

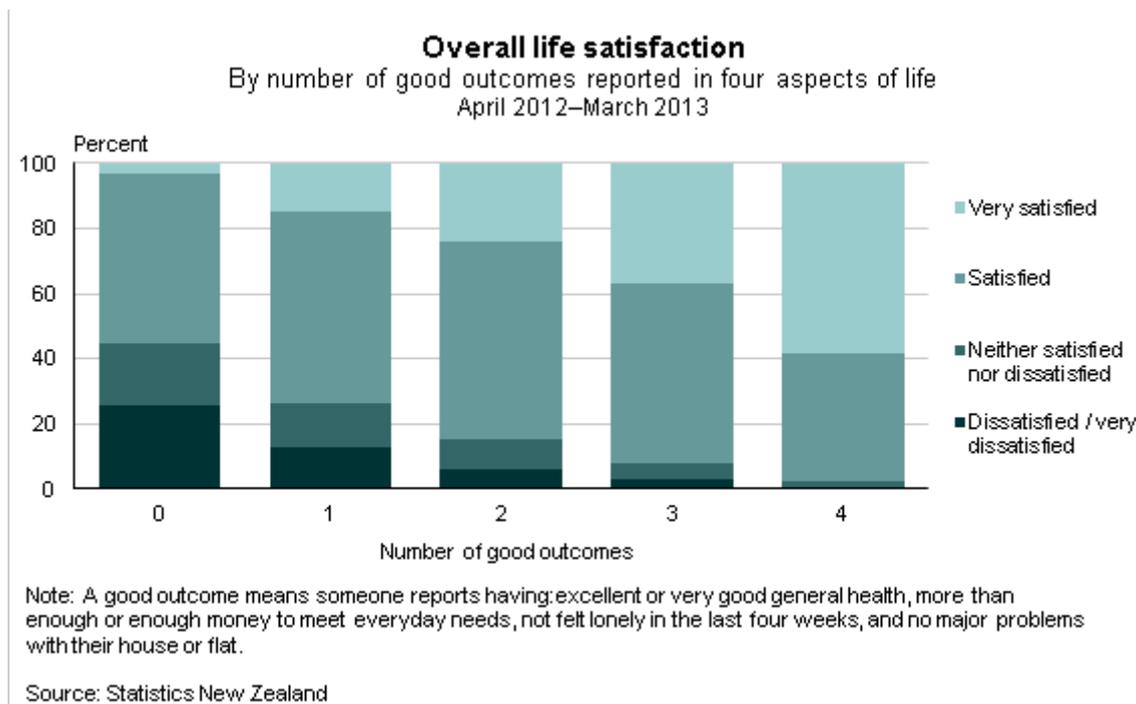
# New Zealand General Social Survey: 2012

Embargoed until 10:45am – 13 August 2013

## Key facts

The New Zealand General Social Survey 2012 shows that:

- An estimated 87 percent of people were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their lives overall.
- Four aspects of life were important in determining people's overall life satisfaction: health, money, relationships, and housing.
- In 2012 an estimated:
  - 60 percent of New Zealanders rated their health as 'excellent' or 'very good'
  - 52 percent had 'more than enough' or 'enough' money to meet their everyday needs
  - 69 percent had not felt lonely in the last four weeks
  - 67 percent had no major problems with the house or flat they lived in.
- 21 percent of New Zealanders had good outcomes in all four of these (ie excellent or very good health, more than enough or enough money, never felt lonely, and no major housing problems).
- 98 percent of those with four good outcomes were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives overall.
- 5.4 percent of New Zealanders did not have a good outcome in any of the four aspects of life. Of these people, 56 percent were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives overall.



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13 August 2013  
ISSN 1179-5050

## Commentary

- [About the New Zealand General Social Survey](#)
- [High proportion of New Zealanders feel good about life](#)
- [Health, money, relationships, and housing important to well-being](#)
- [One-fifth of New Zealanders have good outcomes in all four aspects of well-being](#)

### About the New Zealand General Social Survey

The objectives of the New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS) are to:

- complement other measures of societal progress by providing information on the well-being of New Zealanders aged 15 years and over across a range of aspects of life
- provide a view of how well-being varies across different groups within the population
- understand the relationships between different aspects of life and to overall well-being.

NZGSS 2012 is the third survey in the series, which gives an opportunity to measure social change over time. The first survey was carried out in 2008 and the second in 2010.

This is the first release of information from the 2012 survey and provides a glimpse of how the NZGSS achieves its three objectives. We will provide more detailed results in future reports.

### High proportion of New Zealanders feel good about life

In 2012, 87 percent of New Zealanders aged 15 years and over were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their lives overall. According to OECD data, life satisfaction in New Zealand is above the OECD average and similar to Australia, the United States, and Canada.

In 2012, the proportion of satisfied and very satisfied New Zealanders was unchanged from 2010 but was up 1.7 percentage points from 2008.

The population characteristics that have an independent relationship with overall life satisfaction are described below. See the [Data quality](#) section for how we determined this independent relationship.

