

MEDIA RELEASE

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LATEST RESULTS FROM NEW ZEALAND'S LARGEST CRIME SURVEY SHOW THE NUMBER OF BURGLARIES CONTINUES TO DECLINE

The Ministry of Justice's New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey for 2020, published today, reveals trends in crime over the last three years.

The number of burglaries per household fell significantly¹ from 18 per 100 in 2018, to 16 per 100 in 2019 and to 14 per 100 in 2020. The percentage of households affected by burglary fell significantly from 12% to 10%.

"There was already a downward trend in burglaries before the COVID-19 lockdown, and this trend appears to have accelerated since then," says Tim Hampton, Ministry of Justice Deputy Secretary. "It is particularly encouraging to see that some of the biggest declines in burglaries has been for those that have historically been the most likely to be burgled, such as Māori and low income households."

"Police remain committed to continue to address burglaries and ensure that people can be safe and feel safe," said Superintendent Eric Tibbott, Director Community Partnerships and Prevention.

There were significant decreases in burglaries in North Island towns and cities apart from Auckland and Wellington. For example, the rate of burglaries and overall household offences in the Manawatū-Whanganui region halved in 2020 compared with 2018.

The percentage of households experienced burglaries or other household offences decreased from 19% before the COVID-19 alert level 4 lockdown to 17% since the lockdown.

The number of household offences also fell from 29 per 100 households before the lockdown to 25 per 100 since the lockdown.

Post-lockdown reductions were significant when compared with the 2018 Survey.

Other key findings from the 2020 survey are:

- A significant reduction to household property damage was recorded after the national COVID-19 lockdown in March-May 2020
- Females who are separated or divorced, are significantly more likely to be victimised than other adults, while males who are married, in a civil union, or in a de facto relationship are significantly less likely to be victimised

¹ "Significant" hereafter means "statistically significant" with 95% probability.

- A higher proportion of Māori are victimised each year than any other ethnic group. This figure may be largely explained by demographic factors (Māori on average are younger, and young people are more likely to be victimised) and socio-economic factors (Māori on average live in more deprived areas, which is linked to a higher risk of victimisation).
- In the last three years, Māori experienced a significant reduction in the proportion of households that experienced a burglary or other household offence
- Over three years of surveys, accounting for differences in average age, people with disabilities were significantly more likely to experience crime.

“This unique survey has been running since 2018,” says Tim Hampton. “This drawn on around 23,500 interviews with randomly selected New Zealanders about their experiences of crime. For the first time, we are able to compare the data over three years and we can now see trends in crime.”

“The Survey provides us with unique evidence because three quarters of crime incidents are not reported to the Police and therefore not recorded in the administrative data”, says Tim Hampton.

“It shows changes in victimisation and can indicate the effectiveness of government policies on crime – this is the key to what New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey offers and will continue to grow in importance over time.”

“It provides valuable data for the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kokiri, the Police, Department of Corrections, Oranga Tamariki, and the Ministry for Women,” he says.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. *The New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey*: This is a nationwide, face-to-face annual survey carried out by the Ministry of Justice interviewing 8,000 randomly selected New Zealanders aged 15 years and over about incidents of crime they experienced in the last 12 months. This includes both incidents reported to the Police and unreported incidents. Surveys were carried out in 2018, 2019, and 2020.
2. The NZCVS has some significant improvements in design compared with its predecessor, the New Zealand Crime and safety survey (NZCASS). The differences in design mean that direct comparison of NZCVS results with its predecessor NZCASS is potentially misleading, even within similar offence types.
3. *NZCVS 2020 and the COVID Lockdowns*. This report is based on data collected between October 2019 and November 2020. Survey interviews were suspended from 21 March to 2 July 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was paused in Auckland

from 12 August to 2 September 2020 during a further outbreak. Interviewing continued later into the year than planned and achieved a lower number of responses than in previous cycles 7,425 instead of 8,000. Nonetheless, a high response rate of 80% was achieved; similar to the response rate in 2019.