

# THE IPSOS NEW ZEALAND ISSUES MONITOR

**An Ipsos Survey – November 2020**

**GAME CHANGERS**



# THE IPSOS NEW ZEALAND ISSUES MONITOR OVERVIEW

## Background Information

At Ipsos, we are passionately curious about people, markets, brands and society. We make our changing world easier and faster to navigate and inspire clients to make smarter decisions. As Ipsos and our previous brands we have operated in New Zealand since 1992.

**The Ipsos New Zealand Issues Monitor tracks what New Zealanders are concerned about, who is worried about what, and which political parties are seen to be best able to improve these matters. From 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> November we conducted fieldwork for our 12<sup>th</sup> Ipsos NZ Issues Monitor report with a total of 1,000 New Zealanders aged 18 and older\*.**

The first Issues Monitor wave in 2020 was conducted at the beginning of March when only a few COVID-19 cases had reached NZ. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a second wave was conducted relatively quickly in May, the third wave in July and the fourth wave in September. This current wave set out to understand what issues were important to New Zealanders under the current alert level 1 / post-election.

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 around the globe think and feel about their world.

*Please direct all queries to Carin Hercock – phone: 09 538 0500 or email: [carin.hercock@ipsos.com](mailto:carin.hercock@ipsos.com) or Amanda*

*Dudding – phone: 04 974 8631 or email: [amanda.dudding@ipsos.com](mailto:amanda.dudding@ipsos.com)*

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\*The precision of Ipsos online polls are calculated using a credibility interval with a poll of 1,000 accurate to +/- 3.5 percentage points





# THE IPSOS NEW ZEALAND ISSUES MONITOR OVERVIEW

## The Media Context: What was making New Zealand news in mid-November 2020?

**HOUSING** ●  
**'Housing history': Median Auckland house price now at \$1 million - REINZ**  
Newshub – 12 November 2020

**BUSINESS**

**Reserve Bank 'caught off guard' by surging house prices - Westpac economist**

NZ Herald – 11 November 2020

**Covid-19: New community case in Auckland with no clear link to the border** ●

Melanie Earley Lucy Xia · 14:55, Nov 12 2020



Stuff.co.nz – 12 November 2020

**POLITICS / ELECTION 2020**

**Jacinda Ardern reveals new ministers in Cabinet refresh**

4:12 pm on 2 November 2020

 **Jane Patterson**, Political Editor  
@janepatterson jane.patterson@rnz.co.nz

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RNZ – 2 November 2020

**Worst rain for 57 years floods New Zealand city of Napier**

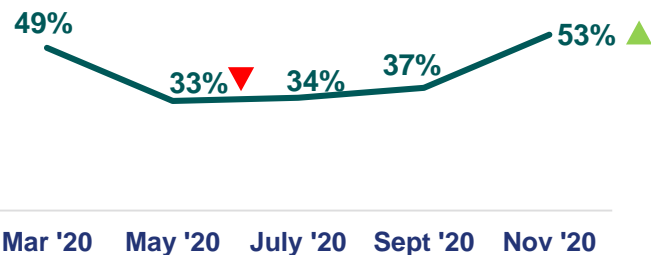
The Guardian – 10 November 2020

# KEY FINDINGS NOVEMBER 2020 – THE TOP ISSUES

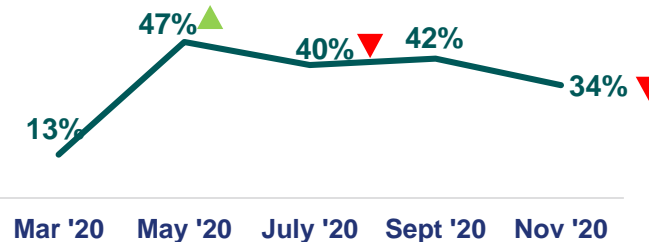
*Housing returns as the #1 issue facing New Zealanders after a drop during the peak of COVID pandemic. Housing concerns are now at the highest level since tracking began in Feb '18. Concerns surrounding the economy & unemployment, which increased significantly during the pandemic peak, have decreased but remain relatively high. Poverty, healthcare, and cost of living are also in the top-5 key issues faced by New Zealanders.*



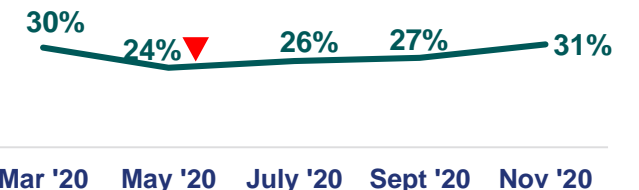
## Housing



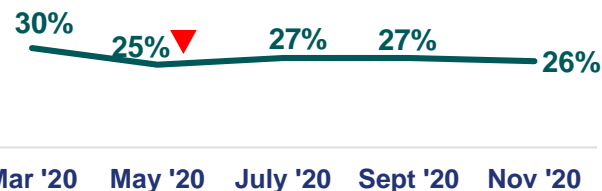
## Economy



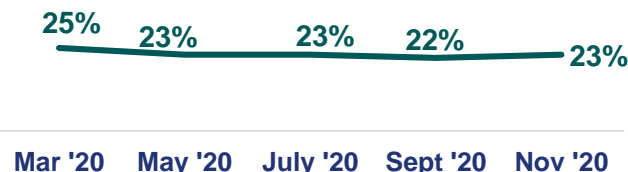
## Poverty / inequality



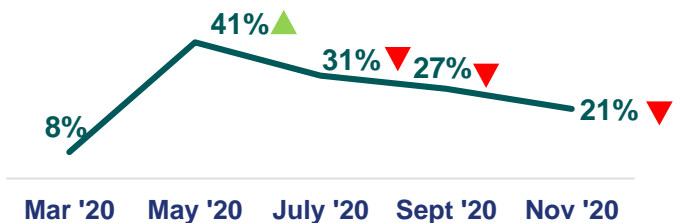
## Healthcare / hospitals



## Inflation / cost of living



## Unemployment



# KEY FINDINGS – NOVEMBER 2020



During the height of the pandemic in NZ concerns around housing decreased while the economy and unemployment increased significantly. Housing has returned to being the biggest issue facing New Zealanders, now higher than ever before.



Climate change is the 7<sup>th</sup> biggest issue facing New Zealanders at a total level, however it's in second position for those aged 18-24. This age group are also significantly more concerned about unemployment.

**80%** of New Zealanders believe COVID-19 poses a high threat to the world compared to **25%** feeling it poses a high threat to New Zealand. Just **12%** believe it poses a high threat to them personally.



**75%** of New Zealanders support compulsory mask wearing in public and keeping the borders closed for COVID-19 protection measures



