

The New Zealand  
Crime and Victims Survey

# Key Findings

## Cycle 3

October 2019–November 2020



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

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa



**Help create**  
safer communities

NEW ZEALAND CRIME AND VICTIMS SURVEY

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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 3 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 three years of interviewing.** The focus is on results from Cycle 3, and comparisons with previous cycles. Where stated, data from all three cycles are combined to make results about small groups more reliable. We call this combined data “pooled data”.

	Data collection	Sample size
Cycle 1	March – September 2018	8,030
Cycle 2	October 2018 – September 2019	8,038
Cycle 3	October 2019 – November 2020	7,425

**Cycle 3 data was collected both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic began.** Because of COVID-19 outbreaks, interviewing was paused nationally from 21 March to 2 July 2020 and in Auckland from 12 August to 2 September 2020. Cycle 3 results still largely reflect the period before the pandemic, because respondents were asked about their experiences over the previous 12 months.

**The full report and other resources are available on the Ministry of Justice [website](#).** In-depth reports using Cycle 3 data will be also made available on this website.

# The extent and nature of crime



In Cycle 3, 29% of adults<sup>1</sup> had experienced one or more offences over the previous 12 months.<sup>2</sup>

- » About **1.2 million adults** were victims.
- » These adults experienced about **1.65 million offences** against them and their households. About 70% were personal offences and 30% were household offences.
- » The most common offence types were **fraud and deception; harassment and threatening behaviour;** and **burglary**. Together, these made up more than half of all offences.
- » About **15% of adults** experienced one or more personal offences and about **19% of households** experienced one or more household offences.

28

personal offences per 100 adults



28

household offences per 100 households



1 For the purpose of this survey adults are people aged 15 years and above

2 From the date of the interview.

Note: All information on this page reflects Cycle 3 results.

# Changes in victimisation rates



Although the overall level of victimisation did not change, household offences declined from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3.

- » Both the number of offences per 100 adults and the proportion of adults victimised stayed about the same between Cycles 1 and 3.
- » **The number of household offences fell** significantly<sup>3</sup> from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3, from 32 down to 28 per 100 households.
- » This appeared to be driven by a **decline in burglaries**, which fell significantly from 18 to 14 per 100 households.
- » Apart from burglary, there were no other statistically significant changes in individual offence types from Cycle 1 to Cycle 3.
- » The decline in household offences could be related to the impacts of **COVID-19** and subsequent lockdowns. We explore this in more detail on the next page.

## Burglary rates have fallen since Cycle 1



18 per 100 households

Cycle 1

16 per 100 households

Cycle 2

14 per 100 households

Cycle 3

<sup>3</sup> Throughout this booklet, significant changes mean the difference was statistically significant at the 95% confidence level. See the full report for more information.

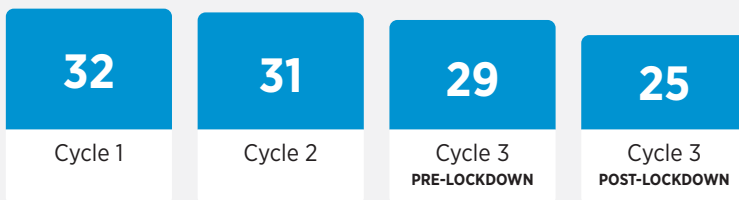
# Impact of COVID-19 and lockdowns



## Household offences decreased since the COVID-19 nationwide lockdown.

- » **The number of offences per 100 households was decreasing before the nationwide lockdown, but decreased more sharply after the lockdown.** The Cycle 3 pre-lockdown<sup>4</sup> rate was 29 offences per 100 households, which was not significantly different from the Cycle 1 rate of 32. The post-lockdown<sup>5</sup> rate fell to 25, which was significantly lower than the Cycle 1 rate.
- » **Within household offences, rates of burglary and household property damage reduced significantly post-lockdown, compared with Cycle 1.** No significant changes were observed for any other offence type post-lockdown. More reliable analysis will be possible when Cycle 4 data is available, which will provide a larger post-lockdown sample.

### Number of offences per 100 households



4 Between 3 September 2019 and 20 March 2020.

5 Between 3 July 2020 and 18 November 2020. Note that because we asked respondents about their experiences over the last 12 months, the post-lockdown sample covers victimisation over a period before, during and after the lockdown.

