

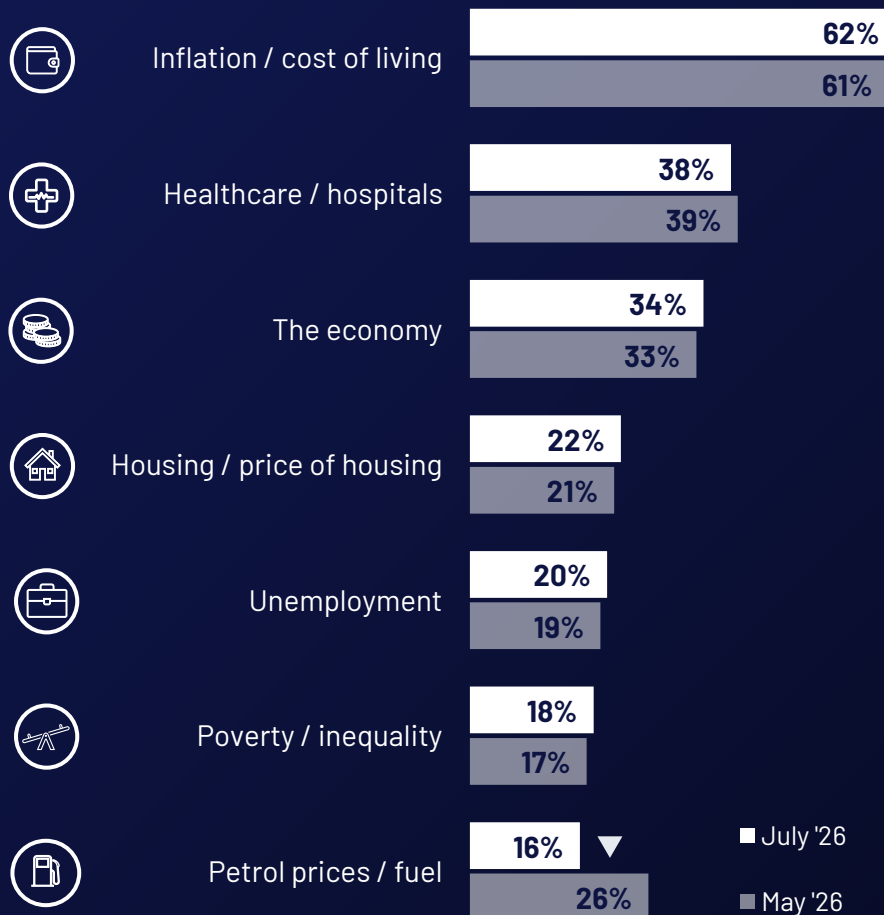
THE IPSOS NEW ZEALAND ISSUES MONITOR

July 2026

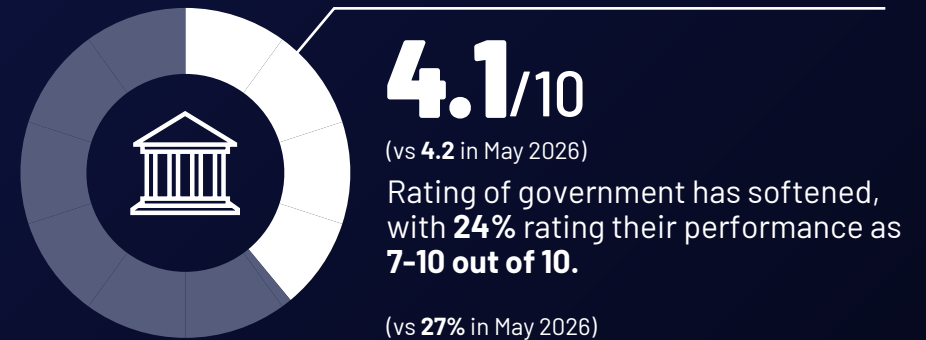
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KEY FINDINGS – July 2026

TOP ISSUES FACING NEW ZEALAND



OPINIONS OF GOVERNMENT



PARTY MOST CAPABLE OF MANAGING TOP 5 ISSUES

National

Labour

Inflation / cost of living

Healthcare / hospitals

The economy

Housing / price of housing

Unemployment

Overview

Background Information

The Ipsos New Zealand Issues Monitor tracks which issues New Zealanders are most concerned about, who is worried about what and which political parties they believe are best able to manage these issues. During 8-14 July 2026 we conducted fieldwork for our 33rd Ipsos NZ Issues Monitor report with a total of 1,002 New Zealanders aged 18 and older*.

This study did not have any external sponsors or partners. It was initiated and run by Ipsos because we think it is important for businesses and organisations to understand the challenges that New Zealanders face in the context of their everyday lives.

At Ipsos we strive to deliver reliable information for a true understanding of society, markets and people, to help our clients make better decisions.

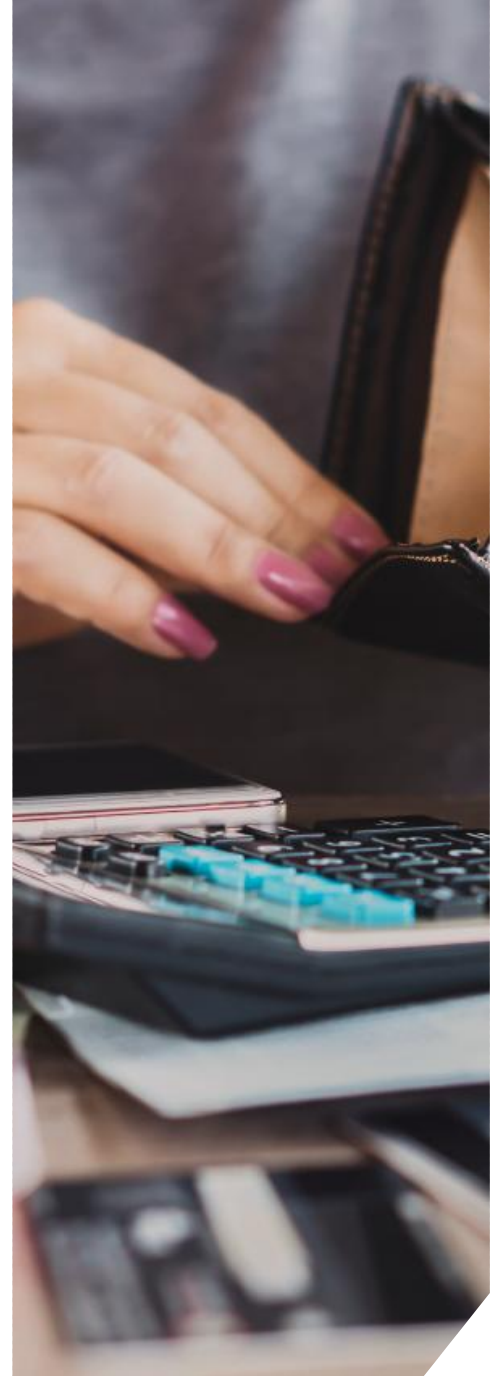
Please direct all queries to Carin Hercock – 021 394 508 | carin.hercock@ipsos.com or

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The precision of Ipsos online survey is calculated with a credibility interval with a sample of **1,004** accurate to + / - 3.5 percentage points.

Significantly **higher** / **lower** figures are reported at 95% confidence.

Where results do not add up to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, multiple responses or the exclusion of 'don't know' or 'not stated' responses.



The media context – What was making New Zealand news during fieldwork?