# THE TOP ISSUES

The most important issues facing  
New Zealand today

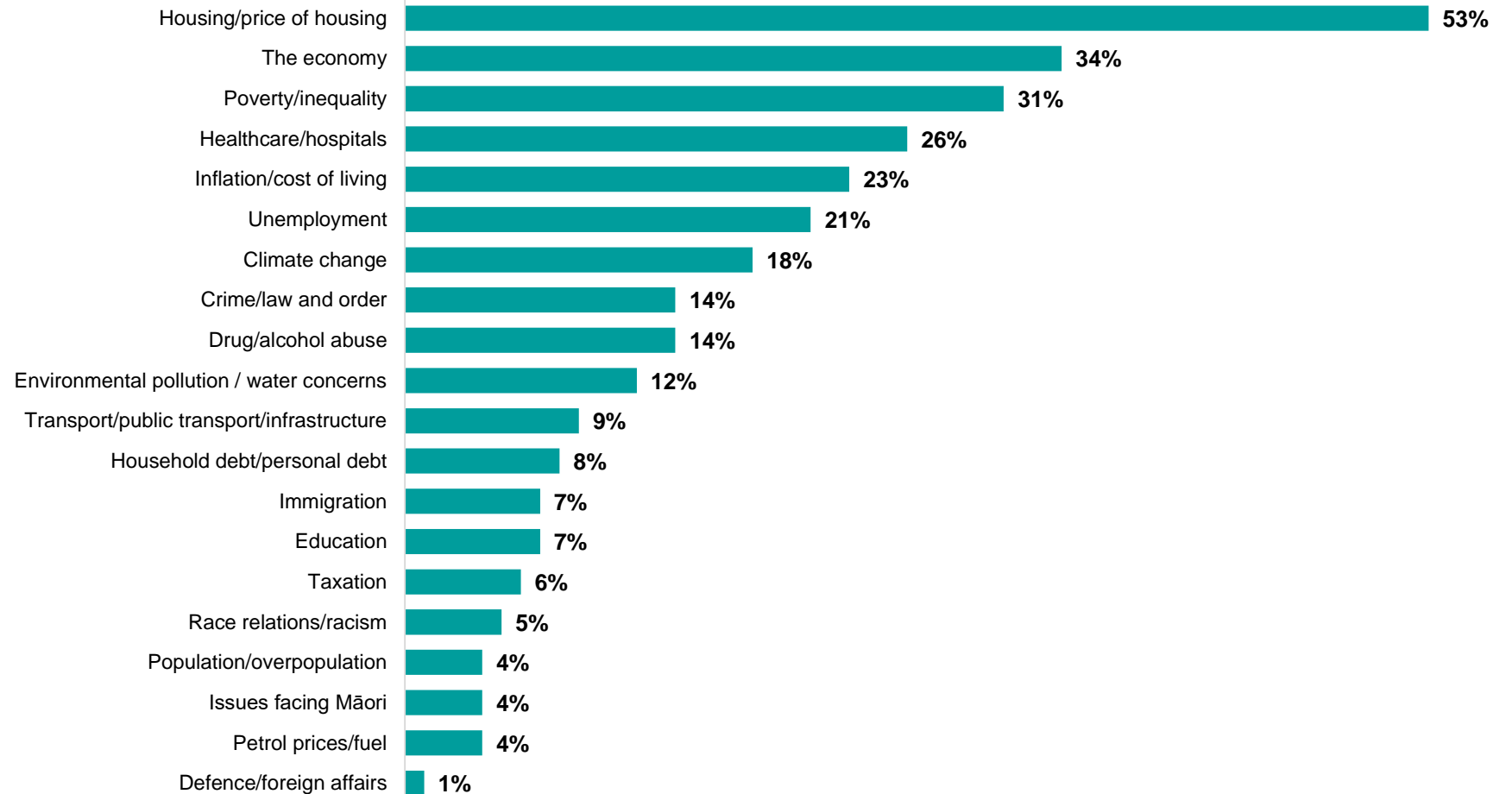
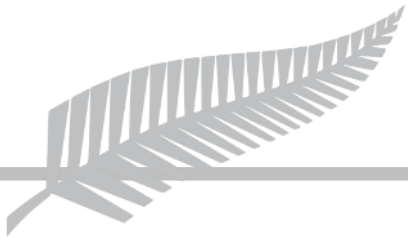
# THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES FACING NEW ZEALAND

(November '20)



Housing is perceived as the most important issue facing New Zealand today (53%), significantly ahead of all other issues.

This is followed by the economy (34%), poverty / inequality (31%), healthcare / hospitals (26%) and inflation / cost of living (23%).



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

Base: November '20 (n=1,001)

# TOP FIVE ISSUES BEFORE AND DURING THE PANDEMIC

Concerns around housing are at the highest since the monitor began. Economy moves to #2 after being the top issue since May '20. Inflation / cost of living returns to the top-5 issues after being pushed out during the peak of the pandemic in NZ.

	NOV 19 (n=615)	MARCH 20 (n=610)	MAY 20 (n=1,000)	JULY 20 (n=1,000)	SEPT 20 (n=1,000)	NOV 20 (n=1,001)
1	Housing / Price of Housing 42%	Housing / Price of Housing 49%	The Economy 47%	The Economy 40%	The Economy 42%	Housing / Price of Housing 53%
2	Poverty / Inequality 29%	Healthcare / Hospitals 30%	Unemployment 41%	Housing / Price of Housing 34%	Housing / Price of Housing 37%	The Economy 34%
3	Inflation / Cost of Living 25%	Poverty / Inequality 30%	Housing / Price of Housing 33%	Unemployment 31%	Unemployment 27%	Poverty / Inequality 31%
4	Healthcare / Hospitals 25%	Inflation / Cost of Living 25%	Healthcare / Hospitals 25%	Healthcare / Hospitals 27%	Healthcare / Hospitals 27%	Healthcare / Hospitals 26%
5	Crime / Law 23%	Crime / Law 25%	Poverty / Inequality 24%	Poverty / Inequality 26%	Poverty / Inequality 27%	Inflation / Cost of Living 23%
	Only a few COVID-19 cases in NZ	NZ moves out of level 4 lockdown	Alert Level 1	Alert Level 2 (second wave of cases)	Alert Level 1 / first wave post-election	

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

Base: Nov '20 (n=1,001), Sept '20 (n=1,000), July '20 (n=1,000), May '20 (n=1,000), Mar '20 (n=610), Nov '19 (n=610), Apr '19 (n=615)



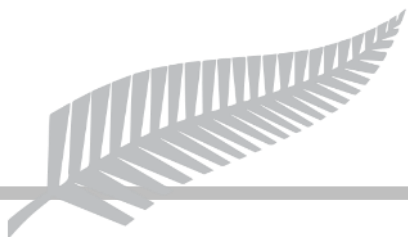
# TOP FIVE ISSUES BY AGE GROUPS





















*Housing is the #1 issue across all age groups and poverty / inequality is also a common concern.*

Young New Zealanders (18-24 years) are more likely to be concerned about climate change and unemployment. The economy is not in the top five for this group. Although housing is also their top issue, it's significantly lower than average.

Concerns for healthcare increase with age. It appears at the #5 for the 25-54 age group, makes it way to #4 for the 55-64 age group years and #2 for 65-74 years.

Cost of living features in the top five issues for those aged 18 to 54, but not the older age groups.



	18–24 years	25–54 years	55–64 years	65–74 years
1	 44%	 55%	 52%	 56%
2	 31%	 31%	 43%	 39%
3	 30%	 29%	 35%	 38%
4	 29%	 27%	 31%	 30%
5	 27%	 24%	 20%	 20%



Housing /  
price of  
housing



Climate  
change



Poverty /  
inequality



The  
economy



Unemployment



Inflation / cost  
of living



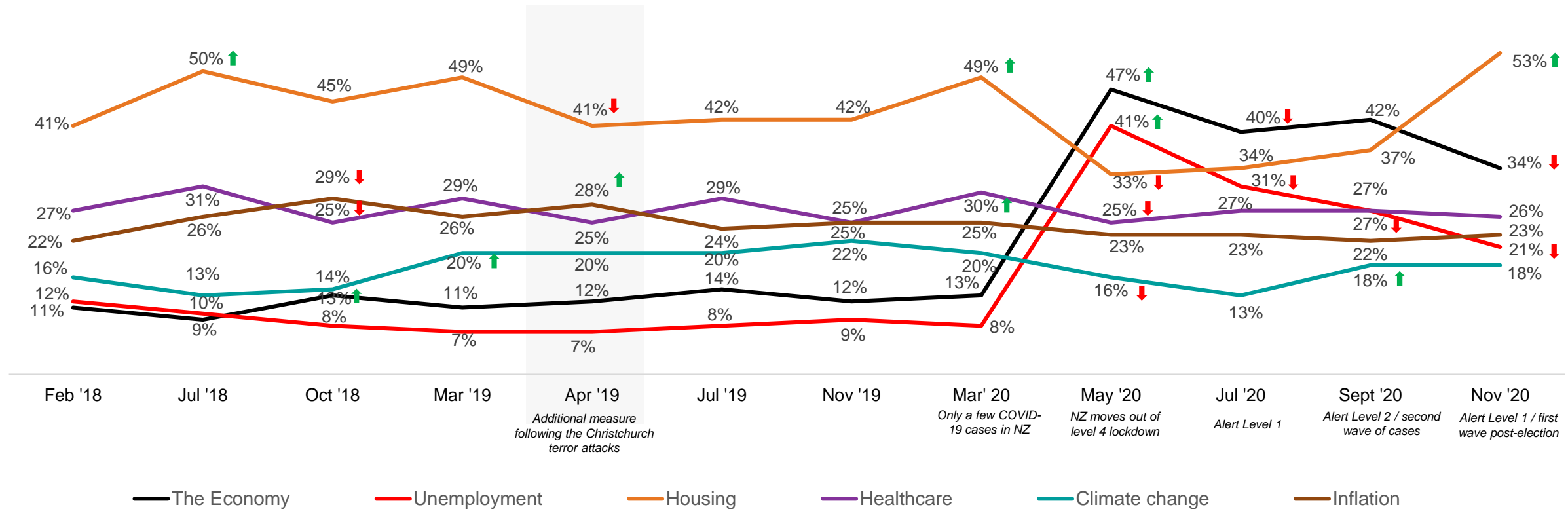
Healthcare /  
hospitals

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

Base: Nov '20 (n=1,001) – 18–24 years (n=146), 25–54 years (n=500), 55–64 years (n=217), 65–74 years (n=138)

# NOTEWORTHY ISSUES

Concerns around housing has increased and are at the highest level since tracking began. Whilst there is a drop in the number who are concerned about the economy, it is still the second most important issue to New Zealanders. Unemployment concerns peaked during lockdown and have declined since.



