



New Zealand  
Crime and Victims **survey**

**HELP CREATE SAFER COMMUNITIES**

Topical report:  
Highly victimised people  
December 2019

Results drawn from Cycle 1 (March-September 2018) of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey

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### Survey participants

We would like to thank the 8,030 New Zealanders who gave their time to take part in the survey and share their stories.

### Service provider

We appreciate the work of CBG Health Research Ltd. Their interviewing and data management services made this survey possible.

### Contributors

All writing and analyses were performed by Dr Tadhg E Daly and Tianying Chu. They were employed by the Ministry of Justice Research and Evaluation team at the time of publication.

### External experts

We are grateful for the support, guidance and advice of the experts who contributed to the project. Our special thanks go to consultant Patricia Mayhew for her invaluable contribution in the survey design, Andrea Johnston (New Zealand Police) for her support of the coding design and process, Chris Hansen and Naeimeh Abi (Statistics New Zealand) for their methodological advice and peer-review, Associate Professor Louise Dixon and Adrienne Everest for reviewing the methodological report, and our colleagues from the Ministry of Justice for their ongoing help and support.

*NZCVS Project Team*

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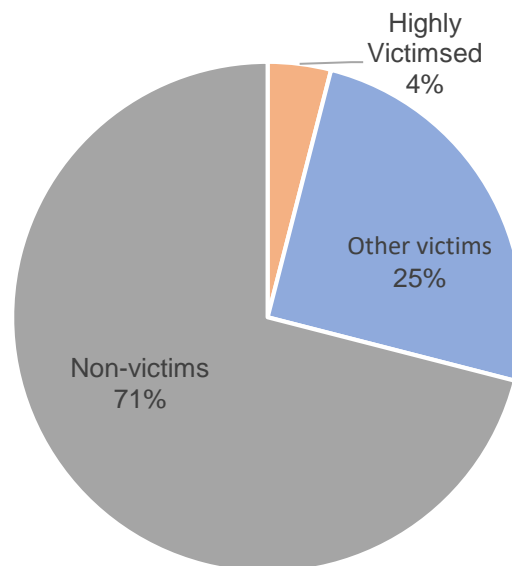
## Introduction

The New Zealand crime and victims survey (NZCVS) provides information on the following key questions:

- What is the extent and nature of crime and victimisation in New Zealand?
- What is the extent and nature of crime that goes reported or unreported to the Police?
- Who experiences crime?
- How is crime distributed among victims?

The NZCVS is a nationwide, face-to-face, annual, random-sample survey asking New Zealand adults aged 15 and over about incidents of crime they experienced over the last 12 months. This includes both incidents reported to the Police and unreported incidents. See [Section 8](#) below for more information on NZCVS or [Section 9](#) for a full list of NZCVS reports.

This report provides a statistical picture of the most highly victimised four percent of New Zealand adults. We define highly victimised people as those who experienced four or more criminal incidents within a 12-month period. In this report highly victimised people are compared with other victims to assess how this population differs and the key factors involved in high or repeat victimisation. The other victims are defined as those who experienced between one and three incidents within a 12-month period, they make up 25% of New Zealand adults. The remaining 71% of adults experienced no crime within a 12-month period (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Percentage of New Zealand adults who are highly victimised versus other victims and non-victims.

For the purposes of this report we chose to define highly victimised people as those experiencing four or more incidents because this threshold allows a deeper level of analysis than would be possible with a more conservative threshold (i.e. experiencing five or more offences) for our first year of survey data. This threshold may be revised as we collect more years of survey data.

This report uses the first year of NZCVS interviewing conducted between March and September 2018. The survey does not cover a specific 12-month period but instead asks

each respondent about their experiences within the 12-months prior to the date of the interview.

This report aims to address the following research questions:

- Who are the most highly victimised four percent of New Zealanders and where do they live?
- What type of offences do highly victimised people experience?
- How are the perpetrators of incidents related to the highly victimised?
- How does repeat victimisation relate with the wellbeing of highly victimised people?
- Is repeat victimisation associated with economic issues or victims' perceptions of crime?

As more data is collected we intend to update and extend the analysis to provide more accurate estimates and reveal clearer patterns within the data.

### Uncertainty of estimates

Because NZCVS is a sample survey it is subject to sampling error. Estimation of standard errors of the estimates is described in the [methodology report](#). Confidence intervals are constructed from the standard errors at the 95% level.

### Comparison of estimates by population groups

Formal statistical tests of differences in estimates across population groups are not provided in this report. Confidence intervals (at the 95% level) are provided to show the uncertainty of estimates. When confidence intervals of two estimates are not overlapping, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference. However, when the intervals do overlap, the difference is unlikely to be statistically significant.

### Disclaimer

1. While all care and diligence has been taken in processing, analysing, and extracting data and information for this publication, the Ministry of Justice gives no warranty that it is error free and will not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by the use directly, or indirectly, of the information in this publication.
2. This report contains highly aggregated data. No identifiable personal data is included in the report.
3. Estimates in the text and graphs (including percentages) are rounded to the nearest thousands, hundreds or whole numbers. Tables provide accuracy to two decimal places.
4. The NZCVS is a new survey with significant improvements in design compared with its predecessor the New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS). Therefore, **any direct comparison with the NZCASS results may be misleading, even for the same offence types.**
5. We acknowledge that some people who have experienced crime dislike being referred to as a 'victim'. Some feel the term accurately conveys their experience of harm, but some prefer to be referred to as 'survivors' and some wish for no label at all. In this report we examine and compare groups of people who have experienced various levels of crime incidents to see whether we can identify factors that are related to high or repeat victimisation. We have used the term 'victim' within this report to differentiate groups of interest in a way that will be easily recognisable for all our audiences including justice agency personnel. We hope that through future consultation with those who have been victimised, we can find a better solution to recognise and respect the needs of people who have been harmed by crime.

## Key findings summary

- Four percent of the New Zealand adult population (12% of victims) experience almost half (47%) of all crime incidents.
- Young people, Māori and people who have never been in a legally recognised relationship are all overrepresented in the highly victimised population.
- There are no significant differences found in geographic location, area deprivation or household composition between highly victimised people and other victims.
- Compared with other victims, highly victimised people experience a significantly lower proportion of household offences (23% vs. 41%) but a significantly higher proportion of interpersonal violence.
- The highly victimised four percent experience over two thirds (67%) of all interpersonal violence.
- The majority of interpersonal violence incidents experienced by all victims are perpetrated by community and not family members (74% vs. 27%<sup>1</sup>).
- There was a non-significant trend for more interpersonal violent incidents to be perpetrated by community members who were strangers compared with known community members (47% vs. 31% for the other victims group).
- Highly victimised people are significantly overrepresented in categories of high psychological distress, low life satisfaction and low feelings of safety when compared with other victims.
- Highly victimised people are less likely to earn high personal incomes and are more likely to be under financial stress when compared to other victims.
- There is no evidence in this report that highly victimised people are less likely to view incidents as crimes when compared to other victims.

### Consistency with previous and international research

These findings fall broadly in line with the findings from the previous New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS) and other international crime surveys. Specifically, the NZCASS, the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS), the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), and the International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) have all found that a small proportion of the population experience a high proportion of crime and an even higher proportion of violent crime. For example, the SCJS found that 1% of adults experienced 59% of all violent crime. Collectively, these surveys and other pieces of research have also consistently found that high or repeat victimisation occurs more often among young people, ethnic minorities, people who are not married and people on low incomes. In contrast with the current findings, international research has consistently found that males are more likely to be repeat victims than females, future research with additional years of NZCVS survey data might help to clarify why this trend is not found in New Zealand.

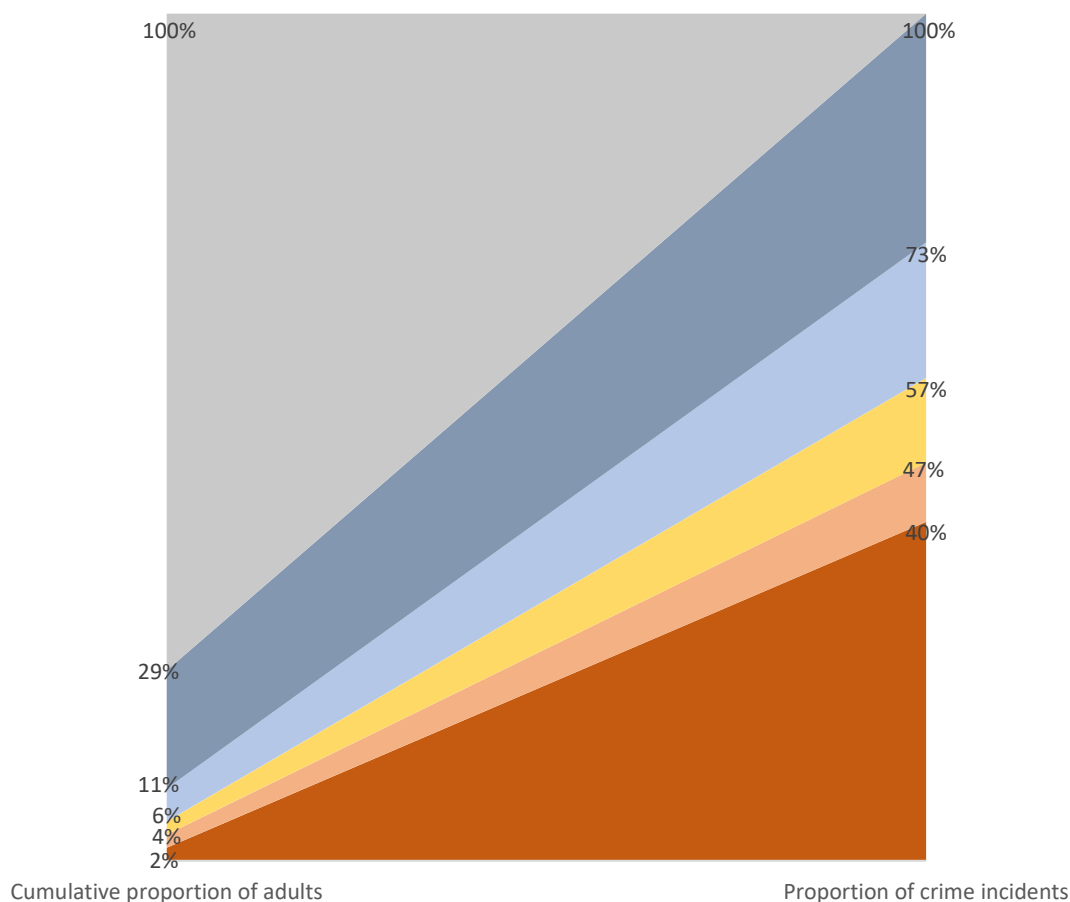
<sup>1</sup> Percentages sum to over 100% because a small number of incidents involve both family and community members.