Premium

Home / Business / Economy / Employment

Kiwi workers go backwards, as NZ's real wage growth is the worst in the OECD



Jenée Tibshraeny

Wellington Business Editor · NZ Herald · 11 Jul, 2026 05:00 AM ⌚ 5 mins to read

Politics | **Politics**

National promises trade talks with seven new markets in bid for 'next billion customers'

Stuff

July 5, 2026 · 12:30pm

[Copy Link](#)

Politics | **Employment**

More than 1300 public service workers to strike over pay

Stuff

July 13, 2026 · 8:48am

[Copy Link](#)

News / Politics 8 July 2026, 3:22pm

ACT announces Three Strikes policy for burglary

Home / New Zealand

Hospital 'hot-bedding': Waitākere Hospital patients moved from beds to chairs to free up space

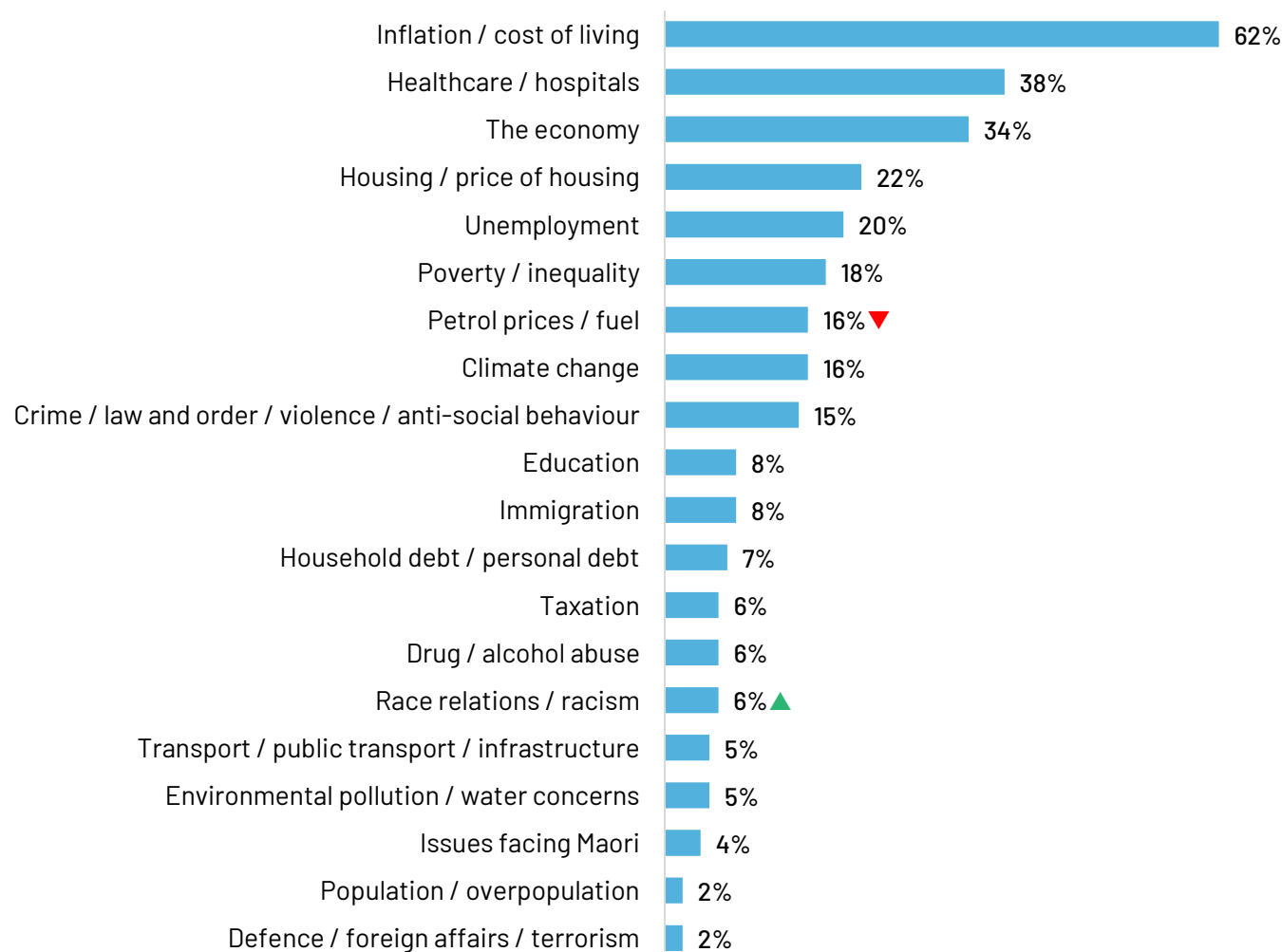


Isaac Davison

Senior Reporter · NZ Herald · 12 Jul, 2023 05:00 AM ⌚ 5 mins to read

TOP ISSUES FACING AOTEAROA

The most important issues facing New Zealanders



Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today?
 ▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave
 Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

Inflation / cost of living continues to be the most important issue facing New Zealanders; the level of concern has remained stable since August 2025.

The top 3 issues have remained unchanged since February 2025.

Healthcare / hospitals (38%) and the *economy* (34%) hold firm as the second and third most pressing issues. Healthcare concern is slowly trending downwards, while concern for the economy has been increasing at a slow by steady rate.

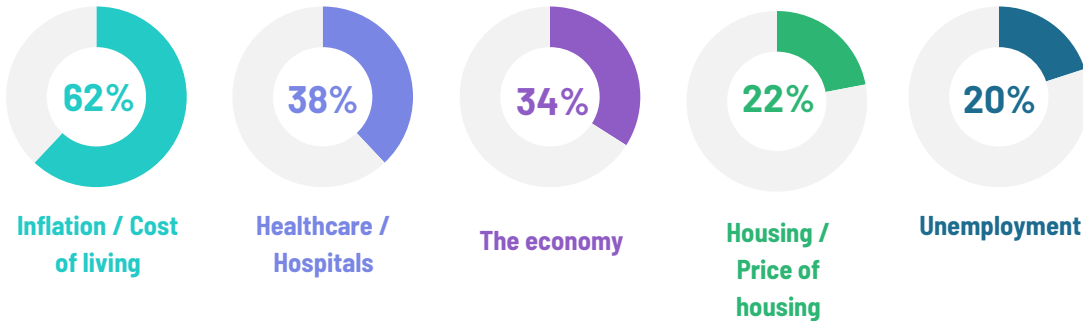
Concern for *housing / price of housing* and *Unemployment* has remained stable.

As fieldwork was conducted during the ceasefire in the US-Iran conflict, there has been a significant decrease in concern about *petrol prices*, moving from 26% in May 2026 to 16% in July 2026, falling to the 7th most pressing issue facing the country.

This has pushed *Unemployment* into the top 5 concerns.

Current top 5 issues

Spotlight July 2026

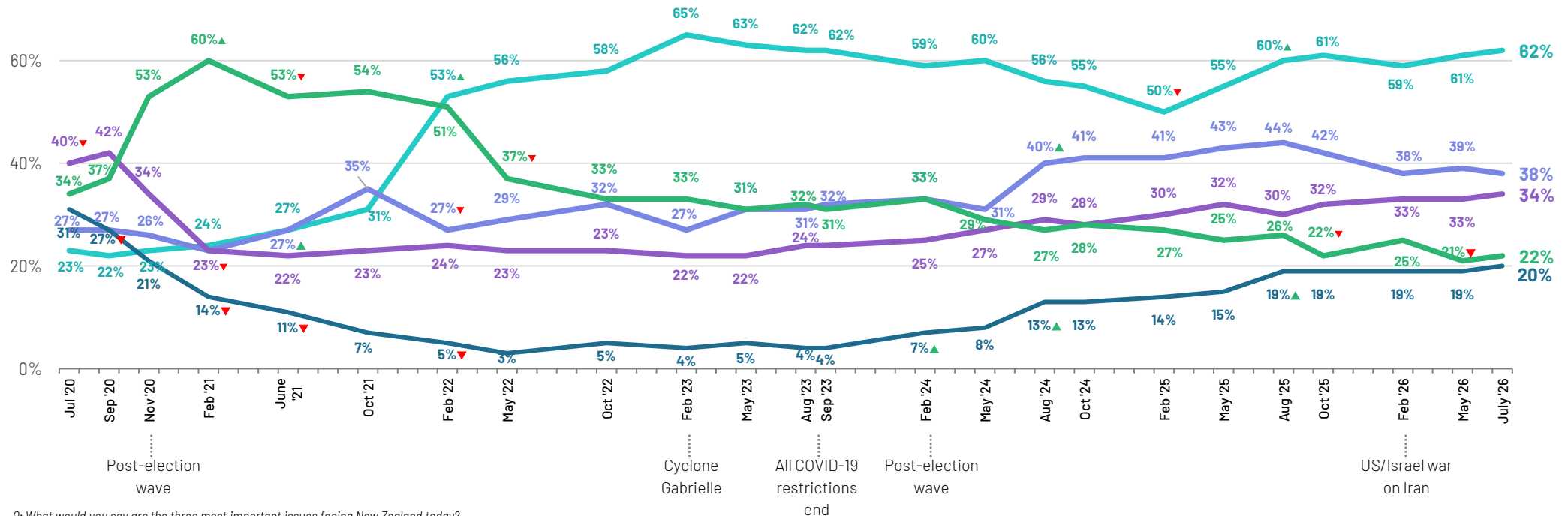


Inflation / cost of living (62%), healthcare / hospitals (38%), and the economy (34%) remain the top three issues for New Zealanders.

Concern for inflation / cost of living has slowly been increasing since early last year, and is now at its highest (62%) since Sept '23, just prior to the last election. Additionally, concern for the economy has reached levels last seen in Nov '20.