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

Base: Nov '20 (n=1,001), Sept '20 (n=1,000), July '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), Feb '18 (n=610)



# CURRENT GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

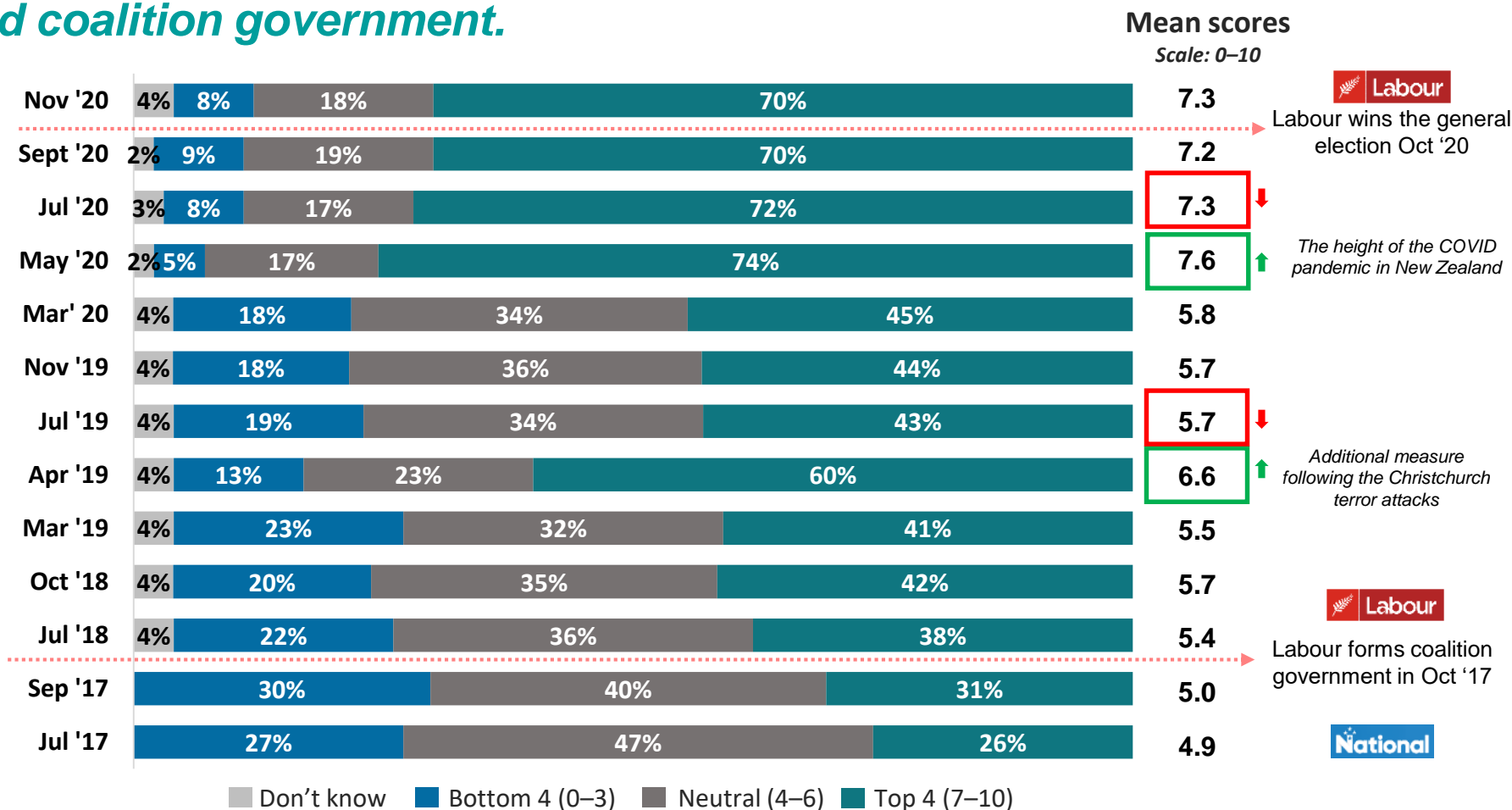
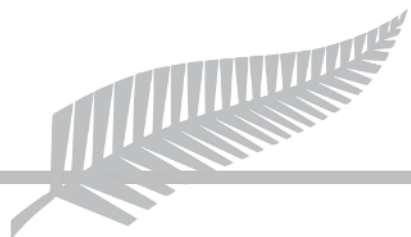


# RATING OF GOVERNMENT OVER LAST 6 MONTHS

*Perceptions of the current Labour government remain high and in line with that of the pre election Labour-led coalition government.*

Ratings of the government's performance increased significantly during the COVID-19 lockdown, and has remained high since, despite a slight drop in July '20.

70% of all respondents gave the current Labour government a rating of between 7–10 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'?




Base: Nov '20 (n=1,001), Sept '20 (n=1,000), Jul '20 (n=1000), 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), Feb '18 (n=610)











# MANAGING THE ISSUES

The political parties perceived as most capable of managing the issues

# POLITICAL PARTY MOST CAPABLE OF MANAGING ISSUES

*The Labour Party is seen as the political party most capable of managing the majority of issues. Environmental pollution is seen as best-handled by the Green Party & Labour equally whereas Green Party continues to have an edge in managing Climate change.*

ISSUE	POLITICAL PARTY
1: Housing / Price of Housing	 Labour
2: The Economy	 Labour
3: Poverty / Inequality	 Labour
4: Healthcare / Hospitals	 Labour
5: Inflation/Cost of Living	 Labour
6: Unemployment	 Labour
7: Climate Change	 Green
8=: Crime / Law and Order	 Labour
8=: Drug / Alcohol Abuse	 Labour
10: Environmental Pollution / Water Concerns	 Green  Labour

ISSUE	POLITICAL PARTY
11: Transport / Public Transport/Infrastructure	 Labour
12: Household Debt / Personal Debt	 Labour
13=: Immigration	 Labour
13=: Education	 Labour
15: Taxation	 Labour
16: Race relations / Racism	 Labour
17=: Population/Overpopulation	 Labour
17=: Issues facing Māori	 Labour
17=: Petrol Prices/Fuel	 Labour
20: Defence / foreign affairs	 Labour