# 1. Highly victimised people

## Four percent of the adult population suffer almost 50% of crime incidents

The first year of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey found that people who experienced four or more incidents of crime within a 12-month period experienced almost half of all crime incidents. Those people make up only four percent of the New Zealand adult population but experience 47% of all crime incidents (see Figure 2). In contrast, 71% of the New Zealand adult population experience no crime incidents within a 12-month period and 18% of New Zealand adults (or 62% of all victims) experience only one crime incident (or 27% of all incidents) within a 12-month period (see Table 1). This means that a minority of people experience the majority of crime incidents in New Zealand.

Therefore, if it were possible to identify the most highly victimised four percent of the population and provide interventions that helped prevent their victimisation, crime across New Zealand could be dramatically reduced. The purpose of this report is to further explore this segment of the population to better understand who they are, where they are and what crimes they are experiencing. After outlining the population and their experiences we will begin to explore other potential areas of difference between highly victimised people and other victims and propose some next steps towards understanding and supporting this population.



**Figure 2.** Concentration of victimisation over a 12-month period in New Zealand.

**Table 1.** Percentage of adult New Zealanders, victims, and overall incidents by the number of incidents experienced within a 12-month period.

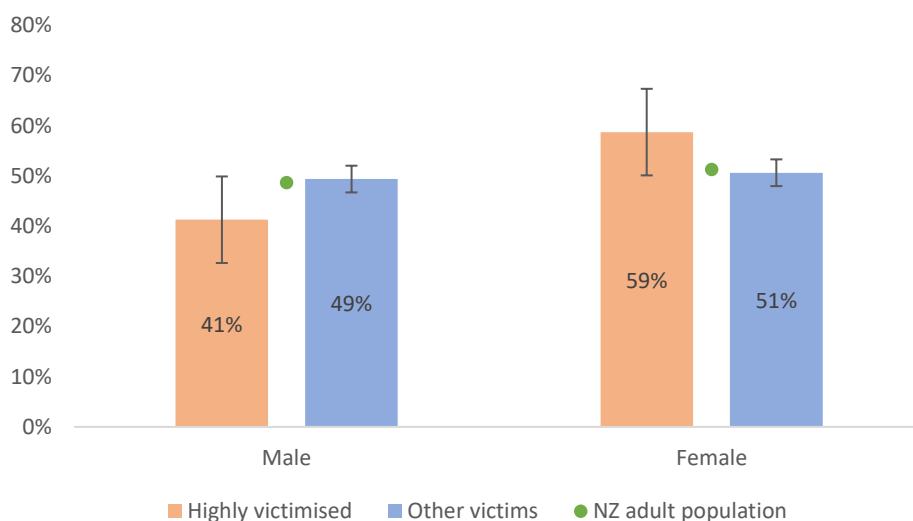
No. of crime incidents experienced	Percentage of adult New Zealanders	Percentage of victims	Percentage of incidents
No incidents	71%	N/A	N/A
One incident	18%	62%	27%
Two incidents	6%	19%	16%
Three incidents	2%	7%	10%
Four incidents	1%	4%	7%
Five or more incidents	2%	8%	40%

## 2. Who are the ‘four percent’?

### Young people, Māori and people who haven’t been married are all overrepresented in the highly victimised population

One way of identifying who highly victimised people are is to analyse their demographic composition and compare it with the composition of the other victims – those who experienced three crimes or less within a 12-month period – to see whether any characteristics are overrepresented within the highly victimised group. We can also use the New Zealand adult population as a reference point for the over and underrepresentation of different demographic characteristics generally.

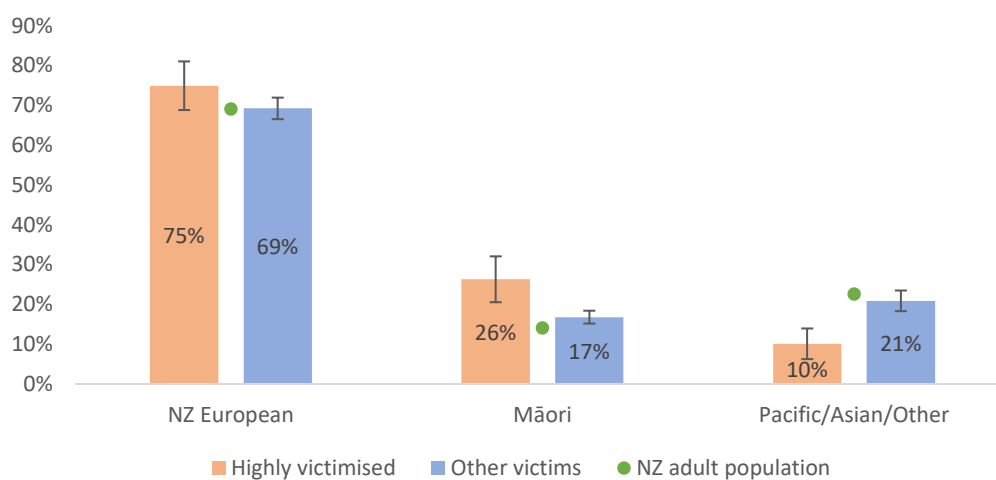
In the NZCVS [key findings report](#) we showed that males and females were equally likely to experience crime. Here we find that females tend to be overrepresented and males underrepresented in the highly victimised population (59% female to 41% male), however, the difference is not statistically significant (see Figure 3). Due to the level of error observed for the highly victimised group we expect that a clearer pattern of results in this area might be found with additional years of survey data.



**Figure 3.** Percentage of males and females within different victimisation groups and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.



The NZCVS key finding report also showed that young people and Māori were more likely to experience crime than the national average. This overrepresentation of young and Māori victims is exaggerated when looking at the highly victimised four percent (see Figures 4 and 5). Specifically, although Māori make up only 14% of the adult New Zealand population<sup>2</sup>, they form 26% of the most highly victimised people<sup>3</sup>. In contrast, those who identify under Pacific, Asian and other ethnicities represent 23% of the New Zealand adult population but only 10% of the highly victimised. Overall, Māori are significantly overrepresented in the highly victimised four percent compared with the other victims, whereas those who identify under Pacific, Asian and other ethnicities are significantly underrepresented. Although New Zealand Europeans are overrepresented within the highly victimised group when compared with all other victims (75% compared with 65%), the difference is not statistically significant. Looking further into why particular ethnicities are more or less likely to be highly victimised is outside the scope of this report. However, we do intend to start addressing these types of questions in an upcoming topical report on Māori victimisation.



**Figure 4.** Percentage of European, Māori and other ethnicities within different victimisation groups and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Overall, people aged 15–29 are significantly<sup>4</sup> overrepresented in the highly victimised group when compared with the other victims, whereas people aged 60 years and over are significantly underrepresented (see Figure 5). Young people aged 15–29 make up only 24% of the New Zealand population but form 42% of the highly victimised. In contrast, people aged 60 years and over make up 26% of the New Zealand population but form only 12% of the highly victimised. There was no significant over or underrepresentation of people aged 30–59 in the highly victimised group.

<sup>2</sup> New Zealand population estimates are based on the 2013 New Zealand census.

<sup>3</sup> Note proportions will not sum to 100% because survey respondents were able to select multiple ethnicities.

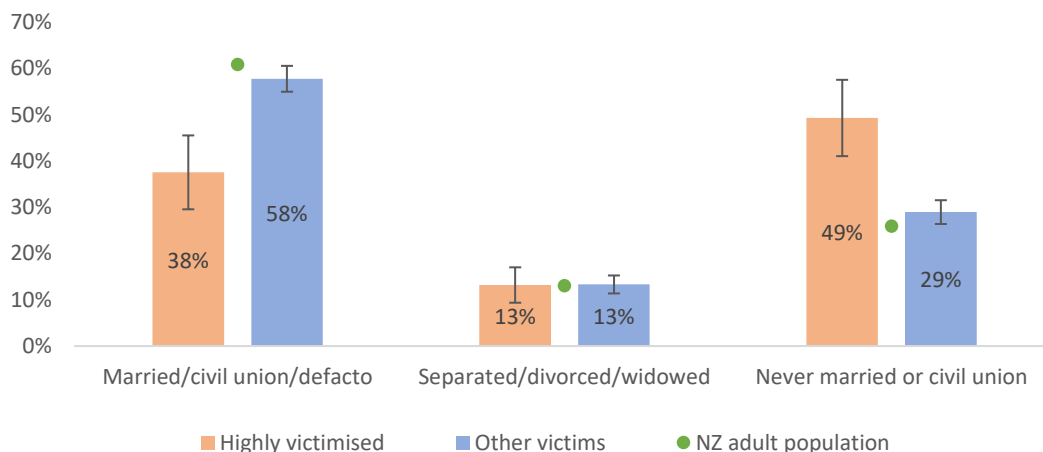
<sup>4</sup> For this report the term significant means statistically significant.



**Figure 5.** Percentage of ages within different victimisation groups and the New Zealand population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Those who have never been married or been in a civil union are highly overrepresented in the highly victimised population<sup>5</sup>, whereas those who are married, in a civil union, or in a de-facto relationship are highly underrepresented (see Figure 6). Specifically, people who have never been married or in a civil union represent only 26% of the New Zealand adult population but 49% of the highly victimised. In contrast, people who are married, in a civil union or in a de-facto relationship represent 61% of the New Zealand adult population but only 38% of the highly victimised. Those who are separated, divorced or widowed are represented evenly across the New Zealand adult population, the highly victimised four percent and the other victims.

Overall, those who have never been married or in a civil union are significantly overrepresented in the highly victimised four percent when compared with other victims. Those who are in a legally recognised relationship are significantly underrepresented. This effect may be partly driven by age as older people are more likely to be in, or have been in, a legally recognised relationship than younger people.



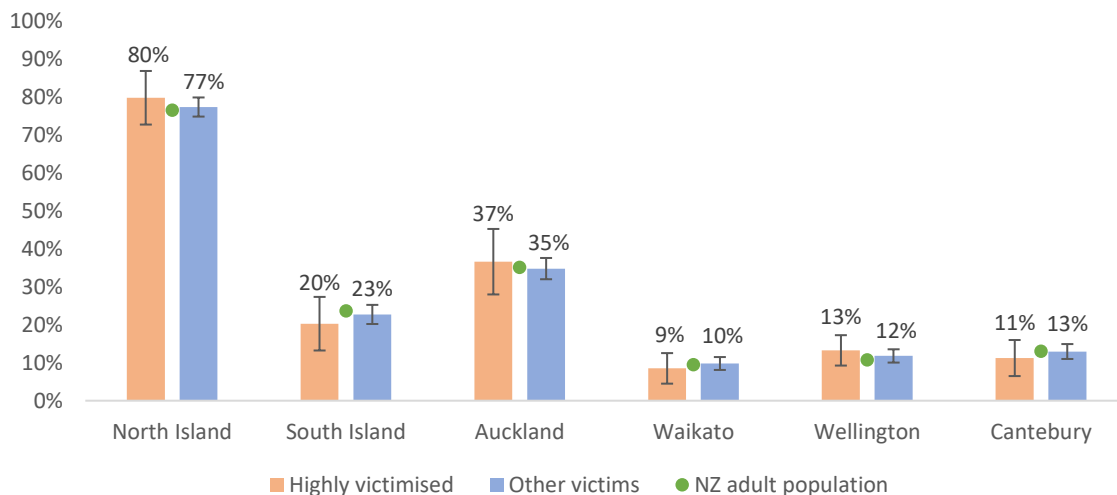
**Figure 6.** Percentage of married, never married and separated/divorced/widowed within different victimisation groups and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

<sup>5</sup> This may be partly driven by the overrepresentation of young people.

