THE IPSOS NEW ZEALAND ISSUES MONITOR

Pre-election special edition

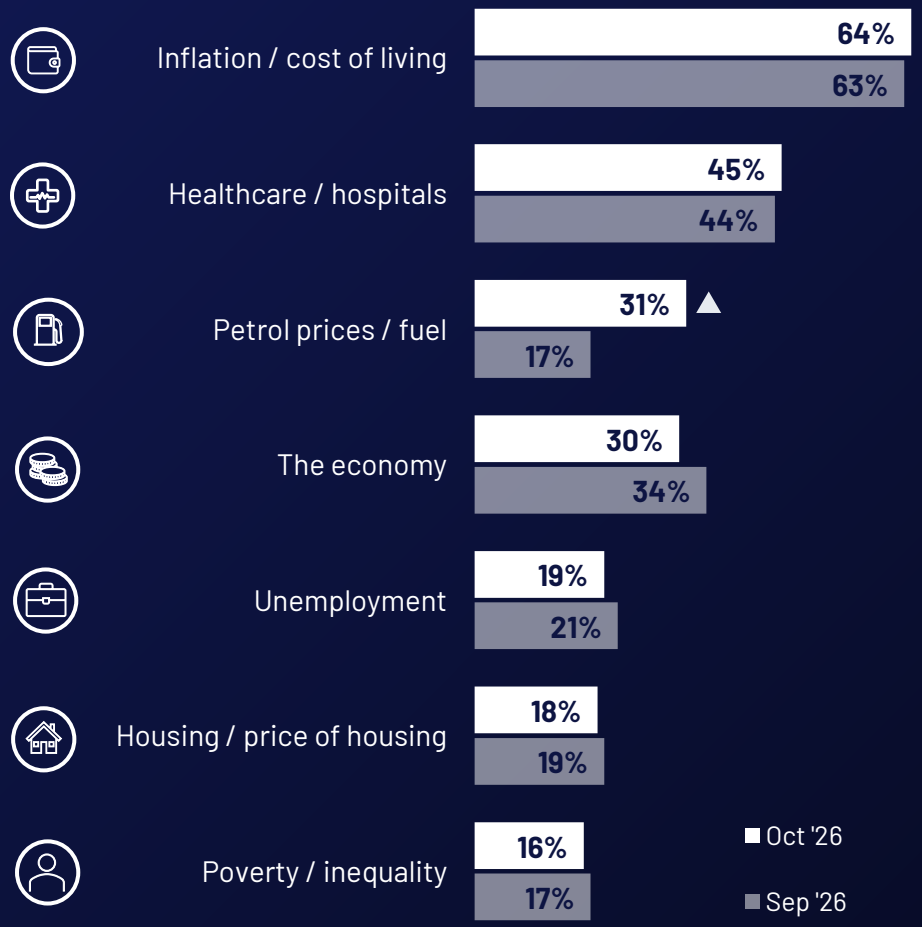
October 2026



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KEY FINDINGS – October 2026

TOP ISSUES FACING NEW ZEALAND



OPINIONS OF GOVERNMENT



4.1/10

(vs **4.1** in September 2026)

Rating of government has remained stable, with **26%** rating their performance as **7-10 out of 10.**

(vs **26%** in Sep 2026)

PARTY MOST CAPABLE OF MANAGING TOP 5 ISSUES

National

Labour

Inflation / cost of living

Healthcare / hospitals

Petrol prices / fuel

The economy

Unemployment

Overview

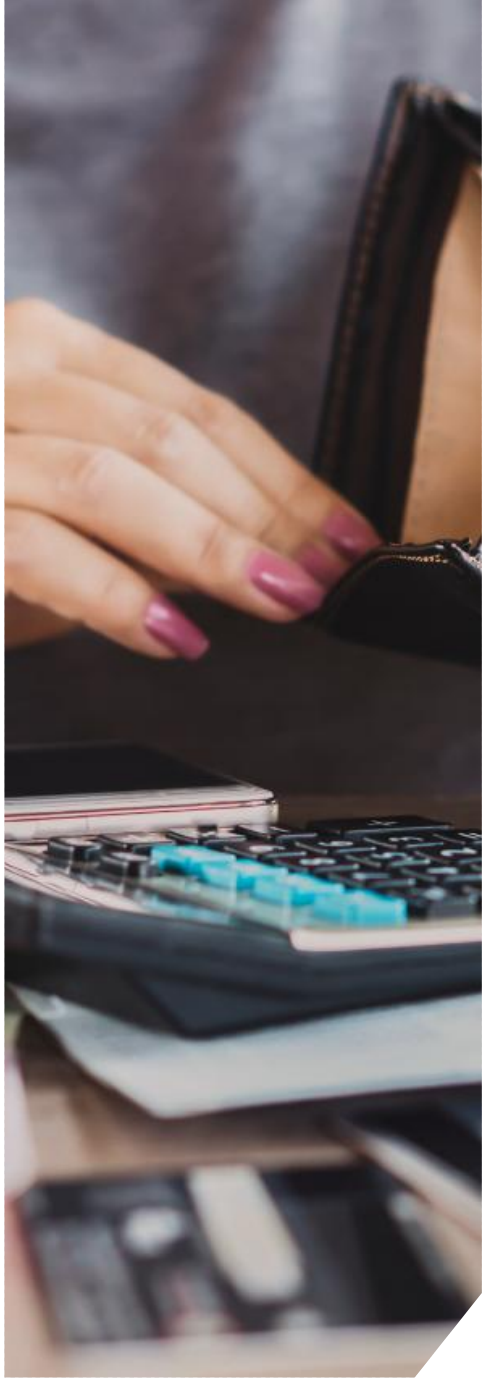
Background Information

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 19-27 October 2026 we conducted fieldwork for our 35th Ipsos NZ Issues Monitor report with a total of 1,008 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 **1,008** 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?

News / Politics / Election 2026 21 October 2026, 8:23am

Election '26: Cost of living continues to be NZers' top concern



Amy Williams
Senior Reporter

News / Health 22 October 2026, 6:21am

Starship Hospital nurse warns staff shortages leading to dire consequences



Finn Blackwell
Journalist

Labour candidate Kerrin Leoni clarifies whānau function with gang members

RNZ Parliamentary reporters

Inflation rate falls to 3.7% for September year but not for long



Liam Dann
Business Editor at Large · NZ Herald · 22 Oct, 2026 11:55 AM · 5 mins to read