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

**Base:** November '20 (n=1,001)



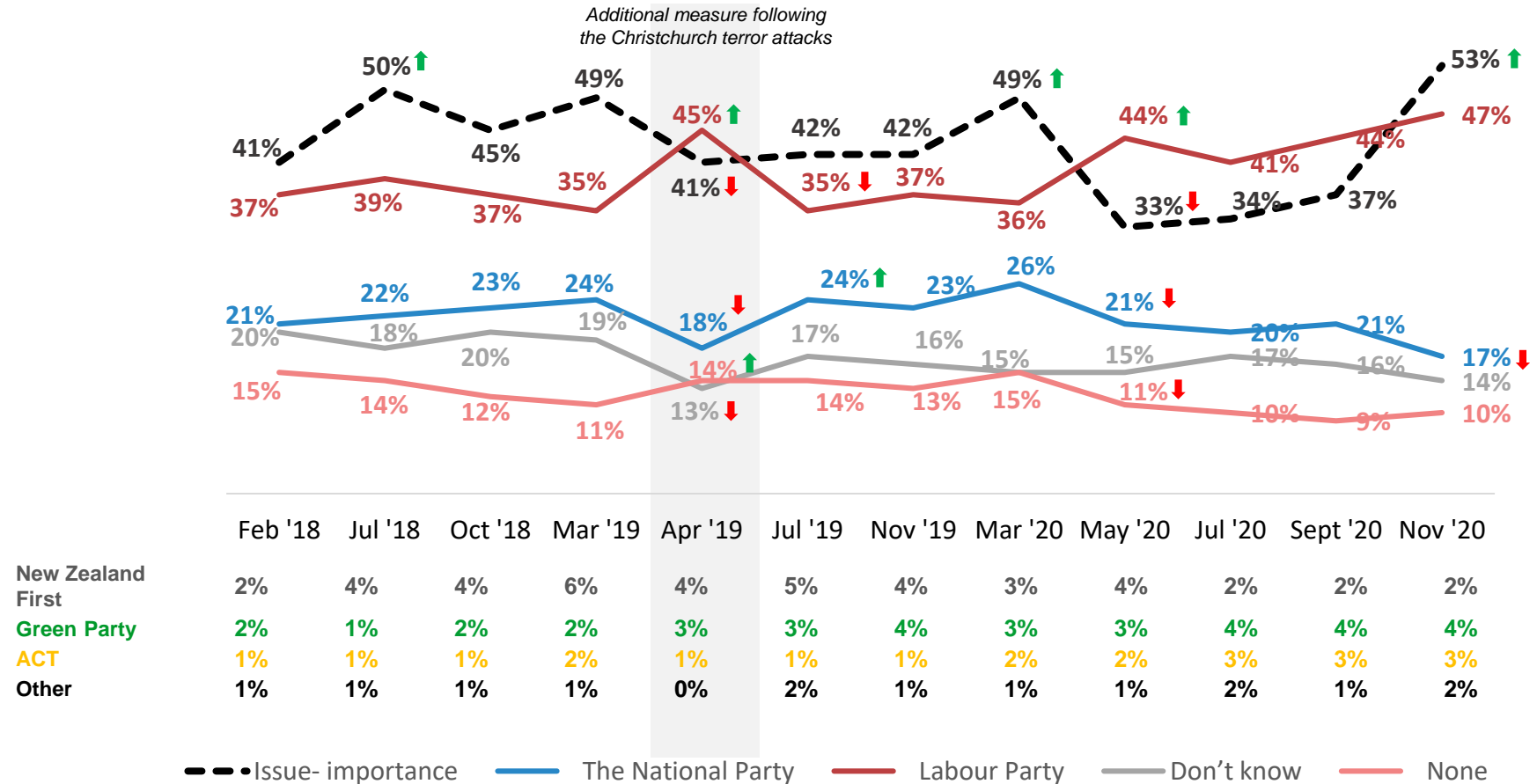
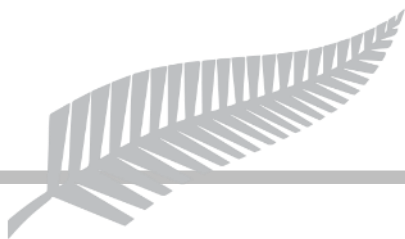
# #1 ISSUE – HOUSING / PRICE OF HOUSING

*Housing has again become the biggest issue facing New Zealanders, with the Labour Party significantly ahead of others in perceived ability to manage housing / price of housing.*



Concerns about housing & the price of housing are at an all-time high as over half of New Zealanders believe this is the main issue facing the country.

Confidence in the Labour Party's ability to manage this issue is also the highest level ever.



Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues: Housing / Price of Housing

Base: Approx. n=610 per wave, except for May '20, Jul '20, Sept '20 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001)

# SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE HOUSING ISSUES

## Voice of New Zealanders



*Work with local government to decrease barrier to densify housing in the urban cores; increase housing availability.”*

**Auckland City, full-time employment, TAHI\*: \$100k–\$120k**



*To somehow put a stop to rising house prices; which in turn put up rental costs; so that those struggling might have access to better housing.”*

**Waikato, not in paid work and not seeking work, TAHI\*: \$15k–\$30k**



*They either need to bring the housing prices down or find a way/scheme for the lower class of people who work hard yet cannot afford to save for the deposit of a house to be able to buy one. We all pay rent so it's not a case of not being able to pay for it but on a low or single income it is not possible to save for the deposit which is so high it is out of reach.”*

**Auckland City, not in paid work and not seeking work, TAHI\*: \$30k–\$50k**



*Stop letting the other countries buy houses and let them sit empty so they have a NZ address.”*

**Waikato, full-time employment, TAHI\*: Up to \$15k**



*Cool the housing market so there are affordable housing options in all areas. Either building more houses to rent or tax relief or other assistance for buying.”*

**Northland, full-time employment, TAHI\*: \$60k–\$80k**



*Access to a lot more affordable and available housing for everyone. Because of the government changes with housing rentals, home owners are having in excess of 50+ people apply for the one house because there's not enough homes to go around for everyone everywhere and others having to move because their landlords cannot afford to get their homes up to rentable standards so they sit empty.”*

**Taranaki, not in paid work and not seeking work, TAHI\*: up to \$15k**

Q: What do you think the government needs to change or do differently to improve life in New Zealand? (open-ended question)

Base: November '20 (n=1,001)

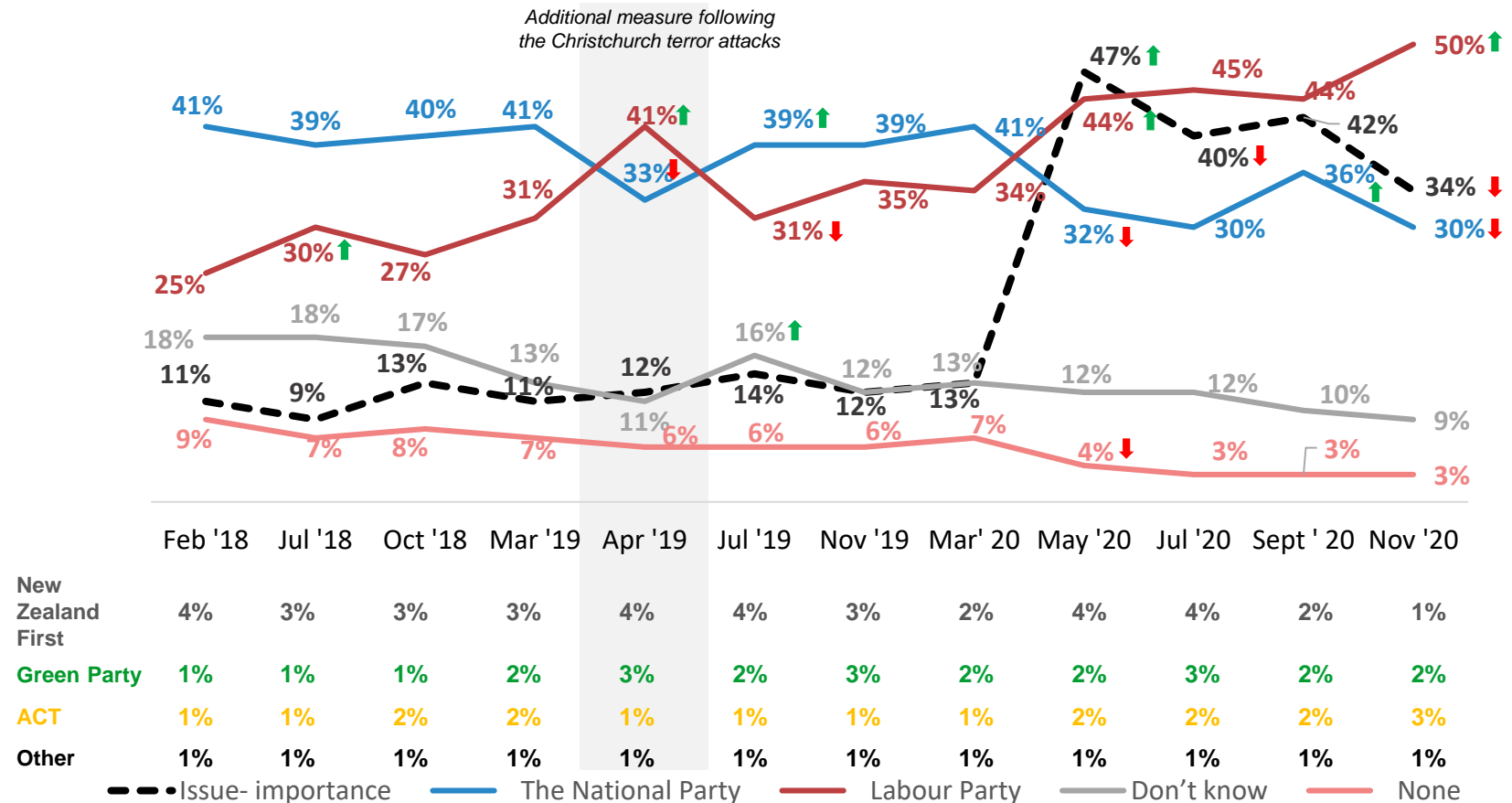
## #2 ISSUE – THE ECONOMY

*Half of New Zealanders believe that the Labour Party are the most capable at managing the issue of the economy.*



Until the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Party was seen as most capable of handling issues surrounding the economy.

