

THE IPSOS NEW ZEALAND ISSUES MONITOR

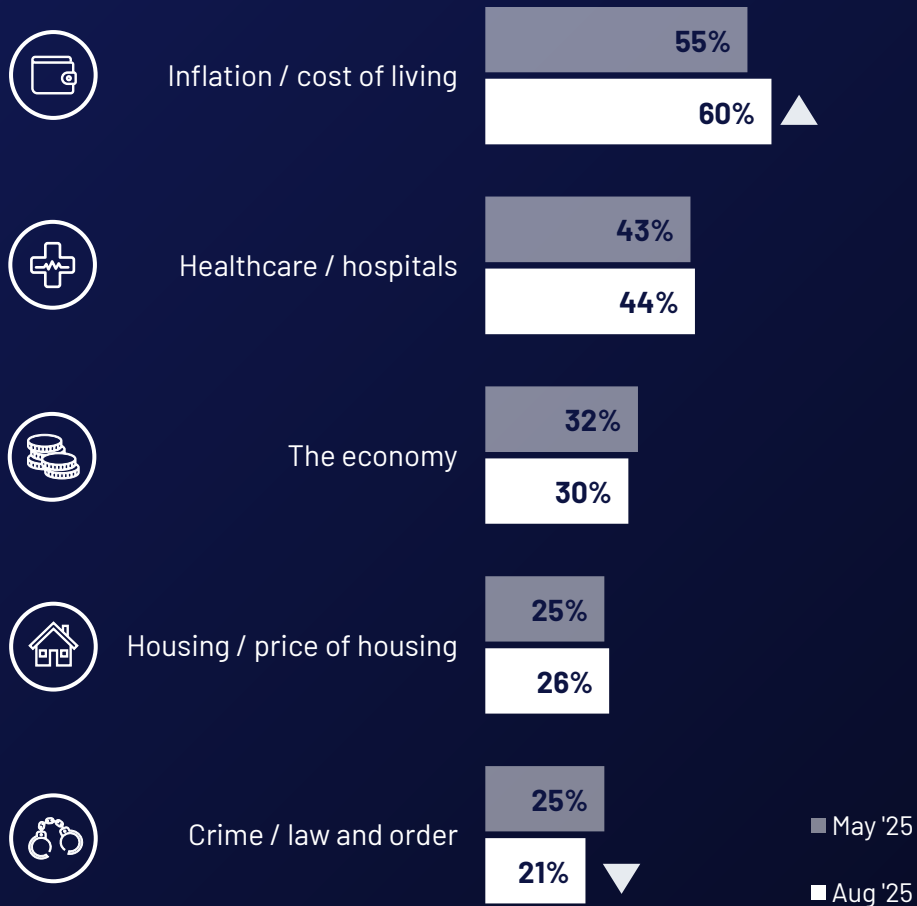
August 2025

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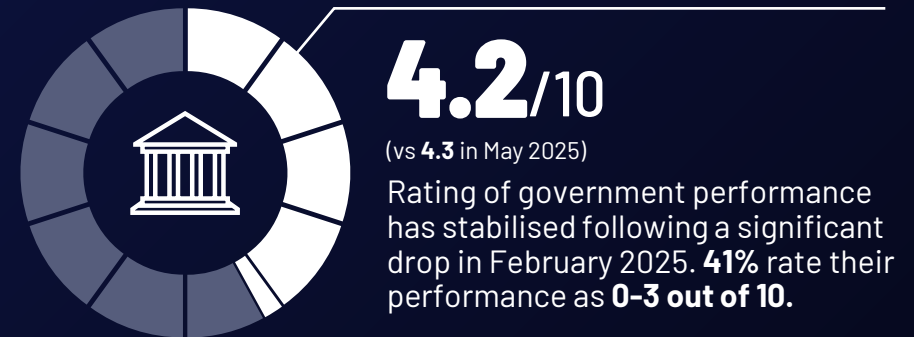


KEY FINDINGS – August 2025

TOP 5 ISSUES FACING NEW ZEALAND



OPINIONS OF GOVERNMENT



PARTY MOST CAPABLE OF MANAGING TOP 5 ISSUES

National

The economy

Crime / law and order

Labour

Inflation / cost of living

Healthcare / hospitals

Housing / price of housing

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 11th – 18th August 2025 we conducted fieldwork for our 29th 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.

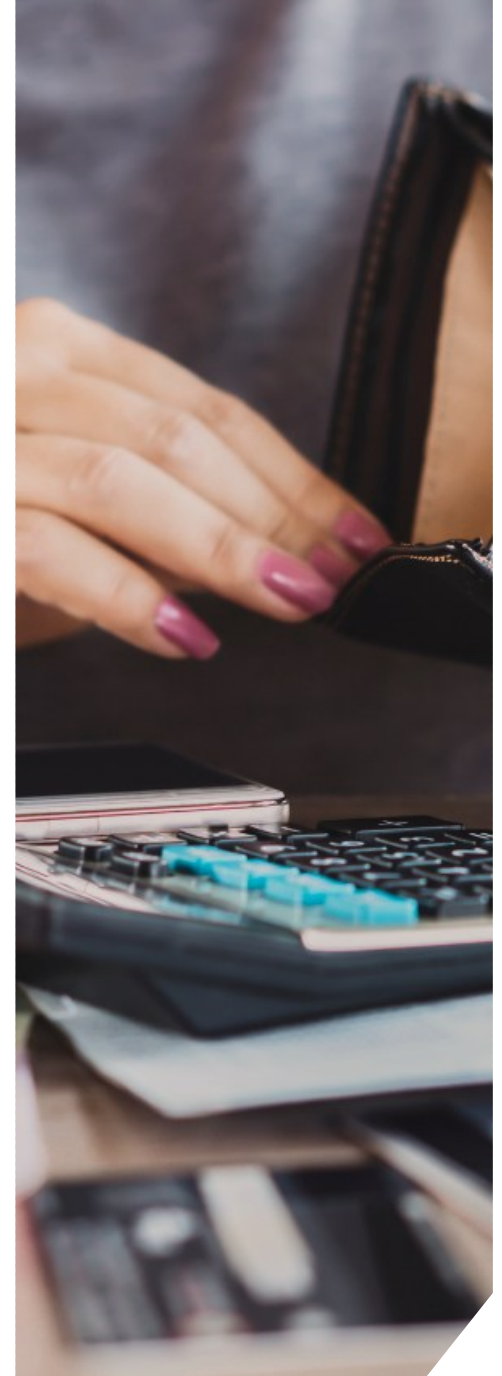
At Ipsos we strive to deliver reliable information for a true understanding of society, markets and people, to help our clients make better decisions.

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Amanda Dudding – 021 612 264 | amanda.dudding@ipsos.com

The precision of Ipsos online survey is calculated with a credibility interval with a sample of **1,002** 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?

Another bank drops rates ahead of OCR review



Eva Gallot

August 13, 2025 • 7:54am

Comment (19) Share

Secondary teachers won't cancel strikes until government improves offer

10:28 am on 14 August 2025

Share this



Lauren Crimp, Reporter
lauren.crimp@rnz.co.nz



Morning Report
Morningreport@rnz.co.nz

Gisborne nurses to join nationwide strike action over staffing levels

Gisborne Herald

18 Aug, 2025 02:39 PM Quick Read



Cameron Bagrie
Mon, 18 Aug 2025

Share

Comment / 1 New

Home / Opinion / Cameron Bagrie

Bumpy road ahead: NZ's sluggish economy and housing challenges

Government to announce biggest building consent reform since 2004

RNZ

18 Aug, 2025 12:48 PM 2 mins to read

Luxon's response to bad poll: Kiwis expect National to fix the economy, and in 2026 'they'll make their call'

Stuff

August 11, 2025 • 6:06am

Comment (634) Share

Food prices lift 5% as all five food categories up annually

NEWS BUSINESS

Tom Raynel, Fri, 15 Aug 2025, 11:44am

High confidence Reserve Bank will cut OCR to 3% on Wednesday



Tom Pullar-Strecker | The Post

August 18, 2025

Share

9yo among homeless youth seeking help as the streets claim two of their own



Mildred Armah

August 16, 2025 • 4:00am

Share

NEW ZEALAND / BUSINESS

Food prices rising fastest since 2023

11:39 am on 15 August 2025

Share this



Global context: How different countries are tracking

A recent global Ipsos survey asks citizens of 31 countries whether they think their country is *heading in the right direction* or *are off on the wrong track*.

