

Fact sheet: New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS)

New Zealand General Social Survey at a glance:

- Sample size:** Approximately 8000 individuals.
- Frequency:** Every two years.
- Mode:** Face-to-face computer-assisted interviews.
- Field duration:** 12 months (April–March).
- Respondent:** One household member 15 years and over.

Survey topics:

- housing
- health
- voluntary work
- paid and unpaid work
- social connectedness
- human rights
- culture and identity
- life satisfaction
- knowledge and skills
- economic standard of living
- the environment
- support across households
- leisure and recreation
- safety and security.

About the New Zealand General Social Survey

The NZGSS gathers information across areas that are important to people's lives. It can:

- combine social and economic data to help understanding of how different social areas relate to each other
- report on what New Zealanders think and feel about their lives, and provide objective measures such as household income
- allow new topics of social interest to be investigated
- provide international comparisons.

Full questionnaire, data dictionary and selected reports available: www.stats.govt.nz/nzgss

Voluntary / unpaid work in the New Zealand General Social Survey (NZGSS)

The NZGSS asked people about voluntary work for a group or organisation, and unpaid work for anyone not living with them (helping someone move, providing transport or lending transport, caregiving, or childcare etc) in the previous four weeks. It found that:

- One-third of people undertook voluntary work, and about two-thirds had done unpaid work.
- People who do voluntary work have higher levels of life satisfaction (89.5%) compared to those who don't do voluntary work (84.2%).
- While about two-thirds of both males and females undertook unpaid work for someone living in another household in the previous four weeks, the frequency with which they did unpaid work differed. Females were more likely than males to have undertaken unpaid work at least once a week, and males were more likely than females to have done unpaid work just once in the four week period.
- There was a steady rise in voluntary work by level of qualification.
- People aged 15–34 years, and 75 years and over were the least likely to have undertaken voluntary work.

The NZGSS is useful to people researching volunteering and unpaid work, as it enables the investigation of relationships between a wide range of social and economic factors and can be used to observe changes over time.

Selected NZGSS Measures

By voluntary / unpaid work
April 2008–March 2009

Measure	Undertook voluntary work	Undertook unpaid work	Measure	Undertook voluntary work	Undertook unpaid work
	Percent			Percent	
Total population	32.6	64.6			
Overall life satisfaction Very satisfied / satisfied	89.5	86.8	Labour force status Employed	32.7	69.1
			Unemployed	28.7	59.6
Age 15–24 years	27.0	66.2	Not in the labour force	32.9	54.2
25–44 years	30.8	66.9	Level of education No qualification	25.9	54.1
45–64 years	36.4	67.2	Level 1–4 certificate	29.8	67.7
65 years and over	35.6	52.4	Level 5–6 diploma	37.7	69.9
Ethnicity European	32.1	65.4	Level 7 / bachelor's degree and above	41.8	69.4
Māori	34.2	68.0	Sex Male	32.6	65.2
Pacific	41.5	64.6	Female	32.6	64.1
Asian	28.2	56.1			

Note: Data users can access a wider array of measures relating to this topic in the NZGSS dataset.

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