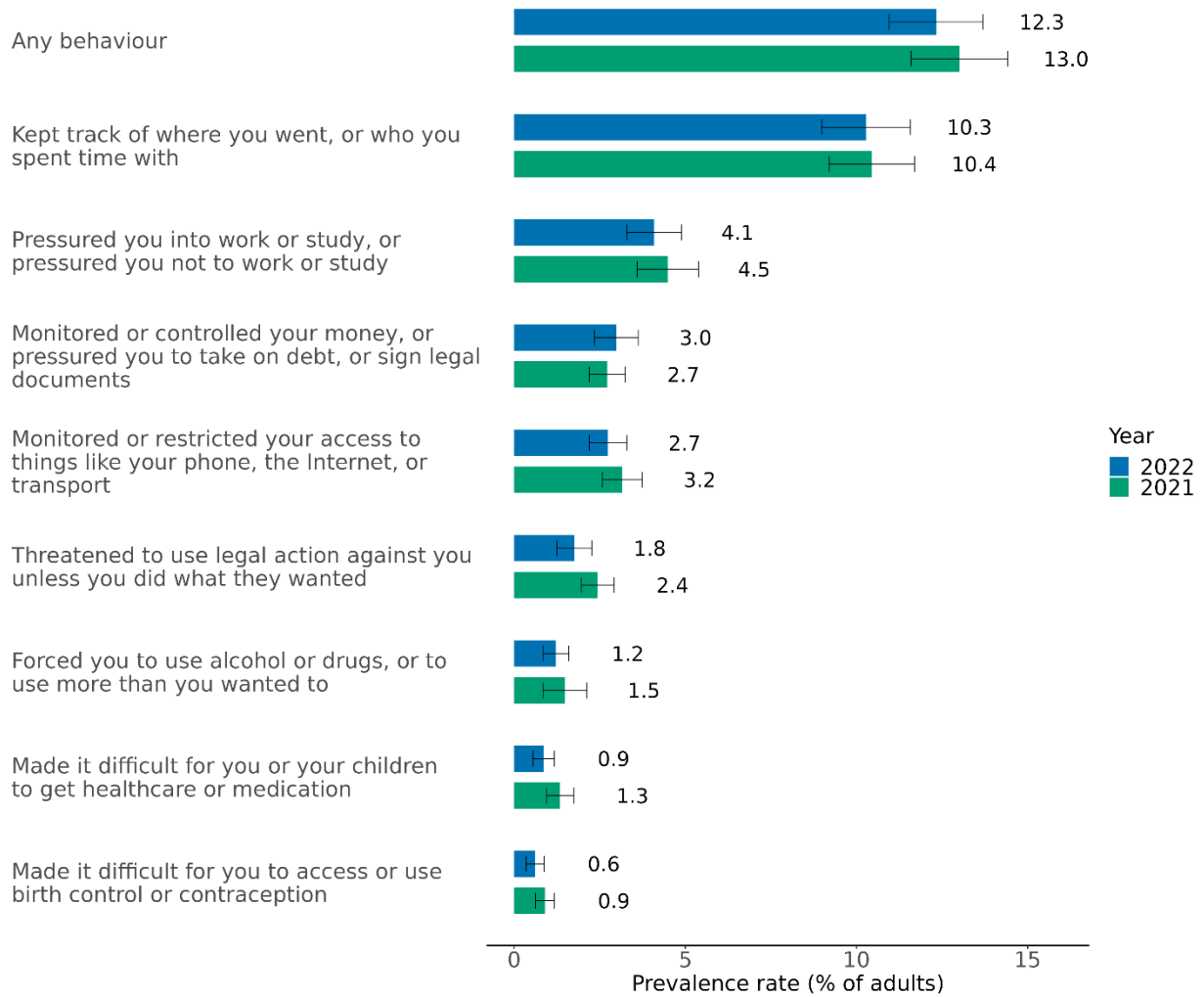


Figure 4-5. Prevalence rates of controlling behaviour experienced in Cycles 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