However, perceptions of the Labour Party in being capable to deal with the economy increased during the pandemic and continues rise.



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

Base: Approx. n=610 per wave, except for May '20, Jul '20, Sept '20 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001)



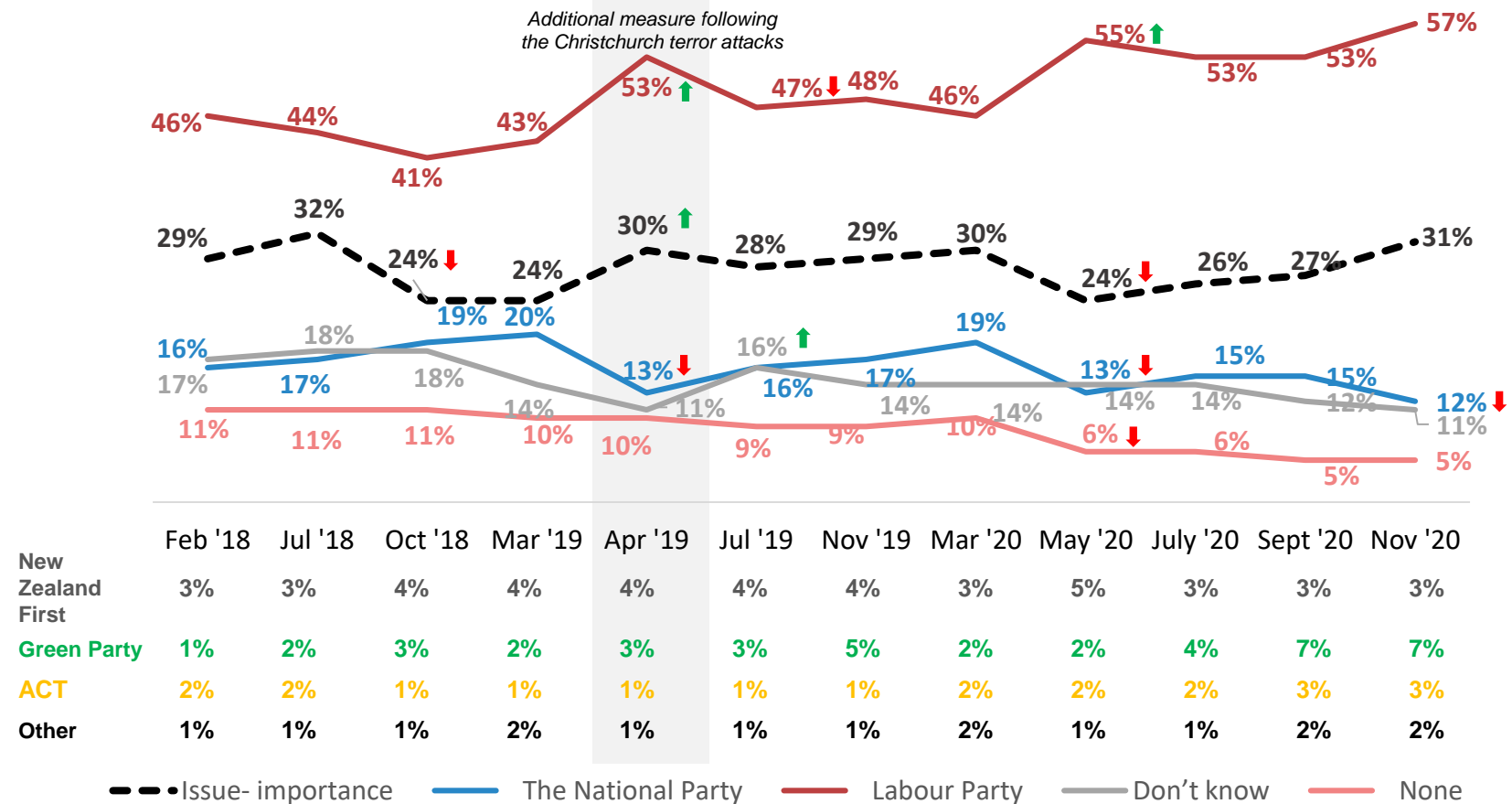
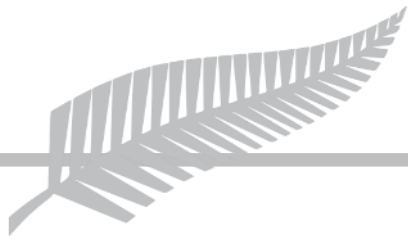
# #3 ISSUE – POVERTY / INEQUALITY

Concerns regarding poverty / inequality have returned to pre-COVID levels and the Labour Party is overwhelmingly seen as the most capable party to handle poverty & inequality issues.



Poverty / Inequality has been one of the top issues since February 2018.

The gap continues to widen between Labour and the National Party, with 57% of New Zealanders believing that the Labour Party are most capable of handling issues of poverty and inequality (vs. 12% National Party).



Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues: Poverty / Inequality

Base: Approx. n=610 per wave, except for May '20, Jul '20, Sept '20 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001)

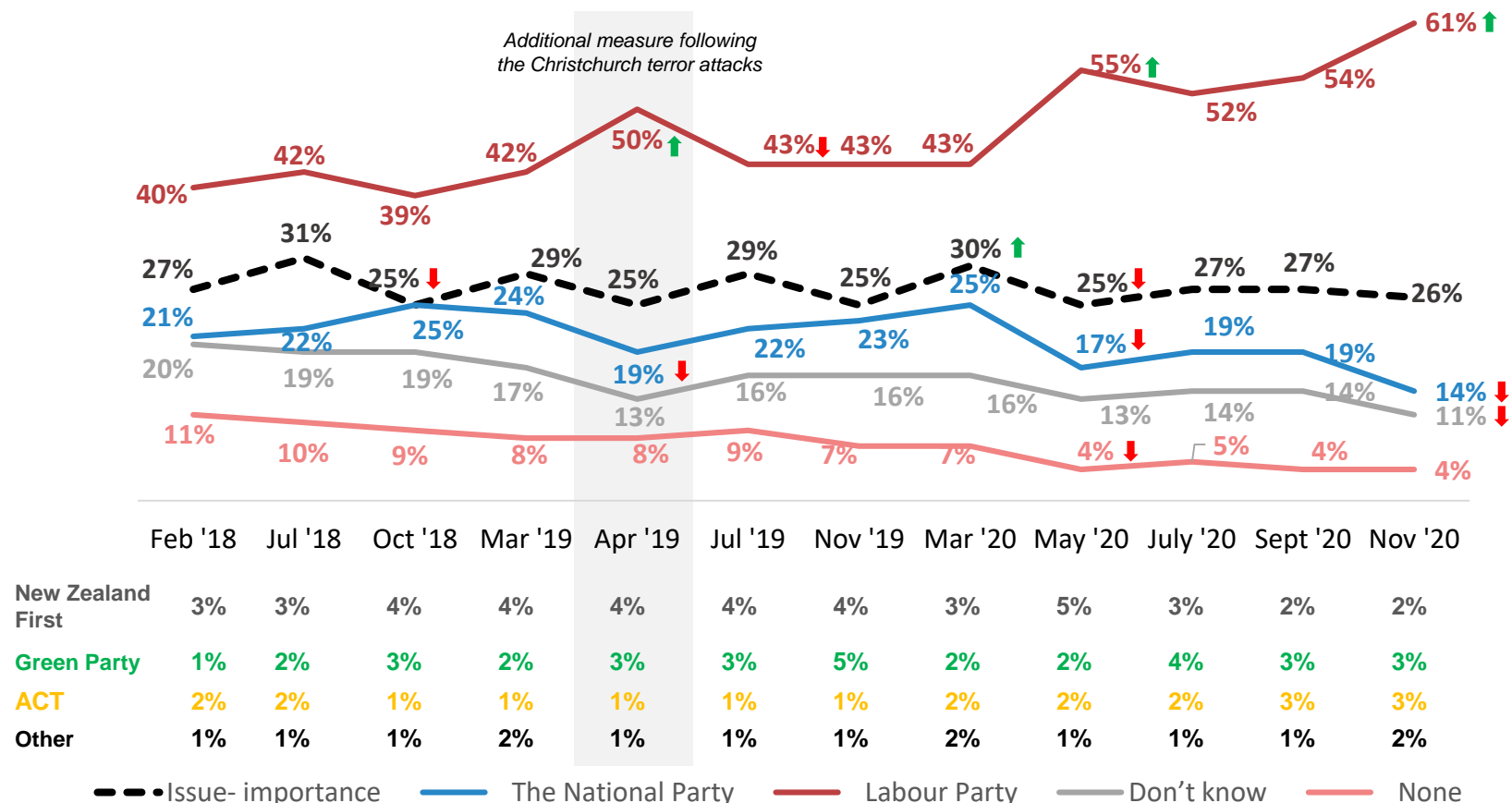
# #4 ISSUE – HEALTHCARE / HOSPITALS

*The Labour Party has further extended its lead in terms of being seen as the party most capable of managing healthcare issues.*



Healthcare / hospitals has been a consistently highly rated issue since February 2018.