Fuel crisis tops NZ business leaders' global concerns

Tim McCready
NZ Herald · 26 Oct, 2026 06:00 PM · 4 mins to read

News / Health 19 October 2026, 3:36pm

Patients 'in danger' from understaffed emergency department, doctors say

Tess Brunton
Senior Journalist, Regional

News / Business 12 October 2026, 6:28pm

Who is cashing in as petrol prices hit record high at the pump



Morning Report

News / Politics 21 October 2026, 3:57pm

Jobs cuts confirmed for Archives NZ and National Library

News / Community 21 October 2026, 2:56pm

Thousands of tertiary education staff are striking over pay



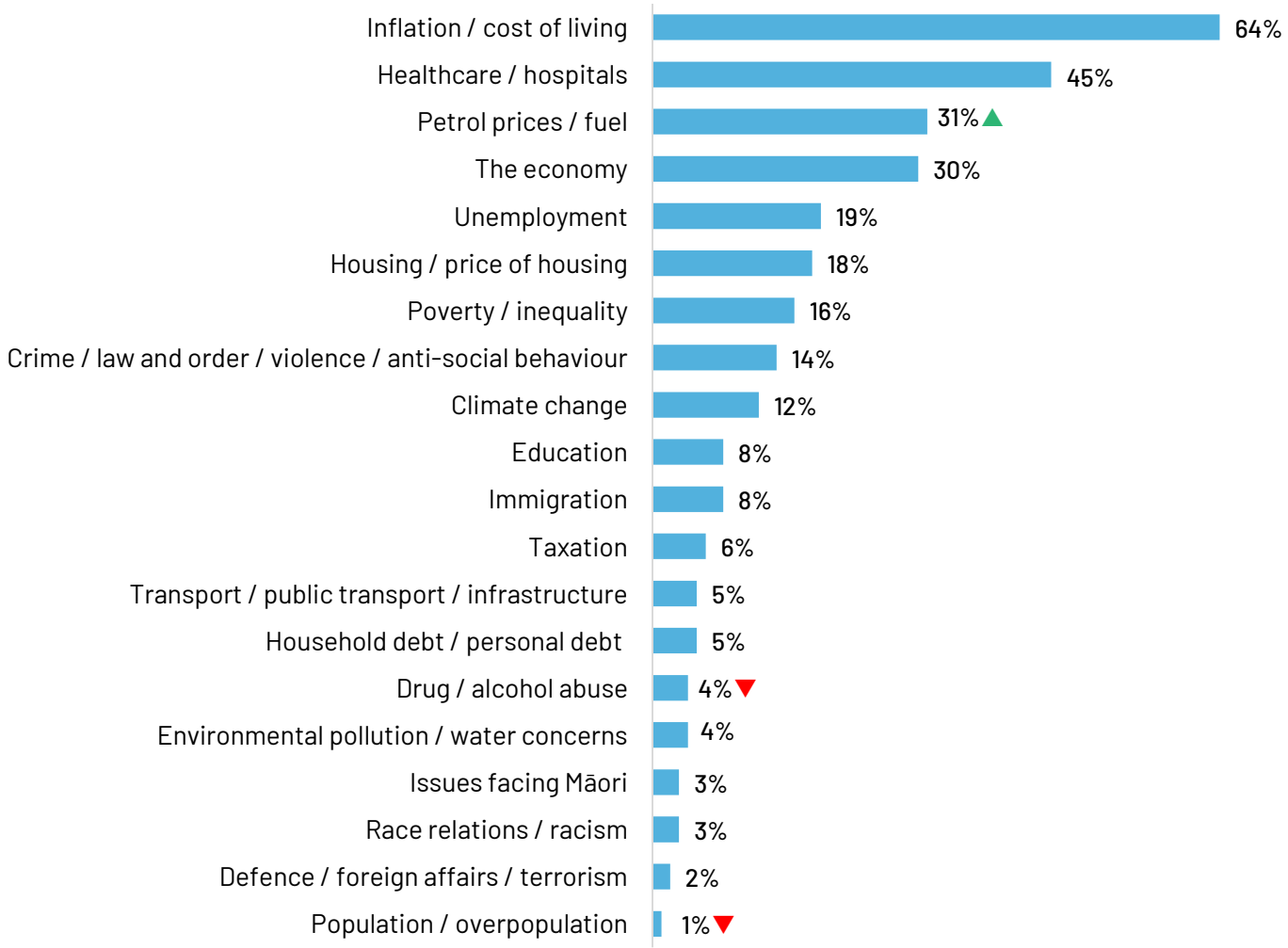
Felix Walton
Auckland Journalist

TOP ISSUES FACING AOTEAROA



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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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

Inflation / cost of living (64%) is still seen as the most important issue facing New Zealanders; with concern slowly but steadily increasing throughout 2026.

Level of concern surrounding *healthcare / hospitals* (45%) increased significantly last measure and shows no signs of easing. It holds steady as the second most pressing issue, and is now at the highest recorded level since surveying began in 2018.

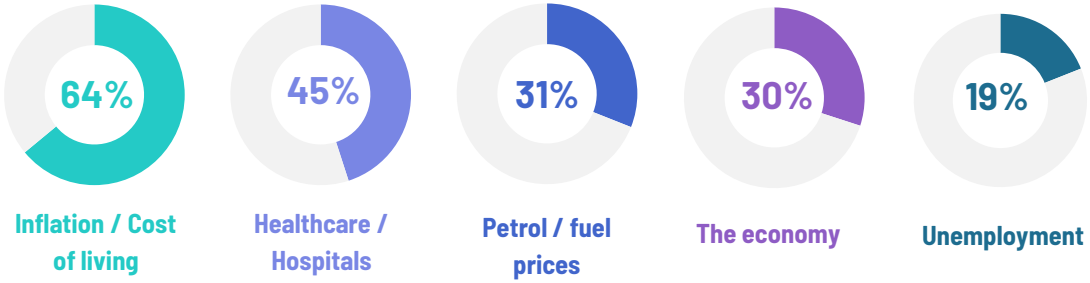
Concern about *petrol prices / fuel* (31%) has risen sharply, increasing by 14 percentage points since September and moving from the seventh to the third most concerning issue among New Zealanders. Concern for this issue is also at the highest recorded level since surveying began in 2018.

At 30%, concern about *the economy* remains unchanged; however, it has dropped from third to fourth place this wave after being overtaken by concern *about petrol prices / fuel.*

Unemployment remains a stable concern for New Zealanders at 19%, ranking fifth overall and tracking closely with concern about *housing / price of housing* (18%).