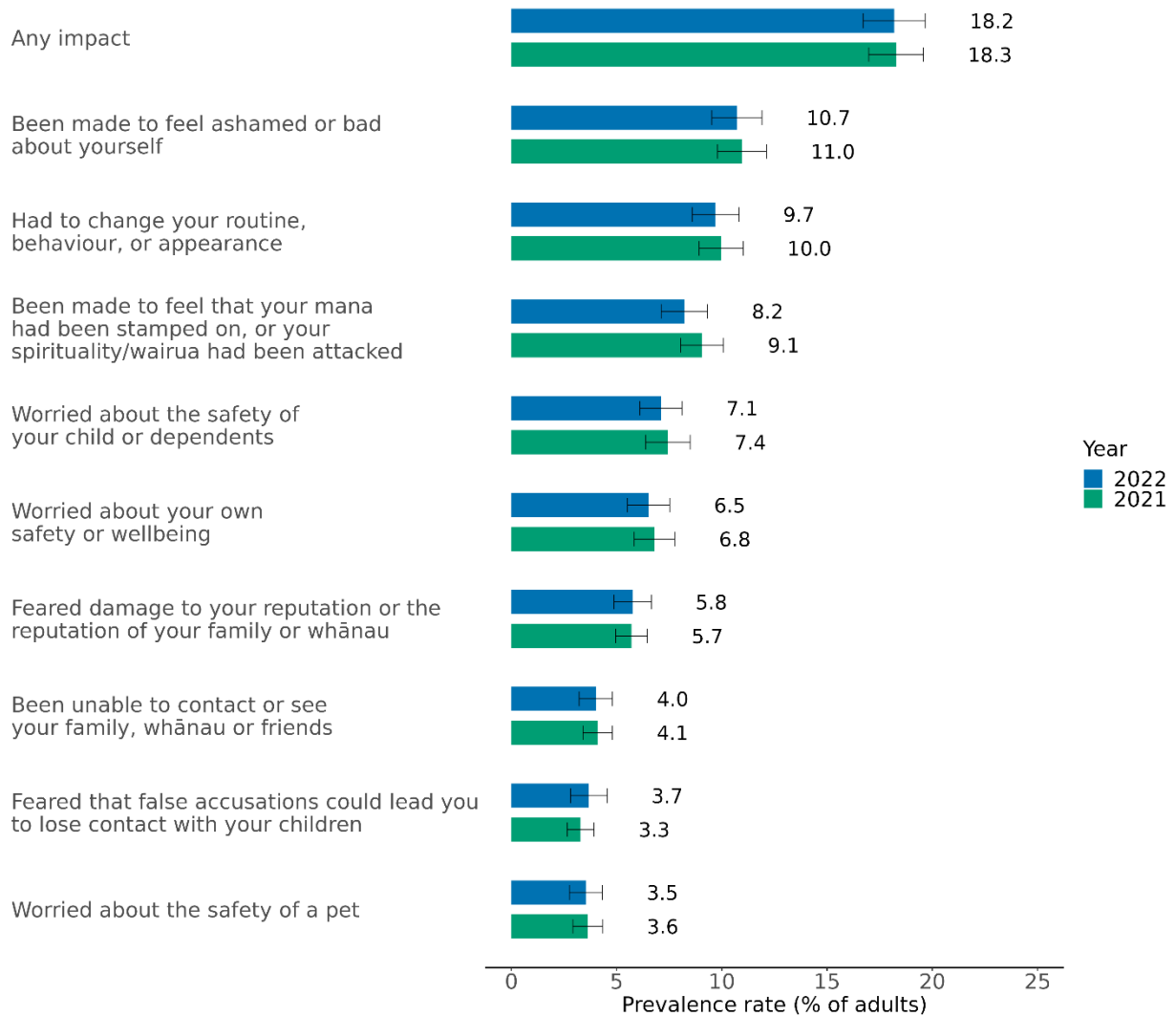


Figure 4-6. Prevalence rates of impacts of controlling behaviour experienced in Cycles 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

5 Distribution of crime

This section discusses how crime is distributed – whether victims experience crime evenly, or whether some victims experience a disproportionate amount of crime.

We measure the distribution of crime in two ways:

1. **multiple victimisation** means a person has been a victim of crime more than once in the previous 12 months, regardless of the type of offence. For example, a person may have been assaulted, had their car stolen and had their house burgled
2. **repeat victimisation** means a person has been a victim of the same crime more than once in the previous 12 months. For example, a person may have had their house burgled twice.

We define **highly victimised people** as people who have experienced four or more criminal incidents in the previous 12 months.

5.1 Multiple victimisation

In Cycle 5, most adults (69%) experienced no crime, which is similar to the finding in Cycle 4 (71%).

In Cycle 5, of the 31% of adults who had experienced at least one victimisation incident, most (61%) had experienced only one victimisation incident in the previous 12 months, while 27% had experienced two or three victimisation incidents and 13% were highly victimised, as they had experienced four or more incidents (see Figure 5-1).

In Cycle 5, 163,000 adults were highly victimised. While this was a small proportion (4%) of all respondents, these people experienced a disproportionate number of offences. This group represented 13% of adults who had been victimised, but experienced 56% of all offences. In contrast, in Cycle 4 138,000 adults were highly victimised. This was 12% of adults who had been victimised, and they experienced 47% of all offences.

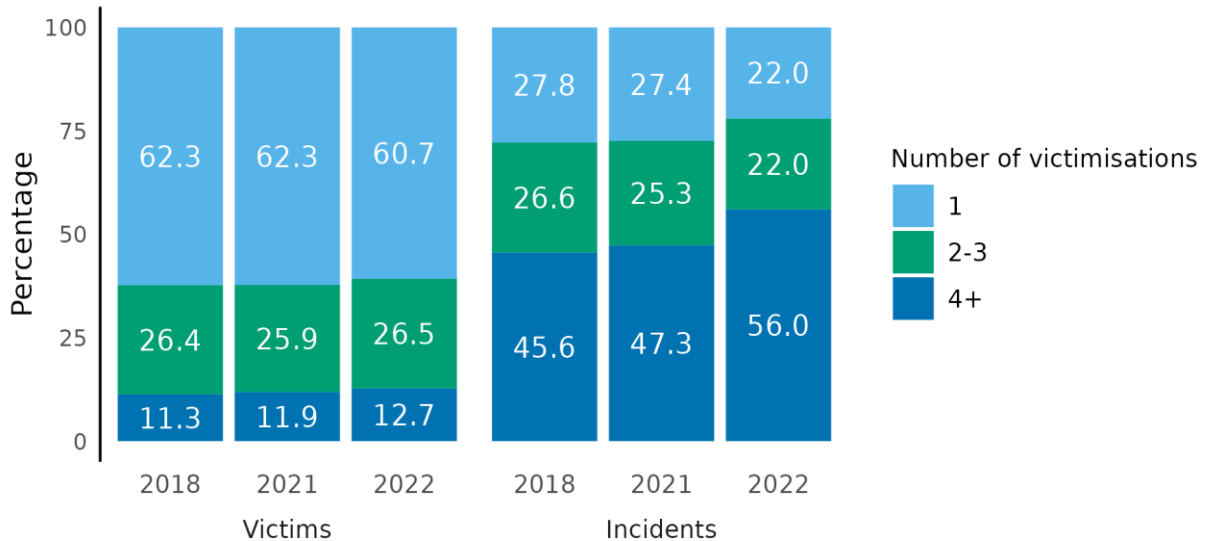


Figure 5-1. Proportion of victims and incidents by number of victimisations, in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

In Cycle 5 there were 25,000 more highly victimised individuals than in Cycle 4. These additional victims represent a small proportion (1%) of all victims in Cycle 5, so they have little impact on the overall prevalence rate of victimisation. However, in Cycle 5, highly victimised individuals experienced 1,381,000 incidents, which was 558,000 incidents more than in Cycle 4, when highly victimised individuals experienced 823,000 incidents. This means that, in Cycle 5, a similar number of highly victimised individuals experienced a much greater number of incidents. This may partly explain why the prevalence rate was consistent in Cycles 4 and 5, but the incidence rate increased substantially.

Pooled data from 2018 to 2022 shows that 4% of adults were highly victimised and that the likelihood of a person being highly victimised varies considerably, depending on demographic factors. Table 5-1 shows the demographic groups that are more likely to be highly victimised than the New Zealand average.

