**New Zealanders’ concern about cost of living significantly increases; and concern for unemployment at highest level in five years**

**New Zealand / Aotearoa, 31 August 2025 -** Ipsos New Zealand has released the 29th edition of the Ipsos Issues Monitor which tracks the most important issues facing New Zealanders today and which political parties are best able to manage them. The survey has been running since 2018.

The quarterly survey of 1,002 New Zealanders reveals significant increases in concern about *inflation / cost of living* and *unemployment*. *Inflation / cost of living* remains the most important, with 60% of New Zealanders identifying it as a concern increasing significantly on the previous wave. Meanwhile, concern for *Unemployment* is at its highest point since November 2020, with 1 in 5 (19%) New Zealanders identifying it as a key issue.

*Healthcare* (44%), *The economy* (30%), and *Housing / price of housing (26%)* remain the second, third, and fourth top issues respectively, while *Crime / law and order* remained in the top 5 despite a significant decrease (21%, from 25% in May 2025).

**Other key findings include:**

* The proportion of New Zealanders selecting *Inflation / cost of living* as a key issue is at its highest point since May 2024 and has been the top issue facing New Zealanders since February 2022.
* *Healthcare / hospitals* remains the second top issue and continues on its steady upward trend, reaching its highest level of concern since tracking began (44%).
* Concern around *The economy* appears to be stabilising, with 30% identifying it as a key issue (32% in May), while *Housing / price of housing* remains stable at 26%.
* *Crime / law & order* remains in the top 5 despite a significant drop (4pp to 21%) marking its lowest point since February 2022.
* Issues change in importance across generations:
	+ *Inflation / cost of living* continues to be the primary concern for those aged 18-64, while those aged 65+ are significantly less likely to be concerned about it
	+ *Healthcare* continues as the primary concern for those aged 65+; however, it ranks fourth for those aged 18-34 and second for those aged 35-64
	+ Concern for *Unemployment* is higher among younger New Zealanders; it is a top 5 issue among those aged 18-49
	+ *Housing* is the second most important issue for those aged 18-34, third for 35–49, and fifth for 50-64
	+ *Crime* is a bigger concern for older New Zealanders; it is the number four issue for those aged 50-64 and number three for 65+
* Although political leaning has an impact on the perception of importance for multiple issues, both those intending to vote on the ‘left’ if there was an election tomorrow, and those intending to vote on the ‘right’ continue to agree that *inflation / cost of living* and *healthcare* are the two primary concerns facing New Zealand. However:
	+ *The economy* and *crime* are of significantly higher concern to right-leaning voters
	+ Left-leaning voters are significantly more concerned about *poverty / inequality*.
* New Zealanders’ rating of the current coalition government’s performance dipped slightly by 0.1 points to 4.2, with 41% of New Zealanders scoring it 0-3 out of 10 (from 39% in May).
* Labour continues to be perceived as the political party most capable of handling three of the top five issues – *Inflation / cost of living, Healthcare*, and *Housing*, while National is seen to be most capable of managing *The economy* and *Crime*.
* Beyond the top 5 issues, National continues to be seen as being the most capable of managing just one of the remaining fifteen issues: *Defence / foreign affairs / terrorism*.
* New Zealanders’ top five concerns are largely in line with our Australian counterparts, with both countries identifying *Inflation / cost of living* as their top issue and showing a similar level of concern for *The economy*. More Australians are concerned about *Housing* than us, while more of us are concerned about *Healthcare*.

**Carin Hercock, Country Manager, Ipsos New Zealand, said**: “New Zealanders’ concerns around inflation and the cost of living have increased significantly. This, combined with growing worries around unemployment, now in the top 5 issues for under 50s, is likely to have a real impact on their confidence for spending.”

**Amanda Dudding, Executive Director Public Affairs, Ipsos New Zealand, added:** “Healthcare continues to steadily increase as an important issue for New Zealanders, no matter their political leaning. It has significantly increased as an issue for those aged over 65 years who are more likely to need healthcare and hospital services.”

For a full copy of the 29th Ipsos Issues monitor, New Zealand edition, please visit our website <https://www.ipsos.com/en-nz>

**ENDS**

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**About the Study**

This study did not have any external sponsors or partners. It was initiated and run by Ipsos, because we are curious about the world we live in and how citizens in New Zealand and around the globe think and feel about their world.

The study was conducted using online research panels between 11 and 18 August 2025, with 1,002 New Zealanders aged 18 and older representing the adult New Zealand population. Quotas were set to ensure representativeness.

The precision of Ipsos online surveys is calculated using a credibility interval. Here, the total New Zealand results have a credibility interval of +/-3.5 percentage points. For more information on the Ipsos use of credibility intervals, please visit the Ipsos website.

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