Current top 5 issues

Spotlight October 2026

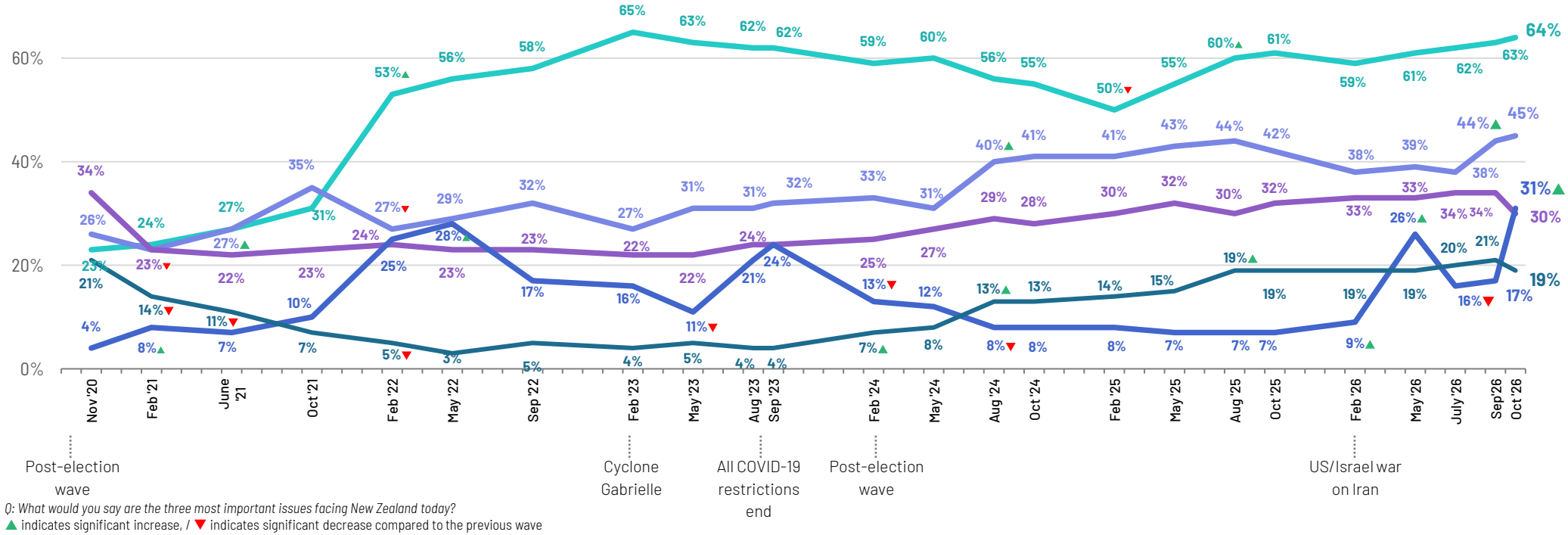


Inflation / cost of living (64%), *healthcare / hospitals* (45%), remain the top two issues for New Zealanders. Concern about *inflation / cost of living* has continued to rise gradually since early 2025, reaching its highest level since May 2023.

At 45%, concern about *healthcare / hospitals* has remained steady after the significant increase in the previous wave and is now at the highest level of concern since the monitor began.

Due to a significant increase this wave, concern about *petrol prices / fuel* has reached a record high of 31%, elevating it to the third most important issue for New Zealanders (up from 7th position in September).

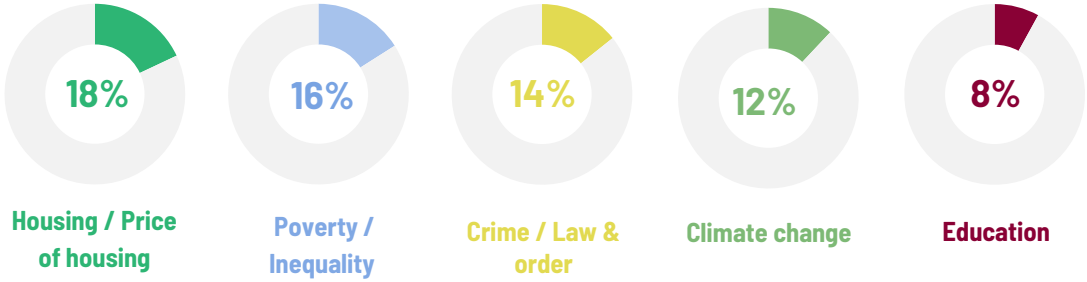
The economy (30%) remains a key concern for New Zealanders, sitting at or above 30% since the beginning of 2025. Due to the increase in *petrol prices / fuel*, it has fallen outside the top three concerns for the first time since early 2025.



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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

Issues ranked 6-10

Spotlight October 2026

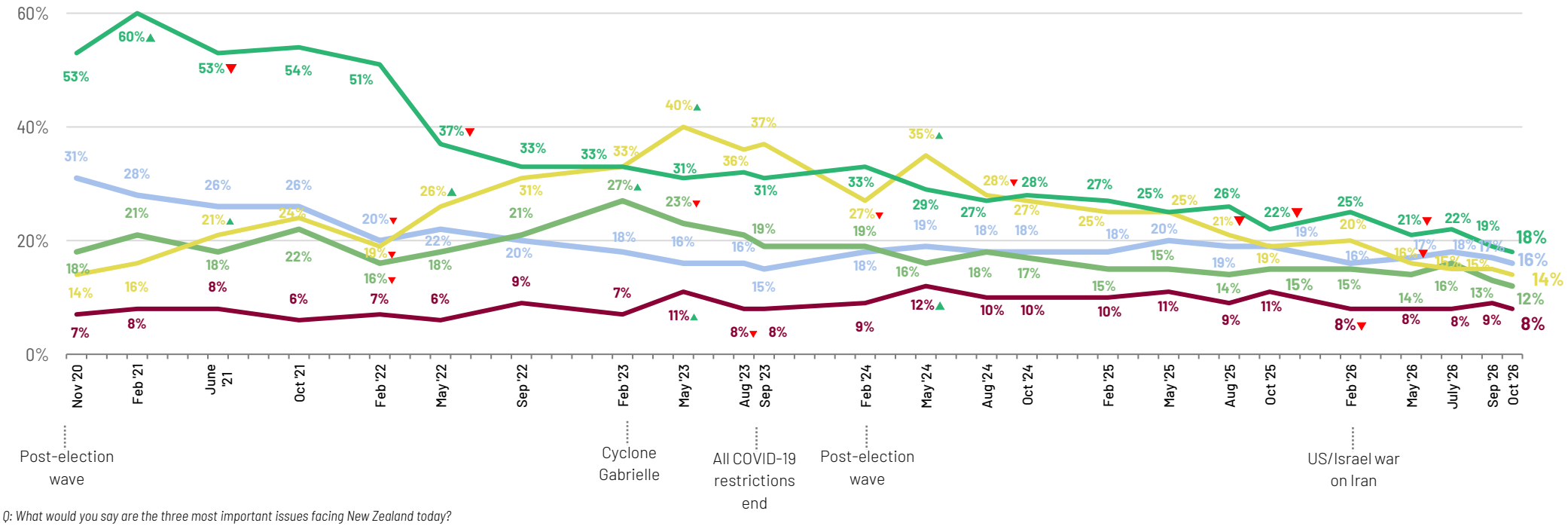


The remaining issues in the top 10 have remained largely stable compared with the previous wave, although rankings have shifted slightly. Concern about *housing / price of housing* (18%) has fallen from fifth to sixth position and *poverty / inequality* (16%) also dropped a position to seventh.

After trending downward since May 2023, concern about *crime / law and order* (14%) has remained unchanged this wave.

Concern about *education* (8%) has shown little change since early 2026.

Notably, concern for *climate change* (12%) has continued its downward trend, reaching the lowest levels seen since surveying began in 2018.