### 3. Where do highly victimised people live?

#### No major differences in location or household composition when compared with other victims

Like the way we looked at demographic differences we can identify whether highly victimised people are overrepresented in particular places or environments to see whether there are any environmental indicators of high victimisation. Based on our analysis there is no significant difference in the representation of the highly victimised people between the North and South Island or the four largest regions of New Zealand (see Figure 7).

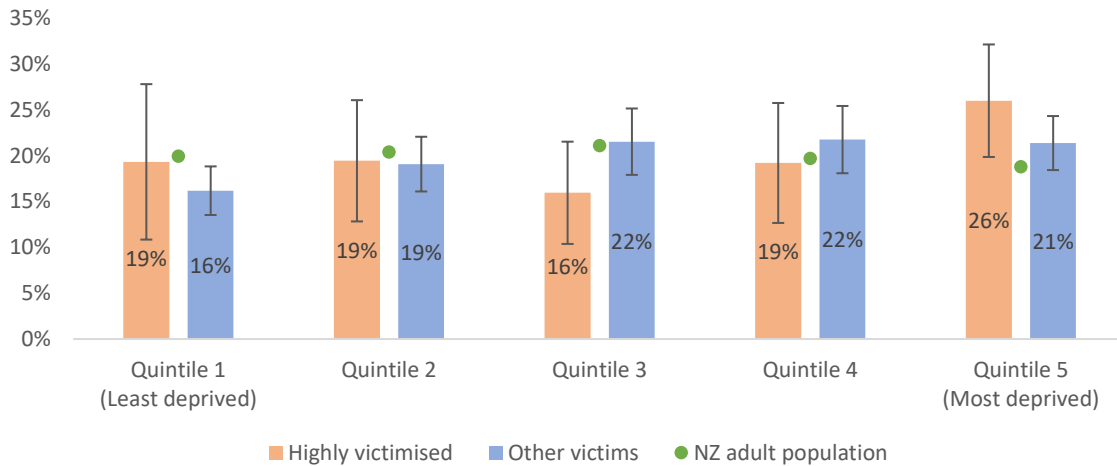


**Figure 7.** Percentage of people in New Zealand regions within different victimisation groups and the adult New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

The New Zealand Index of Deprivation 2013<sup>6</sup> (NZDep2013) groups deprivation scores into deciles, where 1 represents the areas with the least deprived scores and 10 the areas with the most deprived scores<sup>7</sup>. The deciles were converted to quintiles by combining deciles 1 and 2, 3 and 4, etc. The NZCVS key findings report showed that although there was no difference in victimisation across different regions in New Zealand, people in more deprived neighbourhoods were more likely to be victimised and people in less deprived neighbourhoods were less likely. Looking at highly victimised people, we did not find a continuation of this pattern; there was no significant difference between the proportion of highly victimised people within any deprivation quintile when compared with other victims (see Figure 8).

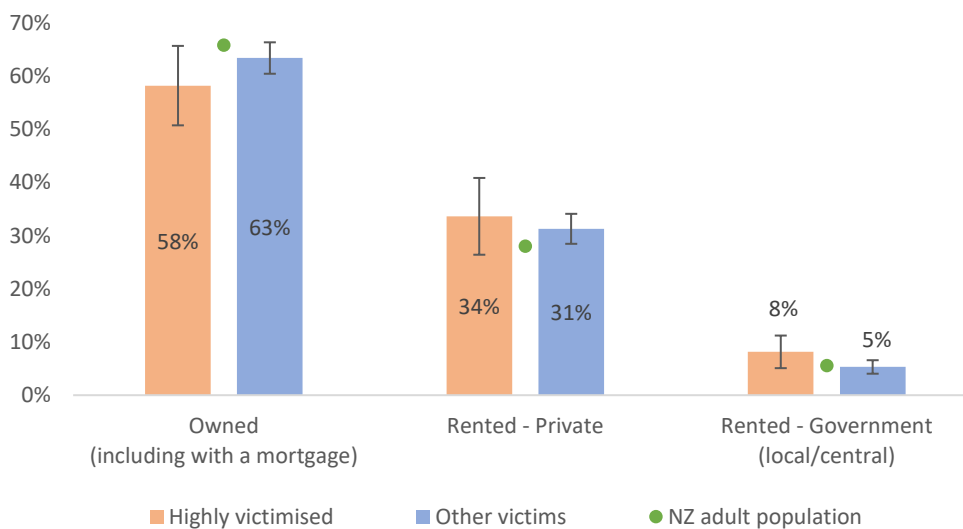
<sup>6</sup> <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/nzdep2013-index-deprivation>

<sup>7</sup> Variables included in the New Zealand Deprivation Index include education, employment, household income, benefit use, home ownership, internet access, car access, living space and family support.



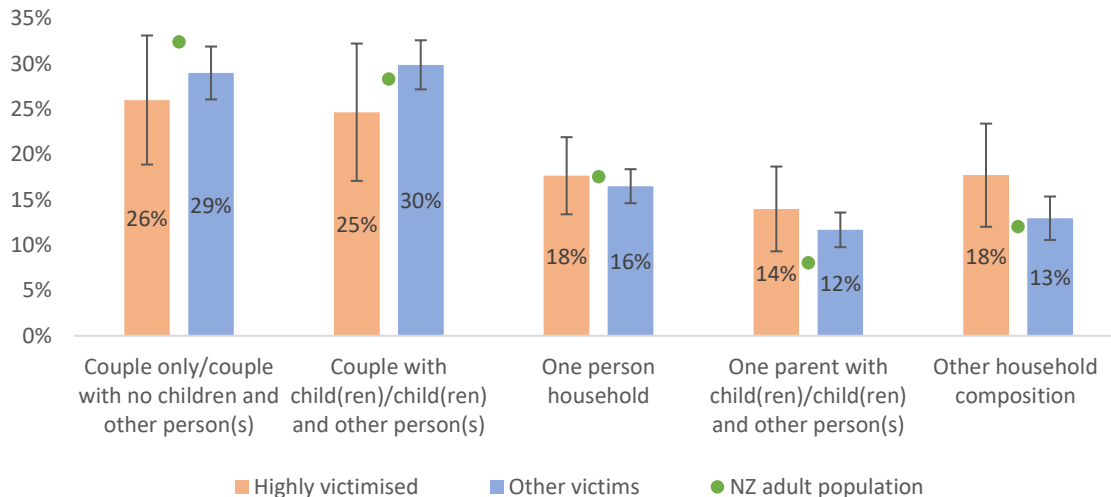
**Figure 8.** Percentage of people in different deprivation quintiles within different victimisation groups and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Although there was a trend for highly victimised people to be overrepresented in renting accommodation versus owning it, this difference was not significant (see Figure 9).



**Figure 9.** Percentage of people who own their house, rent their house or rent from the government within different victimisation groups and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Looking at the composition of households in which respondents live, the NZCVS key findings report showed that people from single parent households were more likely to be victimised whereas people from couple-only households were less likely to be victimised. This trend can also be seen with highly victimised people, however the differences are not significant (see Figure 10).



**Figure 10.** Percentage of people living in different types of households by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

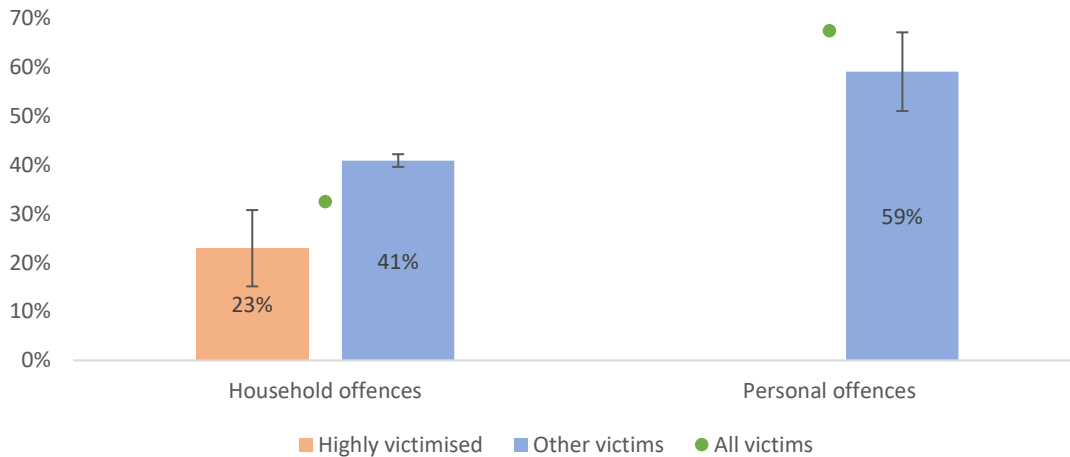
## 4. What type of offences do highly victimised people experience?

### Highly victimised people experience more interpersonal violence

In addition to understanding the personal and environmental characteristics of highly victimised people we also need to know the types of crime they are experiencing so that we can better address their needs. To do this, we compared the distribution of incidents experienced by the four percent of highly victimised people with other victims and with all victims combined as a reference point. In the NZCVS, at the highest level, we break down all incidents into two broad categories labelled household offences and personal offences. Household offences are defined as incidents directed towards the household such as burglary, trespass and theft or damage to household items. Personal offences are defined as incidents directed towards the person such as assault, fraud, harassment and theft or damage of a person's personal items (i.e. items used exclusively by the victim).

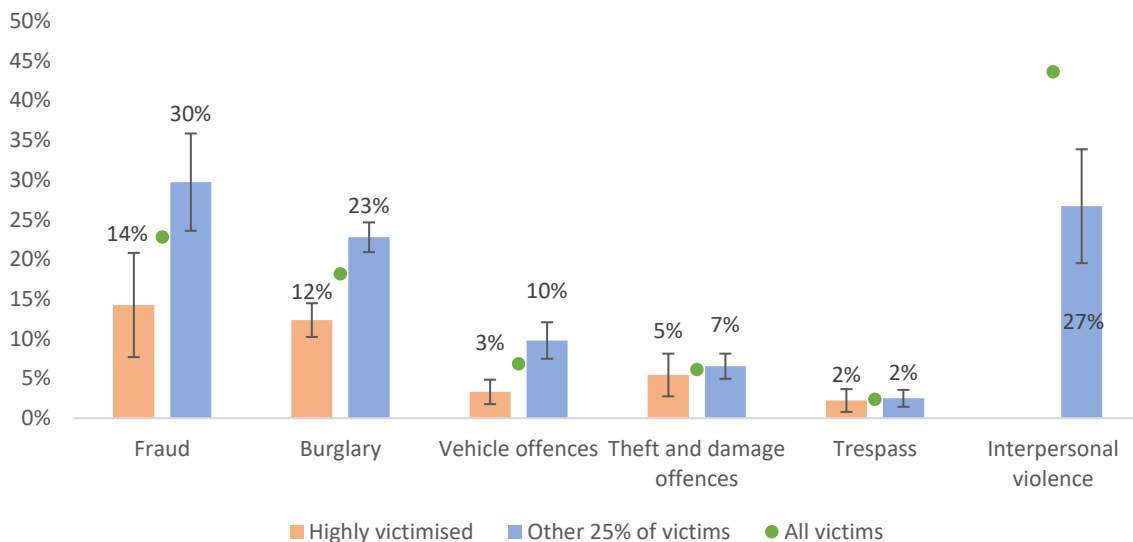
As shown in Figure 11, highly victimised people experience a significantly lower proportion of household offences (23%) when compared with other victims (41%). Highly victimised people also experienced a higher proportion of personal offences when compared with other victims, but the difference is not statistically significant. We cannot report the proportion estimate for the highly victimised group because the margin of error is too high based on our reporting standards<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> All estimates with a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points are suppressed because they are considered too unreliable for general use.