Concern for healthcare / hospitals has been slowly softening over the past two years, after a long period of increase.

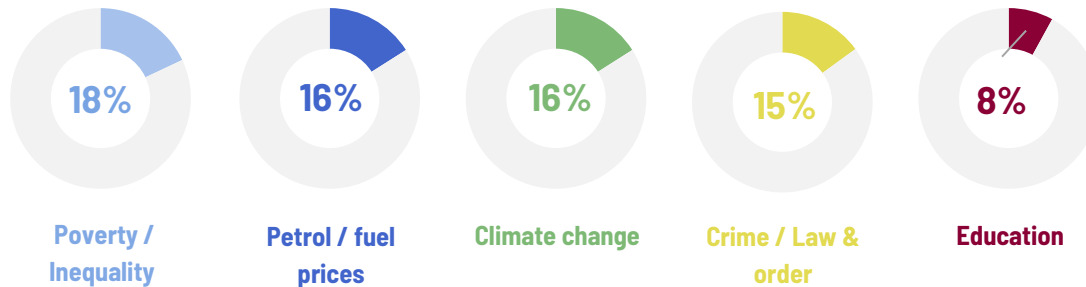
Unemployment has been stable since August '25, at levels comparable to Nov '20.



Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today?
▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave
Base: July '26 - Total sample (n=1,002)

Noteworthy issues

Spotlight July 2026

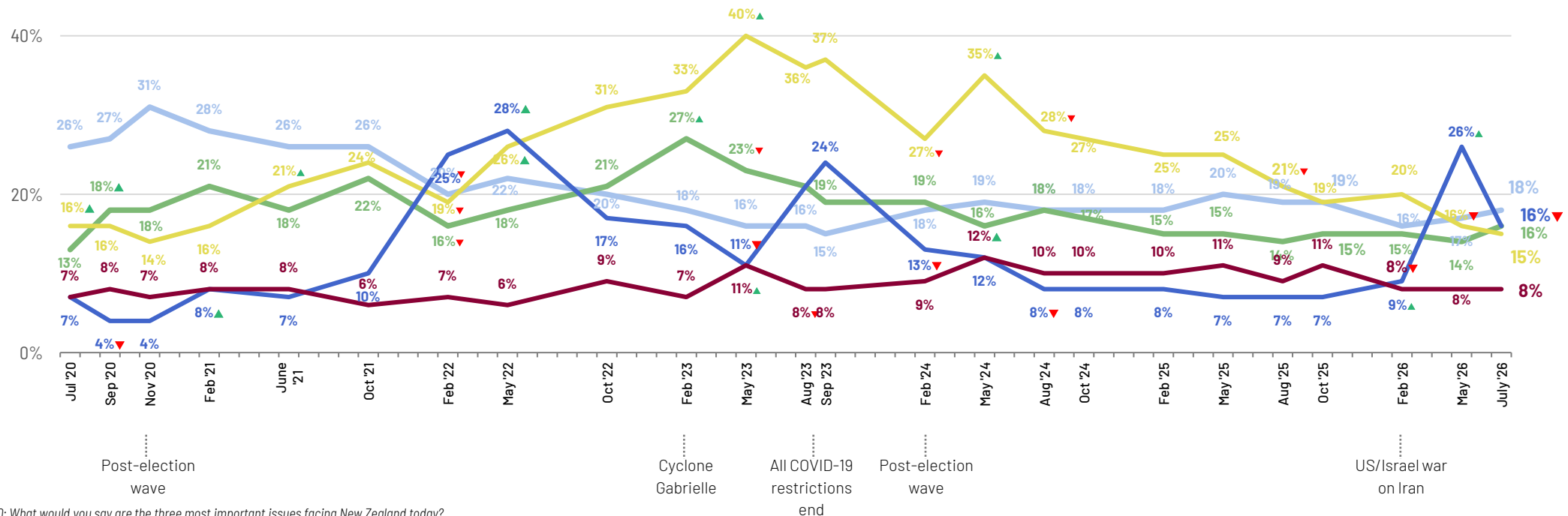


The remaining issues in the top 10 have remained largely stable compared to February 2025.

Poverty and inequality is a concern for 18% of New Zealanders, rising one place in the rankings from the last wave. *Climate change* (16%) and *unemployment* (8%) have also remained stable.

Notably, concerns about *petrol prices* have fallen markedly since May '26 (down 10 ppts) though it remains relatively high at 16%. This is likely due to fieldwork taking place during the ceasefire. With concerns easing, *petrol prices* has fallen three places in the rankings, moving from 4th in the last wave to joint 7th with *climate change*.

Concern about *crime* (15%) is substantially lower than its peak of 40% in May '23 and has been on a downward trend since.



Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today?
▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 - Total sample (n=1,002)

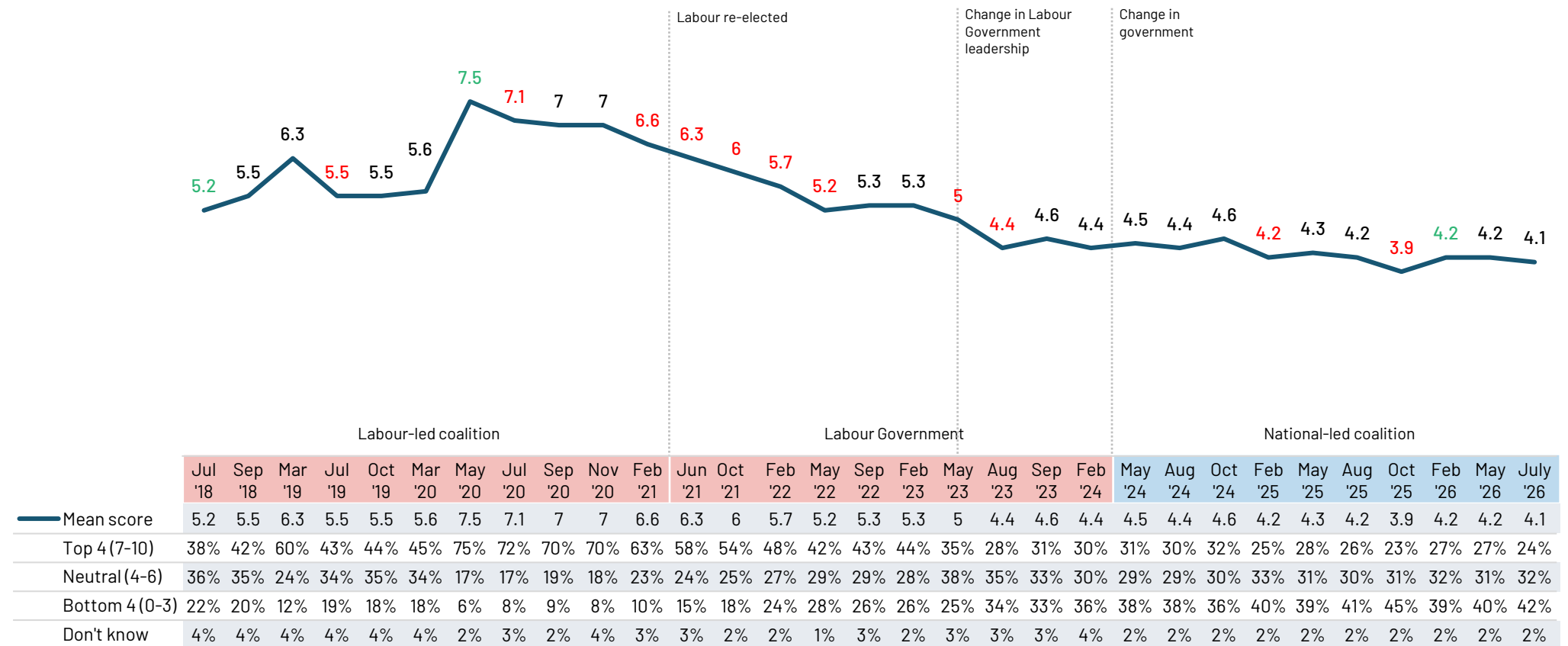
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CURRENT GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

New Zealanders' rating of how they
perceive the current government

Rating of government performance over the 6 months

The government's performance rating is consistent with the previous two measures (4.1 out of 10 compared to 4.2 out of 10 in February and May '26). Less than a quarter (24%) of New Zealanders rate the government's performance positively (a score of 7-10), while 42% gave a rating 0-3 out of 10.