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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

CURRENT GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

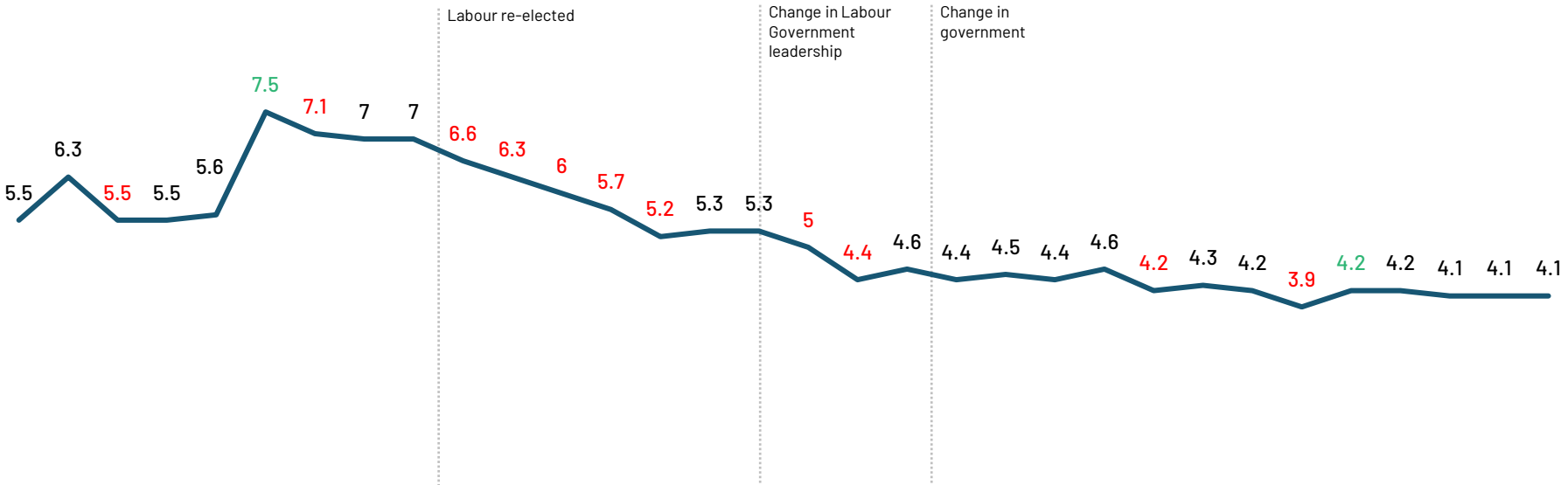
New Zealanders' rating of how they perceive the current government



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Rating of government performance over the 6 months

The government's average performance rating has remained steady at 4.1 out of 10, continuing the relatively stable pattern observed over the previous four waves. Just over a quarter of New Zealanders (26%) rated the government positively, whereas 42% expressed a negative view, rating the government between 0 and 3 out of 10.



	Labour-led coalition									Labour Government										National-led coalition												
	Sep '18	Mar '19	Jul '19	Oct '19	Mar '20	May '20	Jul '20	Sep '20	Nov '20	Feb '21	Jun '21	Oct '21	Feb '22	May '22	Sep '22	Feb '23	May '23	Aug '23	Sep '23	Feb '24	May '24	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	Jul '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
Mean score	5.5	6.3	5.5	5.5	5.6	7.5	7.1	7	7	6.6	6.3	6	5.7	5.2	5.3	5.3	5	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.2	4.3	4.2	3.9	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1
Top 4 (7-10)	42%	60%	43%	44%	45%	75%	72%	70%	70%	63%	58%	54%	48%	42%	43%	44%	35%	28%	31%	30%	31%	30%	32%	25%	28%	26%	23%	27%	27%	24%	26%	26%
Neutral (4-6)	35%	24%	34%	35%	34%	17%	17%	19%	18%	23%	24%	25%	27%	29%	29%	28%	38%	35%	33%	30%	29%	29%	30%	33%	31%	30%	31%	32%	31%	32%	30%	30%
Bottom 4 (0-3)	20%	12%	19%	18%	18%	6%	8%	9%	8%	10%	15%	18%	24%	28%	26%	26%	25%	34%	33%	36%	38%	38%	36%	40%	39%	41%	45%	39%	40%	42%	41%	42%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%

*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 – Oct '26 (n=1,008), Sep '26 (n=1,003),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



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Political party most capable of managing Top 5 issues

Labour is perceived to be the party most capable of managing all five issues currently ranked as most important by New Zealanders: *inflation / cost of living*, *healthcare / hospitals*, *petrol prices / fuel*, *the economy*, and *unemployment*. This is the third consecutive wave in which Labour has led across all five top-ranked issues.

	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
1	Inflation / cost of living	Labour
2	Healthcare / hospitals	Labour
3	Petrol prices / fuel	Labour
4	The economy	Labour
5	Unemployment	Labour

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

Base: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

Political party most capable of managing other issues

Labour's perceived capability advantage extends beyond the five leading concerns, with the party leading on 16 of the 20 issues measured in total, up from 15 in September. National continues to lead on *crime / law and order*, while *defence / foreign affairs / terrorism* has shifted back to Labour. As usual, the Green Party maintains its lead on *climate change* and *environmental pollution / water concerns*, and Te Pāti Māori remains the party perceived as most capable of managing *issues facing Māori*.

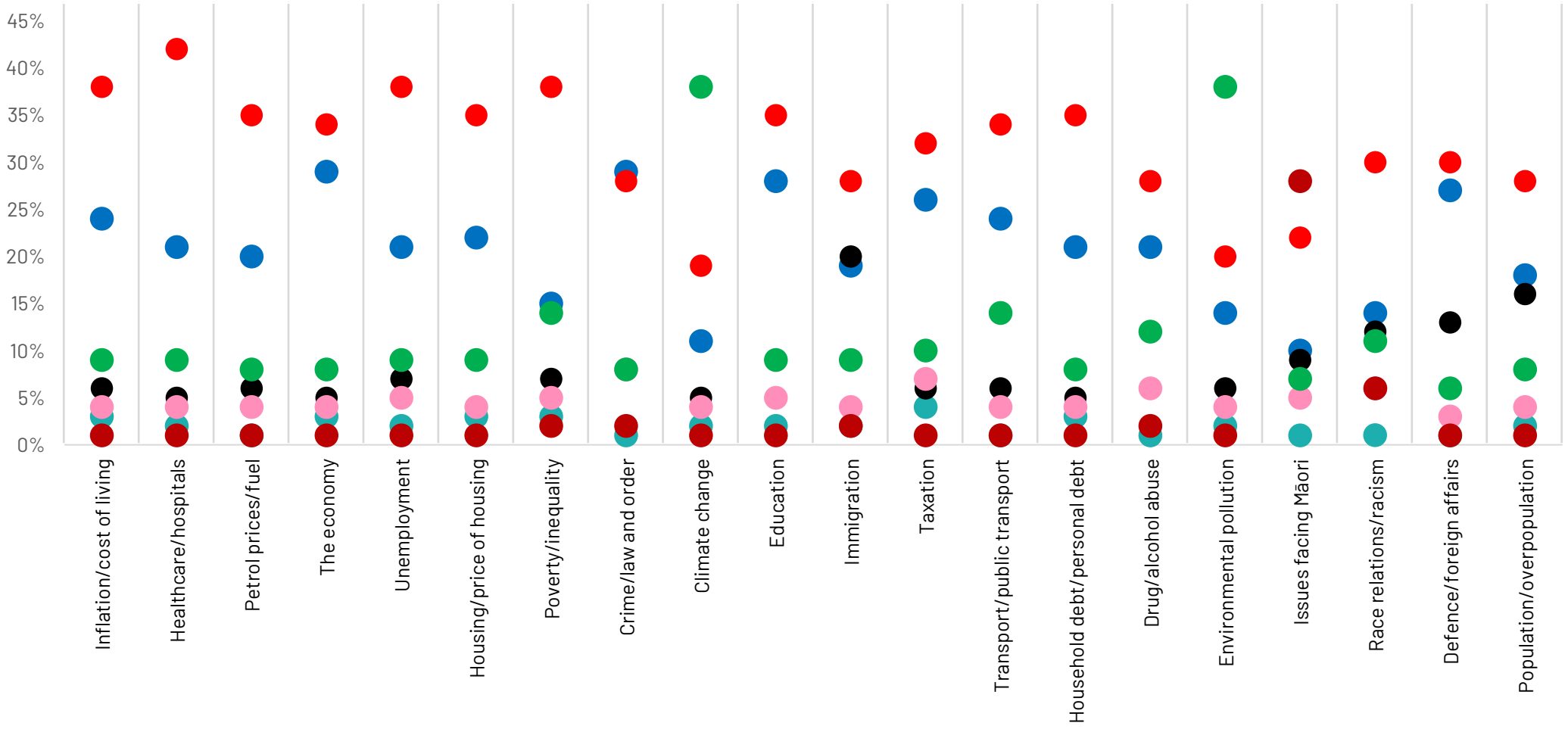
	Issue	Political party most capable of managing issue
6	Housing / price of housing	Labour
7	Poverty / Inequality	Labour
8	Crime / law and order	National
9	Climate change	Green
=10	Education	Labour
	Immigration	Labour
12	Taxation	Labour
=13	Transport / public transport / infrastructure	Labour
	Household debt / personal debt	Labour
=15	Drug / alcohol abuse	Labour
	Environmental pollution / water concerns	Green
=17	Issues facing Māori	māori
	Race relations	Labour
19	Defence / foreign affairs / terrorism	Labour
20	Population / overpopulation	Labour