Table 5-1. Proportion of highly victimised adults in Cycles 1 to 5, for demographic groups that are more likely to be highly victimised than the New Zealand average

Demographic group	% of adults who experienced four or more victimisation events (+/- 95% confidence intervals)
New Zealand average	3.5 (+/-0.3)
Experiencing high level of psychological distress	17.3 (+/-3.3)
Bisexual	13.5 (+/-4.0)
Perception of safety is 0–6/10 (least safe)	9.7 (+/-1.3)
LGBT+	9.2 (+/-2.1)
Life satisfaction is 0–6/10 (least satisfied)	8.6 (+/-1.1)
Experiencing moderate level of psychological distress	8.1 (+/-1.4)
Rented, government (local/central) housing	7.7 (+/-2.8)
Four-or-more-children household	7.5 (+/-2.3)
Māori	7.4 (+/-0.8)
Not employed, not actively seeking work	7.3 (+/-1.9)
Disabled adults	7.0 (+/-1.8)
Cannot buy \$300 non-essential item	6.9 (+/-0.1)
One parent with child(ren) household	6.8 (+/-1.0)
Unemployed	6.6 (+/-1.8)
Cannot meet unexpected expense of \$500	6.2 (+/-0.8)
15–19 years old	5.7 (+/-1.7)
20–29 years old	5.7 (+/- 0.9)
Other multi-person household	5.3 (+/-1.2)
Perception of safety is 7/10	5.0 (+/-0.8)
Women	4.1 (+/-0.4)

5.2 Repeat victimisation

In Cycle 5, the number of repeat victims varied considerably across different types of offences:

- interpersonal violence – 103,000 repeat victims (39% of all victims of this offence type)
- fraud and cybercrime – 55,000 repeat victims (11% of all victims of this offence type)
- offences by family members – 45,000 repeat victims (60% of all victims of this offence type)

- burglary – 43,000 households repeatedly victimised (23% of all burgled households)
- theft and damage – 25,000 repeat victims (12% of all victims of this offence type)
- vehicle offences – 14,000 repeat victims (11% of all victims of this offence type).

For most types of offence, the number of repeat victims represents 10 to 25% of all victimised adults or households for that offence type. There are two exceptions to this: interpersonal violence (39% of victims) and offences by family members (60% of victims).

For most types of offence, the proportion of repeat victims is relatively stable across cycles. However, the proportion of repeat victims of offences by family members has steadily increased between 2018 and 2022 (see Figure 5-2). Further research is needed to explain this increase.

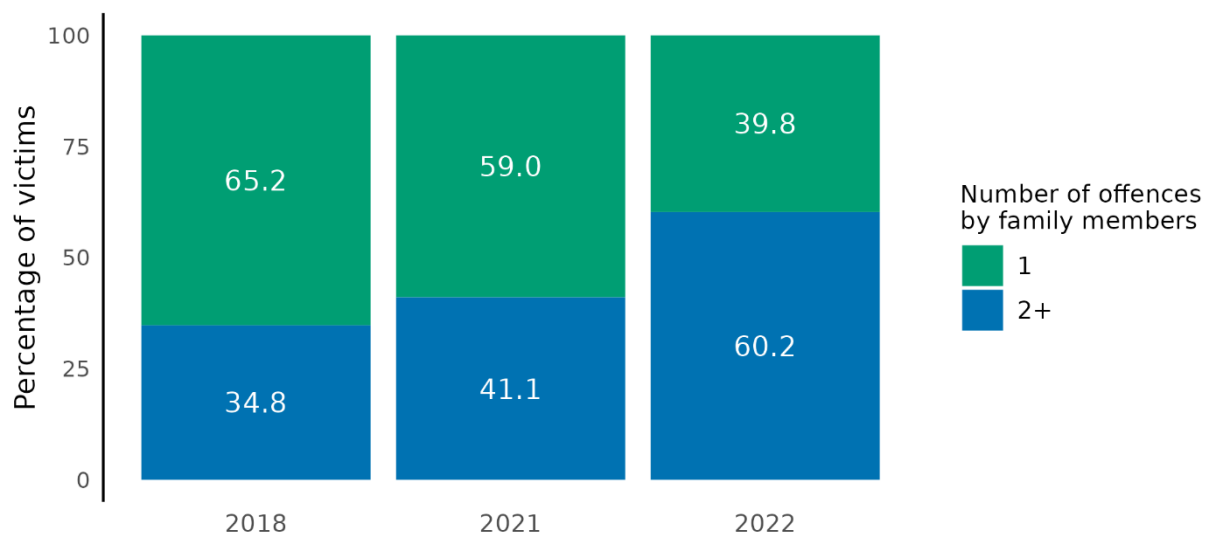


Figure 5-2. Proportion of victims who experienced two or more offences by a family member in the previous 12 months, in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

6 Reporting crime to the Police

Through the NZCVS, we monitor how frequently people report experiences of crime to the Police¹⁸. In this section, we look at the rate of reporting to the Police for different offence types, and how this has changed over time. We examine the effects that demographic factors, relationships with offenders and perceptions of offences have on reporting rates. We also look at people's reasons for not reporting crime to the Police.

We cannot always provide statistics on reporting to the Police due to a high level of error. In some cases, we then looked at rates of non-reporting to get a better picture of reporting patterns.

6.1 Reporting rate

Previous cycles of the NZCVS suggest that people report approximately 25% of offences to the Police, but the reporting rates vary considerably for different types of offences. For example, vehicle theft appears to be the most reported offence, while fraud and cybercrime is the least reported.

Reporting rates have been stable in previous cycles but substantially decreased between Cycle 4 (25%) and Cycle 5 (19%) (although this decrease was not statistically significant). This decrease was driven by people reporting fewer personal offences (see Figure 6-1), as the rate of reporting personal offences dropped from 21% in Cycle 4 to 14% in Cycle 5. In contrast, the rate of reporting household offences increased slightly from 33% in Cycle 4 to 34% in Cycle 5.

Although the proportion of offences reported to the Police dropped between Cycle 4 and Cycle 5, the proportion of victims who reported at least one crime slightly increased (see Figure 6-2). In Cycle 5, 35% of victims reported at least one crime to the Police, compared with 33% in Cycle 4. The proportion of victims who reported at least one personal offence dropped slightly, from 22% in Cycle 4 to 18% in Cycle 5, but this was offset by an increase in the proportion of victims who reported at least one household offence – 40% in Cycle 5 compared with 37% in Cycle 4.