# Who experiences crime?

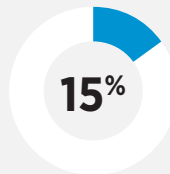


## Some groups were at much higher risk of victimisation than others.

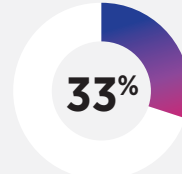
- » Overall **29% of New Zealand adults** experienced one or more offences over the last 12 months.
- » The risk was significantly higher for **bisexual people**, with almost half (47%) experiencing one or more offences.
- » Those who were **not employed, and not actively seeking work**, were also at high risk, with 43% experiencing one or more offences. Having low household income and living in government rental accommodation were also factors associated with higher risk of victimisation.
- » More than half of those showing symptoms of **high psychological distress** (55%) had been a victim of one or more offences. Low life-satisfaction and poor feelings of safety were also associated with higher risk of victimisation.

### Bisexual people

were at **twice the risk** of experiencing a **personal offence** than the New Zealand average



New Zealand average



Bisexual

Note: All information on this page reflects Cycle 3 results.

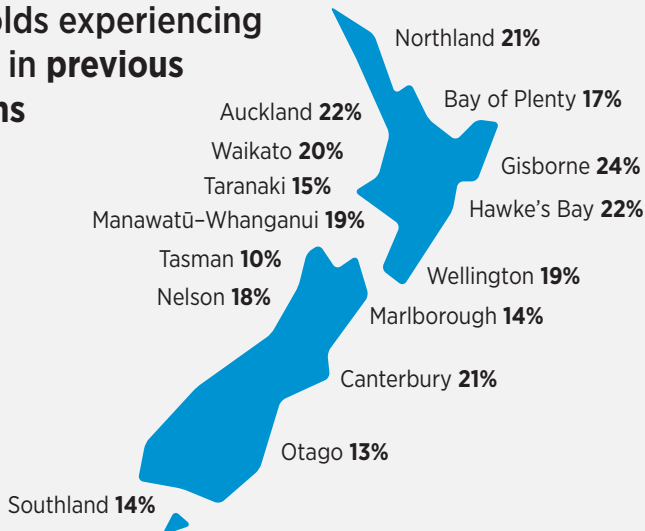
# Regional differences



The risk of experiencing personal offences was similar across the country, but household offences were more common in some regions than others.

» **Between Cycle 1 and Cycle 3**, household offences fell significantly in Wellington and the rest of the North Island (excluding Auckland).

## Households experiencing offences in previous 12 months



Note: All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1-3), except where stated.



# Controlling for age and deprivation



## Younger people and people living in more deprived areas tend to be at higher risk of victimisation.

- » Using pooled data from Cycle 1-3, **Māori** adults were significantly more likely to be victimised than the average adult (**38%** compared with **30%**). This can be partly explained by the fact that compared with the overall population, 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, we would expect **32%** to have been victims of crime
- » **Adults with disability** were victims of crime at a similar rate to the population average (**31%** compared with **30%**). After accounting for the older age distribution of adults with disability, they were significantly more likely to experience crime.



If **adults with disability** had the same age structure as the overall population, we would expect **41%** to have been victimised.

Note: All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1-3).

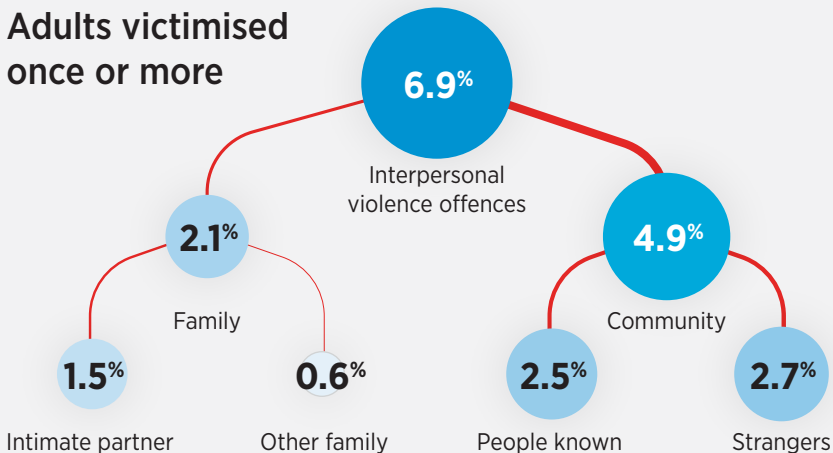
# Interpersonal violence offences



About 280,000 adults experienced about 670,000 interpersonal violence offences<sup>6</sup> over the last 12 months.

- » **7% of adults** experienced one or more interpersonal violence offences.
- » There were **16** interpersonal violence offences **per 100 adults**.
- » **75%** of interpersonal violence offences occurred as part of a **chain of two or more incidents** against the same victim.

## Adults victimised once or more



<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.

Notes: One person may be victimised more than once by different offenders. All information on this page reflects Cycle 3 results.