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

Base: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

Political party most capable of managing the issues

Labour is perceived as more capable than National across most of the issues measured, with its largest advantages on *healthcare / hospitals*, *unemployment*, and *poverty / inequality*, while the two parties are seen more closely capable on *the economy* and *defence / foreign affairs / terrorism*. National narrowly leads Labour on *crime / law and order*



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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

***NOTE:** The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

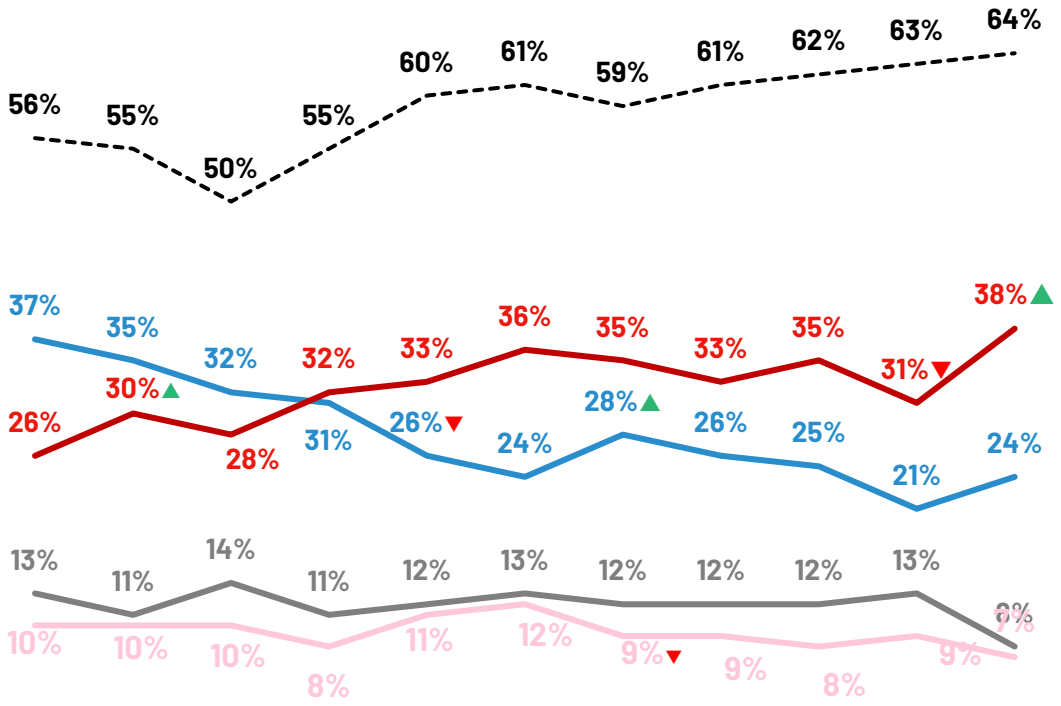
#1 issue – Inflation / cost of living

Inflation / cost of living continues to dominate New Zealanders' concerns, reaching 64% after gradually increasing since February '26.

Perceptions of Labour's ability to manage this issue have strengthened significantly since the last wave (up 7 ppt), with current levels comparable to those last recorded in October '21.

Perceptions of National's ability to manage this issue have shown no significant movement since February '26. While the latest wave is directionally higher than the previous one, it remains consistent with recent results overall.

Labour's lead over National on perceived capability has increased, with the gap expanding from 10 percentage points last wave to 14 points this wave.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	3%	2%	5% ▲	4%	6%▲	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Green Party	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%	8%	6%	8%	9%
ACT	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	6% ▲	4%
Te Pāti Māori	1%▼	2% ▲	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										4%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

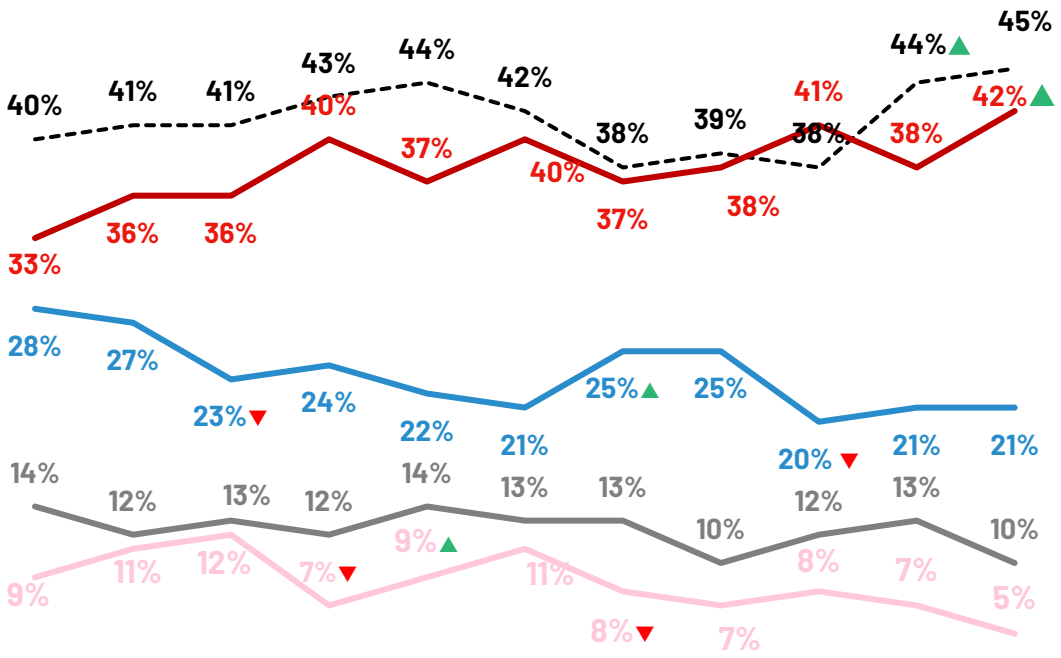
*NOTE: *The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