The key driver behind the decreased proportion of crime incidents reported to the Police is a reduced proportion of incidents reported by highly victimised individuals. Highly victimised individuals reported a much smaller proportion of offences to police in Cycle 5 (16% of offences) compared to Cycle 4 (25%). While the proportion of highly victimised individuals only increased slightly between Cycle 4 (12% of victims) and Cycle 5 (13% of all victims), the

¹⁸ The rate of reporting crime to the Police measured by the NZCVS may be different to other sources, because the NZCVS does not cover all possible offences. It does not include manslaughter and murder; abduction; victimless crimes, where the victim cannot be identified (such as drug offences); commercial crime or crime against a business; crimes against people who do not live in permanent, private dwellings; and crimes against people who live in an institution.

proportion of offences experienced by highly victimised individuals in Cycle 5 (56%) was much higher than in Cycle 4 (47%). As such, the decrease in reporting by highly victimised individuals will have had a small impact on the total proportion of victims reporting to the police but will have had a disproportionate impact on the proportion of offences reported to the police. Alongside the decrease in reporting rate for highly victimised individuals, there was also a smaller decrease in the number of offences that non-highly victimised individuals reported in Cycle 5 (22%) compared to Cycle 4 (24%). This small decrease is primarily driven by the significant increase in fraud and deception offences in Cycle 5. If we exclude fraud and cybercrime from our analysis, the proportion of offences reported by non-highly victimised is 29% for both Cycle 4 and Cycle 5. This is because, consistent with previous years, fraud and cybercrime has the lowest reporting rate in Cycle 5 (6.5% of offences). As fraud and cybercrime make up a greater proportion of offences experienced by non-highly victimised individuals in Cycle 5, this low reporting rate has depressed the overall reporting rate compared to previous years.

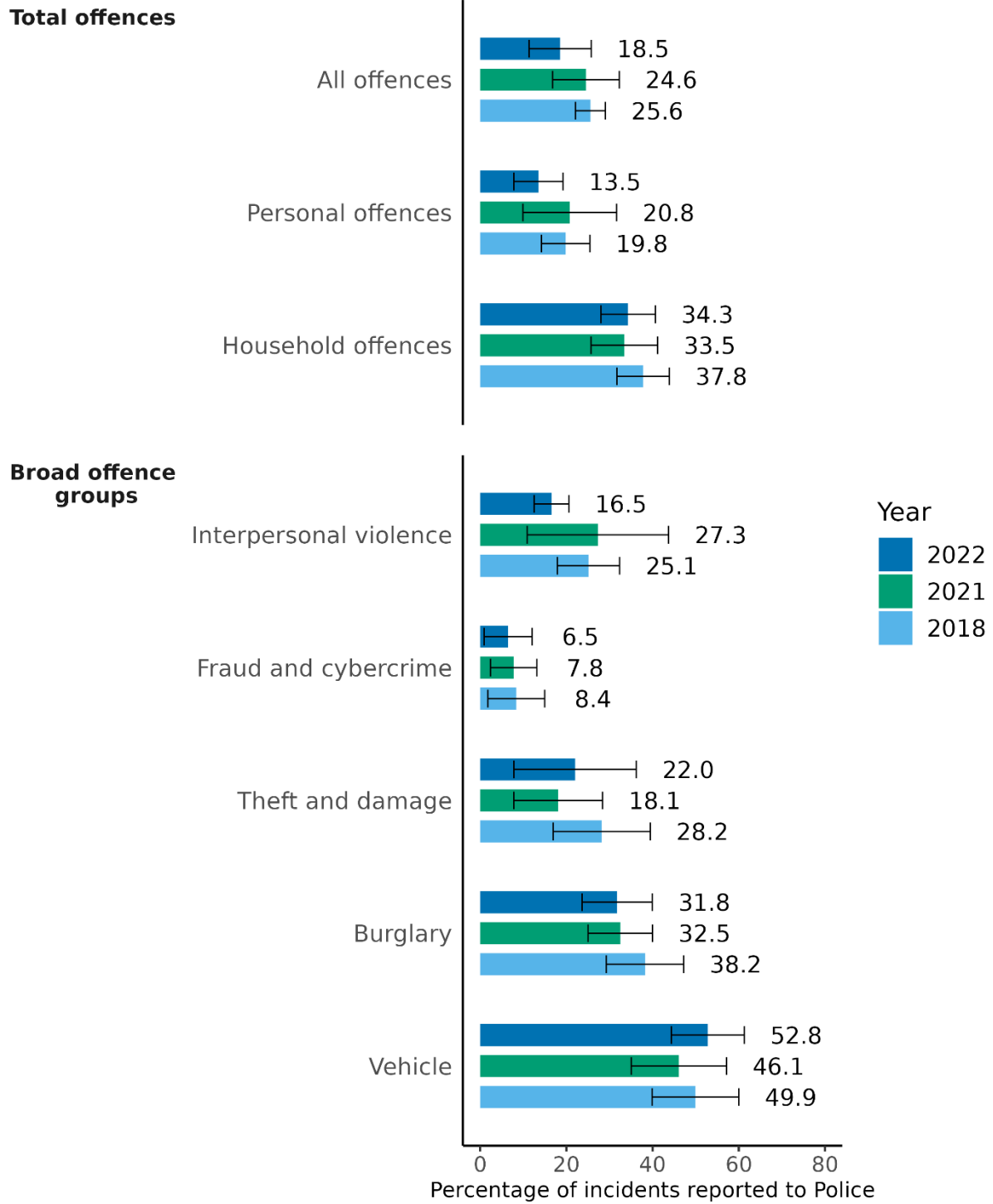


Figure 6-1. Percentage of incidents reported to the Police in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