#### Young and old more likely to be satisfied

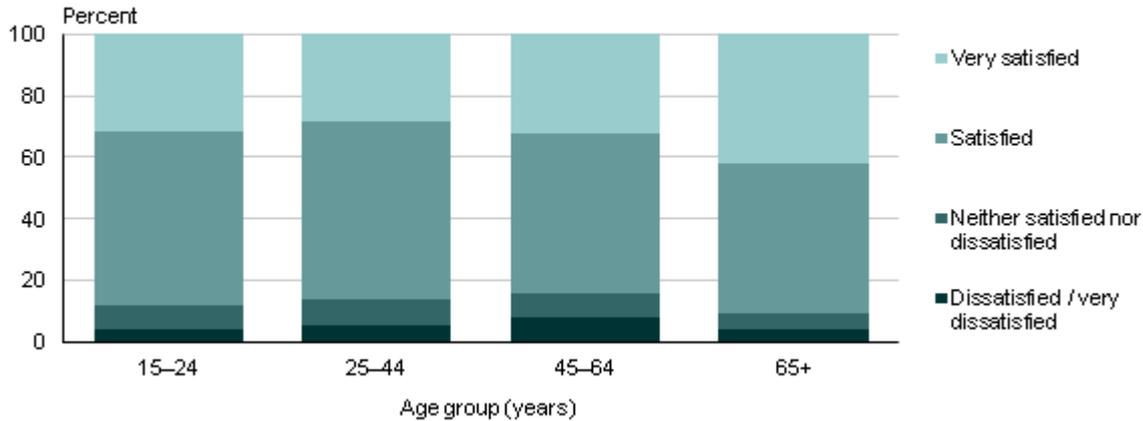
While 88 percent of 15–24-year-olds were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives, the proportion was 84 percent for those aged 45–64 years. The proportion increased again for older people – 91 percent of those aged 65 years or more were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives.

This pattern may reflect the pressure from work and family responsibilities that people face as they move through life. Important stages in life, such as raising children, buying a home, entering and leaving the workforce, and the experience of ageing all influence life satisfaction.

## Overall life satisfaction

By age group

April 2012–March 2013



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### People in higher income households more likely to be satisfied

While 79 percent of people with an annual household income of \$30,000 or less were satisfied or very satisfied with life overall, they were less likely to be satisfied than people with an annual household income of more than \$100,000 (91 percent).

### Unemployed people least likely to be satisfied

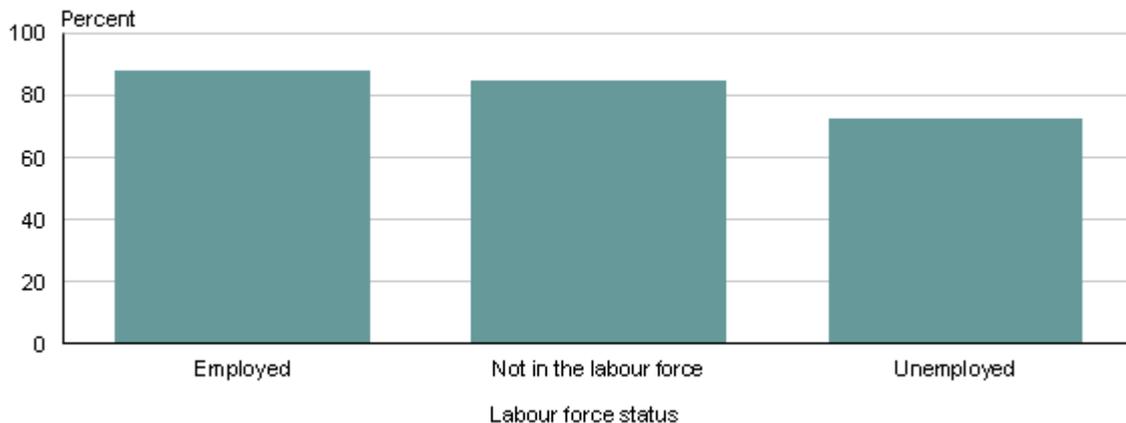
Unemployed people were three times more likely (14 percent) than employed people (4.5 percent) to say they were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their lives overall, and twice as likely as those not in the labour force (7.5 percent).

Unemployed people were less likely to be satisfied with life than any other population group described in this release.

The proportion of employed people who reported they were satisfied or very satisfied increased 2.2 percentage points between 2008 and 2012.

## Satisfied or very satisfied with life overall

By labour force status  
April 2012–March 2013



Source: Statistics New Zealand

### People in one-parent families less likely to be satisfied

People living in one-parent families were less likely to be satisfied with their lives than people living in other family types. Over three-quarters (78 percent) of people living in one-parent-with-children families were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives overall, compared with 89 percent of people living in couple-with/without-children families.

The proportion of people living in a couple-with-children family who were satisfied or very satisfied increased 3.2 percentage points between 2008 and 2012.

### People with no qualifications less likely to be satisfied

Overall, New Zealanders with educational qualifications were more likely to be satisfied with their lives than those with no qualifications. More than 9 in 10 (92 percent) people with a qualification at level 7 (bachelor's degree) or above were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives overall, compared with 8 in 10 (81 percent) people with no qualification.

### Health, money, relationships, and housing important to well-being

A number of aspects of New Zealanders' lives have a strong independent relationship with overall life satisfaction. The four with the strongest relationship in the NZGSS are:

- self-rated health status
- availability of money to meet everyday needs
- quality of relationships with family and friends
- housing quality.

The NZGSS measures these four aspects of New Zealanders lives. They are the focus of this release.

A good outcome for each of these aspects of life is captured in the survey when someone reports having:

- excellent or very good general health

- more than enough or enough money to meet everyday needs
- not felt lonely in the last four weeks
- no major problems with the house or flat in which they live.

See the [Data quality](#) section for a further explanation on the analysis used to determine the strength of the relationship between these measures and overall life satisfaction.

### **Three in five New Zealanders rate their health highly**

In 2012, an estimated 60 percent of New Zealanders rated their health as 'excellent' or 'very good'. This proportion remained relatively unchanged between 2008 and 2012.

An independent relationship exists between self-rated health and the following population characteristics:

**Age** – self-rated health satisfaction decreased with increased age. People aged 65+ years were less likely to rate their health as excellent or very good (46 percent) than those aged 15–24 years (68 percent).