Globally, on average, belief that countries *heading in the right direction* is low, with 3 in 5 stating their country is *on the wrong track*.

New Zealand (60%) sits right in the middle, very close to the global average, with less believing we're off on the wrong track than Great Britain (67%) but more than the US (56%) and Australia (50%)



Country

World

Singapore

Indonesia

India

Malaysia

South Korea

Argentina

Australia

Poland

US

Mexico

Canada

Ireland

Thailand

New Zealand

Israel

Colombia

Brazil

Great Britain

Germany

Chile

Spain

Netherlands

Belgium

Sweden

South Africa

Italy

Türkiye

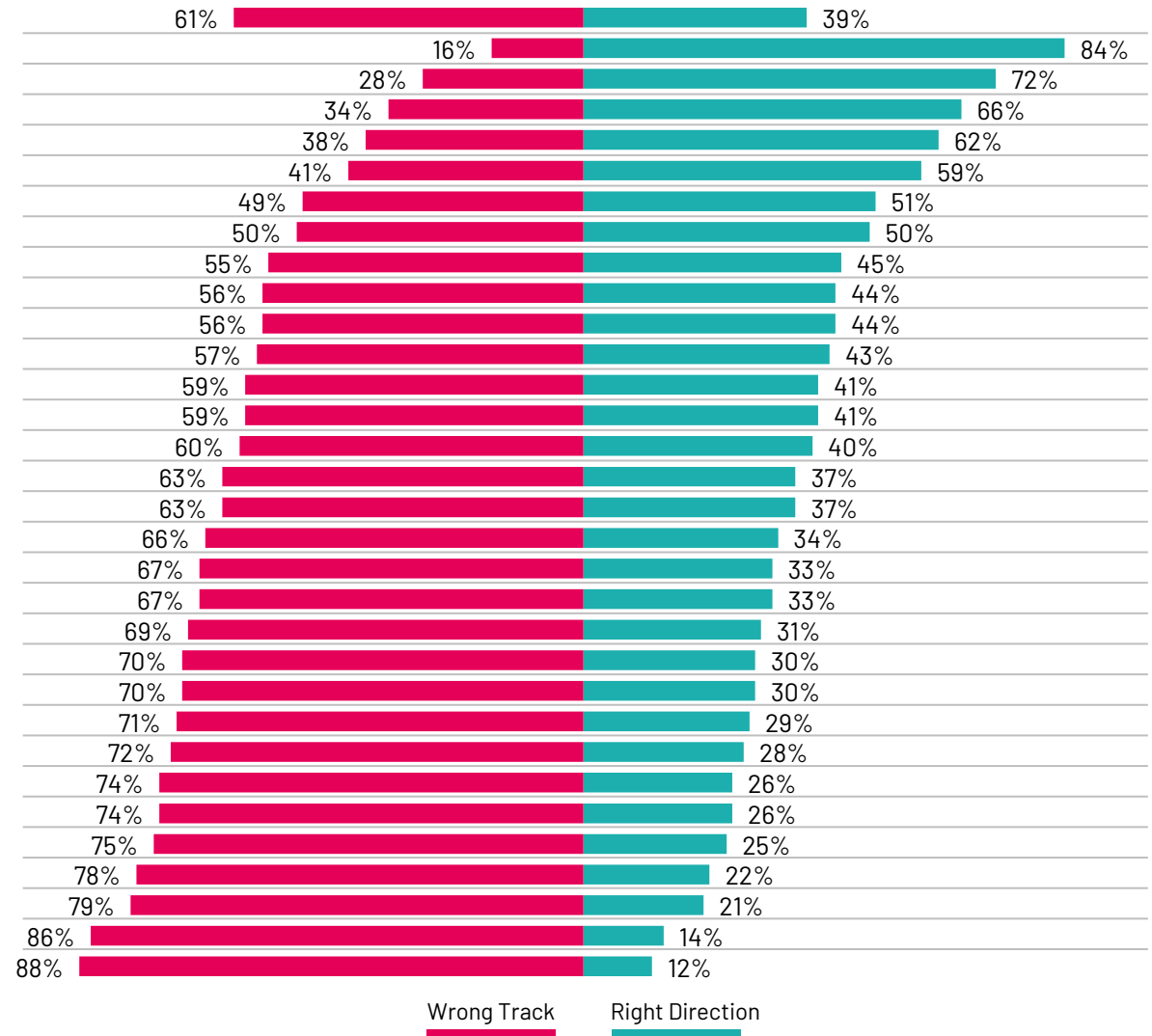
Hungary

Japan

France

Peru

Q: Would you say things in this country are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track? (July 2025)



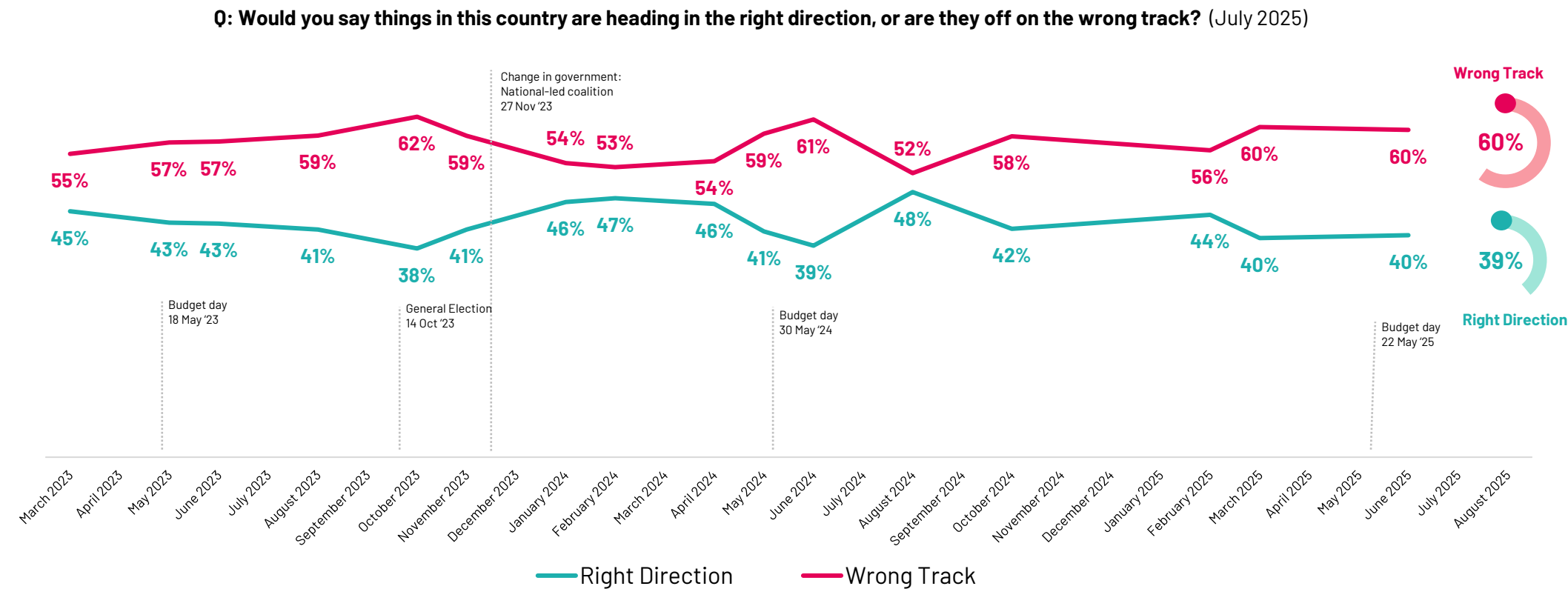
Base: Representative sample of 25,703 adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, June 20th 2025 - July 4th 2025.