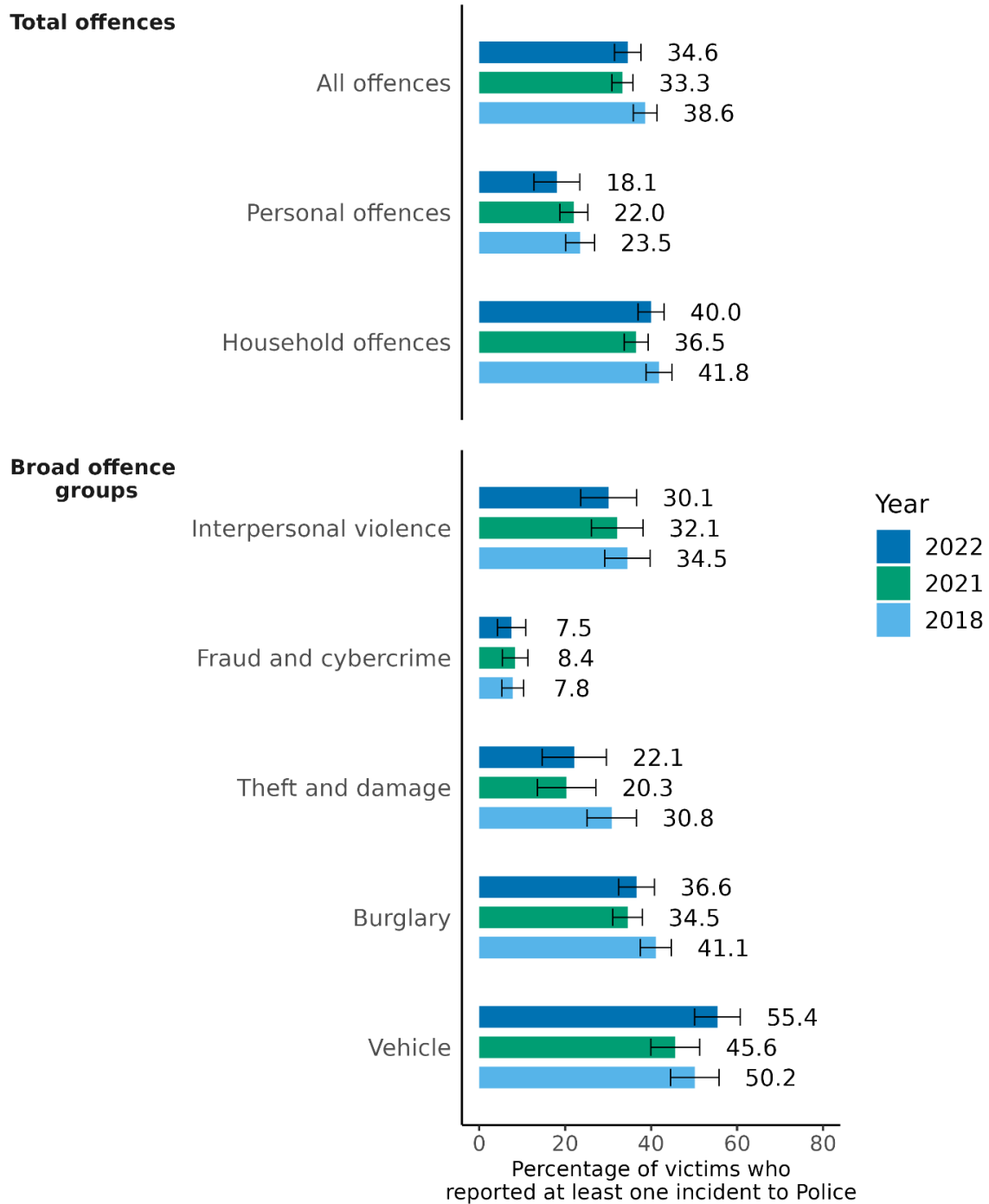


Figure 6-2. Percentage of victims who reported at least one incident to the Police, in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

6.2 Reasons for not reporting

As well as knowing the rate at which people report crime to the Police, it is useful to understand why people do not report incidents. Looking at the pooled data from 2018 to 2022, the most common reason that people give for not reporting is that they think the incident is too trivial to be worth reporting (45%). Another 18% of respondents decided to deal with the issue themselves. A significant proportion of victims did not report an incident because they believed that the Police could not do anything (24% of respondents) or would not be interested (15% of respondents).

The reasons that people choose not to report a crime vary by offence types. In some cases, people do not report an incident to the Police because they report it to another authority instead. For example, banks and credit card companies will often take action to mitigate the impact of fraud and cybercrime. Therefore, victims of these crimes were significantly less likely to have reported the offence to the Police because their bank or credit card company took care of it (47% of respondents gave this reason) or because they reported it to another authority (20% of respondents gave this reason).

Social norms may have an impact on people's reasons for not reporting a serious offence, such as sexual assault or an offence by a family member. Table 6-1 shows the main reasons that victims did not report a sexual assault or offence by a family member to the Police. You can find more details of this in our recent [report on controlling behaviour](#).¹⁹

¹⁹ Ministry of Justice. 2023. *New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey. Topical report: Controlling behaviours and help-seeking for family violence. Key findings. March 2023. Results drawn from Cycle 4 (2020/21) of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey.* Wellington: Ministry of Justice.

Table 6-1. Reasons for not reporting a sexual assault or offence by a family member to the Police, in Cycle 5

Reasons for not reporting the crime to the Police	Proportion of victims who selected the reason (+/- 95% confidence interval)
Sexual assault	
Too trivial, no loss or damage, or not worth reporting	58.7 (+/-10.7)
Shame, embarrassment or further humiliation	22.2 (+/-7.7)
Police could not have done anything	20.6 (+/- 20.6)
Did not have enough evidence to report it	20.1 (+/-6.9)
Police would not have been interested	19.1 (+/-6.8)
Offences by family members	
Private, or personal/family/whānau matter	34.3 (+/-17.2)
Shame, embarrassment or further humiliation	26.0 (+/-12.6)
Police could not have done anything	15.5 (+/-7.9)
Police would not have bothered or interested	11.0 (+/-6.1)
Did not have enough evidence to report it	10.3 (+/-5.7)

Note

The percentages in the table do not add up to 100%, because respondents can select more than one reason for not reporting an incident, the table does not include all the reasons that respondents can select from.

7 Perceptions of safety

This section looks at respondent's perceptions of safety and how they vary for different demographic groups. In the NZCVS, we ask respondents:

- Overall, how safe do you feel?
- Overall, how safe do you feel when with family or whānau?

The survey uses an 11-point scale, where 0 means “not at all safe” and 10 means “completely safe”. Scores from 0 to 6 correspond to feeling the least safe.²⁰

We also ask respondents to answer “yes” or “no” to this question: “Do you ever feel unsafe when with family or whānau?” as families can contribute to family members feeling safer or less safe.

In Cycle 5, more than a quarter of New Zealanders (27%) reported feeling completely safe. This was the most common response in Cycles 4 and 5, but a smaller proportion of respondents chose this response in Cycle 5 than in Cycle 4 (29%). In both cycles, around 11% of New Zealanders reported feeling the least safe (see Figure 7-1).

In Cycle 5, 82% of adults reported feeling completely safe with family or whānau members. This high proportion has not changed since Cycle 3 when these questions were introduced.

²⁰ We combine the seven lowest scores (0–6) to avoid having to suppress findings due to small sample sizes.