**Labour force status** – employed people were more likely to rate their health as excellent or very good (66 percent) than people who were unemployed (55 percent) or not in the labour force (50 percent).

**Income** – Self-rated health satisfaction increased with increased household income. Where annual household income was over \$100,000, people were more likely to rate their health as excellent or very good (69 percent) than those with annual household income of \$30,000 or less (45 percent).

**Educational qualifications** – people with a qualification at level 7 (bachelor's degree) or above were more likely than those with no qualifications to say their health was excellent or very good (70 percent and 47 percent, respectively).

**Ethnicity** – Māori and Pacific peoples were less likely to rate their health as excellent or very good (54 and 55 percent, respectively) than Europeans (62 percent) or Asians (60 percent).

**Housing tenure** – people in owner-occupied dwellings were more likely to rate their health as excellent or very good (63 percent) than people who lived in rented dwellings (55 percent).

Self-rated health satisfaction didn't change across any of these population characteristics between 2008 and 2012.

### **Half of New Zealanders have enough money for everyday things**

In 2012, an estimated 52 percent of New Zealanders had 'more than enough' or 'enough' money to meet their everyday need for things such as accommodation, food, clothing, and other necessities. Results from 2012 are very similar to those from 2008 and 2010.

An independent relationship exists between having enough money and the following population characteristics:

**Income** – People with an annual household income of more than \$100,000 were more likely to have more than enough or enough money (71 percent) than people with an annual household income of \$30,000 or less (33 percent).

**Age** – the proportion of people with more than enough or enough money increased with age. Three in five (59 percent) people aged 65+ years had more than enough or enough money, compared with 43 percent of those aged 15–24 years.

**Labour force status** – 57 percent of employed people had more than enough or enough money. This was more than double the proportion for unemployed people (23 percent).

**Family type** – people in families without children were more likely to have more than enough or enough money than people in families with children. About 3 in 5 (62 percent) people who lived in couple-without-children families had more than enough or enough money, compared with 50 percent living in couple-with-children families and 28 percent of one-parent-with-children families.

**Educational qualifications** – people with no qualifications were less likely than those with an educational qualification to have more than enough or enough money. Two in five (41 percent) people with no qualification had more than enough or enough money, compared with 64 percent of those with a qualification at level 7 (bachelor's degree) or above.

**Housing tenure** – people living in owner-occupied dwellings were more likely than those in rented dwellings to have more than enough or enough money (50 percent and 36 percent, respectively).

**Region** – people who live in the Auckland region were least likely to have more than enough or enough money. Less than half (47 percent) of people living in Auckland had more than enough or enough money, compared with 58 percent of people living in either the Wellington or Canterbury regions.

The proportion of people with more than enough or enough money to meet their everyday needs changed significantly between 2008 and 2012 for two groups:

- employed people – the proportion **increased** 3.1 percentage points,
- people not in the labour force – the proportion **decreased** 4.6 percentage points.

### **One-third of New Zealanders feel lonely**

In 2012, an estimated 31 percent of New Zealanders had felt lonely a little, some, most, or all of the time in the last four weeks. The remaining 69 percent had never felt lonely in the last four weeks.

The proportion of people who felt lonely in 2012 was unchanged from 2010 but was down 2.5 percentage points from 2008.

An independent relationship exists between loneliness and the following population characteristics:

**Family type** – people living in one-parent families were more likely to have felt lonely (39 percent) than those in a couple-with-children family (30 percent). People in couple-without-children families were the least-likely family type to say they had felt lonely (26 percent).

**Age** – younger people were more likely to feel lonely than older people. One-third (35 percent) of people aged 15–24 years had felt lonely, compared with 20 percent of people aged 65+ years.

**Sex** – men were less likely than women to have felt lonely (28 percent and 34 percent, respectively).

**Housing tenure** – people living in owner-occupied dwellings were less likely to feel lonely (27 percent) than those living in rented dwellings (40 percent).

**Region** – people living in Wellington were more likely to feel lonely than those living elsewhere in New Zealand (35 percent, compared with 30 percent for Auckland and 32 percent for Canterbury).

**Labour force status** – unemployed people (40 percent) were more likely to experience loneliness than employed people (30 percent) or those not in the labour force (32 percent).

The proportion of people that had felt lonely in the last four weeks decreased significantly between 2008 and 2012 for four groups:

- people in couple-with-children families – down 5.0 percentage points,
- employed people – down 3.6 percentage points,
- people living in owner-occupied dwellings – down 3.5 percentage points,
- females – down 3.4 percentage points.

## **Two in three people have no major housing problems**

In 2012, an estimated 67 percent of New Zealanders reported having no major problems with the house or flat they lived in. This is a significant increase on rates from 2008 (63 percent) and 2010 (64 percent).

An independent relationship exists between having no major housing problems and the following population characteristics:

**Income** – people with an annual household income of more than \$100,000 were more likely to have no major housing problems (72 percent) than those on lower annual household incomes.

**Housing tenure** – people in owner-occupied dwellings were more likely to have no major housing problems (75 percent) than people living in rented dwellings (50 percent). Renters were the least likely to report no major housing problems across all population groups described in this release.

**Migrant status** – people born in New Zealand were more likely to have no major housing problems (68 percent) than long-term migrants (64 percent) and recent migrants (59 percent).

**Age** – people aged 65+ years were more likely to have no major housing problems (83 percent) than younger people. People aged 25–44 years were the least likely to report no major housing problems (57 percent).

The proportion of people reporting no major problems with their house or flat increased significantly between 2008 and 2012 for four groups:

- people living in rented dwellings – up 7.1 percentage points.