Source: Ipsos Global Advisor.

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Global context: How is New Zealand tracking

Looking at New Zealand results overtime, when asked whether they believe *things in this country* is heading in the right direction or are off on the wrong track, the majority (60%) feel New Zealand is *off on the wrong track*. This sentiment has trended upwards over the past year, being 8pp higher in June 2025 compared to August 2024.



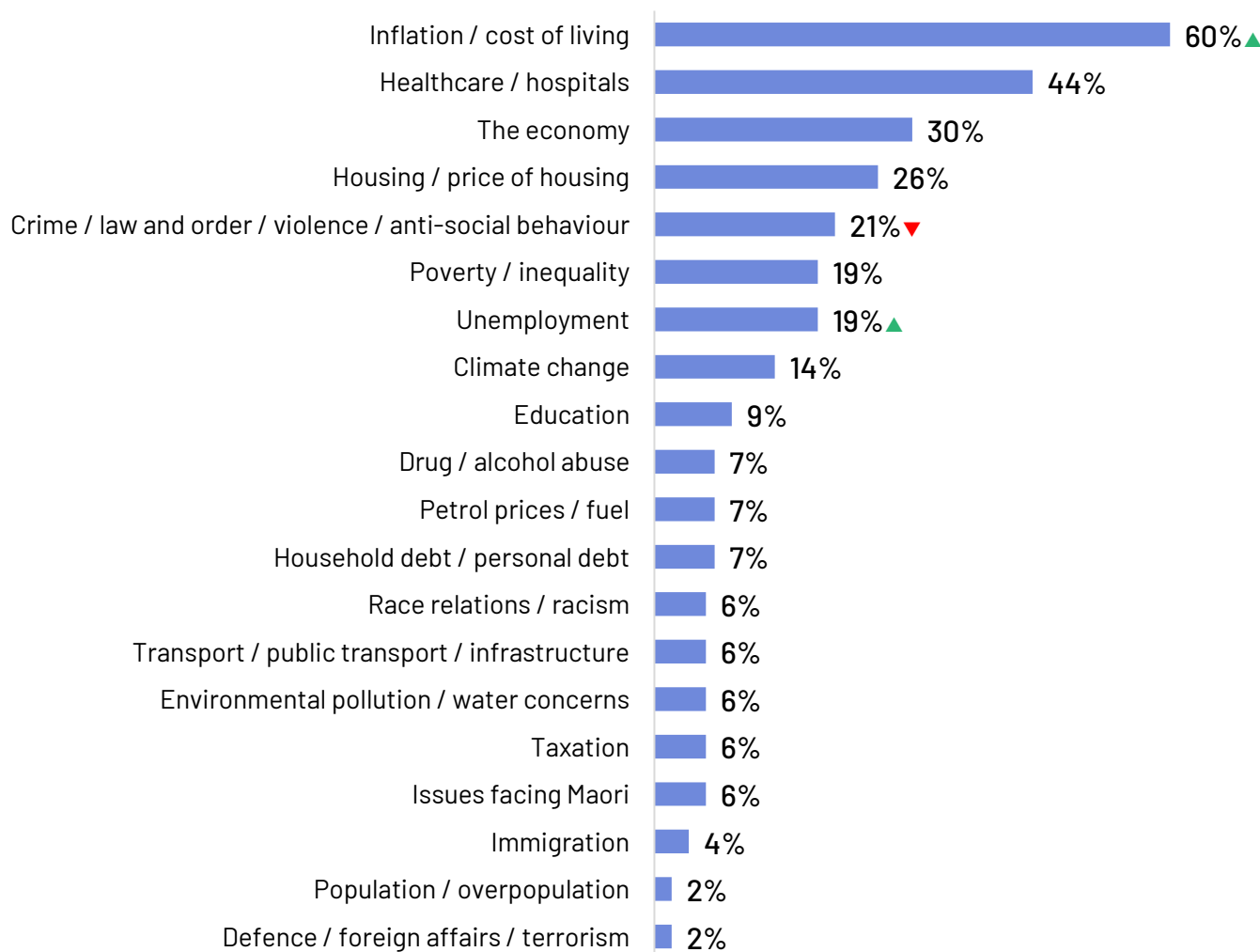
Base: Representative sample of 500adults aged 16-74 in 30 participating countries, June 20th 2025 - July 4th 2025.

Source: Ipsos Global Advisor.



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: Aug '25 - Total sample (n=1,002)

Inflation / cost of living has remained the number one issue facing New Zealanders for the 14th straight Issues Monitor survey in a row, since its rise to the position in Feb '22.

Following a notable drop in February, concern for *Inflation / cost of living* has risen in two consecutive waves, including a significant increase from May, with 60% now identifying it as a primary concern.

Healthcare / hospitals has continued its upward trend and remains a major concern for nearly half of New Zealanders.

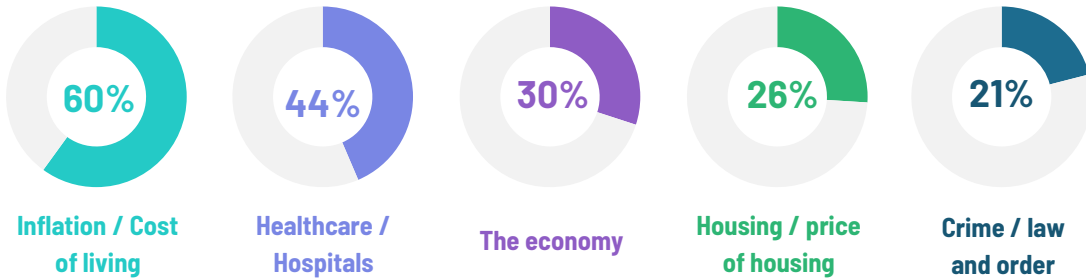
Concerns around *Crime / law & order* has decreased significantly this wave, with 1 in 5 identifying it as a key issue.

Unemployment has significantly increased, rising above *Climate change* as a key issue for New Zealanders.

Defence / foreign affairs / terrorism and *Issues facing Māori* have both stabilised this wave after a significant decline in May '25.

Current top 5 issues

Spotlight August 2025

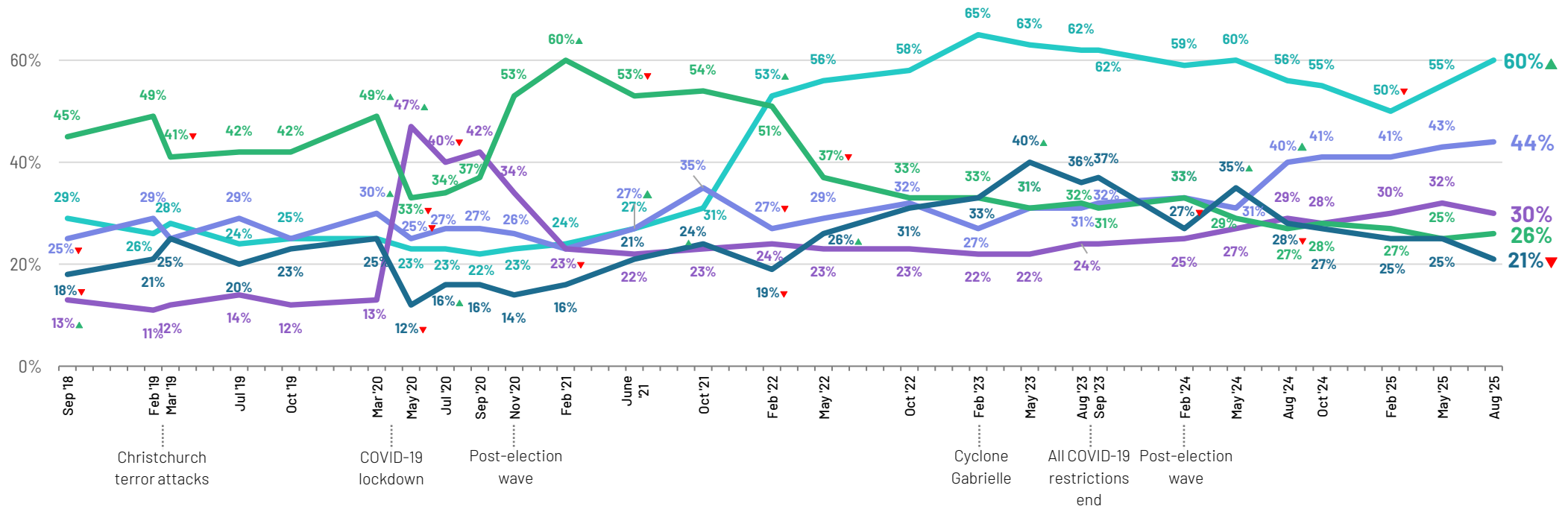


In 2025, New Zealanders' top five issues have remained consistent. Following a steady downward trend beginning in early 2023, *Inflation / cost of living* has seen a resurgence in the last two waves and is now at its highest level since May 2024.