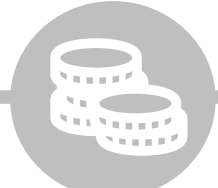
There has been a notable increase in the number who perceive the Labour Party as the most capable of dealing with this issue. The gap between the Labour party and National party has increased significantly after March '20



Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues: Healthcare / Hospitals  
 Base: Approx. n=610 per wave, except for May '20, Jul '20, Sept '20 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001)

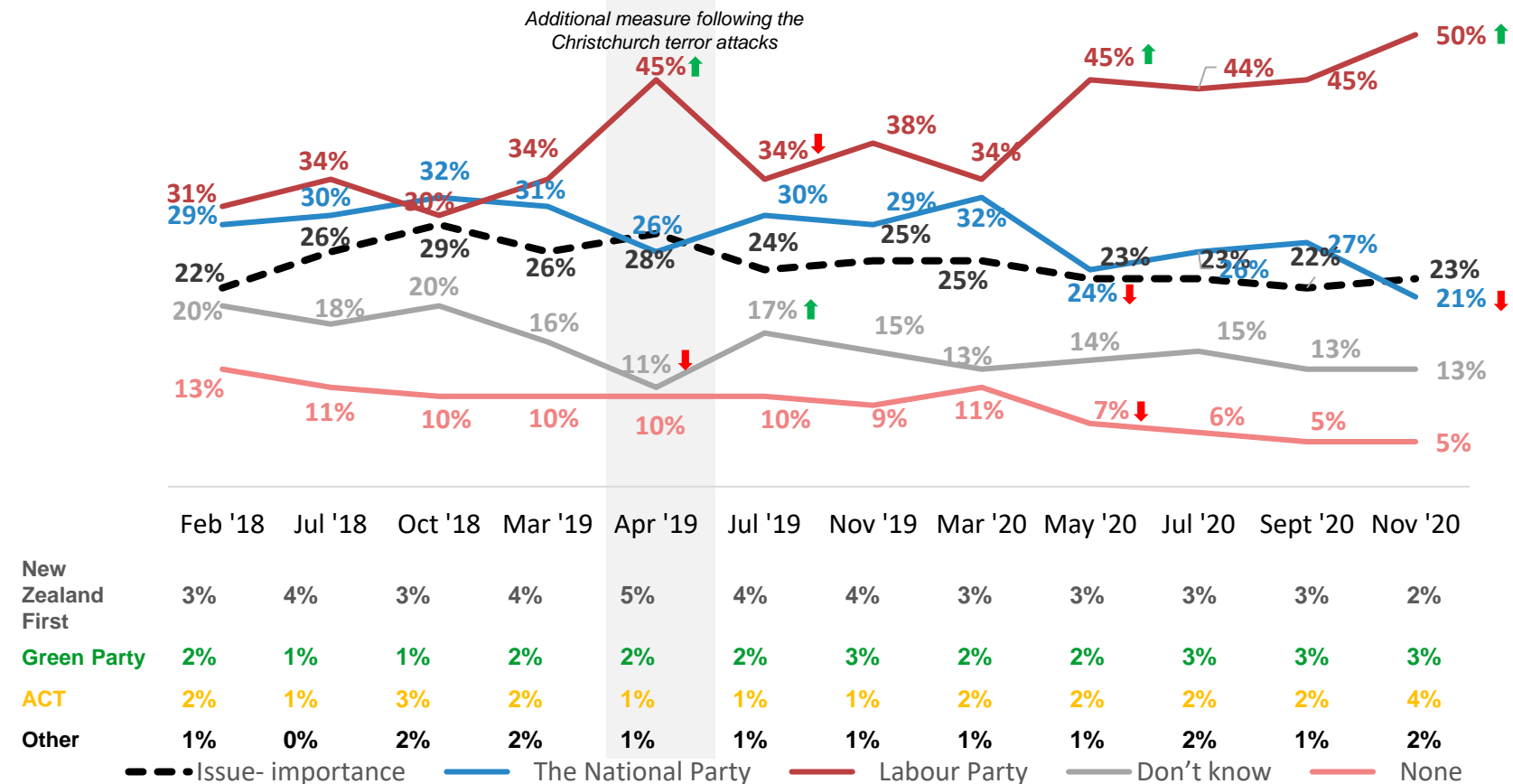
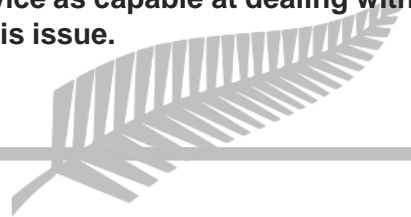
# #5 ISSUE – INFLATION / COST OF LIVING

*In March '20, both Labour Party & National party perceived to be almost equally competent in ability to manage the issue of inflation / cost of living but the Labour party has increased their lead steadily since then.*



The issue of inflation / cost of living was one of the top-5 issues facing New Zealand in March '20, when the Labour Party and the National Party were seen as similarly capable of handling this issue.

However, since March '20, this gap has widened considerably, with the Labour Party seen as more than twice as capable at dealing with this issue.



Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues: Inflation / cost of living

Base: Approx. n=610 per wave, except for May '20, Jul '20, Sept '20 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001)