Q: Overall, how would you rate the government for its job in the last 6 months from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'abysmal' and 10 means 'outstanding'? **NOTE:** This was reworded in Feb 24 to last 4 months (the period post election)

Base: Total sample – July '26 (n=1,002), May '26 (n=1,001), Feb '26 (n=1,000), Oct '25 (n=1,000), Aug '25 (n=1,004), May '25 (n=1,002), Feb '25 (n=1,002), Oct '24 (n=1,003), Aug '24 (n=1,005), May '24 (n=1,001), Feb '24 (n=1,001), Sep '23 (n=1,000), Aug '23 (n=1,148), May '23 (n=1,002), Feb '23 (n=1,002), Sep '22 (n=1,000), May '22 (n=1,000), Feb '22 (n=1,004), Oct '21 (n=1,003), Jun '21 (n=1,003), Feb '21 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001), Sep '20 (n=1,000), Jul '20 (n=1,000), May '20 (n=1,000), Mar '20 (n=610), Nov '19 (n=610), Jul '19 (n=610), Apr '19 (n=615), Mar '19 (n=614), Oct '18 (n=610), Jul '18 (n=611)

MANAGING THE ISSUES

The political parties perceived as most capable of managing key issues

Political party most capable of managing Top 5 issues

Similar to last wave, Labour is perceived as the party best equipped to manage all of New Zealanders' top 5 concerns of *inflation / the cost of living*, *healthcare*, *the economy*, *housing*, and *unemployment*.

Since the last wave, Labour has overtaken National as the party seen as best able to manage the *economy*.

	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
1	Inflation / cost of living	 Labour
2	Healthcare / hospitals	 Labour
3	The economy	 Labour
4	Housing / Price of housing	 Labour
5	Unemployment	 Labour

Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...?

Base: July '26 - Total sample (n=1,002)

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Political party most capable of managing other issues

Beyond the top five issues, perceptions of capability are skewed to Labour. The party is perceived as the most capable to manage 11 of the 15 other issues – up from 9 in May '26. National is seen as most capable on 2 issues, jointly with Labour on *defence / foreign affairs / terrorism*. The Green Party remains the most capable party for managing both *climate change* and *environmental pollution / water concerns*, while Te Pāti Māori remains as the leader on *issues facing Māori*.

	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue		Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
6	Poverty / inequality			Taxation	
=7	Petrol prices / fuel		=13	Drug / Alcohol abuse	
	Climate change			Race relations / Racism	
9	Crime / law and order / violence / anti-social behaviour		=16	Transport / public transport / infrastructure	
=10	Education			Environmental pollution / water concerns	
	Immigration		18	Issues facing Māori	
12	Household debt / personal debt		=19	Population / overpopulation	
				Defence / foreign affairs / terrorism	

Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...?

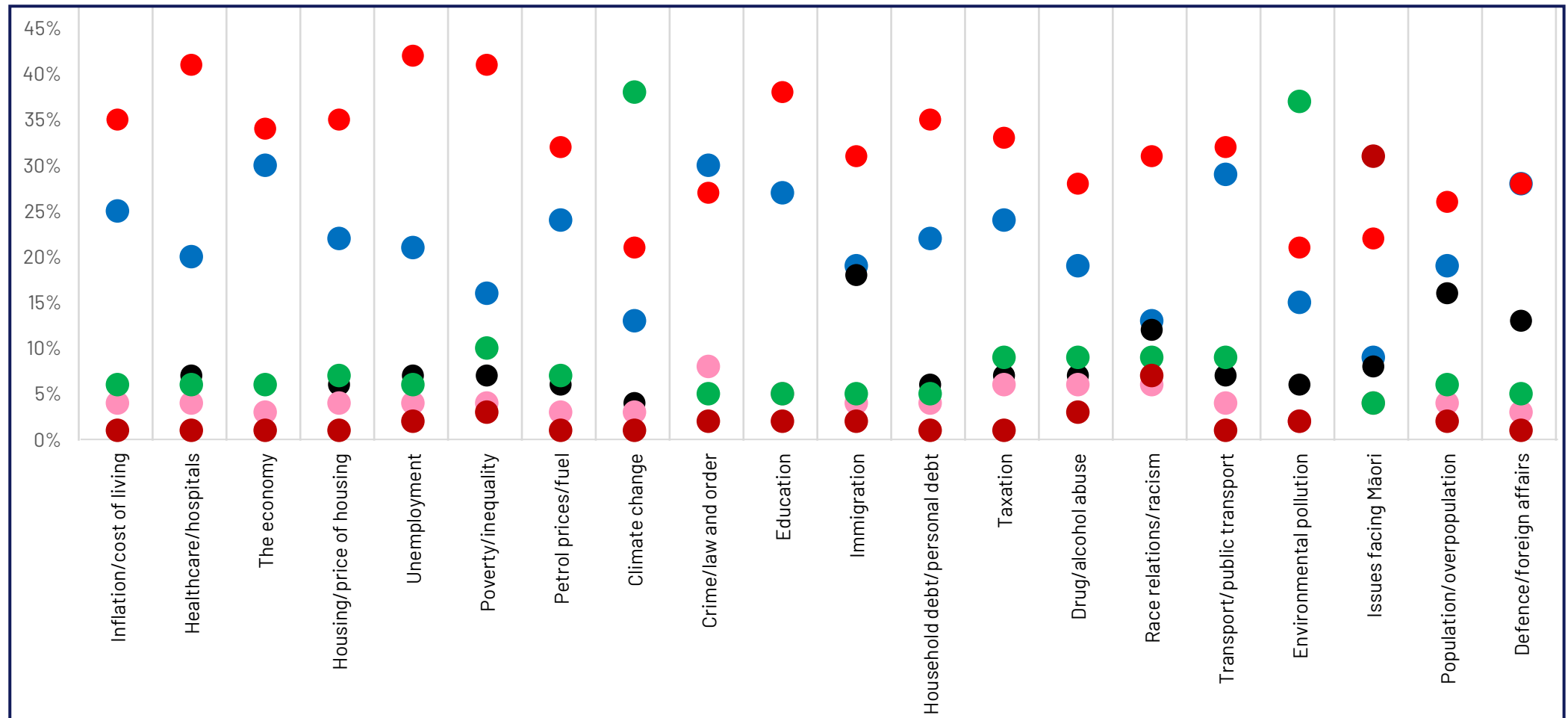
Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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Political party most capable for managing the issues

There is a visible gap between Labour and National's perceived capability across most of the issues.

In this view, we can see the perceived strengths of other parties too – with climate change and environment led by Green Party and issues facing Māori led by Te Pati Māori. Compared to other issues, NZ First is seen more capable when it comes to immigration, population, defence and racism.



Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

Base: July '26 - Total sample (n=1,002)

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#1 issue – Inflation / cost of living

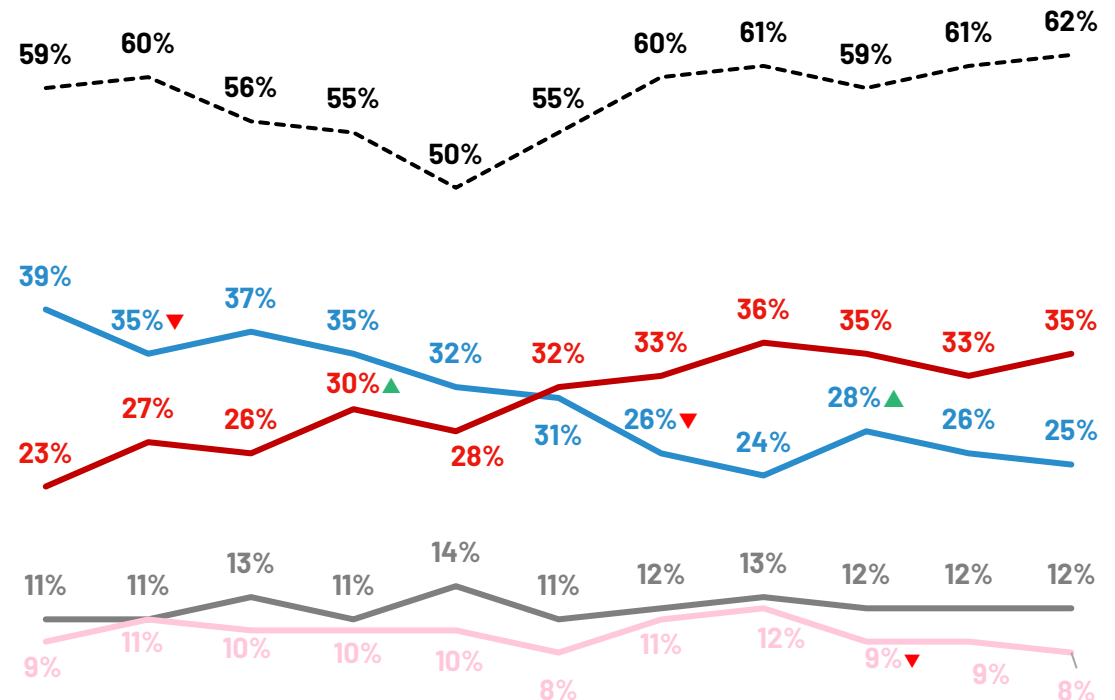


Inflation / cost of living remains the number one issue facing New Zealanders.