Concern for *Healthcare / hospitals* has not significantly increased in the latest wave, however this issue has steadily gained in importance since the significant increase this time last year, and is at its highest level since the monitor began in 2018.

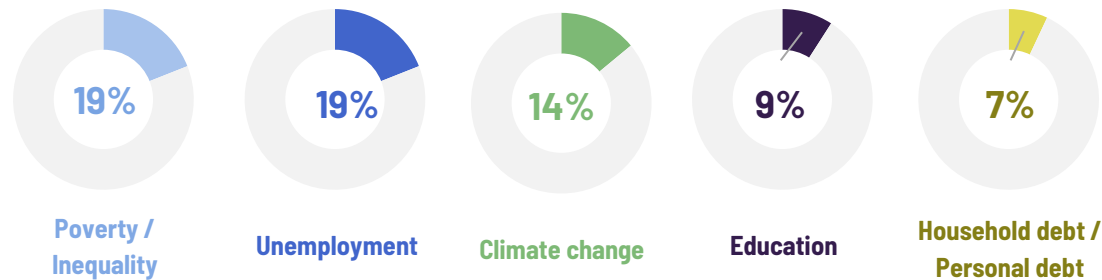
The economy remains the 3rd most important issues facing New Zealand, however concerns around the issue have slightly dropped in the latest measure.

Housing / price of housing remains stable and comparable to levels seen last year, while *Crime / law and order* has continued on its downward trend, reaching its lowest level since Feb '22



Noteworthy issues

Spotlight August 2025

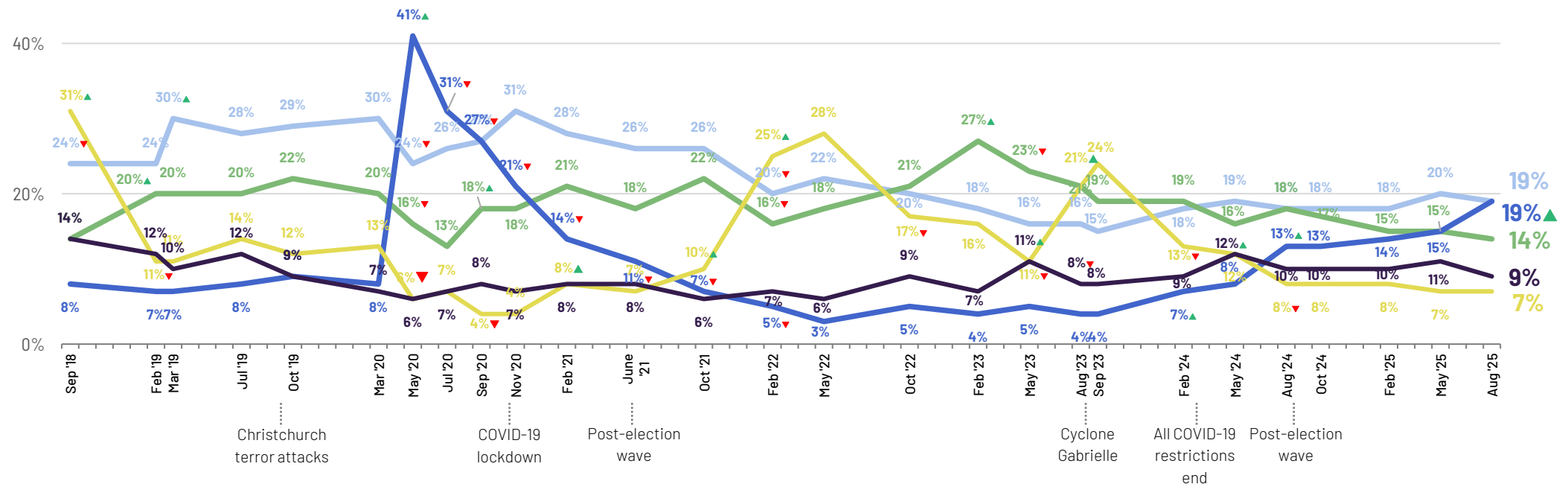


New Zealanders' concern for the remaining issues in top 10 issues have remained stable on most fronts compared to May 2025.

Poverty / inequality (19%) and *Education* (9%) have remained stable as issues facing New Zealanders over the past year.

After a period of stability, concern for *Unemployment* (19%) has seen a significant increase, reaching its highest level in the post-Covid era of 19% – up 15pp from just 4% in Aug '23.

The proportion of New Zealanders stating *Climate change* (14%) and *Household debt* (7%) has remained consistent in 2025 but has seen a longer-term decline, down 5pp and 14pp respectively compared to Aug 2023.



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: Total sample – Aug '25 (n=1,002)

Top current issues by **generation**

	Aged 18-34 (n=269)	Aged 35-49 (n=300)	Aged 50-64 (n=218)	Aged 65+ (n=215)
1	Inflation / cost of living 59%	Inflation / cost of living 68%▲	Inflation / cost of living 64%	Healthcare / Hospitals 61%▲
2	Housing / Price of housing 31%	Healthcare / hospitals 40%	Healthcare / hospitals 49%	Inflation / cost of living 49%▼
3	The economy 31%	Housing / Price of housing 30%	The economy 32%	Crime / Law & Order 31%▲
4	Healthcare / hospitals 29%▼	The economy 28%	Crime / Law & Order 27%	The economy 28%
5	Unemployment 23%	Poverty / inequality 20%	Unemployment 20%	Housing / Price of housing 25%

Financial challenges persist for younger New Zealanders

For young New Zealanders, 4 out of the top 5 issues are related to financial challenges, with *The economy* now higher than *Healthcare / hospitals*. *Unemployment* is highest amongst the youngest New Zealanders, and in the top 5 issues for those under 50.

Healthcare more pressing for older New Zealanders

Healthcare / hospitals tops the list for those aged 65+. While still significantly lower than the total population, half of over 65s identified *Inflation / cost of living* as an issue, putting it in 2nd place for this age group. Additionally, concerns for *Inflation / cost of living* has seen a significant increase as the leading issue for those aged 50-64 (up 13pp compared to May '25).

Crime more of a concern for those over 50

Concern for *Crime / law and order* is much higher in those over 50, with a third of New Zealanders aged 65+ selecting it as a top issue.

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: Total sample - Aug '25 (n=1,002)

Top current issues by **voting intent**

	Left-leaning (NET - n=454)	Right-leaning (NET - n=298)
1	Inflation / cost of living 63%	Inflation / cost of living 56%
2	Healthcare / hospitals 44%	Healthcare / hospitals 45%
3	Poverty / Inequality 30%▲	The economy 39%▲
4	Housing / price of housing 29%	Crime / Law & Order 36%▲
5	The economy 22%▼	Housing / Price of housing 20%▼

Inflation / cost of living and Healthcare / hospitals continue to remain the top 2 issues for voters on both sides of the political spectrum.

Those who say they would vote left show are significantly more likely to be concerned about *Poverty / inequality* and less so about *The economy* – this is consistent with the previous wave in May '25.