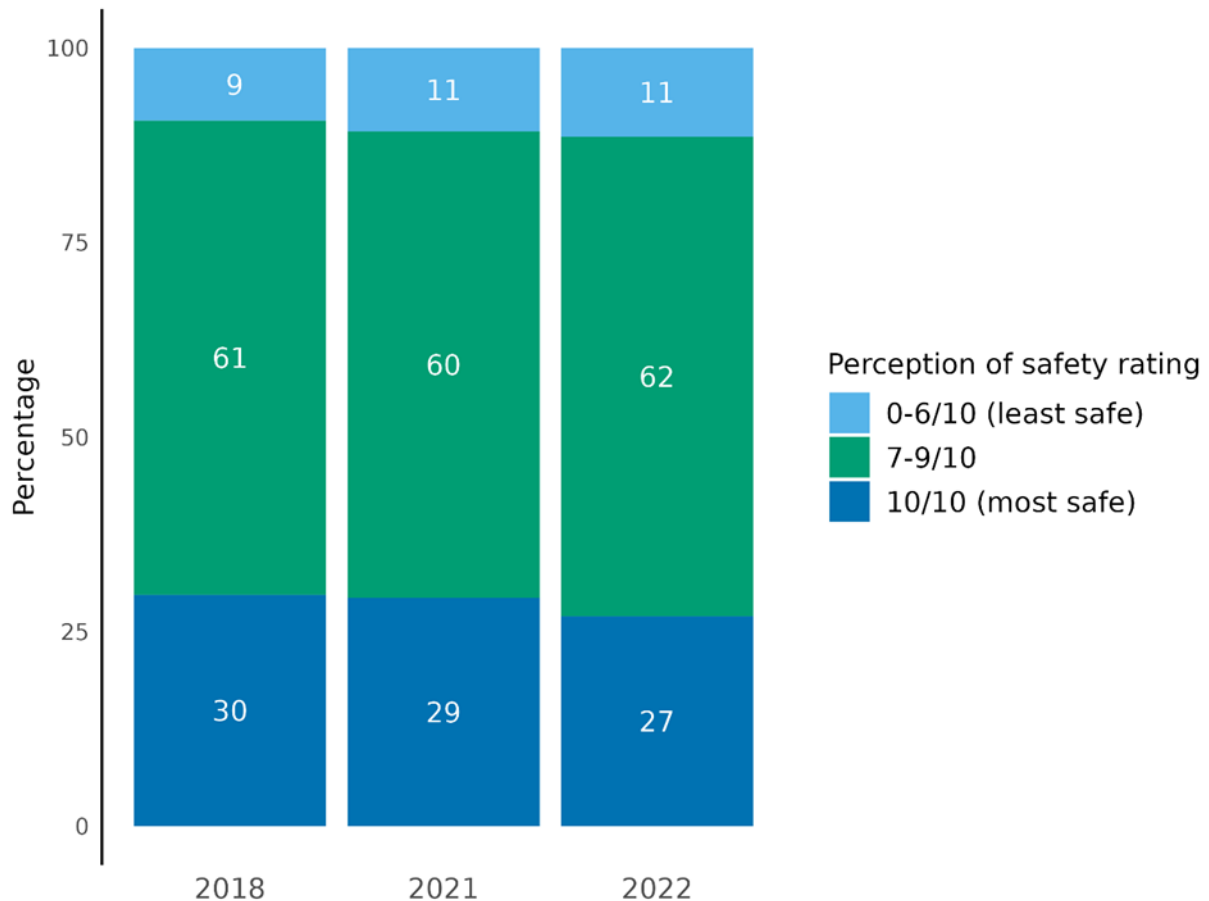


Figure 7-1. Proportion of respondents who said they felt least safe or most safe, in Cycles 1, 4 and 5

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Consistent with [previous NZCVS reports](#), in Cycle 5 we found a strong negative relationship between people’s overall perceptions of safety and their experience of victimisation (see Figure 7-2). Of the adults who reported feeling the least safe, a significantly bigger proportion had experienced at least one incident of crime (44%) than the average New Zealander. In contrast, of the adults who reported feeling the safest, a significantly smaller proportion had experienced a crime (21%) than the average New Zealander.

We saw the same pattern for personal offences. Of the adults who reported feeling the least safe, significantly more had experienced a personal offence (24%) – including interpersonal violence (12%) – than the average New Zealander. On the other hand, of the adults who reported feeling the safest, significantly fewer had experienced a personal offence (11%) – including interpersonal violence (3%) – than the average New Zealander.

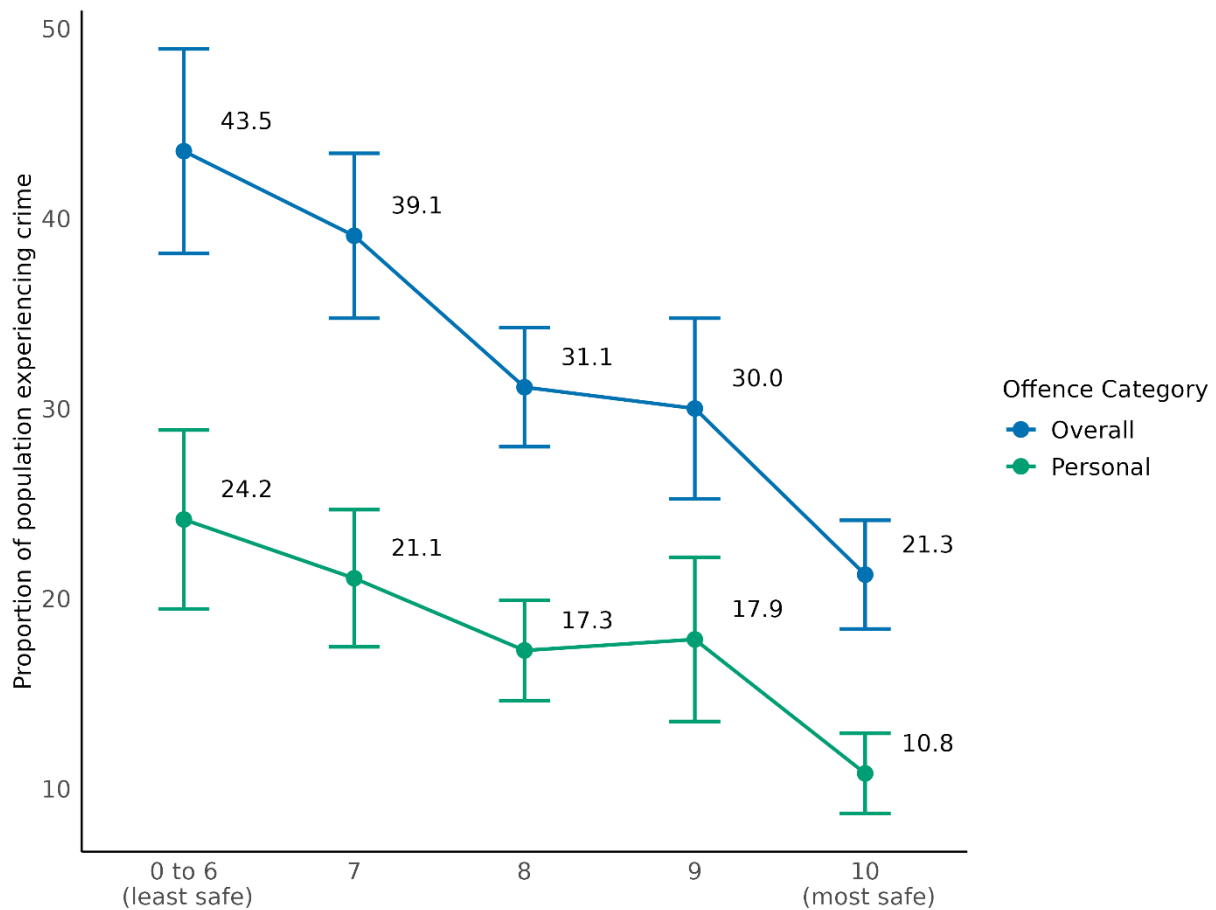


Figure 7-2. Proportion of respondents in Cycle 5 who said they felt least safe or most safe, by experience of an offence or personal offence