#2 issue – Healthcare / hospitals

Following a dip in July '26, concern about *healthcare / hospitals* has rebounded to its highest level since the monitor began in 2018. This follows the significant increase observed in the previous wave, with concern remaining elevated this wave.

Labour maintains a substantial lead on this issue, with the difference in perceived capability between Labour and National now standing at 21 percentage points, up from 17 points in Sep '26.

While National's perceived capability has remained stable, Labour's perceived lead on the issue has increased by 4ppt this wave.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	3%	3%	4% ▲	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%	7%	7%	5%
Green Party	6%	5%	4%	5%	7%	5%	6%	8%	6%	8%	9%
ACT	4%	2%	4% ▲	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	3%▲	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										2%	2%
Other	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

***NOTE:** *The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

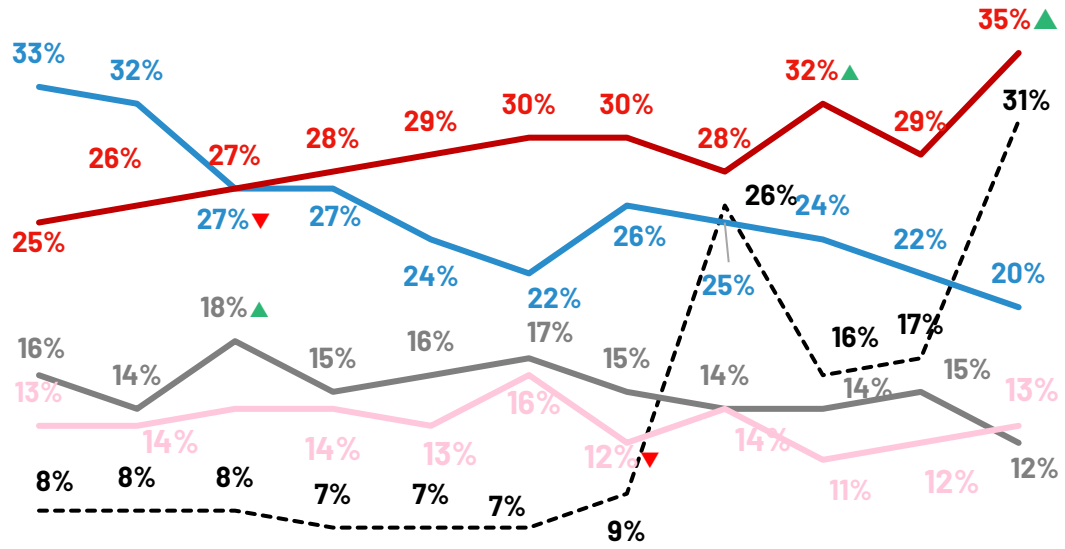
#3 Issue - Petrol prices / Fuel

At 31%, concern about *petrol prices / fuel* has reached a new high, increasing by 14 percentage points since the previous wave and surpassing the previous peak recorded in May '26 by 5 percentage points.

This increase has seen *petrol prices / fuel* rise from seventh to third place among New Zealanders' most important issues.

Perceptions of Labour's ability to manage this issue have strengthened markedly this wave, rising by 6 percentage points. In contrast, National's perceived capability has continued its downward trajectory observed since February '26.

Labour's lead over National on perceived capability has more than doubled since the last wave, with the gap increasing from 7 to 15 percentage points.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	3%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%
Green Party	7%	7%	5%	6%	5%	5%	7%	8%	7%	8%	8%
ACT	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										2%	1%
Other	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

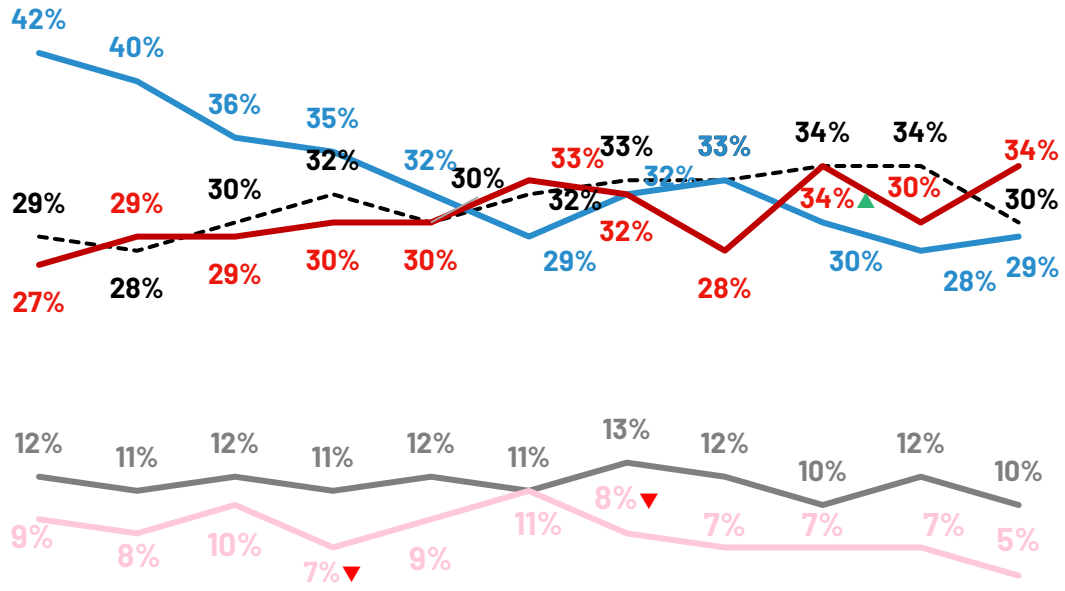
***NOTE:** *The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

#4 issue – The economy

Concern about *the economy* has eased this wave, slipping to fourth place among New Zealanders' most important issues. This marks the first time since August '24 that it has not ranked third.

Labour remains the party most often viewed as capable of managing the economy, extending its lead over National by 3 percentage points compared with the last wave.