Voters on the right also show a similar outlook to the previous wave: they continue to be significantly more concerned about *The economy* and *Crime / law and order* than the total population. They are also significantly less likely to be concerned about *Housing / price of housing*.

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

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

Base: Total sample – Aug '25 (n=1,002)

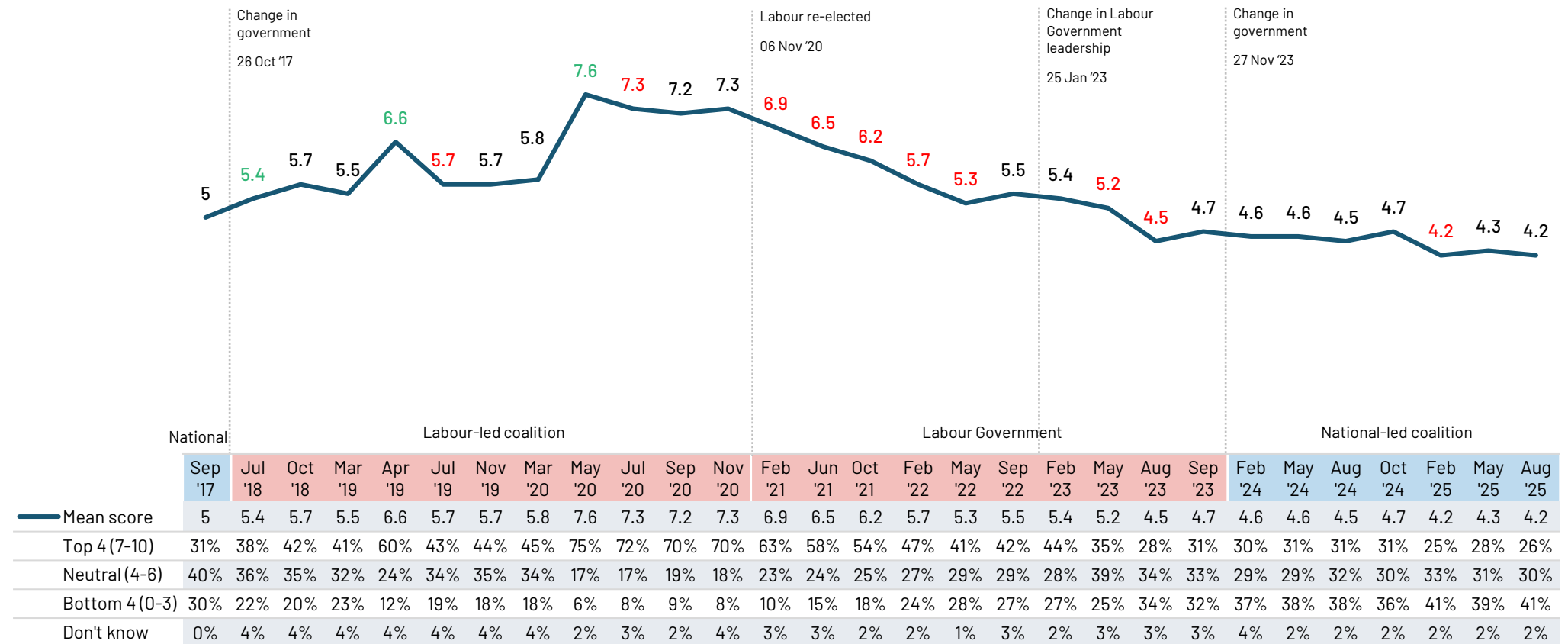
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CURRENT GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

New Zealanders' rating of how they
perceive the current government

Rating of government performance over the 6 months

The government's performance ratings over the past six months have remained low but stable throughout 2025 following a significant decline earlier in the year. Currently, 41% of New Zealanders rate the government's performance poorly, scoring it between 0 and 3 on a 10-point scale.



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 – Aug '25 (n=1,002), 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)

MANAGING THE ISSUES

The political parties perceived as
most capable of managing key issues

Political party most capable of managing Top 5 issues

New Zealanders’ perception of political parties most capable of managing the top 5 issues remained unchanged from May 2025.

Labour is seen to be most capable of managing 3 of the top 5 issues, including *Inflation / cost of living*, *Healthcare / hospitals* and *Housing / price of housing*, while National is seen be most capable of managing *The economy* and *Crime / law and order*.

	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
1	Inflation / cost of living	
2	Healthcare / hospitals	
3	The economy	
4	Housing / price of housing	
5	Crime / law & Order	

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

Base: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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Political party most capable of managing other issues

Of the remaining issues in the top 20, Labour continues to be seen as the most capable of managing 11. National is only seen as capable of managing *Defence / foreign affairs / terrorism*, while Te Pati Māori and the Green Party continue to be seen most capable of managing *Issues facing Māori* and *Climate change* respectively.

	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
=6	Poverty / Inequality	 Labour
	Unemployment	 Labour
7	Climate change	 Green
9	Education	 Labour
	Household debt / personal debt	 Labour
10=	Petrol prices / fuel	 Labour
	Drug / Alcohol abuse	 Labour

	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
	Transport / public transport	 Labour
	Race relations / Racism	 Labour
=13	Taxation	 Labour
	Environmental Pollution / water concerns	 Green
	Issues facing Māori	 māori
18	Immigration	 Labour
	Population / overpopulation	 Labour
=19	Defence / foreign affairs / terrorism	 National

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

Base: Aug '25 - Total sample (n=1,002)

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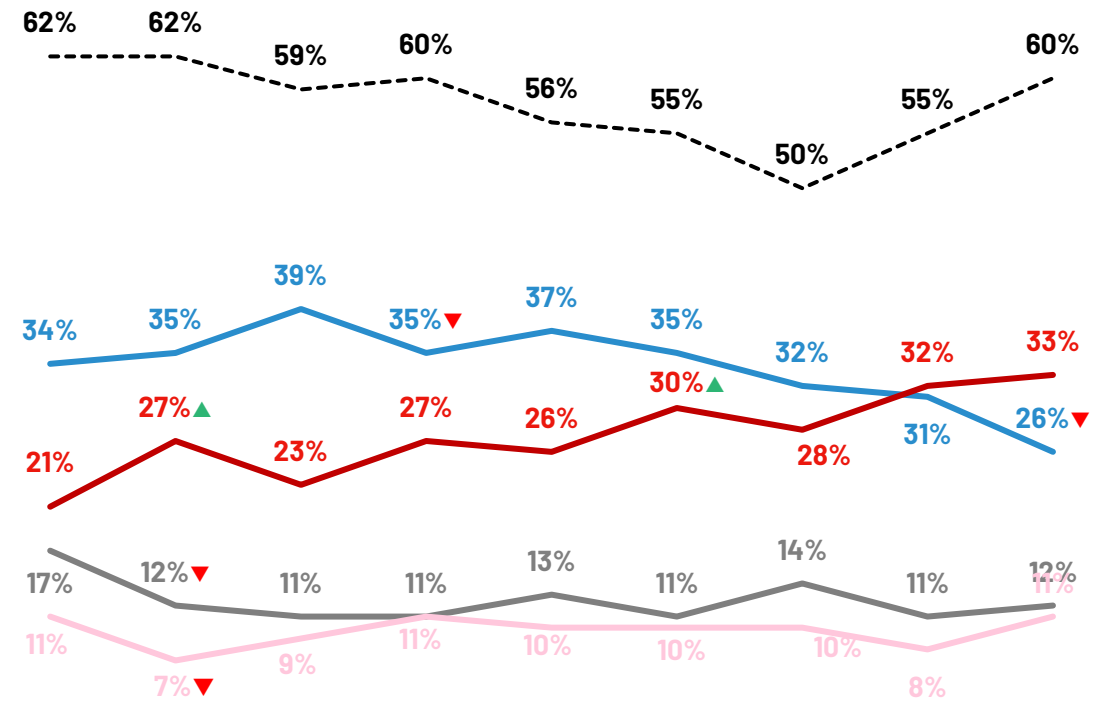
#1 issue – Inflation / cost of living



National's perceived ability in managing *Inflation / cost of living* has declined significantly this wave, continuing its downward trend beginning in May '24.