Note

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

People’s perceptions of safety vary according to their demographic group(s). Figure 7-3 and Figure 7-4 show which demographic groups were significantly more or less likely to report they felt the least safe compared with the average New Zealander.

Of the respondents identify as Chinese, a significantly higher proportion felt least safe in Cycle 5 (30%) compared with Cycle 4 (8%) or Cycle 1 (12%).

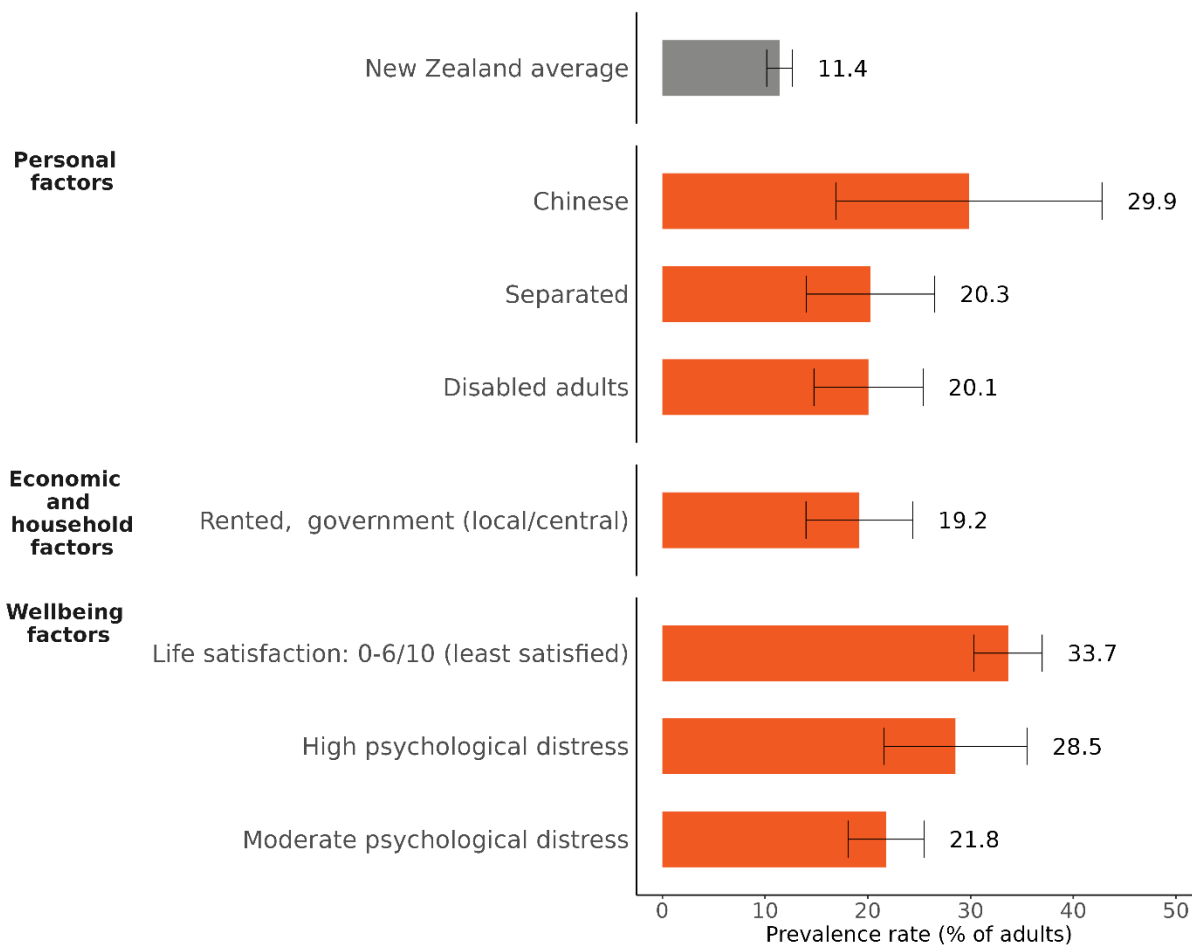


Figure 7-3. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for feeling least safe (0–6/10), for demographic groups whose rating of ‘least safe’ is significantly higher than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