Labour's perceived capability has recovered from the dip observed in the previous wave, returning to higher levels. Meanwhile, perceptions of National's ability to manage the issue have shown little change since July '26.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	2%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%	6%	8%	5% ▼
Green Party	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%	5%	4%	7% ▲	6%	6%	8%
ACT	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	0% ▼	1% ▲	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										4%	3%
Other	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0% ▼	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

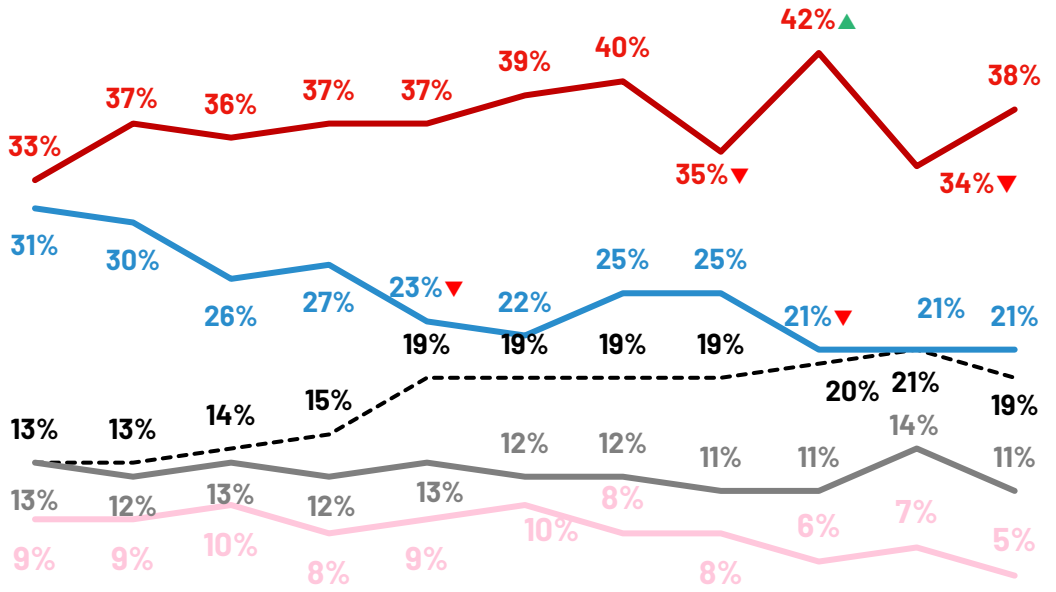
***NOTE:** The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

#5 Issue – Unemployment

Since July '26, *unemployment* has consistently ranked as New Zealanders' fifth most important issue. Despite minor fluctuations in its ranking over time, overall concern has remained broadly stable since August '25.

Since February '26, Labour's perceived capability on *unemployment* has experienced several notable shifts. However, the latest results show no significant movement observed this wave. In contrast, National's perceived capability has remained broadly stable since July '26.

This widens the gap between parties to 17 ppt, up from 13 ppt in the previous wave.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	3% ▼	2%	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Green Party	5%	5%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%	7% ▲	6%	7%	9%
ACT	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%
Te Pāti Māori	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										3%	2%
Other	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0% ▼	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

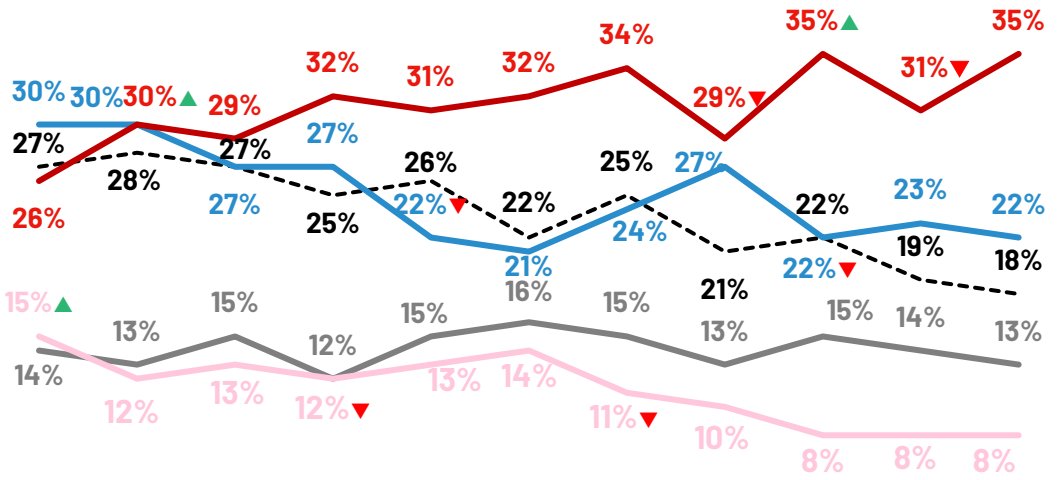
***NOTE:** *The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

Issue spotlight - Housing / Price of housing

Concern for *housing / price of housing* has remained largely stable in the latest wave, however has moved from the 5th to the 6th most important issue for New Zealanders.

Compared with the previous wave, Labour's perceived capability has moved up by 4 percentage points.

While National's perceived capability has remained stable, the gap between the parties has widened from 8 percentage points in the previous wave to 13 percentage points this wave.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	Jul '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	3%	4%	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	6%	6%	7%	4%
Green Party	8%	6%	5%	6%	7%	7%	5%	9%▲	7%	7%	9%
ACT	3%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										4%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2% ▲	2%	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

*NOTE: *The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

Issue spotlight – Taxation

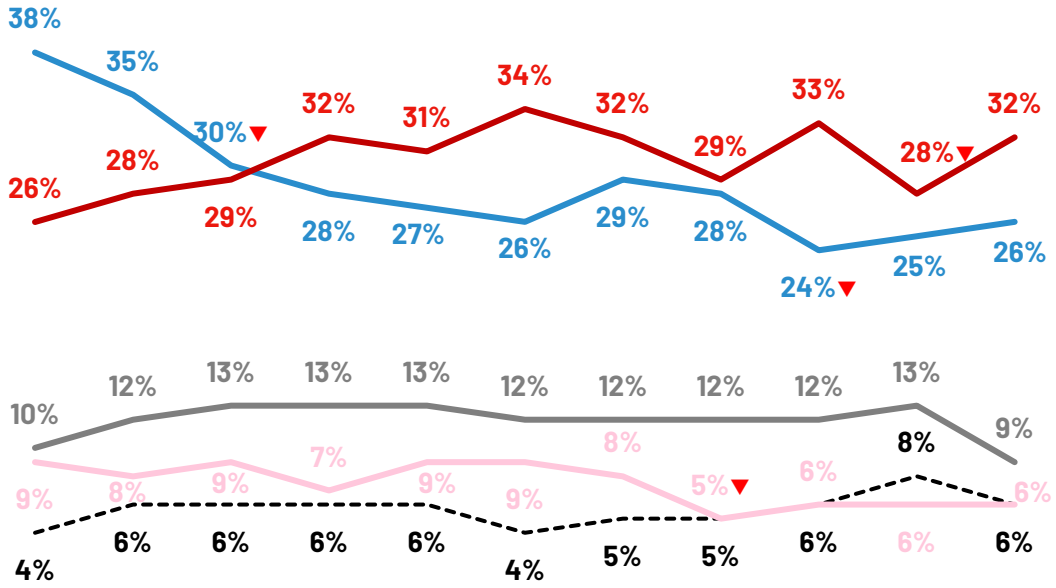
Concern about *taxation* has remained relatively stable over time.