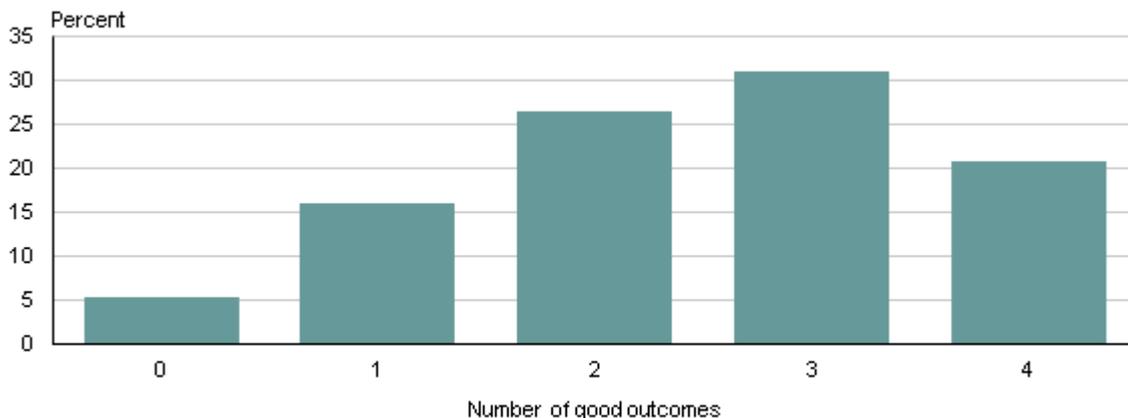
- people aged 25–44 years – up 5.1 percentage points,
- people born in New Zealand – up 4.8 percentage points,
- people who lived in owner-occupied dwellings – up 3.3 percentage points.

## One-fifth of New Zealanders have good outcomes in all four aspects of well-being

Just over one-fifth (21 percent) of New Zealand's adult population had good outcomes in all four aspects of life described in the section above (ie they had excellent or very good health, more than enough or enough money, had never felt lonely, and had no major housing problems). In contrast, 5.4 percent had no good outcomes, and 16 percent had a good outcome in just one aspect.

### Four aspects of life important to well-being

Number of good outcomes  
April 2012–March 2013



Note: Four aspects of life have a strong relationship with well-being in New Zealand. A good outcome for each of these aspects of life is captured when someone reports having: excellent or very good general health, more than enough or enough money to meet everyday needs, not felt lonely in the last four weeks, and no major problems with the house or flat in which they live.

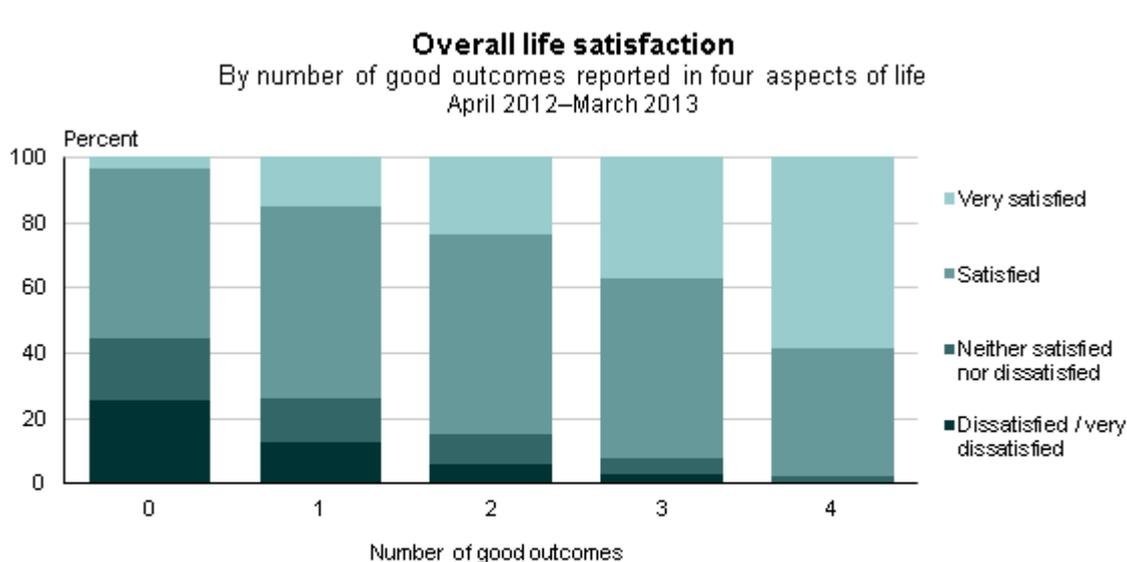
Source: Statistics New Zealand

While the lack of a good outcome in one aspect of life can create difficulties for people, the experience of lacking good outcomes in multiple aspects of life can have a compounding and persistent effect. This can reinforce barriers to getting ahead and increase the likelihood of other related problems later in life.

## High level of overall life satisfaction among people with good outcomes in all four aspects of life

For people who had neither good self-rated health nor enough money for everyday things, and also felt lonely and had housing problems, over a quarter (26 percent) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their lives overall.

In contrast, for those who had good outcomes in all four aspects of life, almost everyone (98 percent) said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their lives overall.



Note: Four aspects of life have a strong relationship with well-being in New Zealand. A good outcome for each of these aspects of life is captured when someone reports having: excellent or very good general health, more than enough or enough money to meet everyday needs, not felt lonely in the last four weeks, and no major problems with the house or flat in which they live.

Source: Statistics New Zealand

Go to [Social well-being in New Zealand: Interactive tool](#) to see how various combinations of these four aspects of life affect overall life satisfaction.