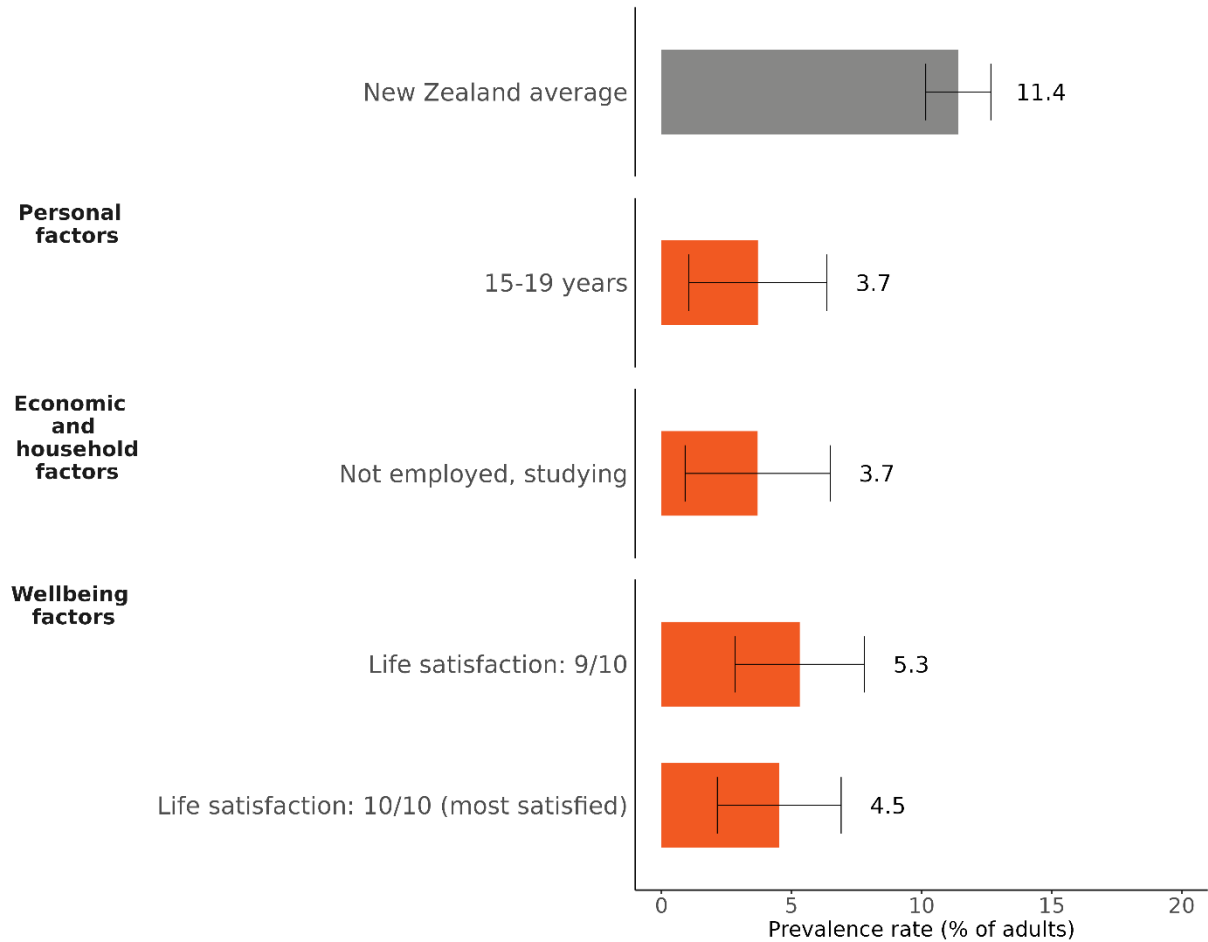


Figure 7-4. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for feeling least safe (0–6/10), for demographic groups whose rating of ‘least safe’ is significantly lower than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Figure 7-5 and Figure 7-6 show which demographic groups were significantly more or less likely to report they felt the most safe compared with the average New Zealander.

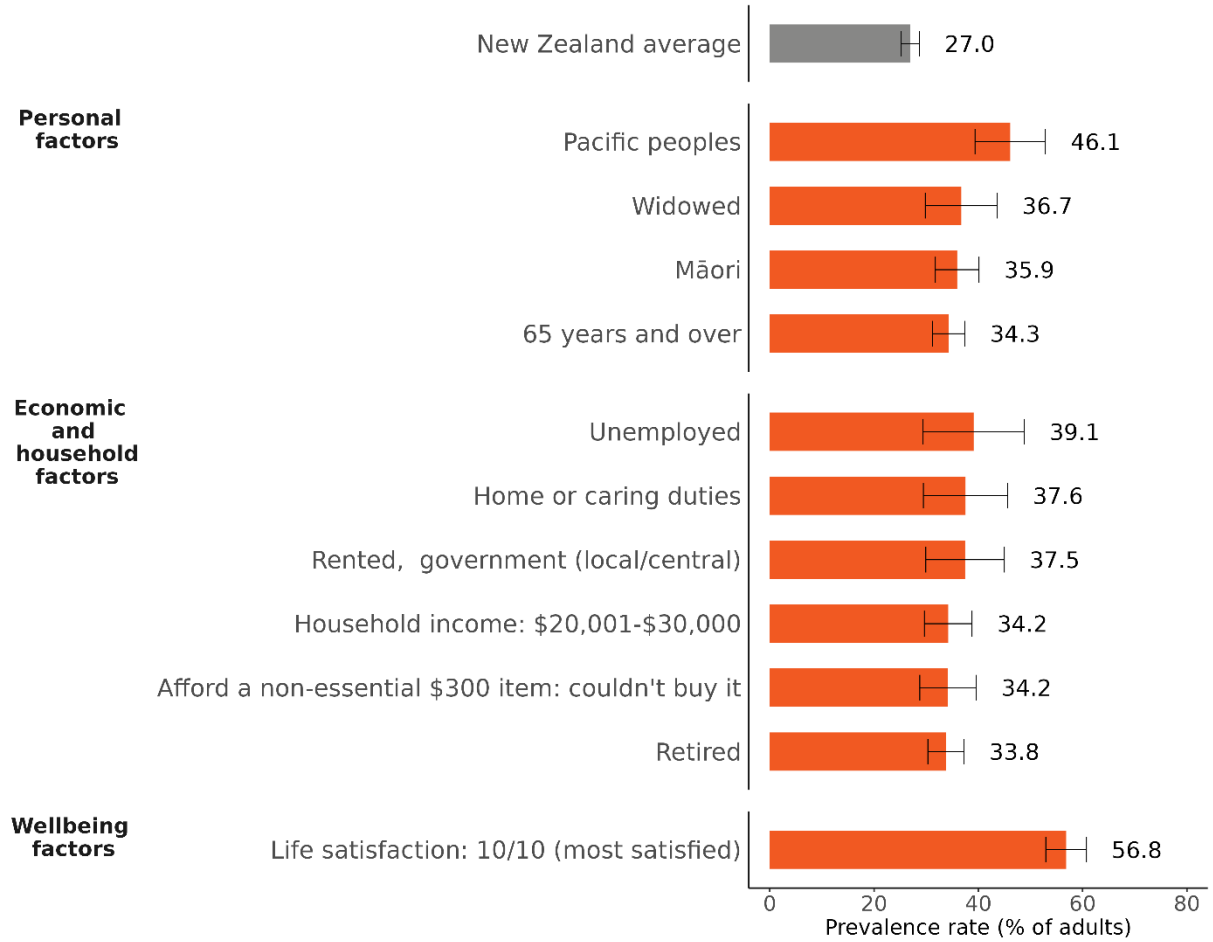


Figure 7-5. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for feeling most safe (10/10), for demographic groups whose rating of 'most safe' is significantly higher than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.



Figure 7-6. Cycle 5 prevalence rates for feeling most safe (10/10), for demographic groups whose rating of 'most safe' is significantly lower than the New Zealand average

Notes

The silver bar represents the New Zealand average; orange bars represent demographic factors that are statistically different from the average.

Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

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