Meanwhile, confidence in Labour to manage the issue has slightly increased, widening the gap with National to 7pp.

New Zealand First has seen a significant increase in New Zealanders' confidence in its ability to manage *Inflation / cost of living*.



	Aug '23	Sep '23	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25
New Zealand First	3%	4%	2% ▼	4% ▲	3%	2%	5% ▲	4%	6% ▲
Green Party	5%	7% ▲	9%	6% ▼	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%
ACT	7%	6%	3% ▼	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	2%	2%	2%	1% ▼	2% ▲	2%	3%	2%
Other	1%	1%	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: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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

Suggestions to improve cost of living issues

Voice of New Zealanders



"Get the economy and the cost of living under control, because it's rapidly spiralling downwards at a very rapid rate."

Bay of Plenty, Self-employed, NZ European

"Get more aggressive about the cost of living and the effects of climate change."

Wellington, Part-time employee, NZ European

"Seriously address cost of living that many people are struggling with getting through the month without taking on debt or savings."

Auckland, Full-time employee, NZ European

"Reduce inflation and tax cuts for lower income. High tax for high income"

Canterbury, Full-time student, Māori

"The current government is focused on improving the lives of the wealthy and disestablishing every policy related to Māori. They have no understanding of how the cost of living crisis is impacting the nation and are creating policies that are causing higher inflation and harm."

Otago, Unemployed, Other ethnicity

Change of system. Let the people speak. Inflation/cost of living is affecting everyone and they need to change it especially with the amount unemployment."

Auckland, Self – employed, Pacific ethnicity

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

Base: Aug '25 (n=1,002)

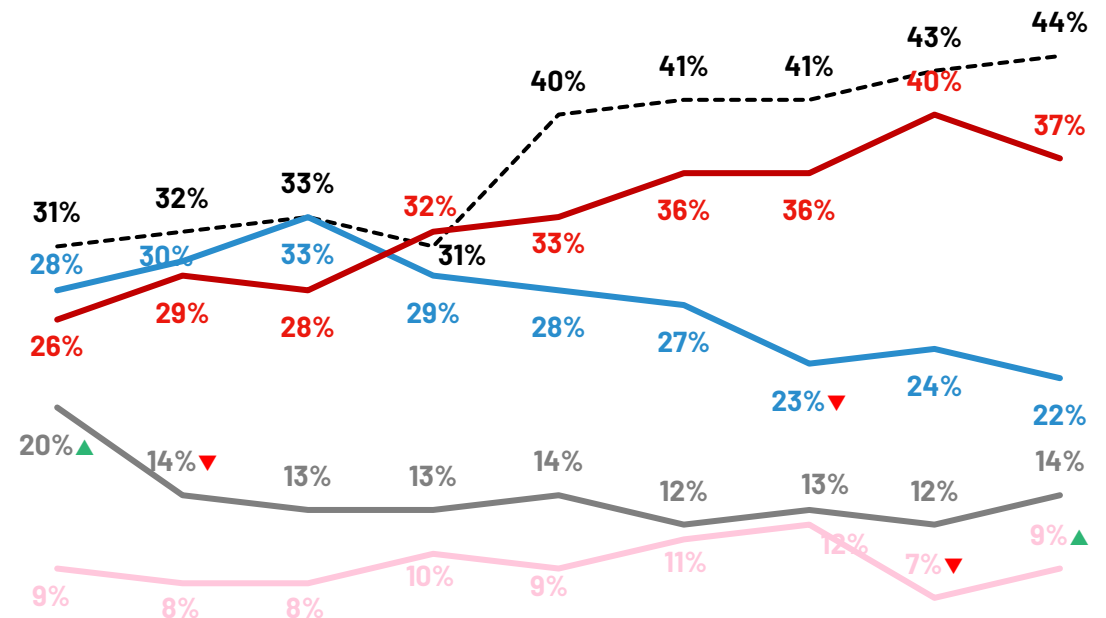
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#2 issue – Healthcare / hospitals



Perceptions of both National and Labour's ability in managing *Healthcare / hospitals* have slightly declined this wave, with Labour retaining a 15pp gap over National in this area.

Notably, a significantly higher number of New Zealanders lack confidence in any political party's capability to manage the issue effectively compared to the previous wave, with nearly 1 in 10 expressing this sentiment.



	Aug '23	Sep '23	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25
New Zealand First	3%	5% ▲	3% ▼	4%	3%	3%	4% ▲	4%	5%
Green Party	6%	7%	8%	6%	6%	5%	4%	5%	7%
ACT	6% ▲	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	4% ▲	4%	3%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%	3% ▲	3%	3%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	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: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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

Suggestions to improve *healthcare / hospital* issues



Voice of New Zealanders

"Stop taking funds from areas that need it like mental health and healthcare. Stop cutting back funding to Māori health and Māori mental health how can people improve their situation without the support?"

Bay of Plenty, Part-time employee, NZ European

"Allocate resources to the healthcare and education system so that we can keep our healthcare workers and teachers well trained and in New Zealand."

Auckland, Full-time employee, Asian

"More money into health care and privatise some of healthcare e.g. integrated systems."

Canterbury, Seeking work, NZ European

"Increase funding for primary and community healthcare focusing on prevention, culturally specific services and mental health."

Otago, Student, Pacific peoples

"Healthcare I believe should be the top priority for New Zealand. Ensure we have enough healthcare professionals all around NZ so people do not have to wait for weeks/months/years to get seen, treated and cared for."

Bay of Plenty, Part-time employee, Asian

Improve access to health care and improve working conditions for healthcare workers."

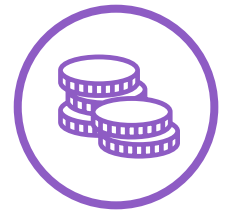
Wellington, Part-time employee, Māori

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

Base: Aug '25 (n=1,002)

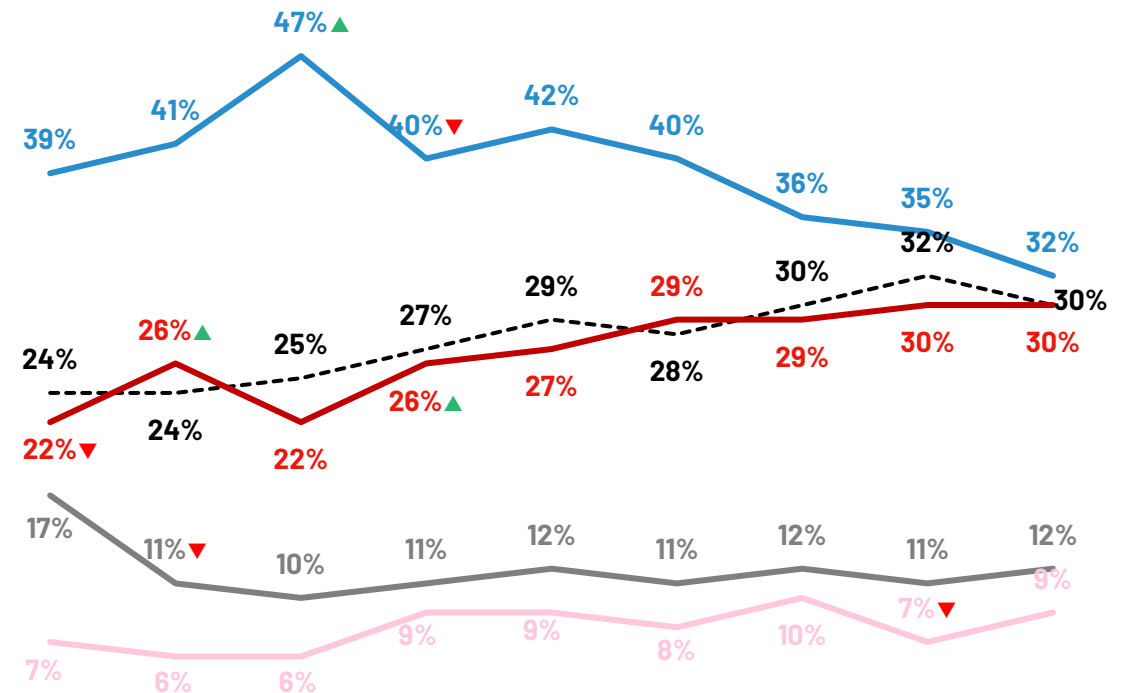
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#3 issue – The economy



With concern for *The economy* steadily rising over the past two years, New Zealanders' perception of National's ability in managing the issue has seen a downward trend from its peak in February 2024.