Our interactive tool allows you to select the aspects of life, either singly or in any combination, and see the overall life satisfaction of people who experienced those combinations.

### Some population groups more likely to experience good outcomes in all four aspects of life

Some population groups were more likely to experience good outcomes in all four aspects of life that are important to well-being. In particular:

- people aged 45+ years (25 percent) were more likely than those aged 15–24 years (16 percent)
- those who identify as European (24 percent) were more likely than those identifying as Māori (12 percent) or Pacific peoples (9 percent)
- people born in New Zealand (23 percent) were more likely than recent migrants (16 percent)
- people with a qualification at level 7 (bachelor's degree) or above (25 percent) were more likely than those with no qualification (15 percent)
- people with an annual household income of more than \$100,000 (31 percent) were more likely than those with \$30,000 or less (11 percent)
- employed people (24 percent) were more likely than unemployed people (8 percent)
- people living in a couple-without-children family (27 percent) were more likely than those in a one-parent-with-children family (10 percent).

For more detailed data see the Excel tables in the 'Downloads' box.

## Definitions

### About the New Zealand General Social Survey

The objectives of the New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS) are to:

- complement other measures of societal progress by providing information on the well-being of New Zealanders aged 15 years and over across a range of aspects of life
- provide a view of how well-being varies across different groups within the population
- understand the relationships between different aspects of life and to overall well-being.

Government departments, researchers, regional and community organisations, and the wider public all use survey information. The survey helps to identify key well-being issues, enables international comparisons to be made, and contributes to better-informed public debate about how we are faring.

The NZGSS 2012 is the third survey in the series. The first NZGSS was carried out in 2008/09 and the information released in October 2009 (see [New Zealand General Social Survey: 2008](#)). The second NZGSS was carried out in 2010/11 and the information released in November 2011 (see [New Zealand General Social Survey: 2010](#)).

General social surveys and surveys of a similar nature are a regular feature of statistical programmes in countries that include Australia, the United Kingdom, and Canada. Statistics Canada undertook their first GSS in 1985 and the Australian Bureau of Statistics started theirs in 2002.

The data collected in the NZGSS is similar to GSS data collected in other OECD countries. Where international comparisons are made, data from the NZGSS is broadly comparable with data from other countries although some questions, scales, or survey populations may vary between countries.

See [Related links](#) for the GSSs for Australia and Canada.

### More definitions

Here are definitions of the main measures included in this release.

**Adequacy of income to meet everyday needs:** is based on the respondent's self-assessment of their income (and their partner's if applicable). The respondent rates whether they had more than enough money, enough money, just enough money, or not enough money to meet their everyday need for such things as accommodation, food, clothing, and other necessities. This measure is an element of the Economic Living Standard Index (ELSI), and is not asked of respondents who are under 18 years of age.

See [Direct measurement of living standards: The New Zealand ELSI scale](#) for more information.

**Contact with family and friends:** measures social connectedness. It refers to contact with a person in another household. Face-to-face contact does not include electronic forms of contact such as using a web cam or video conferencing. The survey also measures non-face-to-face contact such as by telephone, cellphone (calling, texting, video calling), Internet (emails, instant messenger), postal mail, and fax.

**Ethnicity:** is the ethnic group or groups that respondents identify with or feel they belong to. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group.

Ethnicity is a measure of cultural affiliation, as opposed to race, ancestry, nationality, or citizenship.

See [New Zealand Standard Classification of Ethnicity 2005](#) for more information.

This release uses level 1 of the 'total response' classification. The single and combination ethnicity classification is also included in the NZGSS dataset and will be available in the confidentialised unit record file (CURF) dataset.

**Experience of discrimination:** is a self-reported measure of perceived discrimination. Respondents were asked if they felt they had been treated unfairly or had something nasty done to them in the last 12 months because of the group they belong to or seem to belong to. This includes things such as: age, skin colour, disability or a health issue, family status, or sex.

**Family type:** is family composition within households. Measurement is based on level 1 of the [New Zealand Classification of Family Types 2008](#). This release uses the three categories in the classification and a fourth category for people not in a family.

- couples without children – couples who don't have children as well as couples whose children have left home
- couples with child(ren) – couples and their child(ren) who live with them.
- one-parent with child(ren) – one adult with child(ren) who live with them
- not in a family – someone living by themselves or people who are flatting.

**Feeling of safety when walking alone in the neighbourhood at night:** is the respondent's feeling of safety walking alone at night in their neighbourhood. Respondents chose from:

- very safe
- safe
- unsafe
- very unsafe.

**Felt lonely:** is a respondent's subjective perception of the difference between desired and achieved levels in the quality and quantity of social contact. Respondents were asked how often, in the last four weeks, they had felt isolated from others. Respondents chose from:

- all of the time
- most of the time
- some of the time
- a little of the time
- none of the time

**Household income:** is derived by aggregating the total personal gross annual incomes of all members of the household. The measure is based on the [New Zealand Standard Classification of Income Bands 2009](#). It combines the 16 categories into four summary groups: \$30,000 or less; \$30,001–70,000; \$70,001–\$100,000; and \$100,001 or more.

**Household storage of emergency water:** whether respondents had stored water for three days in preparation for natural disasters such as earthquakes.

**Housing tenure:** is the type of occupancy of a household in a private dwelling at the time of the survey. The measure is based on the New Zealand Standard Classification of Tenure of Households 2008. The three categories at level 1 of that classification are combined into two: rented or owner-occupied.

Owner-occupied dwellings include dwellings owned or partly owned (with or without a mortgage), and dwellings held in a family trust. It does not refer to the tenure of the land on which the dwelling is situated.