**Figure 11.** Percentage of household and personal incidents by victimisation group. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

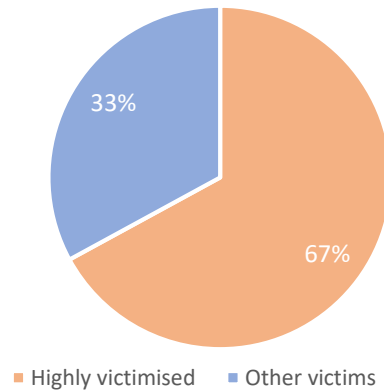
Looking more deeply at these distributions by a lower level of offence type we found that highly victimised people experience a significantly larger proportion of interpersonal violence than other victims and a significantly lower proportion of fraud, burglary and vehicle offences (see Figure 12). More specifically, 63% of the incidents experienced by the other victims involve fraud, burglary or vehicle offences, whereas these offences make up only 29% of the incidents experienced by highly victimised people.



**Figure 12.** Percentage of different offence types experienced by victimisation group. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

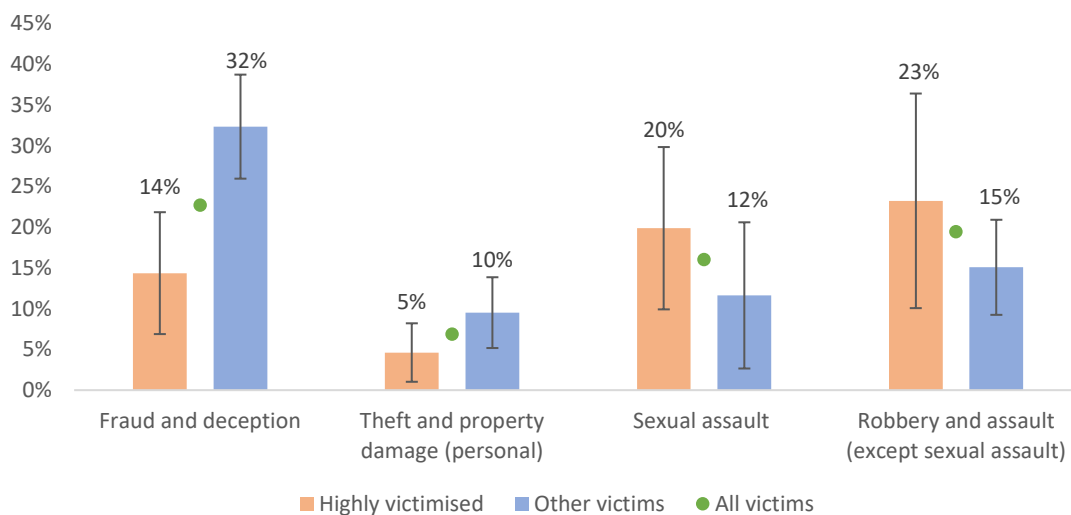
Unfortunately, due to the high margin of error on the estimate we are unable to report the proportion of interpersonal violence experienced by highly victimised people<sup>9</sup>. However, we can report that the highly victimised group experience such a high level of interpersonal violence that it constitutes over two thirds (67%) of all the interpersonal violence experienced by New Zealanders within a 12-month period (see Figure 13).

<sup>9</sup> All estimates with a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points are suppressed because they are considered too unreliable for general use.



**Figure 13.** Percentage of all interpersonal violent incidents experienced by victimisation group.

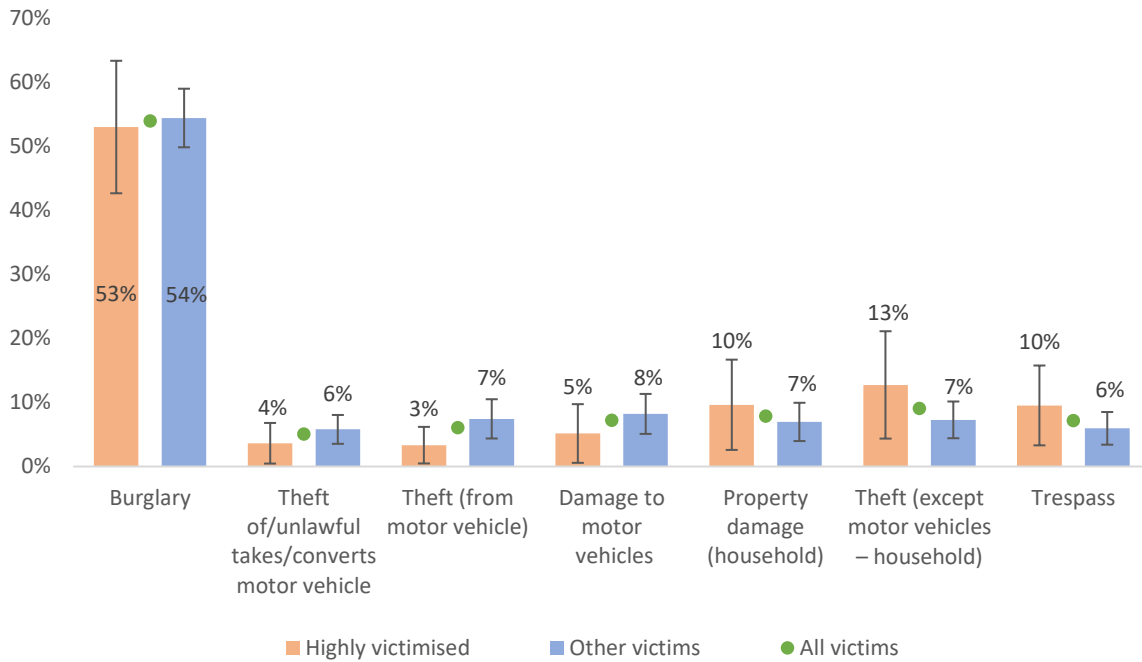
Interpersonal violence can take several forms. Looking within personal offences we found that highly victimised people experience higher proportions of almost all types of interpersonal violence when compared to other victims, including sexual assault, harassment and threatening behaviour and robbery and other assault. However, these differences are not statistically significant (see Figure 14). In contrast, highly victimised people do experience a significantly lower proportion of fraud compared with other victims (14% vs. 32%) and a significantly lower proportion of cybercrime<sup>10</sup>.



**Figure 14.** Percentage of individual personal incidents experienced as a proportion of all personal incidents by victimisation groups. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

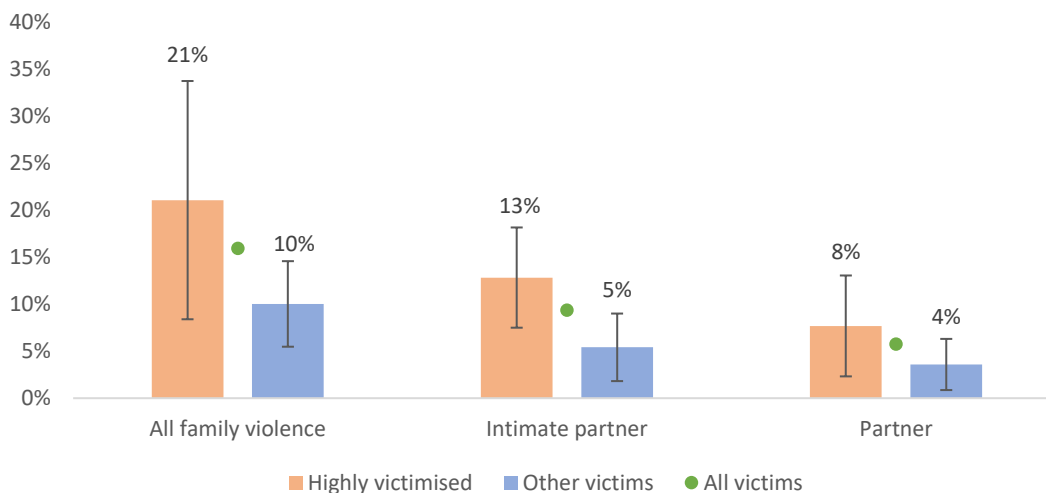
Looking within household offences, there is no significant difference in the proportion of specific household offences experienced by highly victimised people compared with other victims (see Figure 15).

<sup>10</sup> Estimates for harassment and threatening behaviour and cybercrime were suppressed due to high error estimates, see Table 3 for more details.



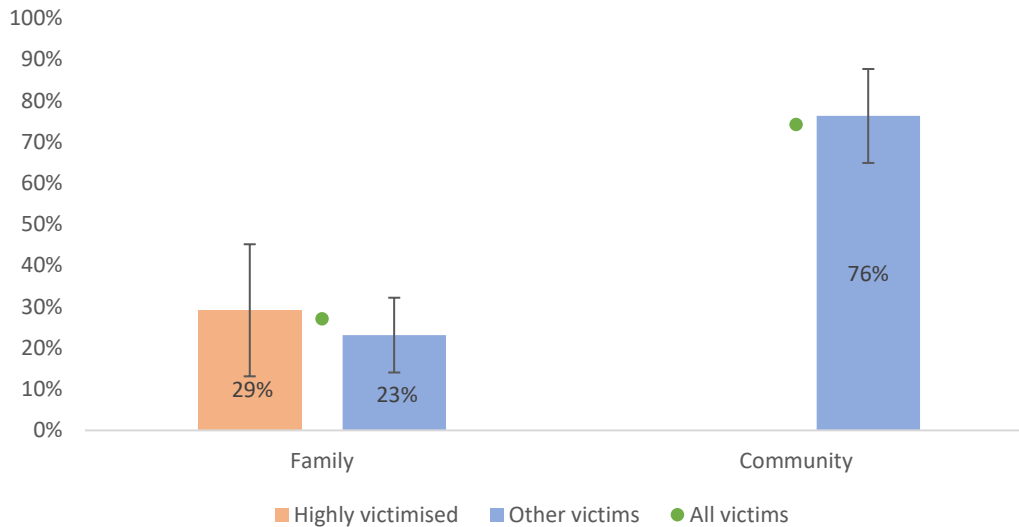
**Figure 15.** Percentage of individual household incidents experienced as a proportion of all household incidents by victimisation groups. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Given the extent of interpersonal violence experienced by highly victimised people it is relevant to ask who are the perpetrators of the violence? In the NZCVS, family violence is broadly defined as interpersonal violence by a family member. Looking at the proportion of personal offences that constitute family violence we found that highly victimised people experience a greater proportion of family violence compared with other victims (see Figure 16). Specifically, 21% of all personal offences experienced by highly victimised people constituted family violence compared with only 10% for other victims. However, due to high margins of error at this level of analysis these differences are not statistically significant. Regardless, although it might be expected that most interpersonal violence experienced by highly victimised people is perpetrated by family members, based on what respondents told us, most perpetrators are non-family members (see Figure 17).