Meanwhile, confidence in Labour's ability remains stable as it continues to close the gap with National. Labour is now 2pp behind National, compared to 25pp in Feb'24.



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Green Party	4%	5%	6%	5%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%
ACT	6%	4%	3%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	2%	2%	2%	0% ▼	1% ▲	2%	3%	2%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	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: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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

Suggestions to improve the economy

Voice of New Zealanders



"The economy is stagnant and cost of living and goods continue to rise, there needs to be more focus on effectively stimulating the economy, creating jobs and supporting New Zealanders below the poverty line or who are struggling."

Auckland, Full-time employee, NZ European

"Stop policies that are designed to create a low wage economy. Stop red tape ministry slush fund. Fix the Strait properly instead of white elephant roads. Basically stop using the 90's playbook."

Waikato, Seeking work, NZ European / Māori

"I think parties need to work closely together and think longer term for the big issues a united plan for long term investment in health education and building the economy. Not feast and famine depending on right or left."

Taranaki, Part-time employee, NZ European

"Focus on real issues and ways to help everyone not just select groups. For example if they can lower the cost of food, petrol and housing then that helps low income families get by and the wealthier have more money to put back into the economy which will in turn be better for everyone"

Canterbury, Full-time employee, NZ European

"Create opportunities by changing visitor visa rules to promote tourism and boost economy."

Auckland, Part-time employee, Asian

"Get more people gainfully employed and contributing to the economy."

Otago, Retired, NZ European

Q: What do you think the government needs to change or do differently to improve life in New Zealand? (open-ended)
Base: Aug '25 (n=1,002)

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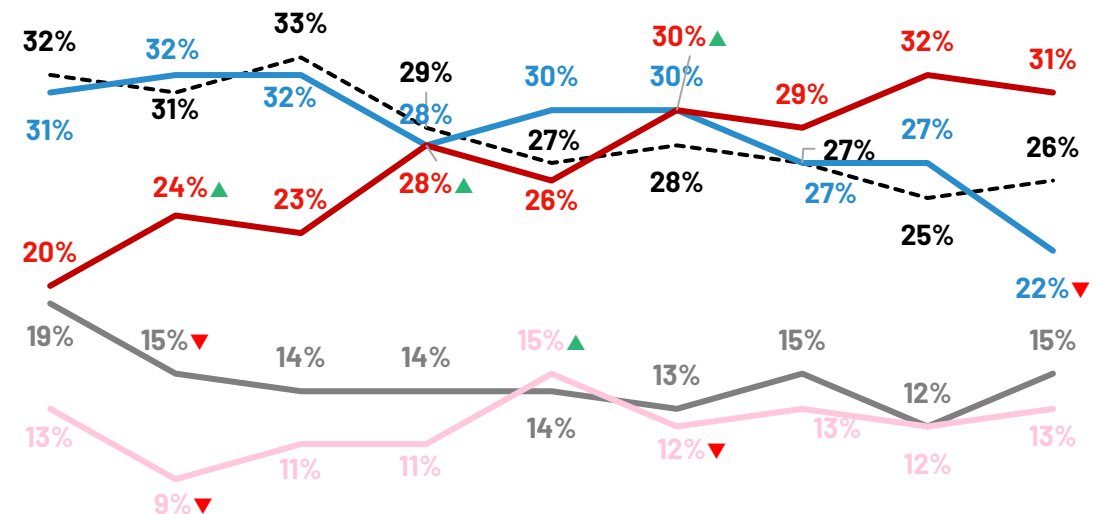
#4 issue – Housing / price of housing



While concern for *Housing / price of housing* has remained stable in the past 12 months, National's perceived ability in managing the issue has seen a significant decline, down 5pp to 22% (compared to 27% in May '25).

Confidence in Labour's ability to manage the issue has remained stable, with 30% of New Zealanders picking the party.

The gap between the two parties' perceived ability has widened to 9pp in Labour's favour, making it the largest gap in perception seen since National's 9pp lead in Feb '24.



	Aug '23	Sep '23	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25
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Green Party	5%	8% ▲	8%	8%	8%	6%	5%	6%	7%
ACT	6%	5%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%
Other	1%	1%	2%	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: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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

Suggestions to improve *housing / price of housing*

Voice of New Zealanders



"Build firm laws around real estate sales in order to make housing more accessible for lower class New Zealand populations, ie restricted capacity for investors and corporations to purchase real estate."

Southland, Student / employed, NZ European

"Affordable housing and rents, rent to own a house schemes minimal interest especially to those full time employees."

Auckland, Full-time employee, Asian

"Serve people first. Also get Abit real about people situations. I alot people struggling to have basic items. Food, housing , clothing, work."

Canterbury, Full-time employee, Asian

"Focus more on the people and how cost of living is affected the people of New Zealand. For example: house pricing and unemployment is a major issue as it affects the people of New Zealand to paying their bills for housing. I've seen many homeless people on the streets all because they couldn't get a job due to racism."

Otago, Full-time employee, Pacific peoples

"We don't have enough housing for our own people eg homelessness, without immigration. Sounds harsh, but it is true, so look after housing our own natives."

Auckland, Retired, NZ European

"The government should build more affordable public housing and cap rent increases."

Auckland, Part-time employee, NZ European

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

Base: Aug '25 (n=1,002)

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#5 issue – Crime / Law & Order

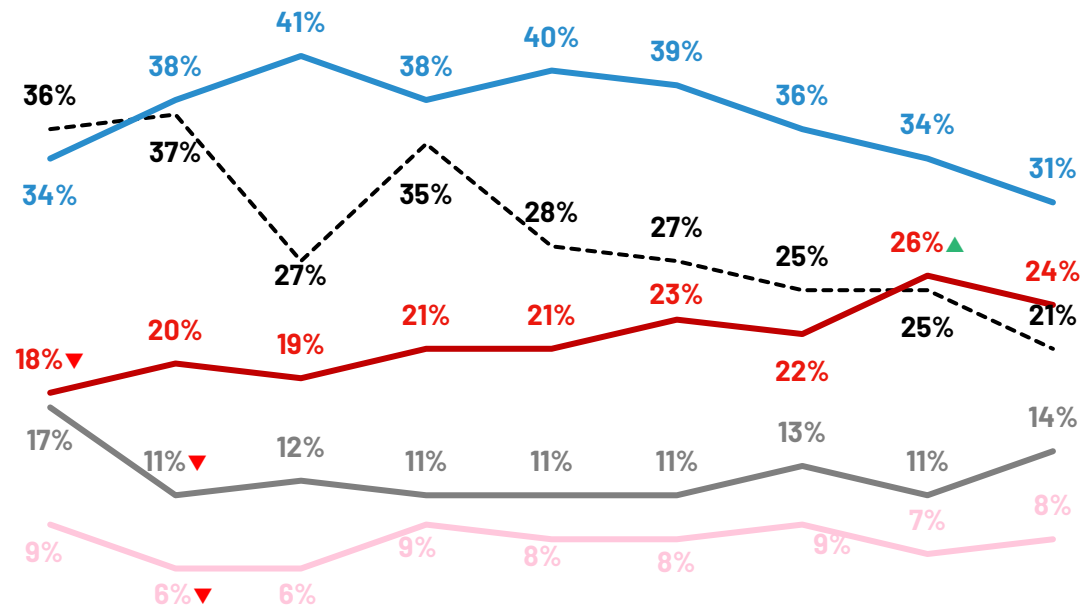


New Zealanders' concern for *Crime / law and order* continues its downward trend, down 7pp compared to this time last year.