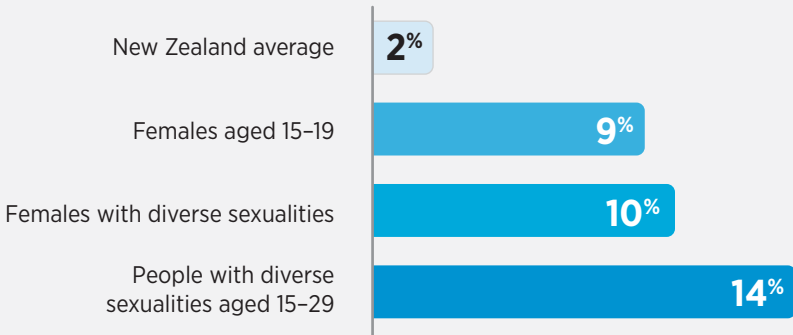
# Sexual assault



## About 1 in 11 females aged 15–19 were sexually assaulted in the previous 12 months.

- » About **2% of adults** experienced sexual assault in the previous 12 months. This figure did not change significantly between Cycles 1 and 3.
- » There were about **168,000 sexual assaults** against **76,000 adults**.
- » More than half of sexual assaults were perpetrated by an intimate partner, other family member or someone else the victim already knew.
- » About half of sexual assaults happened in a residential location.

## Adults victimised once or more by sexual assault



Note: All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–3), except where stated.

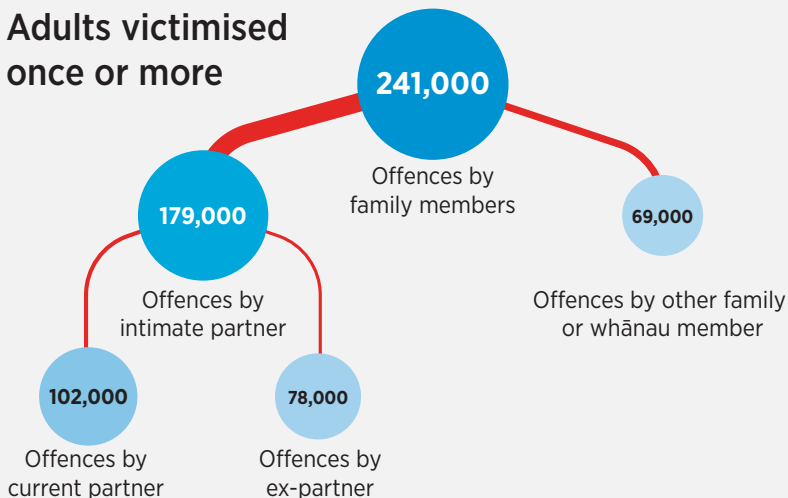
# Offences by family members



## Around three quarters of offences by family members<sup>7</sup> were against females.

- » Almost **90,000 adults (2%)** experienced offences by family members over the last 12 months.
- » Nearly **2 in 10** offences by family members were **sexual assaults**.
- » The prevalence rate of offences by family members was especially high for adults who were **separated** (11%) or in **sole-parent households** (9%).

### Adults victimised once or more



7 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.

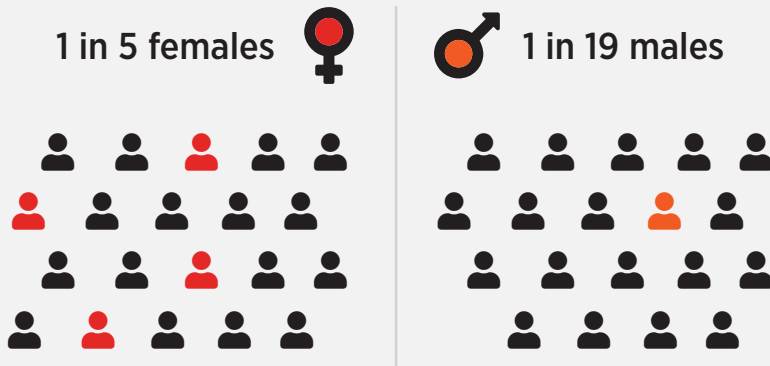
Notes: One person may be victimised more than once by different offenders. All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1-3),

# Lifetime violence



About **35% of females** and **12% of males** had experienced **sexual assault in their lifetime**.

- » **Sexual assault** had affected **18%** of people **aged 15–19** so far during their lives.
- » About **23% of females** and **9% of males** who have ever had a partner had ever experienced **intimate partner violence**.
- » **Adults with disability** were at elevated risk of having experienced both sexual assault and intimate partner violence during their lifetime, especially when accounting for age.



have experienced **forced intercourse** (or attempts) in their lifetimes

Note: All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–3).