**Figure 16.** Percentage of family violence incidents experienced as a proportion of all personal offences by victimisation groups. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.





**Figure 17.** Percentage of interpersonal violence perpetrated by family versus community members by victimisation groups. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

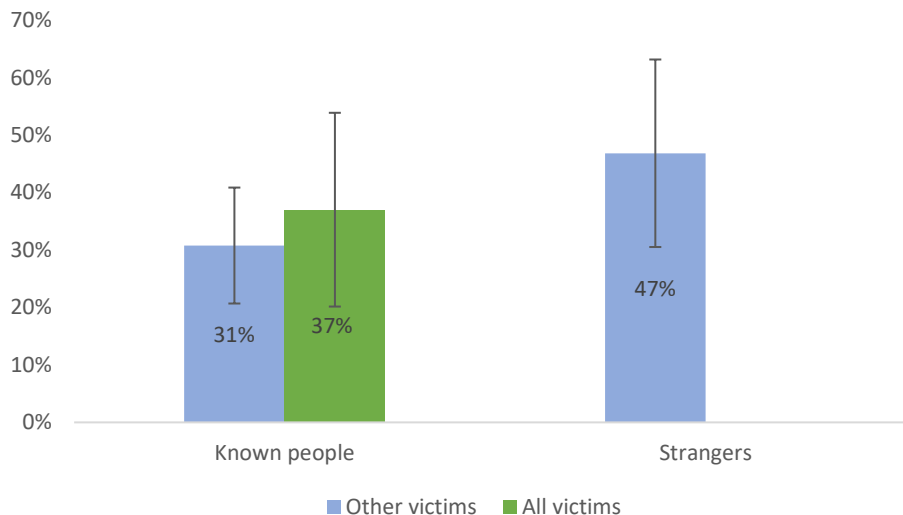
In the NZCVS, community members are defined as any non-family member including both unknown people/strangers and known people like friends, neighbours, colleagues and acquaintances<sup>11</sup>. As shown in Figure 17, other victims experience a significantly higher proportion of interpersonal violence from community members (76%) than from family members (23%). This pattern of results is similar for highly victimised people and for all victims combined<sup>12</sup>, however the estimated proportion of violence by community members for the highly victimised group was suppressed due to a high level of error<sup>13</sup>. These results suggest that repeat victimisation is not isolated to family violence because most of the violent incidents experienced are committed by community members.

Because community members in this analysis include both known associates and strangers, it might be expected that most of the interpersonal violence committed by community members is by known offenders. Unfortunately, due to the high margins of error at this level of analysis we cannot report the estimated proportions of violence perpetrated by known community members versus strangers for the highly victimised group. However, looking at this pattern for the other victims group, the proportion of interpersonal violence committed by strangers is greater than the proportion committed by known people who are not family members, though these differences are not statistically significant (see Figure 18). This pattern of results was the same for all victims though we cannot report the proportion estimate of strangers for all victims due to a high level of error. Revisiting these analyses with additional years of survey data will help clarify whether this pattern is accurate and replicated for the highly victimised group.

<sup>11</sup> See pg.89 of the NZCVS methodology report for more information on how we define relationship to the offender (a link to the methodology report is provided in Section 9).

<sup>12</sup> The percentages for all victims sum to over 100 because a small number of incidents will involve both family and community members.

<sup>13</sup> All estimates with a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points are suppressed because they are considered too unreliable for general use.



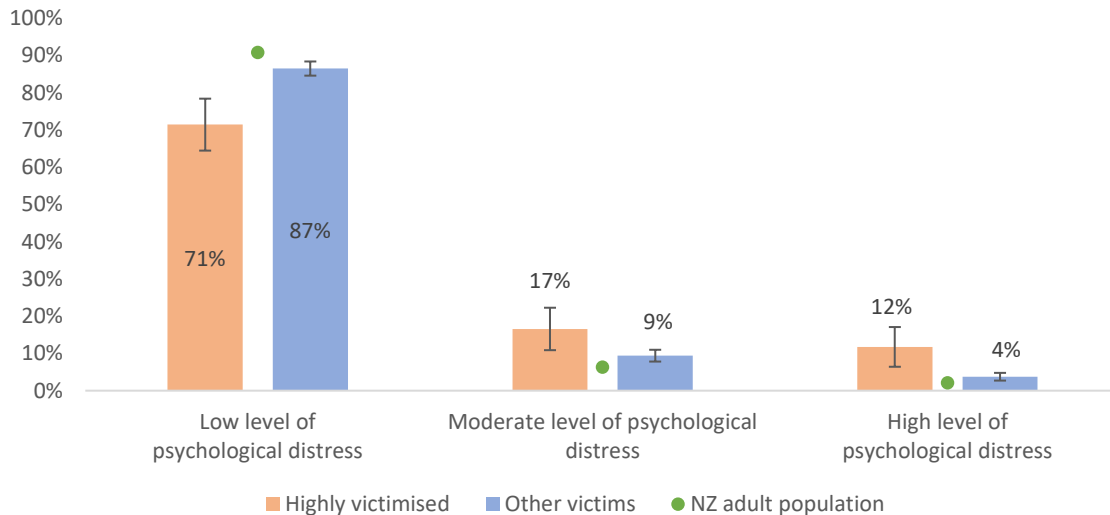
**Figure 18.** Percentage of interpersonal violence perpetrated by known people versus strangers by victimisation groups. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

## 5. Do highly victimised people feel different?

### Highly victimised people are more likely to feel less safe, less satisfied and be more psychologically distressed

Considering that highly victimised people experience such a high proportion of interpersonal violence there is reason to believe that this might have a negative impact on their overall wellbeing. Conversely, the overall wellbeing of highly victimised people might also lead to behaviours that increase or decrease their victimisation. In the NZCVS psychological distress was measured using the Kessler-6 (K6), a short six-item scale that asks about anxiety and depressive symptoms experienced in the last four weeks. As shown in Figure 19, 28% of highly victimised people suffer from moderate to high levels of psychological distress compared with 13% of other victims and 8% of the New Zealand adult population<sup>14</sup>. Overall, highly victimised people are significantly overrepresented among those who experience high levels psychological distress and are significantly underrepresented among those who experience low levels of psychological distress when compared with the other victims.

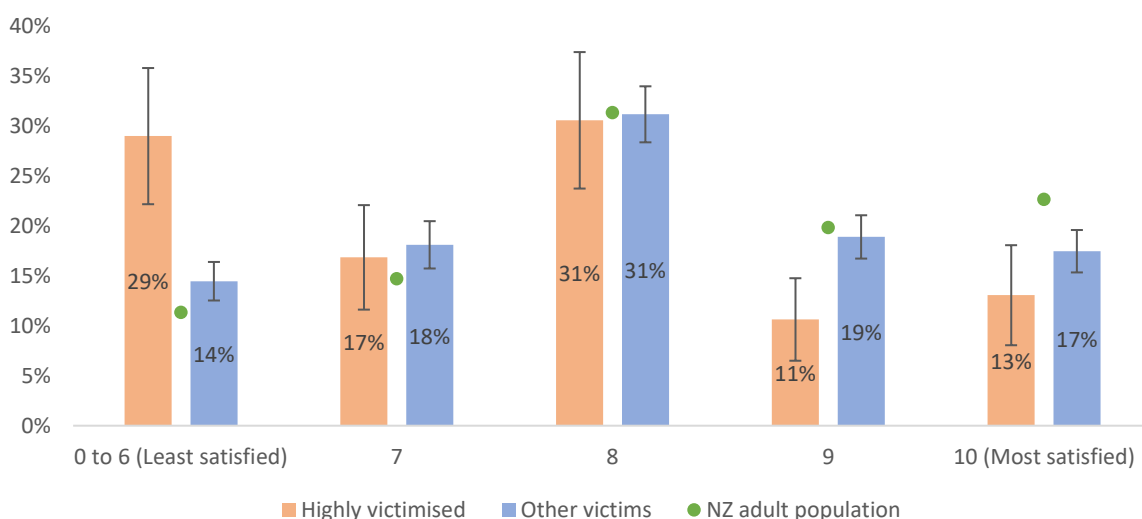
<sup>14</sup> Total scores on the K6 are between 0 and 24, those with scores between 0 – 7 are considered to have a low level of psychological distress, those with scores between 8 – 12 are considered to have a moderate level of psychological distress and those with scores of 13 or above are considered to have a high level of psychological distress.



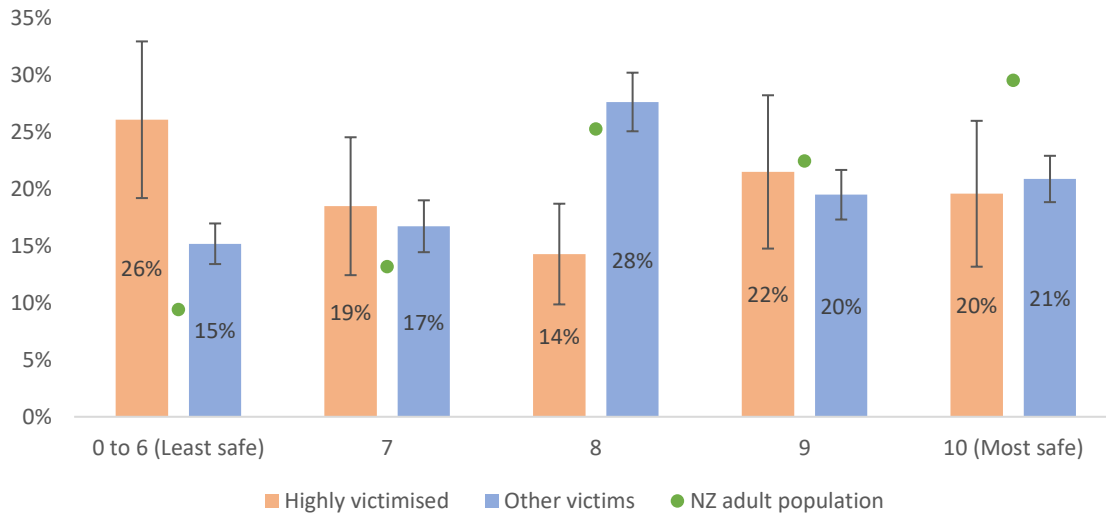
**Figure 19.** Percentage of people suffering different levels of psychological distress by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Another way to examine the wellbeing of highly victimised people is to compare their life satisfaction and feelings of safety to other victims (see Figures 20 and 21). Similar to the proportion of highly victimised people who suffer from moderate to high psychological distress, 29% of highly victimised people also rate their life satisfaction between 0 and 6 out of 10 compared with only 14% of other victims and 11% of New Zealand adults. Similarly, 26% of highly victimised people rate their feeling of safety between 0 and 6 out of 10 compared with only 15% of all victims and nine percent of New Zealand adults.