Labour remains the party perceived as most capable of managing the issue, with its perceived capability remaining fairly stable since Aug '25.

Perceptions of National's ability to handle the issue have reduced over the past two measures, with a steady downward trend since Feb '24.

The perceived capability gap between Labour and National has widened from 7 percentage points in May '26 to 10 percentage points in the current wave.



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	2% ▼	4% ▲	3%	2%	5% ▲	4%	6% ▲	4%	5%	6%	6%
Green Party	9%	6% ▼	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%	8%	6%
ACT	3% ▼	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	2%	1% ▼	2% ▲	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

--- Issue — National Party — Labour Party — Don't know — None

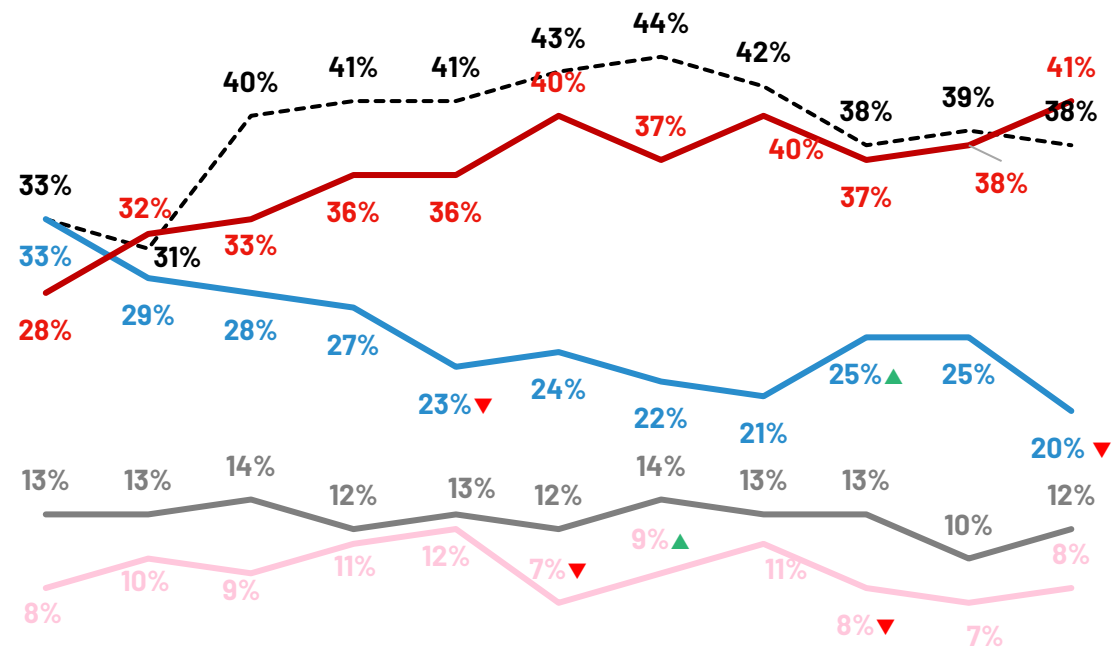
#2 issue – Healthcare / hospitals



Concern for *healthcare / hospitals* remains stable since Feb '26, holding its position as the second most important issue facing the country.

Labour continues to be seen as the party most capable of managing the issue, with a 21 percentage point lead over National. This gap has widened by 8 percentage points since the last wave in May '26.

National's perceived ability to manage the issues has weakened, reaching its lowest point since Feb '24. In contrast, Labour's perceived capability has increased to it's highest level since Oct '21.



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	3% ▼	4%	3%	3%	4% ▲	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%	7%
Green Party	8%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	7%	5%	6%	8%	6%
ACT	4%	4%	4%	2%	4% ▲	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	3%	2%	1%	3% ▲	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

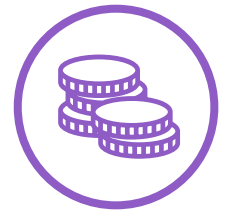
--- Issue — National Party — Labour Party — Don't know — None

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

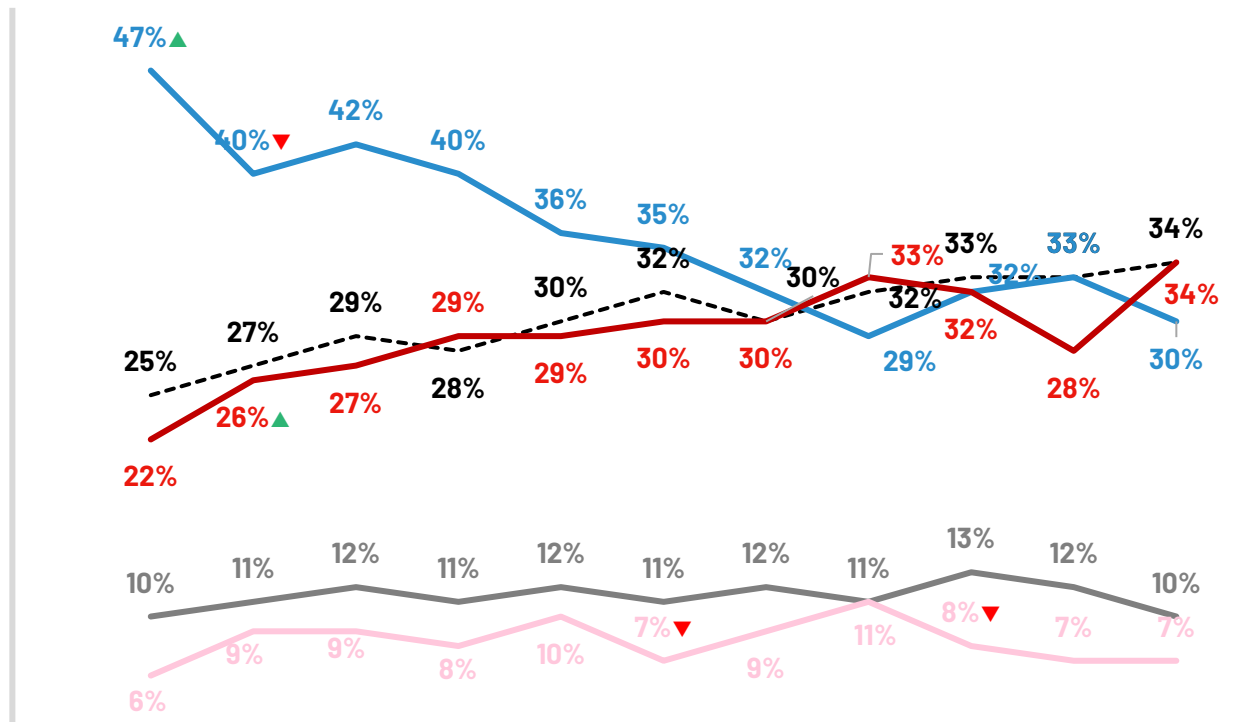
Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

#3 issue – The economy



Concern about *the economy* remains stable this wave, remaining the third top issue among New Zealanders.

However, perceptions of political parties' capability in managing the issue have shifted. National's 5-point lead last wave has been overturned, with 34% of New Zealanders picking Labour as the party most capable of managing the issue compared to 30% choosing National.