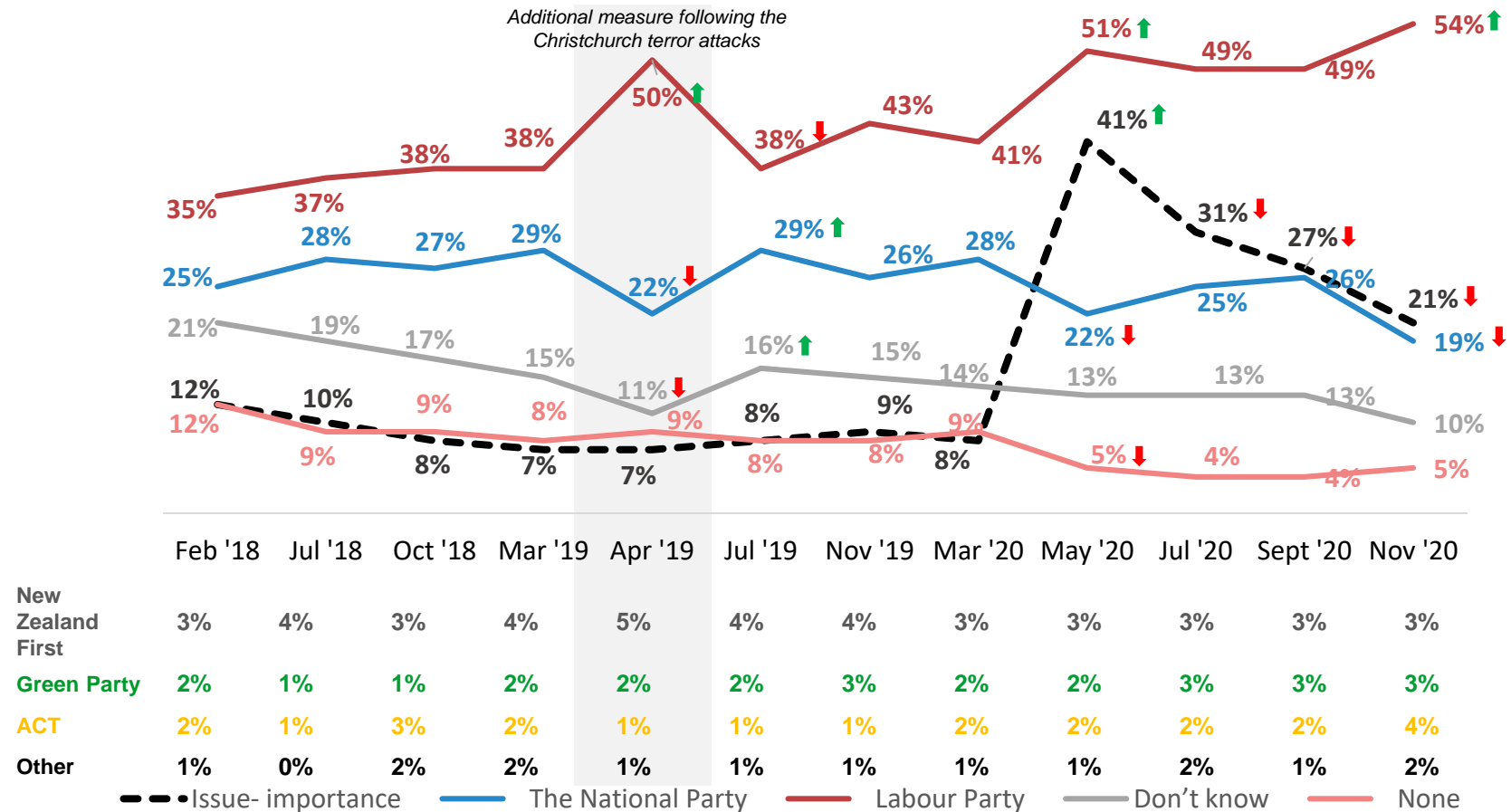


# #6 ISSUE – UNEMPLOYMENT

Concerns for unemployment are on the decline after peaking in March '20. The Labour Party has further increased their position as the party seen as best to deal with unemployment.



Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment wasn't seen as a major concern. However, concerns around unemployment increased significantly in May '20. Since July, these concerns have been dropping steadily.



Q: Please select the political party that you believe is most capable of managing each of the following issues: Unemployment  
 Base: Approx. n=610 per wave, except for May '20, Jul '20, Sept '20 (n=1,000), Nov '20 (n=1,001)

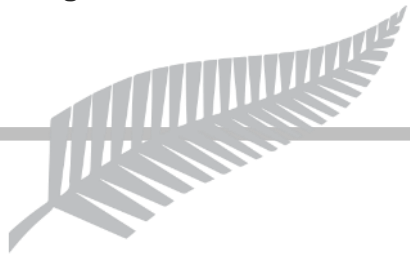
# COMPARING NZ'S ISSUES TO AUSTRALIA'S

# TOP 10 ISSUES - NZ VS. AUSTRALIA



The economy and unemployment increased in importance during the COVID pandemic in Australia as well as New Zealand. While they are still in number 1 and 2 position, there are signs they are decreasing.

Housing is significantly less of an issue in Australia than it is in New Zealand and appears to be slowly trending downwards.



1	Housing/price of housing	53%
2	The Economy	34%
3	Poverty / Inequality	31%
4	Healthcare / Hospitals	26%
5	Inflation / Cost of living	23%
6	Unemployment	21%
7	Climate change	18%
8=	Crime / Law and order	14%
8=	Drug / alcohol abuse	14%
10	Environmental pollution / water concerns	12%

1	The Economy	46%
2	Unemployment	39%
3	Healthcare / Hospitals	30%
4	The Environment	25%
5	Inflation / Cost of Living	24%
6	Crime / Law and Order	20%
7	Housing / Price of Housing	16%
8	Poverty / Inequality	15%
9	Education	12%
10	Drug abuse	11%

**Base:** November 2020 – New Zealand (n=1,001), Australia (n=1,013)



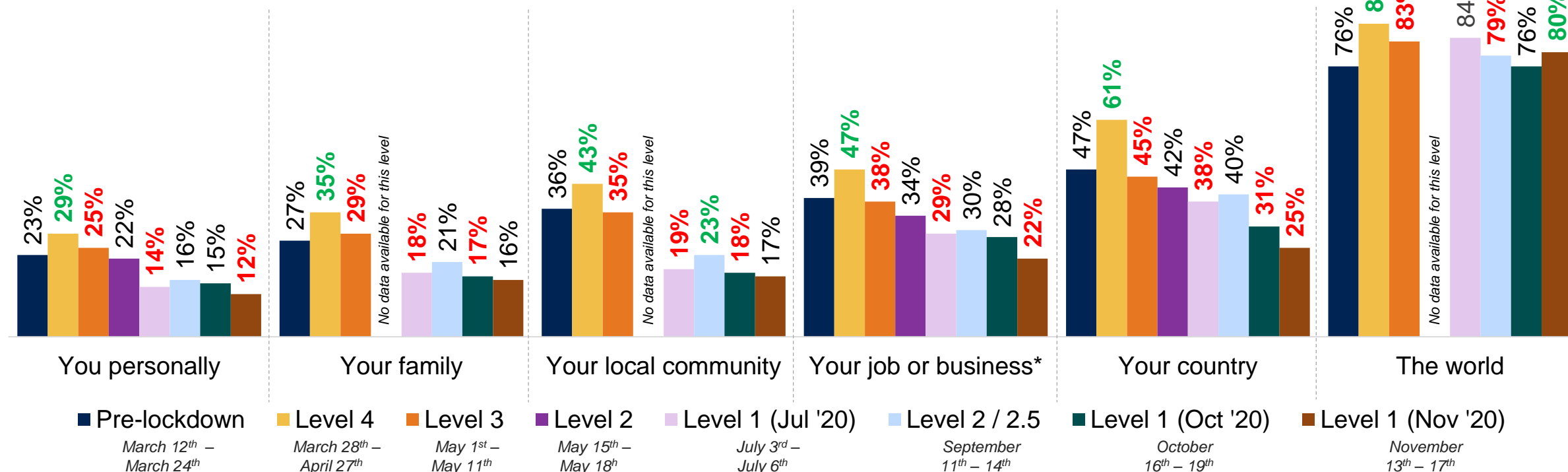
# CURRENT COVID PERCEPTIONS & BEHAVIOURS



# PERCEPTIONS OF COVID THREAT

*COVID-19 is seen as a much larger threat to the world compared to New Zealand as a country and at a local or personal level.*

What level of threat do you think the coronavirus or COVID-19 poses to each of the following? (% 'high' threat)



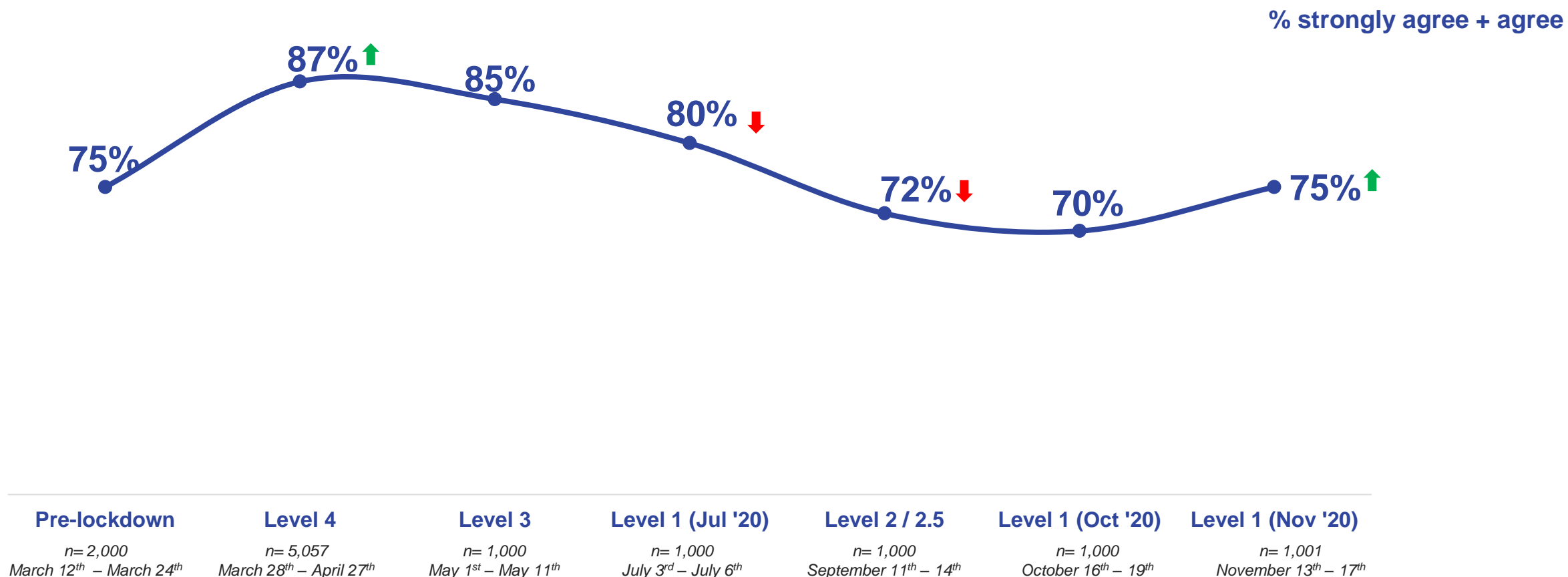
Q: What level of threat do you think the coronavirus or COVID-19 poses to each of the following?