**Labour force status:** a respondent's position in the labour-force in one of three groups: employed, unemployed, or not in the labour force. This measure is based on the New Zealand Standard Classification of Labour Force Status 1999 and refers to the respondent's circumstances in defined time periods.

**Level of education:** measures a person's highest level of formal education, based on the New Zealand Register of Quality Assured Qualifications (2003). For this release, the 13 level 1 categories in the register are combined into four groups. Examples of the types of qualification in each group are:

- no qualification – no formal qualifications
- level 1–4 certificate – eg school certificate, sixth form certificate, university entrance, NCEA or national certificate 1, 2, 3, or 4, trade certificates, and also people with any overseas secondary school qualifications
- level 5–6 diploma – eg nursing or teaching diplomas, or advanced trade certificates
- level 7 / bachelor's degree and above – eg qualifications from university, such as bachelor's degree, post-graduate diplomas and certificates, master's degree, and doctorate.

**Life stages:** age groupings to focus on different experiences at different points in people's lives (eg growing up, learning, working, family formation, child rearing, and retirement). For this release, life stages are:

- young adults – 15 to 24 years
- prime working age – 25 to 44 years
- middle-aged people – 45 to 64 years
- older people – 65 years and over.

**Major problems with house:** is whether respondents reported major problems with their house or flat. The types of problems include: too cold/difficult to keep warm, too small, damp, poor condition, or too expensive.

**Migrant status:** is whether or not a respondent was born in New Zealand, and if not how long they had been here. For this release, the three groups are:

- recent migrants – those who arrived to settle in New Zealand in 2007 or later
- long-term migrants – those who arrived in New Zealand in 2006 or earlier
- New Zealand-born – people born in New Zealand.

**Overall life satisfaction:** is a self-reported measure. Respondents were asked, in a single question, how they felt about their life as a whole (at the time of the interview). Respondents chose from:

- very satisfied
- satisfied
- neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- dissatisfied
- very dissatisfied.

**Personal income:** is the respondent's before-tax income in the previous 12 months. It is collected as an income range rather than an actual dollar income.

**Region:** is based on regional council areas, and grouped where necessary for analysis.

<b>Comparing NZGSS regional groupings with regional council areas</b>	
<b>NZGSS grouping</b>	<b>Regional council area</b>
Auckland	Auckland
Northland/Bay of Plenty/Gisborne	Northland
	Bay of Plenty
	Gisborne
Rest of North Island	Waikato
	Hawke's Bay
	Taranaki
	Manawatu-Wanganui
Wellington	Wellington
Canterbury	Canterbury
Rest of South Island	West Coast
	Otago
	Southland
	Tasman
	Nelson
	Marlborough

**Self-rated general health status:** is based on a respondent's own perception of their health status and functioning. This measure is an alternative to the more traditional objective measures of health (eg hospitalisation rates and disease prevalence). Self-reported health measures introduce subjectivity into health status measurement, which is useful for providing a more person-centred view of health, and for placing more emphasis on quality of life and well-being.

Respondents summarised their perception of their overall health by indicating whether, in general, their health was excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor.

**Support in a time of crisis:** is whether respondents felt they could access support or help from people outside their household if they really needed it.

Examples of support people may require are:

- help during a serious illness or injury
- help maintaining family responsibilities
- emotional support or a place to stay.

**Unpaid work:** is whether the respondent has provided help to people outside their household without payment in the previous four weeks. This does not include activities done for, or through, a group or organisation.

**Voluntary work:** measures whether the respondent has undertaken voluntary activities for a group or an organisation in the previous four weeks.

The NZGSS definition of voluntary work differs slightly from the definitions used in the Time Use Survey and in the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings. The Time Use Survey does not define voluntary work as such. Instead, it is measured in terms of 'unpaid work for any organisation'. The census definition is 'other help or voluntary work for or through any organisation, group or marae'.

For a full list of variables used in the survey see the [NZGSS data dictionary](#).

## **Related links**

### **Upcoming releases**

We will be publishing other information from the NZGSS 2012 during 2013 and 2014.

The *New Zealand General Social Survey: 2014* will be released in August 2015.

[Subscribe to information releases](#), including this one, by completing the online subscription form.

The [Release calendar](#) lists all our upcoming information releases by date of release.

### **Past releases**

See [New Zealand General Social Survey](#) for links to past releases.

### **Related information**

See [General Social Survey: Summary results](#) for results from Australia's latest GSS.

See [The General Social Survey: An overview](#) for an overview from Canada's GSS.

See [Well-being](#) for reports and articles that use previous NZGSS information.

## Data quality

### Period-specific information

This section contains information that has changed since the last release.

- [Reference period](#)
- [Accuracy of the data](#)
- [Response rate](#)
- [Imputation for item non-response](#)
- [Edits](#)
- [Differences between NZGSS 2012 and NZGSS 2010 questionnaires](#)
- [Revisions to sample](#)
- [Change due to 22 February 2011 earthquake](#)
- [Exploratory analysis for 2012](#)

### General information

This section contains information about the data that does not change between releases.

- [Survey population](#)
- [Survey content](#)
- [Reliability of survey estimates](#)
- [Confidentiality and suppression](#)
- [Rounding and percentages](#)
- [Accuracy of the data](#)
- [More information](#)

## Period-specific information

### Reference period

The data collection for the New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS) 2012 took place over the 12 months from April 2012 to March 2013.

### Accuracy of the data

The NZGSS 2012 personal questionnaire was answered by 8,462 individuals. Households were selected at random using a multistage sample design.

### Response rate

The target response rate for the survey is 80 percent. The achieved response rate for 2012 was 78 percent. The response rate was calculated by dividing the weighted percentage of eligible individuals who responded by the estimated number of eligible individuals.