# Reporting to the Police



**A quarter (25%) of offences experienced by New Zealand adults in the last 12 months were reported to the Police.**

- » **Household offences** (38%) were almost twice as likely to be reported as **personal offences** (20%).
- » **Motor vehicle thefts** (89%) were the most likely offence type to be reported, while only 7% of **fraud or cybercrime** offences were reported.
- » Across different offence types, there were no significant changes in reporting rates between Cycles 1 and 3.
- » Reporting rates did not vary much across population groups. However, offences against **bisexual** people and those living in **less deprived neighbourhoods** were less likely to be reported.



Across Cycles 1 to 3, **just 8% of sexual assaults** were reported to the Police.



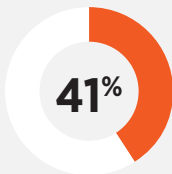
Note: All information on this page reflects Cycle 3 results.

# 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*.

- » The second most common reason for not reporting, “**Police couldn’t have done anything**”, was given for 21% of unreported offences.
- » The reasons “**shame/embarrassment/further humiliation**” and “**fear of reprisals/would make matters worse**” were significantly more likely to be given for not reporting interpersonal violence, sexual assault, and physical offence incidents.



For 41% of unreported offences, the reason given was that it was **too trivial**, there was **no loss or damage**, or it was **not worth reporting**.

Note: All information on this page reflects Cycle 3 results.

# Distribution of crime



## One third (33%) of all crime incidents were experienced by only 2% of adults.

- » Thirty-seven percent of victims experienced **two or more incidents** within the previous 12 months. These victims experienced the majority (69%) of all crime incidents.
- » **Offences by family members** were the most repeated offence group. Almost half of the victims (46%) of offences by family members experienced repeat events, and these victims experienced 82% of all offences by family members.
- » **Vehicle offences** were the most likely offence group to be one-off incidents, with 83% occurring as one-off events.

## 2% of adults experience one-third of all crime incidents.



Note: All information on this page reflects Cycle 3 results.



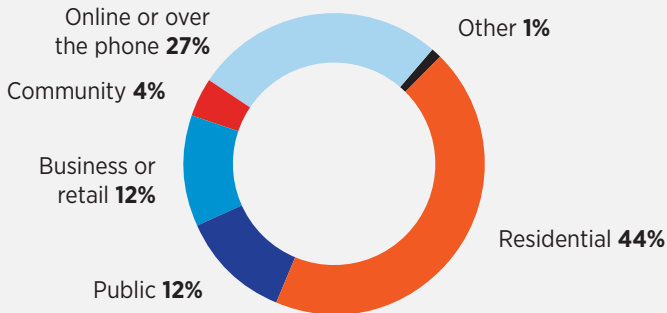
# Crime scene



The most common setting in which offences took place was **residential (44%)**, followed by **online or over the phone (27%)**.

- » More than half (56%) of **vehicle offences**, 16% of **interpersonal violence offences** and 23% of **physical assaults/robberies** happened in **public areas**.
- » A third (31%) of **sexual assaults**, 18% of **interpersonal violence offences**, and 19% of **thefts/damages and vehicle offences** happened in **business or retail** areas.

## Location of offences against New Zealand adults



Note: All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1-3).

# Consequences of crime



## Nine percent of all offences resulted in injury.

- » Victims were injured in 21% of **interpersonal violence offences**, 27% of **offences by family members**<sup>8</sup> and 51% of **non-sexual assaults**.
- » Nine percent of offences resulted in **time taken off work** by the victim. This proportion increased to 15% for offences by family members and 16% for vehicle offences.



**15% of offences resulted in the victim taking time off work.**

8 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 1–3).

# Perceptions of safety



## Adults were most concerned about their safety in Hawke's Bay and Auckland.

- » Those living in **Gisborne, Taranaki, Wellington, Otago, Southland** and **Marlborough** were relatively more confident about their safety.
- » The proportion of **men** who ranked their safety as 0 to 6 out of 10 was significantly lower than the national average, while the proportion of **women** was significantly higher.
- » Two age groups that felt most safe were those aged **15–19** and **65+**. The 65+ age group is relatively less victimised than other age groups, so their higher confidence is not surprising. Those aged 15–19, however, felt relatively safe despite being at higher risk of victimisation.



**29%** of adults ranked their **overall feeling of safety** as 10 out of 10.

**81%** of adults ranked their **feeling of safety with family and whānau** as 10 out of 10.



Note: All information on this page reflects results from pooled data (Cycles 1–3), except in the infographic which reflects Cycle 3 results.

# More information



All observations in this booklet are based on the NZCVS key findings **Cycle 3** 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/nzcvsv/resources-and-results](https://justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvsv/resources-and-results)

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

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