National's perceived ability in managing this issue has also trended down since its peak in Feb '24 and is now at the lowest level recorded in the past two years.

Confidence in Labour's ability in managing the situation has stabilised after a significant increase in the previous wave.

The gap between the two parties continues to decrease and is now at 7pp, compared to 19pp in Aug '24.



	Aug '23	Sep '23	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25
New Zealand First	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	6%	7%
Green Party	3%	6% ▲	5%	5%	6%	4%	4%	4%	5%
ACT	12%	10%	8%	8%	7%	6%	7%	7%	6%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	4%	4%	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	4%
Other	1%	1%	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: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

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

Suggestions to improve *Crime / Law & Order* issues



Voice of New Zealanders

"Crack down on gangs & crime, making criminals face real time that is punishing and a deterrent."

Auckland, Retired, NZ European

"They need to focus on the crime rate and corruption."

Bay of Plenty, Full-time employee, European / maori

"I find crime rates concerning and want more community policing."

Auckland, Part-time employee, NZ European

"More visible action on crime and anti social behaviour."

Canterbury, Full-time employee, Asian

"Address root causes of crime instead of wasting money on prisons and prison populations ."

Wellington, Part-time employee, Asian

"They should establish the standards to reduce the crimes and must consider to control the house prices and increase the salary rates."

Auckland, Ful-time employee, Asian

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

Base: Aug '25 (n=1,002)

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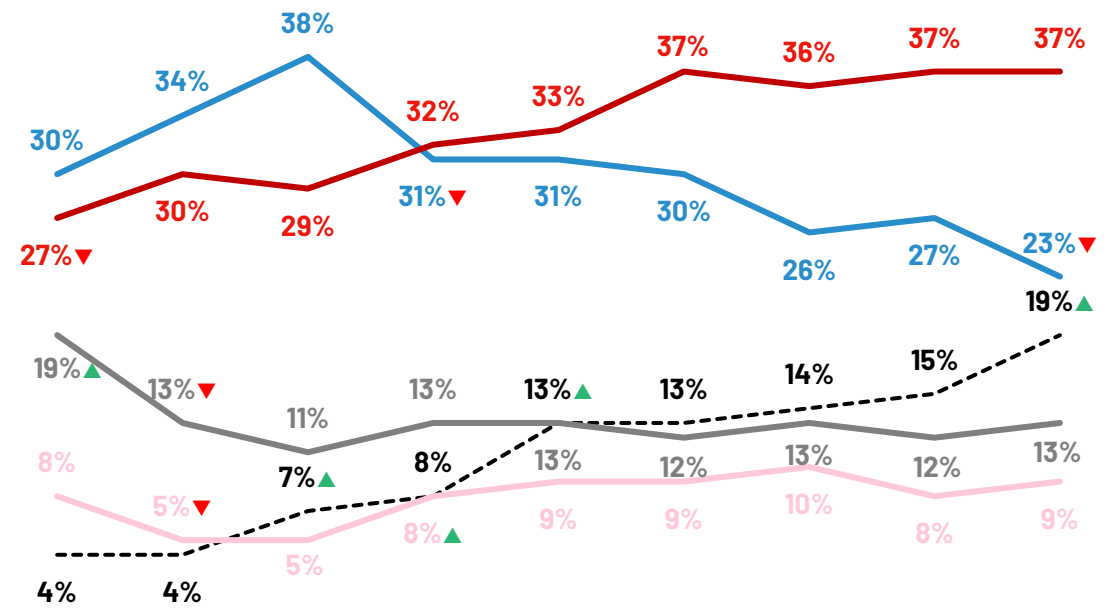
Issue spotlight – Unemployment



Concern around *Unemployment* has been growing steadily in the last two years, with significant jumps in the proportion of New Zealanders identifying it as a key issue in February '24, August '24, and August '25.

1 in 5 New Zealanders currently view *Unemployment* as a key issue – the highest level recorded since November '20.

National's perceived ability to manage *Unemployment* has been tending down since February '24, while confidence in Labour has slowly increased over the same period. There is now a 14pp gap between the two parties.



	Aug '23	Sep '23	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25
New Zealand First	4%	4%	2%	5% ▲	3% ▼	2%	3%	4%	5%
Green Party	4%	7% ▲	7%	5%	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%
ACT	6%	5%	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Other	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	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: Aug '25 – Total sample (n=1,002)

Suggestions to improve *Unemployment* issues

Voice of New Zealanders



"Everything to be honest, considering the lower socioeconomic groups and the minorities. Everything is way too expensive and unemployment rates are so low + tax is high for low income earners."

Waikato, full-time employee, NZ European / Māori

"Lack of competition and investments led to unemployment, rising cost of living, inflation and brain drain."

Auckland, Full-time employee, Asian

"The economy is not getting better and the unemployment rate is the highest it's been for a long time and the government needs to act now to improve things as they have been in power for over 3 years now."

Auckland, Full-time employee, Pacific peoples / Asian

"Change of system. Let the people speak. Inflation/cost of living is affecting everyone and they need to change it especially with the amount unemployment."

Auckland, Self-employed, NZ European / Pacific peoples

"Sort out unemployment and stop paying benefits to lazy people...get them working."

Northland, Full-time employee, NZ European

"Unemployment and housing is a major issues for our Māori ppl"

Waikato, Retired, NZ European

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

Base: Aug '25 (n=1,002)

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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 - 60%	Inflation / cost of living - 59%
2	Healthcare / hospitals - 44%	Housing - 45%
3	The economy - 30%	The economy - 27%
4	Housing / price of housing - 26%	Healthcare - 26%
5	Crime / Law & Order- 21%	Crime - 23%
6	= Poverty / Inequality - 19%	Immigration - 15%
7	= Unemployment - 19%	Poverty - 14%
8	Climate change - 14%	Environment - 12%
9	Education - 9%	= Unemployment - 10%
10	Household debt / personal debt- 7%	= Personal Debt - 10%

Australians and New Zealanders show equivalent levels of concern for *Inflation / cost of living*. It is the #1 issue facing both countries, with around 60% of both populations selecting it.

Australians are more concerned about *Housing* (45%), and less so about *Healthcare* (26%) compared to New Zealanders (44% *Healthcare / hospitals*, 26% *Housing / price of housing*), however both issues make the Top 5 for both countries.

Australians show similar levels of concern for *The economy* (27%) as New Zealanders (30%). It is the #3 issue for both countries.

Crime / law and order rounds up the top 5 issues for both countries, with comparable levels of concern in both countries.

Unemployment (19%) and *Poverty* (19%) are more top of mind issues for New Zealand, while Australians show higher concern for *Immigration* (15%).

Sample demographics – August 2025



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

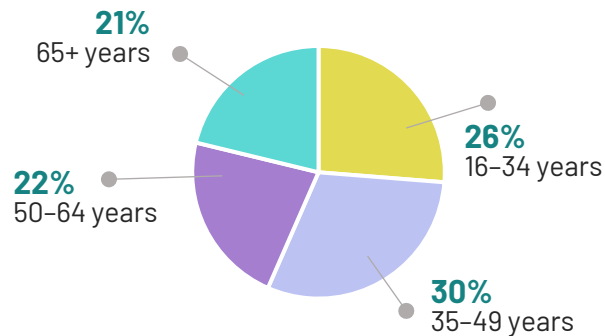
49%
Male



51%
Female

The precision of Ipsos online
polls is calculated with a
credibility interval with a poll
of 1,002 accurate to ± 3.5
percentage points

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



Employment status



44% Full-time

16% Retired

16% Part-time

8% Self-employed

5% Not in paid work but
seeking work

6% Not in paid work & not
seeking work

5% Student

Sample sizes over time

- Feb '18 (n=610)
- Jul '18 (n=611)
- Oct '18 (n=610)
- Mar '19 (n=614)
- 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)

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You act better when you are sure.

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