**Base:** Pre-lockdown sample (n=2,000), level 4 sample (n=5,057), level 3 sample (n=2,000), level 2 sample (n=1,000), level 1 July '20 sample (n=1,000), level 2 / 2.5 sample (n=1,000), level 1 / 2 sample (n=1,000), level 1 Oct '20 sample (n=1,000), level 1 Nov '20 sample (n=1,001) **\*Note:** Asked only of those employed full-time, part-time, or self-employed – pre-lockdown sample (n=1,299), level 4 sample (n=3,394), level 3 sample (n=1,351), level 2 sample (n=700), level 1 July '20 sample (n=659), level 2 / 2.5 sample (n=636), level 1 / 2 sample (n=633), level 1 Oct '20 sample (n=639), level 1 Nov '20 sample (n=667)

Historical data for this question has been taken from the COVID-19 tracker study run by Ipsos.

# KEEPING THE BORDER CLOSED

*Support for keeping the borders closed increased in November after having decreased slowly since late March*



**Q:** Do you agree or disagree with the following: We should close the borders of my country / keep the borders closed, and not allow anyone in or out until the virus is proven to be contained.

**Base:** Total (n=12,058), data collected on a weekly basis n=1000 per week, the dates mentioned above indicate the first and last date of FW within that level.

Historical data for this question has been taken from the COVID-19 tracker study run by Ipsos.

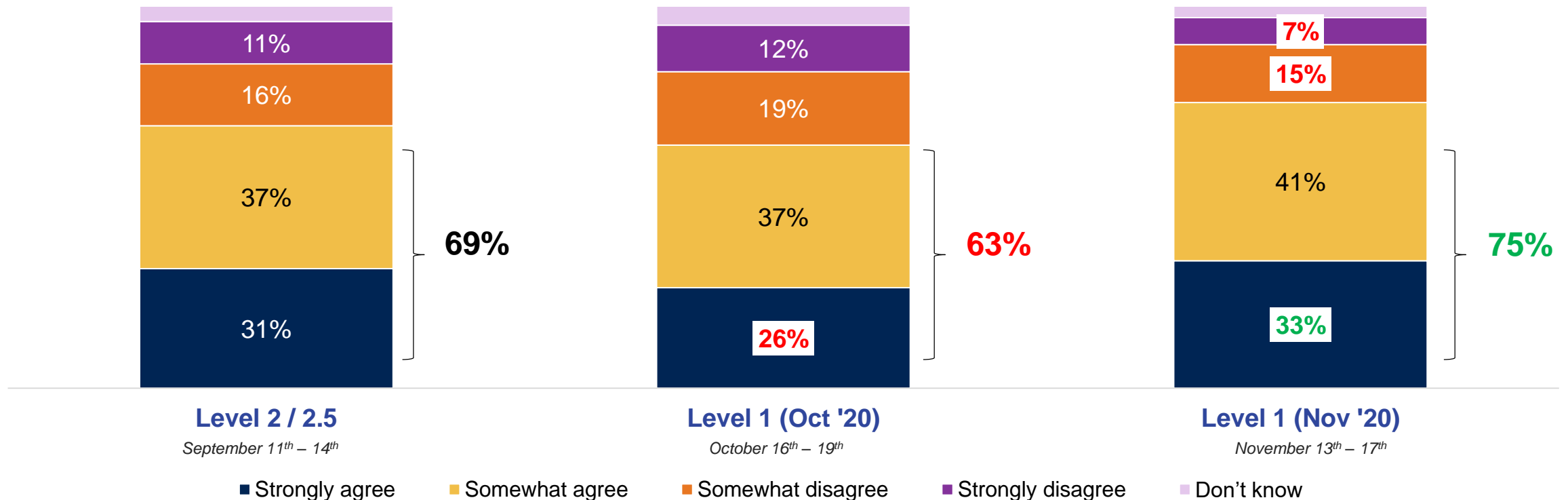
26 – © Ipsos | NZ Issues Monitor

↑ ↓ Indicates significant **increase** / **decrease** in score compared to the previous level

# SUPPORT FOR FACE MASK

*Support for the compulsory wearing of face masks in public has grown since last month.*

I would support compulsory wearing of face masks in public



Q: To what extent do you agree to each of the following?

Base: Level 2 / 2.5 sample (n=1,000), level 1 Oct '20 sample (n=1,000), level 1 Nov '20 sample (n=1,001)

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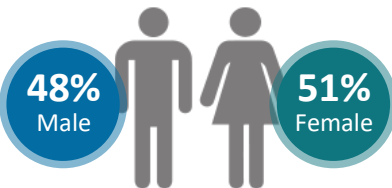
↑ ↓ Indicates significant **increase** / **decrease** in score compared to the previous level



# SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS – NOVEMBER '20



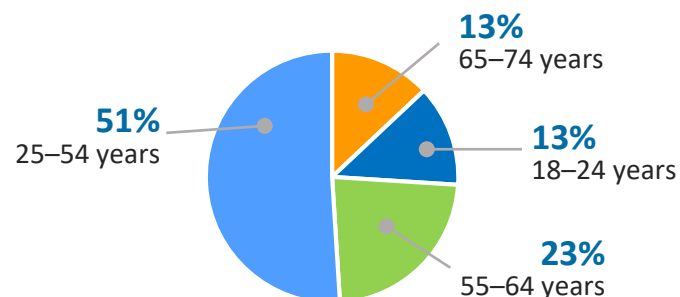
**1,001 respondents**  
were interviewed online in  
November 2020 using the Dynata  
online panel



*\*1% answered 'gender diverse'*

The precision of Ipsos  
online polls are calculated  
using 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

<b>45%</b> Full-time	<b>8%</b> Not in paid work & not seeking work
<b>15%</b> Part-time	<b>7%</b> Self-employed
<b>11%</b> Retired	<b>5%</b> Student
<b>8%</b> Not in paid work but seeking work	



## Highest education completed\*

<b>35%</b> Level 1-4
<b>40%</b> Level 5-7
<b>20%</b> Level 8-10
<b>5%</b> Don't know



## Type of area live in

<b>47%</b> In the suburbs of a large city
<b>18%</b> In a rural area
<b>13%</b> In a large city
<b>12%</b> In, or right outside, a medium sized city
<b>8%</b> In, or right outside, a small city
<b>1%</b> None of these

**SAMPLE SIZES OVER TIME:** Nov '20 (n=1,001), Sept '20 (n=1,000), July '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), Feb '18 (n=610)

# CONTACTS

## Carin Hercock

Managing Director

✉ carin.hercock@ipsos.com

☎ +64 9 538 0537



## Amanda Dudding

Research Director

✉ amanda.dudding@ipsos.com

☎ +64 21 61 22 64



# ABOUT IPSOS

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Ipsos is the third largest market research company in the world, present in 90 markets and employing more than 18,000 people.

Our research professionals, analysts and scientists have built unique multi-specialist capabilities that provide powerful insights into the actions, opinions and motivations of citizens, consumers, patients, customers or employees. Our 75 business solutions are based on primary data coming from our surveys, social media monitoring, and qualitative or observational techniques.

“Game Changers” – our tagline – summarises our ambition to help our 5,000 clients to navigate more easily our deeply changing world.

Founded in France in 1975, Ipsos is listed on the Euronext Paris since July 1st, 1999. The company is part of the SBF 120 and the Mid-60 index and is eligible for the Deferred Settlement Service (SRD).

ISIN code FR0000073298, Reuters ISOS.PA, Bloomberg IPS:FP  
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# GAME CHANGERS

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In our world of rapid change, the need for reliable information to make confident decisions has never been greater.

At Ipsos we believe our clients need more than a data supplier, they need a partner who can produce accurate and relevant information and turn it into actionable truth.

This is why our passionately curious experts not only provide the most precise measurement, but shape it to provide True Understanding of Society, Markets and People.

To do this we use the best of science, technology and know-how and apply the principles of security, simplicity, speed and substance to everything we do.

So that our clients can act faster, smarter and bolder. Ultimately, success comes down to a simple truth:  
**You act better when you are sure.**



**THANK  
YOU**

**GAME CHANGERS**