### Imputation for item non-response

Occasionally, responses are not given to all questions and in these instances, we sometimes use imputation to 'fill' the gaps. Imputation is very selectively done to maintain the quality of the data. It allows more questionnaire responses to be included in the final dataset.

For NZGSS 2012, imputation was only carried out for age, personal income, and labour force status. Very little imputation was required (see the table below for a breakdown of imputations).

We used donor imputation, a hot-deck imputation method, which replaces missing values by data values from another record (a donor). This donor is identified by matching the records on other (complete) matching variables, and is the one that most closely matches the record with missing values.

<b>Number and percentage of imputed records for NZGSS 2012</b>		
By type of imputation (Personal questionnaire)		
Type of imputation	Number of imputed records	Percentage of imputation
Age	10	0.11
Income	267	3.02
Labour force status	27	0.30

### **Edits**

Apart from the above imputations, we made no edits on NZGSS 2012 data.

An edit occurs when a respondent's inconsistent answer is changed to a more accurate answer based on other information they have provided. The quality assurance process employed for this survey did not identify any responses that required editing.

### **Differences between NZGSS 2012 and 2010 questionnaires**

The content and methodology of the 2012 survey was largely the same as the 2010 survey. However, in NZGSS 2008 and NZGSS 2010 the participation in study question was only asked of those who were dissatisfied with their knowledge and skills. In NZGSS 2012, we asked this question of all respondents.

### **Revisions to sample**

To improve the accuracy of the NZGSS we made some changes to the NZGSS 2012 sample, and reissued weights for NZGSS 2010 and NZGSS 2008.

We found the NZGSS 2008 and NZGSS 2010 samples did not have the expected socio-economic dimensions. This was discovered through comparison with the NZ Deprivation Index and is a consequence of non-random sampling.

The effect of this on most published estimates from the NZGSS 2010 and NZGSS 2008 is not statistically significant and it is unlikely to affect aggregate released data. However, point estimates were consistently away from the expected results for lower socio-economic groups, including the Pacific population.

We re-selected a sample for the NZGSS 2012 to ensure the socio-economic bias is corrected. This means the sample has been selected from different primary sampling units (PSUs) than for NZGSS 2010 and NZGSS 2008.

We have also reissued the weights for NZGSS 2010 and NZGSS 2008 to improve small group analysis, which we see as an important aspect of the survey.

See the [General information](#) section for more information on the sample design.

## **Change due to 22 February 2011 earthquake**

After the February 2011 Canterbury earthquake, we updated the sampling frame of PSUs to exclude dwellings in the red zone. This was done before we selected the sample for NZGSS 2012.

## **Exploratory analysis for 2012**

A large body of international evidence shows that self-reported life satisfaction is a credible approach to measuring the well-being of a population. Given the policy interest in maximising people's well-being, there is a need to better understand what makes people more satisfied with their lives.

To inform this report, we used a logistic regression model to look at the aspects of life most strongly associated with overall life satisfaction. The advantage of using regression analysis is that it holds other factors constant, while looking at the association between the likelihood of feeling 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with life and the factor of interest.

Measures from NZGSS that we included in the regression model were:

- had excellent or very good general health
- had more than enough or enough money to meet everyday needs
- had not felt lonely in the last four weeks
- had no major problems with the house or flat in which they live
- undertook voluntary work
- found it easy to express their identity in New Zealand
- felt that police and government departments treat everyone fairly
- felt they belonged to New Zealand
- experienced discrimination in the last 12 months
- felt satisfied about the conditions of facilities in their town, city, or rural area
- had face-to-face contact with family in the last four weeks
- felt safe walking alone in their neighbourhood at night.

The first four measures showed the strongest association with overall life satisfaction. However, we did not include all 500 NZGSS variables in these models, but looked at a select number of well-known social variables.

Once we knew what NZGSS variables we would look at for this release, we looked at which population characteristics had the strongest relationship with those variables, and therefore contained the greatest disparities among groups.

To do this we ran logistic regression models with each of the NZGSS measures as the dependent variable, and these important population group variables as the independent variables.

- sex
- age
- ethnicity
- household income
- labour force status

- family type
- migrant status
- region
- housing tenure
- level of education.

There is a good deal of disparity between each of these models. No population groups had a consistent relationship across all NZGSS measures we looked at. Because of this we have presented each social outcome measure by the four or five population groups having the strongest relationships with that particular measure.

## General information

### Survey population

The target population for the NZGSS is the usually resident New Zealand population aged 15 years and over in private dwellings in the North Island, South Island, or Waiheke Island.

The target population includes:

- New Zealand usual residents temporarily overseas
- New Zealand usual residents temporarily staying elsewhere in New Zealand (including other permanent and temporary private dwellings, institutions, and non-private dwellings; and people who have no fixed abode, but are found in private dwellings on the household enumeration date)
- people in the New Zealand armed forces if they reside in a private dwelling
- young adults at boarding schools (young adults who fall into this category are not surveyed in the personal questionnaire, but are included as members of the household in the household questionnaire).

The target population excludes:

- overseas visitors and international students who expect to be resident in New Zealand for less than 12 months
- people living in non-private dwellings such as hotels, motels, boarding houses, hostels, and homes for the elderly
- patients in hospitals, or residents of psychiatric and penal institutions
- people living on offshore islands (excluding Waiheke Island)
- members of the non-New Zealand armed forces and their dependants
- non-New Zealand diplomats or diplomatic staff members and their dependants
- New Zealand usual residents temporarily overseas who do not return within the survey period
- New Zealand usual residents temporarily staying elsewhere in New Zealand (including other permanent and temporary private dwellings, institutions, and non-private dwellings; and people who have no fixed abode, but stay at private dwellings) who don't return within the survey period
- New Zealand usual residents who live in remote areas that are costly or difficult to access.