Consistent with the last wave, taxation continues to rank as New Zealanders' 12th most important issue.

Labour's perceived capability of managing the issue, has stabilized following a significant decrease in September '26, and has returned to level seen in July '26.

Labour continues to lead as the party perceived most capable of managing this issue by 6 ppt, up from a 3ppt gap in the previous wave.

Following a significant decline in July '26, National's perceived capability to manage this issue has remained broadly stable over the past two waves.



	Aug '24	Oct '24	Feb '25	May '25	Aug '25	Oct '25	Feb '26	May '26	July '26	Sep '26	Oct '26
New Zealand First	2%	4%	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%	6%	7%	7%	6%
Green Party	7%	7%	6%	7%	6%	7%	6%	9% ▲	9%	7%	10%
ACT	5%	4%	6%	5%	6%	6%	5%	7%	6%	8%	7%
Te Pāti Māori	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1% ▼	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
The Opportunity Party*										5%	4%
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	3%	0%	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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

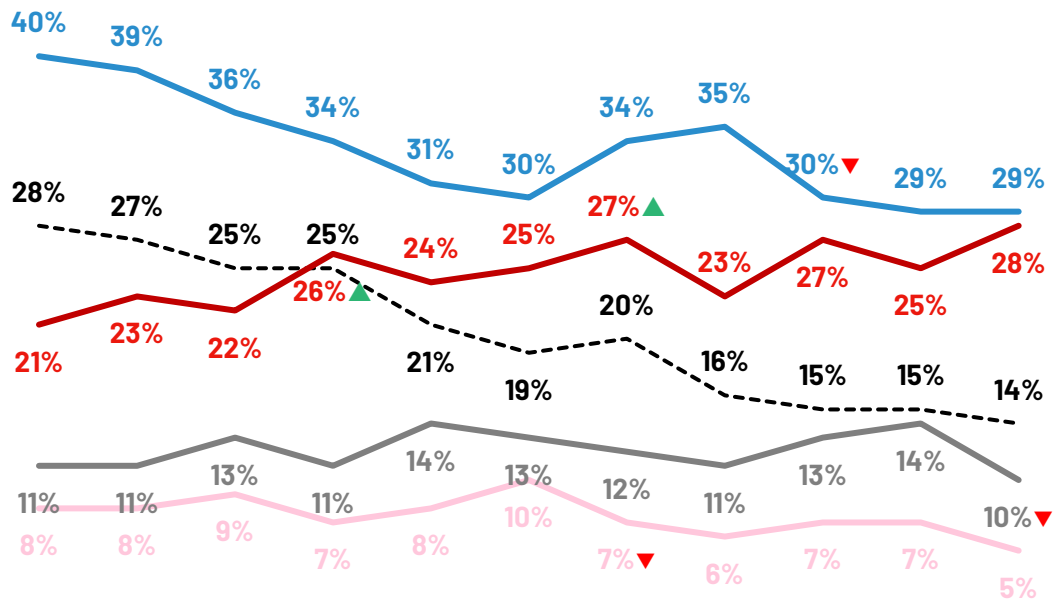
***NOTE:** *The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26*

Issue spotlight – Crime / law and order

Concern about crime / law and order has continued its longer-term decline, falling from 27% in Oct '24 to 14% this wave.

This remains the only issue on which National holds the perceived capability lead, although its result is unchanged at 29%. Labour has increased directionally to 28%, narrowing National's lead to just 1 ppt.

The proportion unable to identify the most capable party has decreased significantly from 14% to 10%.



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

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: October '26 – Total sample (n=1,008)

*NOTE: The Opportunity Party was added as a response option in Sept '26

COMPARISONS WITH AUSTRALIA

Comparing New Zealand's issues to Australia's



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Top 10 issues – New Zealand vs. Australia

	New Zealand	Australia
1	Inflation / cost of living - **64%**	Inflation / cost of living - **65%**
2	Healthcare / hospitals - **45%**	Housing / price of housing - **39%**
3	Petrol prices / fuel - **31%**	Immigration – **25%**
4	The economy – **30%**	Crime / law and order – **25%**
5	Unemployment – **19%**	The economy – **24%**
6	Housing / price of housing – **18%**	Healthcare / hospitals - **22%**
7	Poverty / inequality – **16%**	Petrol prices / fuel– **16%**
8	Crime / law and order - **14%**	
9	Climate change - **12%**	Taxation – **14%**
=10	Education - **8%**	Population – **10%**
	Immigration – **8%**	
=	Taxation – **6%**	Poverty / inequality – **10%**

There is agreement between New Zealanders and Australians that *inflation / cost of living* is the most important issue facing their country. Beyond this, issue priorities vary, particularly in relation to healthcare, petrol prices, and housing.

Australians are considerably more likely than New Zealanders to identify *housing* as a key concern (39% vs. 18%). In contrast, *healthcare* and *petrol/fuel prices* are more prominent issues in New Zealand, ranking as the second and third most important concerns respectively (45% and 31%), compared with 39% and 16% in Australia.

The *economy* ranks as the fourth most important issue in New Zealand (30%) and the fifth most important issue in Australia (24%). Aside from *inflation / cost of living*, it is the issue on which the two countries are most closely aligned.

Unemployment is a more salient issue in New Zealand, where it ranks as the fifth most important concern (19%). In contrast, Australians place greater emphasis on *immigration* (25%) and *crime/law and order* (25%), with *unemployment* ranking outside their top 10 concerns.

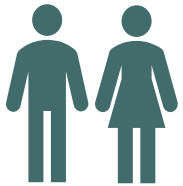
Base: Total sample – New Zealand September '26 (n=1,003), Australia Aug '26 (n=1,000)

Sample demographics – October 2026



1,008 respondents
were interviewed online in October via online panels

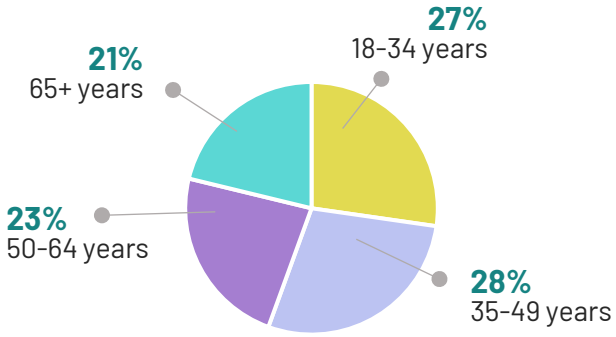
49% Male



51% Female

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



41% Full-time
18% Retired
15% Part-time
7% Self-employed
7% Not in paid work but seeking work
7% 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)
- Sep '26 (n=1,003)
- Oct '26 (n=1,008)

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Game Changers

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You act better when you are sure.

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