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	2%	3%	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%	6%
Green Party	6%	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%	7% ▲	6%
ACT	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	2%	0% ▼	1% ▲	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

--- Issue — National Party — Labour Party — Don't know — None

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

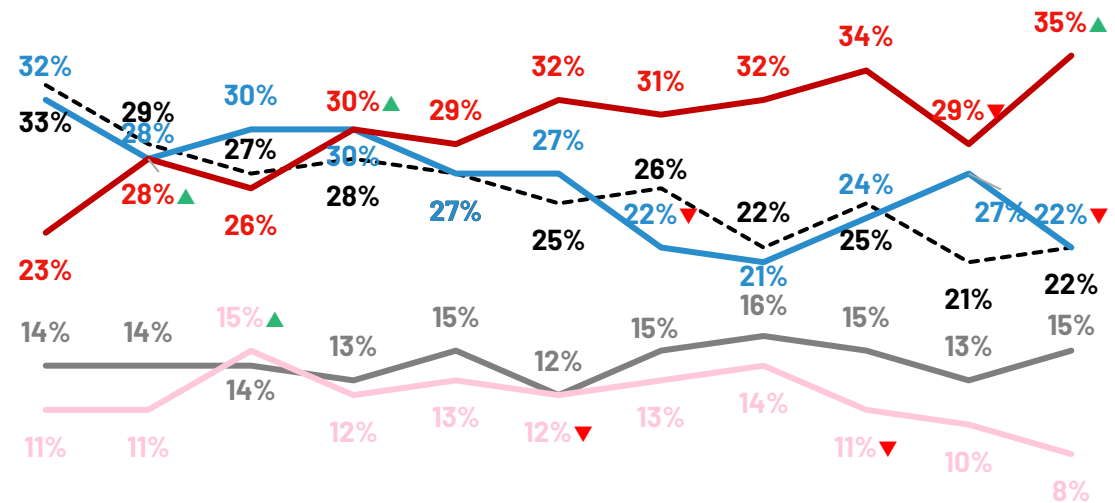
#4 issue – Housing / Price of housing



Concern for *housing / price of housing* has stayed relatively stable this wave, though it has moved from the 5th to 4th most concerning issue for New Zealanders due to the decrease in concern for fuel.

Labour continues to be seen as the party best able to manage this issue, with perceptions of its capability rising by 6 ppts since the last wave in May '26.

Meanwhile, National's perceived capability has declined by 5 ppts, widening Labour's lead to 13 ppts.



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%	6%
Green Party	8% ▲	8%	8%	6%	5%	6%	7%	7%	5%	9% ▲	7%
ACT	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Other	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2% ▲	2%	2%

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

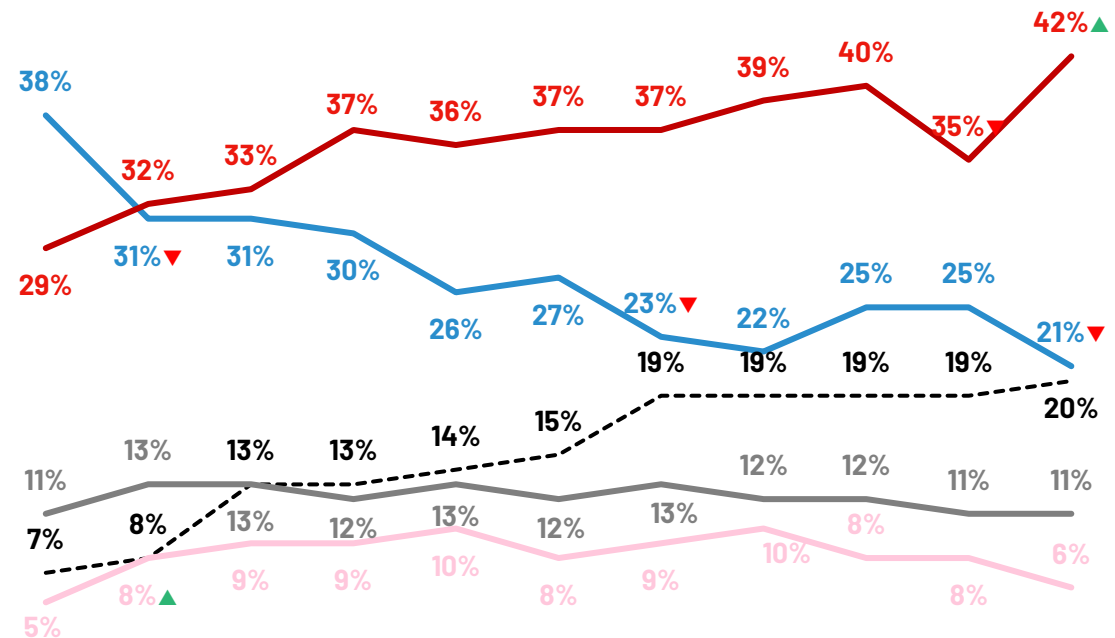
#5 Issue – Unemployment



Concern about *unemployment* has remained stable since August '25. It is currently the fifth most important issue facing New Zealanders.

Labour's perceived ability to manage *unemployment* has increased significantly this wave (up 7 pts), and National's has decreased significantly (down 4 ppt).

This widens the gap to 21 ppt (up 11 ppt from May '26).



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	2%	5% ▲	3% ▼	2%	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	7%	7%
Green Party	7%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	7% ▲	6%
ACT	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Other	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

--- Issue — National Party — Labour Party — Don't know — None

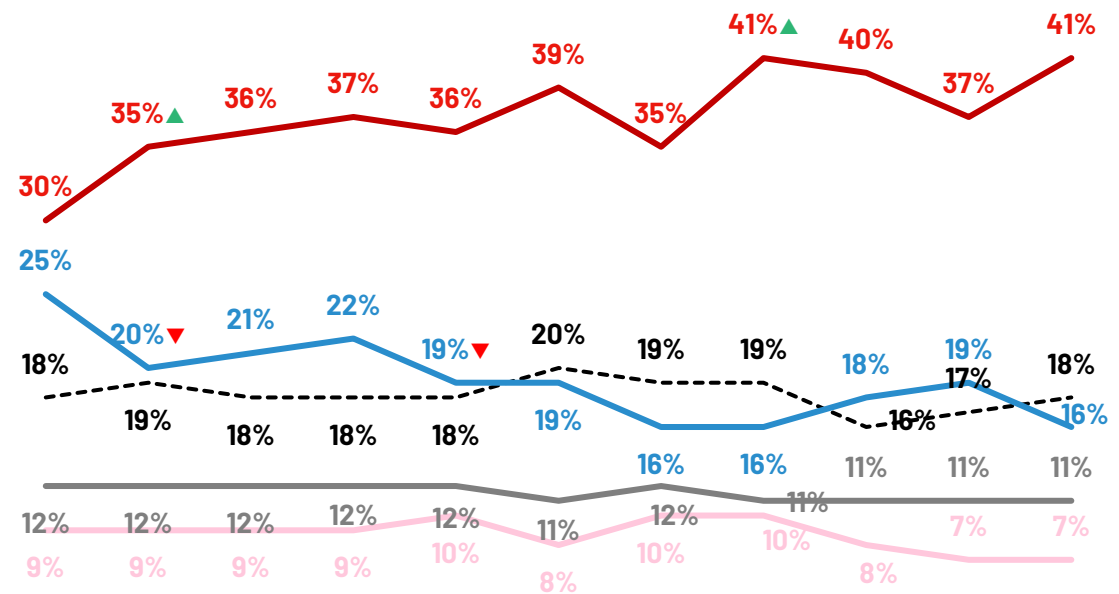
Issue spotlight – Poverty / Inequality



Concern for *poverty / inequality* has remained relatively stable over the last few waves.

Labour continues to hold a significant lead as the party perceived most capable of managing this issue with a gap of 25 ppts between the two parties.

After the Green Party saw a significant increase in their perceived ability to manage this issue last wave (12%), this has stabilised this wave.



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	6%	7%
Green Party	11%	9%	12%▲	10%	10%	8%	11%	11%▲	9%	12%▲	10%
ACT	3%▼	4%	3%	3%	5%▲	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	5%	5%	3%▼	4%	4%	5%	4%	2%	2%▼	2%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%▲	1%	1%

--- Issue — National Party — Labour Party — Don't know — None

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 – Total sample (n=1,002)