## **Survey content**

We use household and personal questionnaires to collect the data. One individual in the household completes the household questionnaire, which collects information about all the usually resident people in that household (eg family relationships and household income). One individual in the household aged 15 years or over is randomly selected to answer the personal questionnaire. Some questions in the personal questionnaire (such as the Economic Living Standard Index (ELSI) questions, including adequacy of income to meet everyday needs) are not asked of respondents who are under 18 years of age.

Interviews are conducted using computer-assisted personal interviews and last an average of 45 minutes.

## **Reliability of survey estimates**

Two types of error are possible in estimates based on a sample survey: sampling error and non-sampling error. Sampling error can be measured and quantifies the variability that occurs by chance because a sample rather than an entire population is surveyed. Non-sampling errors are all errors that are not sampling errors. These errors are not quantifiable and include unintentional mistakes by respondents, variation in the respondent's and interviewer's interpretation of the questions asked, and errors in the recording and coding of data. Statistics New Zealand endeavours to minimise the impact of these errors by applying best survey practices and monitoring known indicators (eg, non-response).

Sampling errors are estimated using a jackknife method, which is based on the variation between estimates, and on taking 100 mutually exclusive subsamples from the whole sample. Sampling errors are quoted at the 95 percent confidence level. For example, if the estimated total number of people is 1,575,200, and the estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 35,500, or 2.3 percent (measured at the 95 percent confidence level), that shows there is a 95 percent chance the true total number of people lies between 1,539,700 and 1,610,700.

Smaller estimates, such as the total number of Pacific people (191,000), are subject to larger sampling errors than larger estimates. This estimate is subject to a sampling error of plus or minus 21,300, or 11.2 percent (measured at the 95 percent confidence level).

High-level checks of the ethnic groups indicated the samples are broadly representative of the population. However conclusions about groups with small population size, such as Pacific people, can potentially be vulnerable to unmeasured differences between the survey participants and the population.

An output with a relative sampling error of 30 percent to 49.9 percent should be viewed with caution (flagged in tables by an asterisk\*), and an error of 50 percent or more should be considered unreliable (flagged by \*\*).

## **Confidentiality and suppression**

Tables with very few contributors are suppressed ('S'). These cells have an estimated population of less than 1,000 and are deemed to be unreliable and a risk to respondents' confidentiality.

## **Rounding and percentages**

All percentages used in the text are calculated from weighted data and then rounded to two significant figures. The percentages in the tables are rounded to one decimal place. To improve

the readability of the data, the calculation of percentages excludes residual categories (eg 'don't know' and 'refused') in the population base from which percentages are calculated.

## **Accuracy of the data**

### **Sample design information**

The NZGSS uses a three-stage sample selection method, similar to other Statistics New Zealand's household surveys.

The first stage of the selection consists of selecting a total of 1,200 PSUs from the Household Survey Frame (HSF). The HSF is the standard sampling frame Statistics NZ uses to select samples and to manage overlap control for all its household surveys. The HSF lists PSUs with attributes determined by data from the census. PSUs are then assigned to standard strata based on these attributes.

The second stage of sample selection consists of selecting eligible dwellings within the selected PSUs. In the third stage, we select one eligible individual within each selected dwelling. The eligible individual is chosen at random from the list of all eligible individuals in the dwelling.

The NZGSS is designed to provide estimates at a national level.

### **Weights**

The survey has two sets of weights attached, one for the household and one for the person. The household weight is used to describe the attributes of a household; for example, how many households have dependent children who live outside that household. The person weight is used to describe the attributes of a person; for example, how many people are 'very satisfied' with their life overall.

### **More information**

See [New Zealand General Social Survey](#) for more information.

### **Liability**

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## Revisions

The effect of the reissued weights on most published estimates from the NZGSS 2010 and NZGSS 2008 is not statistically significant. They are unlikely to affect aggregate released data. However, estimates may be different to those published in the previous releases.

Therefore, we are re-publishing the tables for NZGSS 2008 and NZGSS 2010, with the improved estimates.

See 'revisions to sample' in [Data quality](#) for more information.

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## Tables

The following tables are available in Excel format from the 'Downloads' box. If you have problems viewing the files, see [opening files and PDFs](#).

1. Selected NZGSS measures for the total population
2. Selected NZGSS measures by life stage
3. Selected NZGSS measures by age (10-year groupings)
4. Selected NZGSS measures by sex
5. Selected NZGSS measures by labour force status
6. Selected NZGSS measures by level of education
7. Selected NZGSS measures by household income
8. Selected NZGSS measures by personal income
9. Selected NZGSS measures by housing tenure
10. Selected NZGSS measures by family type
11. Selected NZGSS measures by migrant status
12. Selected NZGSS measures by ethnicity
13. Selected NZGSS measures by region
14. Number of good outcomes in four aspects of life by selected population characteristics

The 14 tables from 2008 and 2010 NZGSS have been revised and are included with this release. See [Revisions](#) for more details.

## Access more data

Use the following to access other specific data from the 2012 survey.

### **NZGSS confidentialised unit record file (CURF)**

The NZGSS CURF contains confidentialised survey data that enables researchers to carry out their own analysis on the dataset. The NZGSS 2012 CURF will be release in September 2013. The CURF is very similar to the dataset that was used to produce this first release and other releases. The [New Zealand General Social Survey Data Dictionary](#) details what is available in the CURF.

### **Customised data requests**

Phone our Information Centre on 0508 525 525 toll-free, or email [info@stats.govt.nz](mailto:info@stats.govt.nz), to discuss options for getting customised data that suits your particular needs. Note: there may be a charge for a customised request.