Overall, there were significantly higher proportions of highly victimised people with lower ratings of life satisfaction and lower ratings of feeling safe when compared to other victims. Together, these measures indicate that the average wellbeing of highly victimised people is lower than the average wellbeing of other victims. These findings signal that a much higher level of care and service is needed to support these victims.



**Figure 20.** Percentage of people within different life satisfaction ratings by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.



**Figure 21.** Percentage of people within different safety feeling ratings by victimisation group and the adult New Zealand population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

## 6. What other factors contribute to high victimisation?

Knowing who is more likely to be highly victimised, where they live, what they are experiencing and how they are affected provides key insight into those who are the most at risk, the type of situation they face and the support they need. However, many of the results covered thus far do not provide any clear insights or mechanisms that could be used to help reduce someone's victimisation. In the next section we examine some wider contributing factors to victimisation to try and identify factors that have the potential to alleviate high victimisation.

### 6A. Is high victimisation an economic issue?

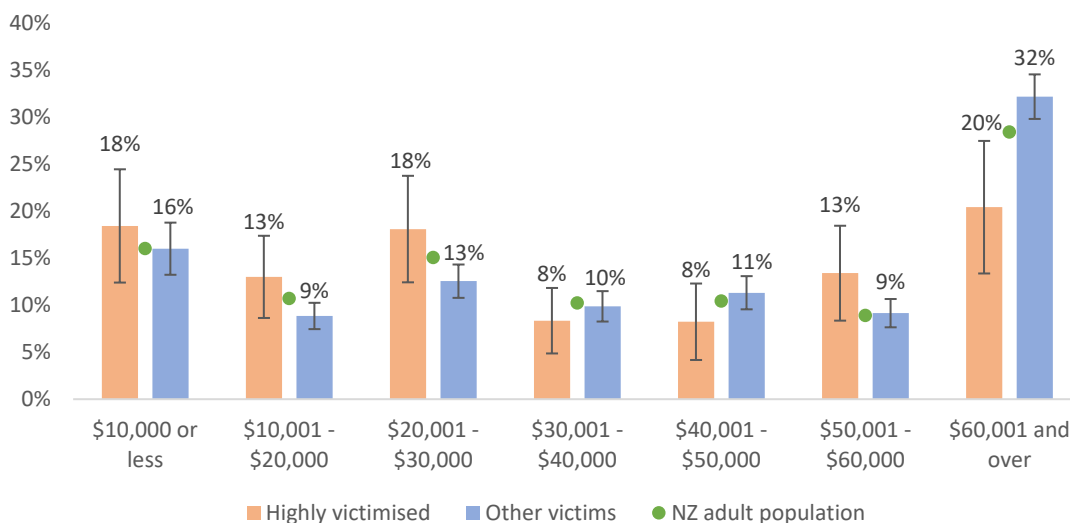
#### Financial stress is related to victimisation level

One factor that might contribute to high victimisation is economic pressure. That is, a lack of work, money or resources might create an environment of stress or uncertainty that increases the risk of repeat victimisation. Conversely, high victimisation might increase economic pressures by changing the economic behaviour of victims. Compared to the New Zealand adult population highly victimised people are equally represented across employment, unemployment and other groups not considered to be part of the workforce (e.g. students and retired people). There is no significant difference between the proportion of highly victimised people under different labour force statuses when compared with the other victims (see Figure 22).



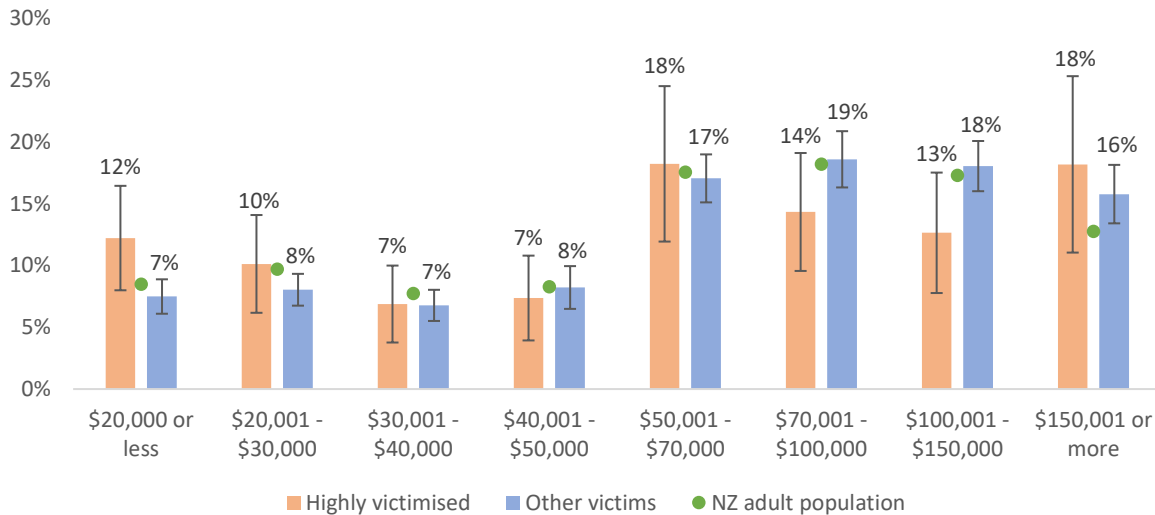
**Figure 22.** Percentage of people in different labour force statuses by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Although labour force status is not directly associated with victimisation, the amount of income a person obtains per year from all sources could still be related to victimisation level. Looking at personal income, the proportion of highly victimised people in the income band of \$60,000 and over is significantly lower than the proportion of other victims in that income band (20% vs. 32%). There is also a trend for highly victimised people to be overrepresented in income bands under \$30,000 however these differences are not statistically significant (see Figure 23).



**Figure 23.** Percentage of people in different personal income bands by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

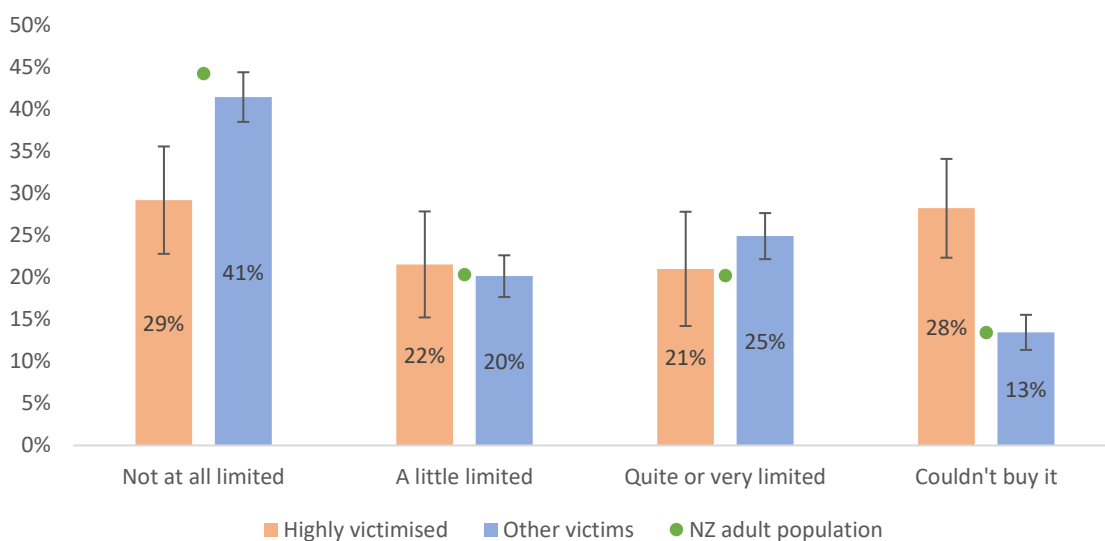
There is no clear pattern regarding the level of household income and level of victimisation (see Figure 24). There are also no significant differences in the proportion of highly victimised people within different household income bands compared with the proportion of other victims in the same household income bands. This might be because household income is more related to how many adults live in the household as opposed to how much money is available for each person.



**Figure 24.** Percentage of people in different household income bands by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

In the NZCVS key findings report we showed that financial stress was the best economic indicator of victimisation. In the NZCVS financial stress is measured in two ways, the first (category 1), asks people about their ability to afford an attractive but not essential item for \$300. The second (category 2), asks people about their ability to afford an unexpected \$500 of extra spending within a month without borrowing money.

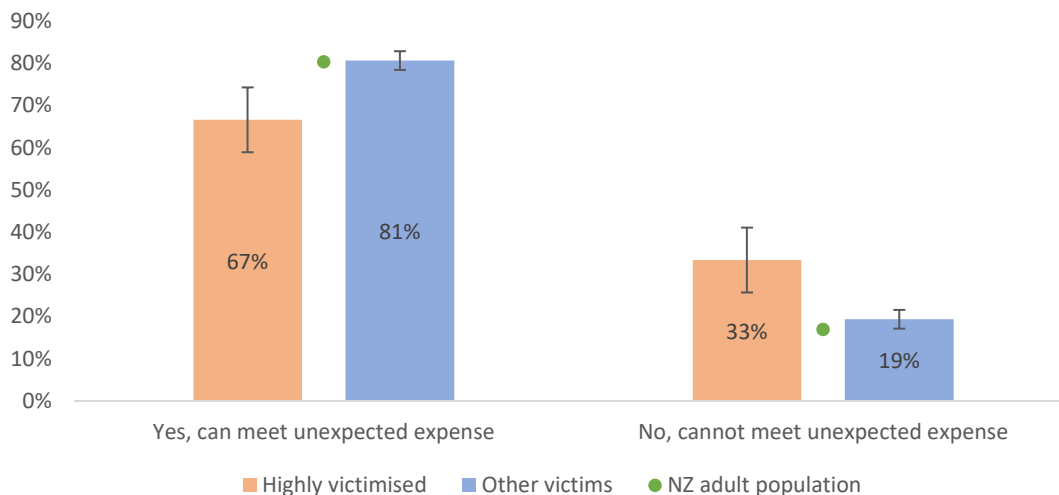
Like the finding that financial stress is the best economic indicator of victimisation overall, we found that financial stress is also the best economic indicator for the level of victimisation experienced (see Figure 25). Specifically, looking at financial stress category 1, the proportion of highly victimised people who said they “couldn’t buy” a non-essential \$300 item was significantly higher than the proportion of other victims who said they “couldn’t buy” it (28% vs. 13%). In contrast, the proportion of highly victimised people who said they were “not at all limited” in their ability to buy a non-essential \$300 item was significantly lower than the proportion of other victims who said they were “not at all limited” (29% vs. 41%).