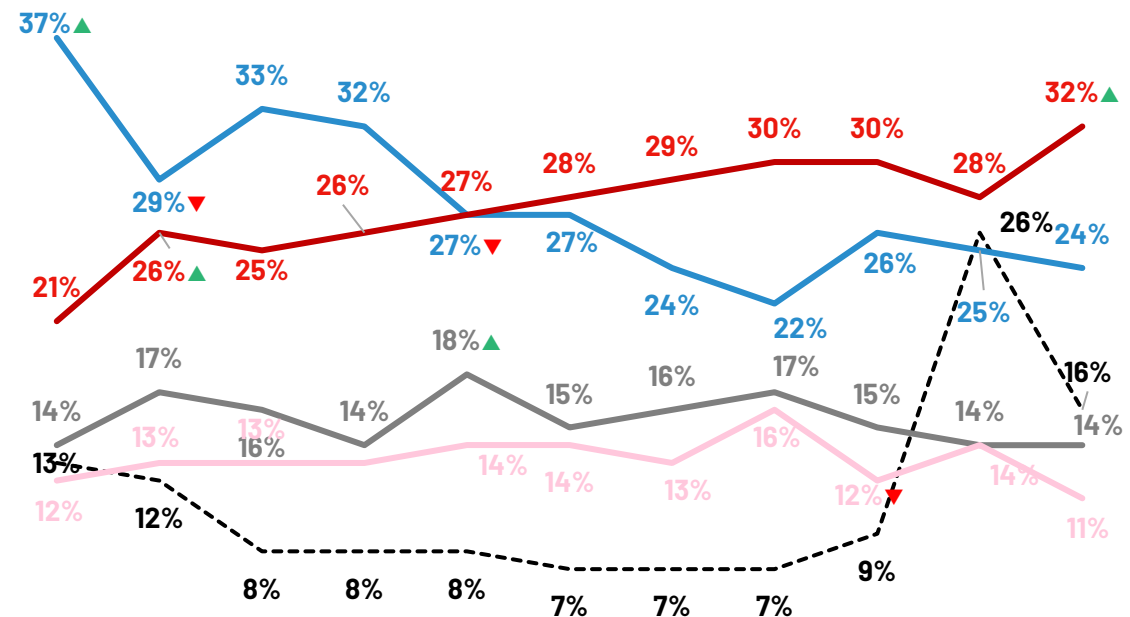
Issue spotlight – Petrol prices / Fuel



Following the last wave in May '26 concern for petrol prices / fuel has fallen significantly, (down 10 ppts), however is still higher than levels of concern back in Feb '26 and earlier.

This decrease has dropped the issue from 4th position last wave to the 7th most pressing issue facing New Zealanders.

The gap between the parties has widened from 3 ppts last wave to 8 ppts this wave, driven by a significant 4-point increase in Labour's perceived capability.



	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26
New Zealand First	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%
Green Party	7%	6%	7%	7%	5%	6%	5%	5%	7%	8%	7%
ACT	3% ▼	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues...

▲ indicates significant increase, / ▼ indicates significant decrease compared to the previous wave

Base: July '26 - Total sample (n=1,002)

--- Issue — National Party — Labour Party — Don't know — None

ISSUES DEEP DIVE

What matters across age, gender & voting intent.

For this section we have combined the February, May and July 2026 waves of the issue monitor to understand the importance of issues across more granular demographic groups.

Top current issues by **generation**

	Aged 18-34 (n=288)	Aged 35-49 (n=294)	Aged 50-64 (n=221)	Aged 65+ (n=199)
1	Inflation / cost of living 67%	Inflation / cost of living 63%	Inflation / cost of living 60%	Healthcare / Hospitals 57%▲
2	Unemployment 31%▲	The economy 33%	Healthcare / hospitals 47%▲	Inflation / cost of living 54%
3	The economy 30%	Healthcare / Hospitals 32%▼	The economy 35%	The economy 40%
4	Housing / Price of housing 27%	Housing / Price of housing 23%	Poverty / inequality 22%	Climate change 21%
5	Healthcare / hospitals 25%▼	Unemployment 21%	Housing / Price of housing 19%	Crime / Law & Order 19%

Financial pressures dominate for younger New Zealanders

For those aged 18-34, immediate financial concerns continue to dominate. They are significantly more concerned than the average New Zealander about *unemployment*. For this age group *unemployment* has gone from 4th ranked issue at 29% in May, to 2nd highest ranked issue (31%) in July.

Growing concern among unemployment for New Zealanders aged 35-49 years old

Unemployment has crept into the top 5 issues for New Zealand adults aged 35-49 too. Along with *Inflation / cost of living* and *the economy* as the top 2 concerns for this cohort suggesting a growing anxiety around job security and financial stability as economic pressures persist.

Healthcare remains the primary concern for older generations

Healthcare / hospitals continues to be the number one issue for New Zealanders aged 65 and over, with 57% citing it as a top concern—a figure significantly higher than the national average.

Petrol prices have fallen out of the top 5 concerns for all ages

The recent surge in concern about petrol prices has eased, dropping out of the top five concerns across all generations this wave.

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today?

▲ indicates significantly higher / ▼ indicates significantly lower compared to the total sample

Base: July '26 - Total sample (n=1,002)

Top 5 issues by age and gender

Cost of living remains the dominant concern across almost all age and gender groups, ranking as the top issue for every segment except those aged 65+, where healthcare overtakes inflation as the primary concern.

Younger cohorts place greater emphasis on employment and housing affordability, particularly among young men and women respectively. Mid-life respondents broaden their focus to include healthcare and economic management, while older New Zealanders increasingly prioritise healthcare, alongside concerns about the economy and community safety.

Age group	Gender	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
18-34	Male (n=322)	Inflation/Cost of living (58%) ▼	Unemployment (32%)	The economy (30%)	Housing / price of housing (30%)	Petrol prices / fuel (26%)
	Female (n=503)	Inflation/Cost of living (67%) ▲	Housing / price of housing (33%)	Healthcare / hospitals (30%) ▲	Unemployment (27%)	The economy (25%)
35-49	Male (n=441)	Inflation/Cost of living (62%)	The economy (35%) ▲	Healthcare / hospitals (25%) ▼	Housing / price of housing (24%)	Unemployment (22%)
	Female (n=414)	Inflation/Cost of living (67%)	Healthcare / hospitals (39%) ▲	The economy (28%) ▼	Housing / price of housing (25%)	Poverty / inequality (23%) ▲
50-64	Male (n=342)	Inflation/Cost of living (62%)	The economy (42%) ▲	Healthcare / hospitals (38%) ▼	Crime / law & order (21%)	Poverty / inequality (17%)
	Female (n=343)	Inflation/Cost of living (60%)	Healthcare / hospitals (52%) ▲	The economy (34%) ▼	Poverty / inequality (21%)	Housing / price of housing (19%)
65+	Male (n=369)	Healthcare / hospitals (55%)	Inflation/Cost of living (51%)	The economy (42%) ▲	Crime / law & order (20%)	Climate change (19%)
	Female (n=263)	Healthcare / hospitals (63%)	Inflation/Cost of living (53%)	The economy (34%) ▼	Crime / law & order (24%)	Poverty / inequality (21%) ▲

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today?

▲ indicates significantly higher / ▼ indicates significantly lower compared to the opposite gender in the same age bracket

Base: Feb '26, May '26, July '26 – Total sample (n=3,003)

How concerns shift across Age and Gender

Across most age groups, women are more likely, when compared to men, to prioritise health and social wellbeing issues, including healthcare, poverty and inequality, and drug and alcohol abuse. While men are more likely to focus on economic and security-related concerns such as the economy, taxation, immigration, crime and fuel prices.

While the specific issues vary by life stage, this broader pattern remains largely consistent.

16-34



Male

- Higher concern about **immigration** (13% vs 4%)



Female

- Higher concern about **inflation / cost of living** (67% vs 58%)
- Higher concern about **healthcare / hospitals** (30% vs 18%)
- Higher concern about **poverty / inequality** (16% vs 10%)

35-49



Male

- Higher concern about **the economy** (35% vs 28%)
- Higher concern about **taxation** (11% vs 2%)
- Higher concern about **crime / law & order** (20% vs 13%)



Female

- Higher concern about **healthcare / hospitals** (39% vs 25%)
- Higher concern about **poverty / inequality** (23% vs 13%)
- Higher concern about **drug / alcohol abuse** (8% vs 5%)

50-64



Male

- Higher concern about **the economy** (42% vs 34%)
- Higher concern about **defence / foreign affairs** (3% vs 0%)



Female

- Higher concern about **healthcare / hospitals** (52% vs 38%)

65+



Male

- Higher concern about **the economy** (42% vs 34%)
- Higher concern about **petrol / fuel prices** (18% vs 11%)
- Higher concern about **race relations / racism** (12% vs 5%)