**Figure 25.** Percentage of people under different categories of financial pressure (category 1) by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

A similar pattern of results can be seen for the second category of financial stress (see Figure 26). That is, the proportion of highly victimised people who said they could not afford an unexpected expense of \$500 within a month was significantly higher than the proportion of other victims who said they could not afford the unexpected expense (33% vs. 19%). In contrast, the proportion of highly victimised people who said they could meet the unexpected expense was significantly lower than the proportion of other victims who could meet that expense (67% vs. 81%). Overall, it appears that highly victimised people suffer from financial problems, though it is less clear how these financial problems are caused. The problems don't appear to be related to personal participation in the labour force, although the labour force participation of others close to the respondent could still be a factor.

There is some indication that these issues could be related to personal income, however additional years of survey data will be required before we can reliably look at stress by income level. It is unclear whether these financial problems cause greater victimisation or whether greater victimisation contributes to these financial problems. Regardless, it appears that people's overall financial situation and their ability to manage this situation is a key risk factor for high victimisation and consequently a key area of future research.



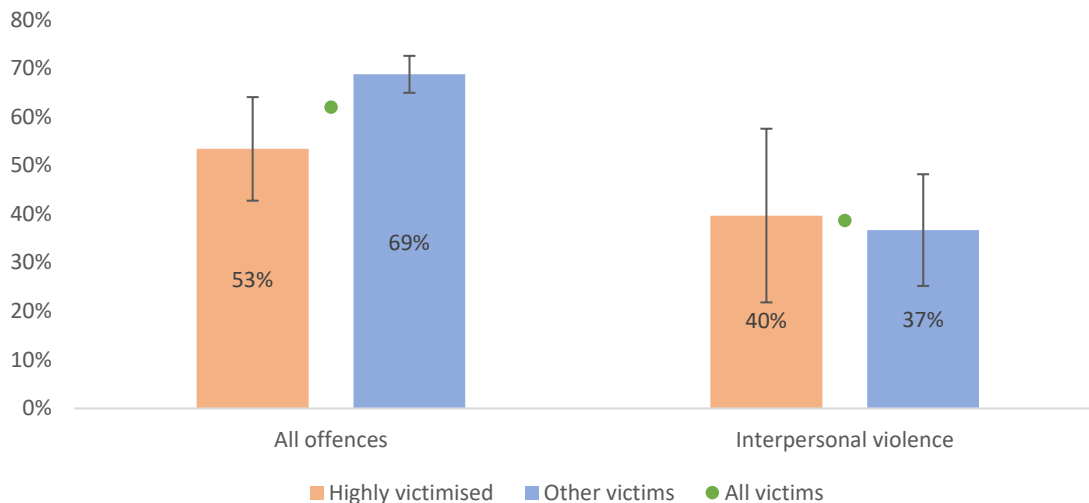
**Figure 26.** Percentage of people under different categories of financial pressure (category 2) by victimisation group and the New Zealand adult population. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

## 6B. Is criminal behaviour viewed differently by the highly victimised?

The NZCVS does not ask people whether they experienced specific crimes but instead asks people whether they have experienced specific situations. Following the survey, each situation is coded by experts to see whether it matches a formal criminal offence. This process means that some people who experience crimes do not realise they are experiencing crimes and might see some crimes as normal behaviour. The perception of crime as normal behaviour could lead to less action against perpetrators and consequently a higher likelihood of repeat victimisation. Therefore, we examined how highly victimised people view crimes in comparison with other victims to see whether perception plays a role in high victimisation.

Looking first at the overall perception of crime, it appears highly victimised people are less likely to view crimes as crimes (see Figure 27). That is, the proportion of highly victimised people who viewed the incidents they experienced as crime was significantly lower than the

proportion of other victims. However, on closer inspection, this difference appears to be artificial because both highly victimised people and other victims viewed a similarly low proportion of interpersonal violence as crime and highly victimised people experience a much higher level of interpersonal violence. This likely pulls down their perceptions of crime for all offences. In other words, highly victimised people are not perceiving crimes differently; they are just experiencing a higher amount of interpersonal violence which is less likely to be perceived as a crime.



**Figure 27.** Percentage of incidents viewed as crimes by victimisation group and offence groupings. Error bars are 95% confidence intervals.

Other important areas of perception that are examined in NZCVS are how serious people view the incident to be, whether people reported the offence to the police and whether they believe the incident was driven by discrimination. In line with the example above, these variables need to be analysed by offence type because highly victimised people experience different types of offences to other victims, meaning any overall differences might be due to offence type rather than level of victimisation. Unfortunately, with only one year of data, the error is currently too high to examine these variables by offence type, but we do intend to return to these analyses when we have additional years of survey data.

## 7. Summary of findings and future directions

The purpose of this report is to develop a better understanding of the four percent of New Zealand adults who experience 47% of all crime incidents that occur within a 12-month period. Looking at who the four percent are, our analysis shows that young people aged 15–29 years, Māori and people who had never been married or in a civil union were overrepresented in the highly victimised population. We found that although people who live in more deprived neighbourhoods are more likely to be victimised overall, where a person lived was not indicative of high or repeat victimisation. Looking at the types of incidents experienced by highly victimised people, we found highly victimised people experience less household offences and a far higher proportion of interpersonal violence when compared with other victims. The evidence indicates that the interpersonal violence experienced by all victims is not specifically a family violence issue because most violent incidents are perpetrated by community members, and the early evidence indicates that around half of these community members are strangers.



Looking into the relationship between high victimisation and wellbeing, we found that people who are highly victimised are overrepresented among those who have high levels of psychological distress, poorer life satisfaction and those who feel unsafe. These findings suggest that highly victimised people might require higher levels of mental health support to help them cope. Looking at other potential factors that might contribute to high victimisation we see that labour force participation and household income are not strong indicators of high victimisation, but personal income and especially a person's overall amount of financial stress are clear indicators. This suggests that identifying the causal relationship between income, financial stress and high victimisation could be key to understanding and reducing high victimisation. Finally, we found no strong evidence that highly victimised people perceived crimes differently to other victims, however due to the limitations of our data this line of analysis, as well as others, will be revisited once more years of survey data become available.

This is the first NZCVS topical report on high victimisation, as we collect more years of survey data we intend to revisit these analyses to refine and clarify our understanding of highly victimised people. In the meantime, we hope these analyses provide enough information to guide discussions and support initiatives that might address and alleviate victimisation.

## 8. About NZCVS

The NZCVS is a random-sample, nationwide, face-to-face, annual survey asking New Zealanders aged 15 years and over about incidents of crime they experienced over last 12 months. This includes both incidents reported to the Police and unreported incidents.

The first NZCVS was undertaken between March and October 2018 and achieved 8,030 interviews. The response rate was 81% and the survey results are representative.

Note that while the NZCVS delivers the best estimate available about a wide range of personal and household offences that are not captured elsewhere, it still does not report the total amount of crime in New Zealand. This is because the NZCVS is a sample survey<sup>15</sup> subject to sample errors; also, it does not cover every type of crime that someone might experience (see Table 14.1).

**Table 8.1. Scope of crimes/offences covered in the NZCVS**

<b>Covered in the NZCVS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• personal offences, either reported to the Police or not, where the respondent was the victim of the crime</li> <li>• household offences, either reported to the Police or not, where the respondent's household was offended</li> </ul>
<b>Not covered in the NZCVS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• manslaughter and homicide</li> <li>• abduction</li> <li>• crimes against children (14 years old and under)</li> <li>• 'victimless crime' (such as drug offences)</li> <li>• commercial crime/white-collar crime/crimes against businesses or public-sector agencies</li> <li>• crimes against people who do not live in permanent private dwellings</li> <li>• crimes against people living in institutions<sup>16</sup></li> </ul>

The NZCVS is a new survey with some significant improvements in design compared with its predecessors such as New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS). In particular<sup>17</sup>, the NZCVS:

- has a larger annual sample
- uses a different approach to coding offences that is more consistent with the Police approach
- applies a much lower level of data imputations
- covers additional offence types (e.g. fraud, cybercrime, trespass) and
- employs a different approach for collecting data from highly victimised people (allowing similar incidents to be reported as a group).

These differences mean that direct comparison of NZCVS results with its predecessor NZCASS is potentially misleading, even within similar offence types. More detail about how the NZCVS was conducted in 2018 can be found in the NZCVS methodology report<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> A sample survey means that not every New Zealander gives information about their experiences; it's not a census of the population. Also, not all respondents may want to talk about their experiences, remember the incidents that they have experienced, and/or provide accurate information about incidents (deliberately or due to imperfect recall).

<sup>16</sup> Those living in care facilities, prisons, army barracks, boarding schools and other similar institutions or non-private dwellings are excluded from the NZCVS sampling and interviewing process.

<sup>17</sup> Partial list.

<sup>18</sup> See the methodology report online at [www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvcs](http://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvcs)

## 9. Other NZCVS reports and future reporting

A number of resources are already available on the Ministry of Justice website to help access the results from the NZCVS, interpret findings, and understand the research.

The technical aspects of the research are discussed in detail in the methodology report available from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-2018-Methodology-Report-Year-1-fin.pdf>.

For the topline report summarising the initial findings of the NZCVS Cycle 1 (2018) go to <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-2018-Topline-report.pdf>

The NZCVS Cycle 1 (2018) core report (the most comprehensive, full size report) is available from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-A4-KeyFindings-2018-fin-v1.1.pdf> .

The NZCVS Cycle 1 (2018) key findings only report (short version) is available from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-List-of-key-findings-Y1-fin.pdf> (without infographics) or <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-A4-KeyFindings-2018-fin.pdf> (with infographics).

A standalone set of infographics supporting the core report may be downloaded from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvsv/resources-and-results/>

Data tables (aggregated data) are available from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-Core-report-2018-tables-fin.pdf> (in pdf format) or <https://www.justice.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Publications/NZCVS-Core-report-2018-tables-fin.xlsx> (excel spreadsheet).

Some additional documents are also available from <https://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvsv/resources-and-results/> .

We are working with Statistics New Zealand on putting the NZCVS data (only those records obtaining respondents' consent) on their Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) in the fourth quarter of 2019.

If you have any feedback or questions about NZCVS results, please email us on [nzcvsv@justice.govt.nz](mailto:nzcvsv@justice.govt.nz) .