Female

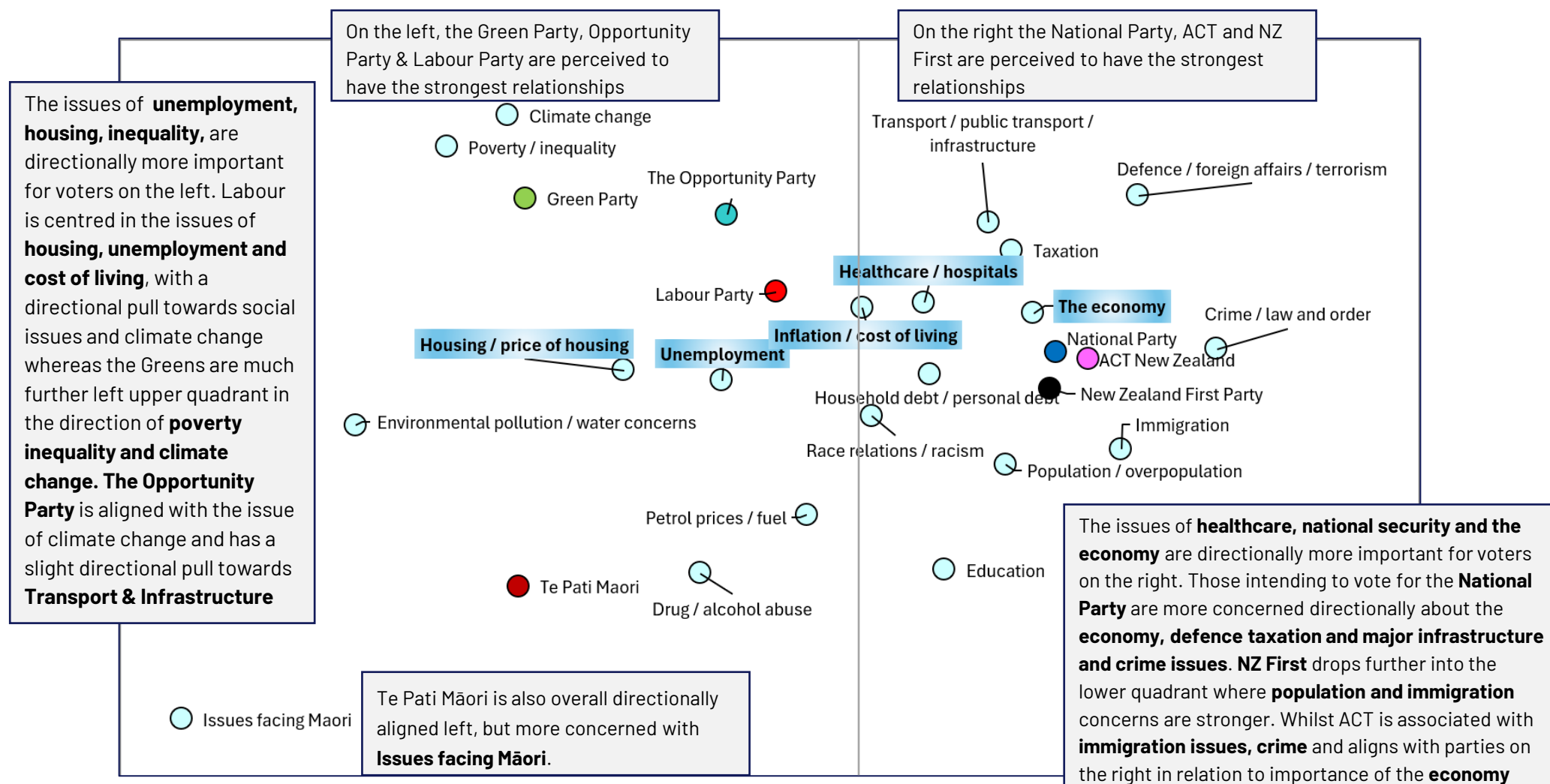
- Higher concern about **poverty / inequality** (21% vs 14%)

Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today?

Base: Feb '26, May '26, July '26 - 16-34 Male (n=322), 16-34 Female (n=503), 35-49 Male (n=441), 35-49 Female (n=414), 50-64 Male (n=342), 50-64 Female (n=343), 65+ Male (n=389), 65+ Female (n=263).

Mapping the link between voters intent and issues

This map graphically displays voting intention and the importance of issues in the minds of New Zealanders. The location of each issue shows how closely related they to other issues in terms of what is seen as important. The location of the parties is based on how important each issue is for those intending to vote for that party. For example, National Party is closest to the economy, which means those who plan to vote for National Party are more likely to believe the economy is an important issue facing our country. Relative to other parties, Te Pati Māori is the closest to issues facing Māori. Inflation /cost of living, is a central issue, impacting the majority, despite political persuasion.



Q: What would you say are the three most important issues facing New Zealand today? / Q: If there was an election next week, which party would you vote for?

Base: Feb '26, May '26, July '26 - Total sample (n=3,003)

COMPARISONS WITH AUSTRALIA

Comparing New Zealand's issues to
Australia's

Top 10 issues – New Zealand vs. Australia

	 New Zealand	 Australia
1	Inflation / cost of living – 62%	Inflation / cost of living – 62%
2	Healthcare / hospitals – 38%	Housing / price of housing – 42%
3	The economy – 34%	The economy – 26%
4	Housing / price of housing – 22%	Immigration – 24%
5	Unemployment – 20%	Crime / law and order – 23%
6	Poverty / inequality – 18%	Healthcare / hospitals – 22%
7	Petrol prices / fuel – 16%	= Petrol prices / fuel – 15%
	Climate change – 16%	
8	Crime / law and order – 15%	Taxation – 12%
9	Education – 8%	= Poverty / inequality – 12%
	Immigration – 8%	
10	Household debt / personal debt – 7%	Environment – 9%

While New Zealanders and Australians share top concerns around the *cost of living*, priorities diverge on other key issues, particularly *healthcare* and *housing*.

Australians are more likely to be concerned about *housing* (42%) than their New Zealand counterparts (22%). Conversely, *healthcare* is a much more prominent issue in New Zealand (38%), ranking 2nd, while it is the 6th-ranked issue in Australia (22%).

The economy is ranked the 3rd top issue in both New Zealand (34%) and Australia (26%), with concern being slightly higher for New Zealanders.

Unemployment is a higher priority in New Zealand, where it ranks as the fifth most important issue (20%). In contrast, Australians are more focused on *immigration* (24%), while unemployment falls outside their top 10 concerns.

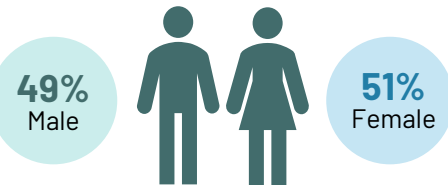
Australians are also more likely to be concerned about *crime* (23% vs 15% New Zealand), while New Zealanders show higher concern for *poverty / inequality* (18% vs 12% Australia).

Unlike many other issues, concern about *petrol prices/fuel* is closely aligned across New Zealand and Australia, where it ranks seventh overall (16% and 15%, respectively).

Sample demographics – July 2026

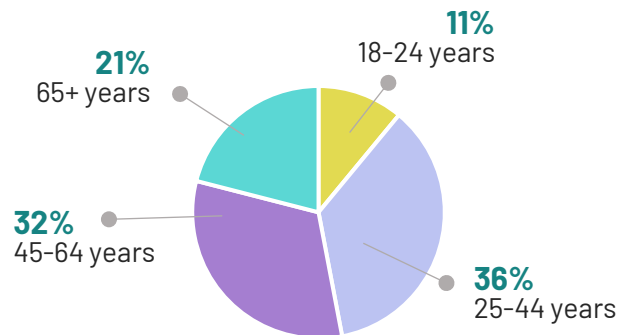


1,002 respondents
were interviewed online in July via
online panels



The precision of Ipsos online polls is calculated with a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to ± 3.5 percentage points

Results are weighted by age, gender and region to ensure they reflect the New Zealand population



Employment status



45% Full-time
17% Retired
14% Part-time
7% Self-employed
7% Not in paid work but seeking work
5% Not in paid work & not seeking work
5% Student

Sample sizes over time

- Feb '18 (n=610)
- Jul '18 (n=611)
- Sep '18 (n=610)
- Mar '19 (n=615)
- Apr '19 (n=615)
- Jul '19 (n=610)
- Nov '19 (n=610)
- Mar '20 (n=610)
- May '20 (n=1,000)
- Jul '20 (n=1,000)
- Sep '20 (n=1,000)
- Nov '20 (n=1,001)
- Feb '21 (n=1,000)
- Jun '21 (n=1,003)
- Oct '21 (n=1,003)
- Feb '22 (n=1,004)
- May '22 (n=1,000)
- Sep '22 (n=1,000)
- Feb '23 (n=1,002)
- May '23 (n=1,002)
- Aug '23 (n=1,148)
- Sep '23 (n=1,000)
- Feb '24 (n=1,001)
- May '24 (n=1,001)
- Aug '24 (n=1,005)
- Oct '24 (n=1,003)
- Feb '25 (n=1,002)
- May '25 (n=1,002)
- Aug '25 (n=1,002)
- Oct '25 (n=1,004)
- Feb '26 (n=1,000)
- May '26 (n=1,001)
- July '26 (n=1,002)

About Ipsos

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You act better when you are sure.

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