## 10. Tables

**Table 1:** Percentage of highly victimised and other victims by demographic variables

All offences	Highly victimised				Other victims			Percentage of NZ adult population
	%	MOE	MOE Level	Sig.	%	MOE	MOE Level	
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	41.27	8.62	†		49.37	2.66		48.68%
Female	58.73	8.62			50.63	2.66		51.32%
<b>Age</b>								
15-29 years	41.58	8.55	†	*	29.12	2.78		24.29%
30-39 years	15.50	5.34	†		18.96	2.18		17.79%
40-49 years	15.58	5.12	†		15.94	1.99		14.94%
50-59 years	15.66	5.75	†		17.34	2.21		16.51%
60 years and over	11.68	4.01	†	*	18.64	2.21		26.46%
<b>Ethnicity</b>								
NZ European	74.91	6.11			69.22	2.71		69.10%
Māori	26.30	5.76	†	*	16.79	1.62		14.10%
Pacific/Asian/Other	10.09	3.85	†	*	20.89	2.59		22.59%
<b>Marital Status</b>								
Married/civil union/de-facto	37.53	7.99	†	*	57.75	2.79		60.83%
Separated/divorced/widowed	13.18	3.82	†		13.31	1.94		13.06%
Never married or civil union	49.28	8.25	†	*	28.94	2.57		25.89%
<b>Location</b>								
North Island	79.73	7.05			77.29	2.52		76.43%
South Island	20.27	7.05	†		22.71	2.52		23.57%
Auckland	36.58	8.62	†		34.77	2.80		35.10%
Waikato	8.51	4.02	†		9.79	1.70		9.42%
Wellington	13.25	4.00	†		11.78	1.75		10.70%
Canterbury	11.23	4.75	†		12.95	1.96		12.98%
<b>Deprivation Quintiles</b>								
Quintile 1 (Least deprived)	19.34	8.49	†		16.19	2.65		19.95%
Quintile 2	19.46	6.62	†		19.10	2.99		20.41%
Quintile 3	15.96	5.58	†		21.54	3.62		21.12%
Quintile 4	19.22	6.55	†		21.77	3.67		19.72%
Quintile 5 (Most deprived)	26.02	6.14	†		21.39	2.95		18.81%
<b>Household Ownership</b>								
Owned (including with a mortgage)	58.21	7.47	†		63.40	2.96		65.82%
Rented, Private	33.64	7.22	†		31.29	2.82		28.06%
Rented, government (local/central)	8.15	3.07	†		5.31	1.27	†	5.55%

† The numerator or denominator of ratio-based estimates has a relative standard error between 20% and 50%, and so this estimate should be used with caution.

\* Statistically significant difference from other victims at the 95% confidence level.

(a) These statistics are person weighted. This means the statistics relate to offences against adults where they were a victim of a personal crime or who lived in a household that was a victim of a household crime. For further detail refer to the explanation of weighting in the [Methodology report](#).

**Table 1a:** Percentage of highly victimised and other victims by demographic variables

All offences	Highly victimised				Other victims			Percentage of NZ adult population
	%	MOE	MOE Level	Sig.	%	MOE	MOE Level	
Couple only/couple with no children and other person(s)	26.00	7.12	†		28.98	2.92		32.41%
Couple with child(ren)/child(ren) and other person(s)	24.66	7.57	†		29.88	2.71		28.32%
One person household	17.65	4.25	†		16.49	1.88		17.54%
One parent with child(ren)/child(ren) and other person(s)	13.99	4.68	†		11.68	1.91		8.06%
Other household composition	17.71	5.69	†		12.96	2.40		12.03%
<b>Psychological distress</b>								
Low psychological distress	71.47	6.98		*	86.53	1.90		90.87%
Moderate psychological distress	16.58	5.70	†		9.40	1.59		6.32%
High psychological distress	11.76	5.34	†	*	3.75	1.04	†	2.13%
<b>Life satisfaction</b>								
0 to 6 (Least satisfied)	28.96	6.81	†	*	14.45	1.93		11.34%
7	16.83	5.22	†		18.09	2.37		14.71%
8	30.54	6.83	†		31.14	2.80		31.32%
9	10.62	4.13	†	*	18.88	2.17		19.81%
10 (Most satisfied)	13.05	5.00	†		17.45	2.12		22.64%
<b>Perception of safety</b>								
0 to 6 (Least safe)	26.10	6.88	†	*	15.20	1.78		9.42%
7	18.50	6.06	†		16.74	2.28		13.20%
8	14.30	4.42	†	*	27.66	2.58		25.27%
9	21.51	6.73	†		19.51	2.18		22.47%
10 (Most safe)	19.59	6.41	†		20.89	2.04		29.55%
<b>Employment status</b>								
Employed	63.74	6.90			69.12	2.61		63.95%
Unemployed	5.01	2.43	†		4.51	1.16	†	4.61%
NILF/Other	31.25	6.93	†		26.37	2.54		31.19%

† The numerator or denominator of ratio-based estimates has a relative standard error between 20% and 50%, and so this estimate should be used with caution.

\* Statistically significant difference from other victims at the 95% confidence level.

(a) These statistics are person weighted. This means the statistics relate to offences against adults where they were a victim of a personal crime or who lived in a household that was a victim of a household crime. For further detail refer to the explanation of weighting in the [Methodology report](#).

**Table 1b:** Percentage of highly victimised and other victims by demographic variables

All offences	Highly victimised				Other victims			Percentage of NZ adult population
	%	MOE	MOE Level	Sig.	%	MOE	MOE Level	
<b>Personal income</b>								
\$10,000 or less	18.44	6.03	‡		16.02	2.77		16.05%
\$10,001 - \$20,000	13.02	4.37	‡		8.86	1.40		10.75%
\$20,001 - \$30,000	18.11	5.67	‡		12.56	1.77		15.11%
\$30,001 - \$40,000	8.35	3.49	‡		9.88	1.62		10.26%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	8.24	4.07	‡		11.33	1.77		10.46%
\$50,001 - \$60,000	13.41	5.05	‡		9.16	1.51		8.92%
\$60,001 and over	20.43	7.05	‡	*	32.20	2.37		28.45%
<b>Household income</b>								
\$20,000 or less	12.22	4.23	‡		7.49	1.39		8.47%
\$20,001 - \$30,000	10.13	3.96	‡		8.04	1.29		9.70%
\$30,001 - \$40,000	6.88	3.11	‡		6.77	1.26		7.75%
\$40,001 - \$50,000	7.37	3.43	‡		8.22	1.73	‡	8.28%
\$50,001 - \$70,000	18.23	6.29	‡		17.05	1.94		17.55%
\$70,001 - \$100,000	14.33	4.77	‡		18.60	2.28		18.20%
\$100,001 - \$150,000	12.65	4.87	‡		18.05	2.03		17.29%
\$150,001 or more	18.19	7.14	‡		15.78	2.37		12.76%
<b>Financial pressure (ability to afford purchasing a non-essential item for \$300)</b>								
Not at all limited	29.20	6.39	‡	*	41.47	2.95		44.26%
A little limited	21.55	6.31	‡		20.15	2.49		20.32%
Quite or very limited	21.02	6.80	‡		24.92	2.74		20.22%
Couldn't buy it	28.23	5.88	‡	*	13.46	2.09		13.40%
<b>Financial pressure (ability to afford an unexpected spending of \$500 within a month without borrowing)</b>								
Yes, can meet unexpected expense	66.61	7.68	‡	*	80.64	2.22		80.38%
No, cannot meet unexpected expense	33.39	7.68	‡	*	19.36	2.22		16.97%

‡ The numerator or denominator of ratio-based estimates has a relative standard error between 20% and 50%, and so this estimate should be used with caution.

\* Statistically significant difference from other victims at the 95% confidence level.

(a) These statistics are person weighted. This means the statistics relate to offences against adults where they were a victim of a personal crime or who lived in a household that was a victim of a household crime. For further detail refer to the explanation of weighting in the [Methodology report](#).

**Table 2:** Proportions of offences experienced by the highly victimised and other victims

	Highly victimised				Other victims			All victims
	%	MOE	MOE Level	Sig.	%	MOE	MOE Level	%
<b>Household offences</b>								
Burglary	53.03	10.35	#		54.44	4.58		53.98
Theft of/unlawful takes/converts motor vehicle	3.63	3.17	†		5.80	2.25	†	5.08
Theft (from motor vehicle)	3.34	2.85	†		7.44	3.07	†	6.08
Unlawful interference/getting into motor vehicle	Ŝ	3.94	Ŝ		1.91	1.47	†	1.97
Damage to motor vehicles	5.16	4.58	†		8.22	3.12	†	7.20
Unlawful takes/converts/interferes with bicycle	Ŝ	1.47	Ŝ		1.97	1.36	†	1.59
Property damage (household)	9.64	7.05	†		6.97	2.99	†	7.85
Theft (except motor vehicles – household)	12.75	8.39	†		7.29	2.87	†	9.10
Trespass	9.54	6.24	†		5.96	2.55	†	7.15
All household offences	22.95	7.81		*	40.90	1.30		32.49
<b>Personal offences</b>								
Theft and property damage (personal)	4.62	3.59	†		9.51	4.34	†	6.89
Robbery and assault (except sexual assault)	23.24	13.17	#		15.08	5.83	†	19.44
Fraud and deception	14.36	7.48	†	*	32.34	6.39		22.72
Cybercrime	Ŝ	3.60	Ŝ	*	16.82	6.61	†	9.89
Sexual assault	19.88	9.96	†		11.63	8.97	†	16.04
Harassment and threatening behaviour	S	22.63	S		14.61	6.49	†	25.01
All personal offences	S	20.09	S		59.10	8.06		67.51
<b>Type 2 Offence Groupings</b>								
Fraud	14.25	6.56	†	*	29.73	6.12		22.83
Interpersonal violence	S	22.04	S	*	26.69	7.17		43.61
Theft and damage offences	5.44	2.69	†		6.54	1.58		6.13
Vehicle offences	3.31	1.53	†	*	9.78	2.30		6.85
Burglary	12.35	2.12	†	*	22.79	1.87		18.18
Trespass	2.22	1.44	†		2.50	1.07	†	2.41
<b>Family violence</b>								
Partner	7.69	5.37	†		3.59	2.72	†	5.78
Ex-partner	5.21	4.32	†		Ŝ	2.43	Ŝ	3.63
Intimate partner	12.84	5.33	†		5.41	3.59	†	9.39
Other family member	Ŝ	13.84	Ŝ		4.62	3.61	†	7.38
All family violence	21.08	12.68	#		10.03	4.55	†	15.94

# Percentage has a margin of error between 10 and 20 percentage points and should be used with caution.

† The numerator or denominator of ratio-based estimates has a relative standard error between 20% and 50%, and so this estimate should be used with caution.

S Suppressed as the percentage has a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points.

Ŝ Suppressed as the numerator and/or denominator of the ratio estimate has a relative standard error greater than or equal to 50%, which is considered too unreliable for general use.

\* Statistically significant difference from other victims at the 95% confidence level.

**Table 3:** Percentages of incidents by incident level demographics for highly victimised and the other victims

Interpersonal violence by	Highly victimised				Other victims			All victims
	%	MOE	MOE Level	Sig.	%	MOE	MOE Level	%
Family	29.15	16.03	#		23.13	9.08	‡	27.09
Community	S	22.87	S		76.32	11.41	#	74.25
Known people	S	21.96	S		30.79	10.09	#	37.04
Strangers	S	31.67	S		46.87	16.33	#	S
<b>Viewed as a crime</b>								
All offences	53.40	10.66	#	*	68.75	3.80		61.98
Interpersonal violence	39.69	17.87	#		36.70	11.49	#	38.68

# Percentage has a margin of error between 10 and 20 percentage points and should be used with caution.

‡ The numerator or denominator of ratio-based estimates has a relative standard error between 20% and 50%, and so this estimate should be used with caution.

S Suppressed as the percentage has a margin of error greater than or equal to 20 percentage points.

\* Statistically significant difference from other victims at the 95% confidence level.