**NEW ZEALAND’S LARGEST CRIME SURVEY RELEASED**

The majority of New Zealanders aged 15 and over did not experience crime within the previous 12 months of their life, according to the latest release of the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey.

The 2021 New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey, published today by the Ministry of Justice, reveals trends in crimes drawing on the experiences more than 6,200 randomly selected New Zealanders.

The survey showed that about 29 percent of adults in New Zealand were victimised once or more in the previous 12 months, the same proportion as in 2020. The three most common offence types were harassment and threatening behaviour; burglary; and fraud and deception. Together, these made up more than half of all offences (51 percent). The proportion of households which experienced burglaries fell significantly, from 12.1 percent in 2018 to 9.3 percent in 2021. However, the number of burglary incidents increased compared to the previous year. This indicates households that were burgled were more likely to experience multiple burglaries.

Seventy-one percent of New Zealanders were not victimised.

The survey revealed that age and the level of deprivation are among the key factors influencing victimisation. Younger adults and those living in more deprived areas experience higher risk of victimisation as compared with average adults.

“This is a really important finding,” says Anton Youngman, General Manager Sector Insights in the Ministry of Justice. “It reconfirms that by improving wellbeing we may reduce the size of crime and victimisation in Aotearoa New Zealand.”

Mostly due to these factors, a higher proportion of Māori are victimised each year than any other ethnic group. There was only a small (2 percent) gap between Māori victimisation and the New Zealand average when age and deprivation are accounted for. This finding supports the view that the different age structure and the different level of deprivation between Māori and the New Zealand average are key contributors to the higher likelihood of victimisation for Māori.

Further, just over two percent of adults experienced 39 percent of all crime. Previous NZCVS research shows that young people, Māori and people who have never been in a legally recognised relationship are all overrepresented in the highly victimised population.

About 292,000 adults experienced interpersonal violence offences. This is slightly higher than in 2019 and 2020 but the same as in 2018.

Other key findings from the 2021 Crime and Victims survey are:

* About one in nine adults (11 percent) who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual and other adults with diverse sexuality were sexually assaulted within a 12-month period. This is more than five times higher than New Zealand average (2percent).
* Offending by intimate partners decreased significantly between 2020 and 2021; the decrease was driven by the rate of offending by current partners (as opposed to ex-partners).
* About 35 percent of females and 12 percent of males had experienced sexual assault in their lifetime. The proportion of those who experienced sexual assault was high in young people, with 18 percent of adults aged 15-19 already victimised in their lifetime.
* Disabled adults were more likely to experience crime across personal offences and household offences after accounting for older age distribution
* Only 8 percent of sexual assaults were reported to the Police.
* 18 percent of adults experienced harm in the previous 12 months because of a partner, ex-partner, family or whanau members’ controlling behaviour
* The overall victimisation level has remained stable before and during the COVID-19 pandemic

“This unique survey has been running since 2018,” says Mr Youngman. “It draws on almost 30,000 interviews with randomly selected New Zealanders about their experiences of crime. We are now are able to compare the data over four years and examine trends in crime.”

“The survey provides us with unique evidence because three quarters of crimes are not reported to police.”

“It shows changes in victimisation and can indicate the effectiveness of government policies on crime – this is the key to what New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey offers and will continue to grow in importance over time. The survey supplies valuable data for the Ministry of Justice, the Police, Ministry of Social Development, Te Puni Kokiri, Department of Internal Affairs, Oranga Tamariki, and the Ministry for Women.”

**ENDS**

Notes to editors:

1. The New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS)is a nationwide, face-to-face annual survey carried out by the Ministry of Justice interviewing randomly selected New Zealanders aged 15 years and over about incidents of crime they experienced in the last 12 months. This includes both incidents reported to the Police and unreported incidents. Surveys have been carried out annually from 2018.
2. The NZCVS has some significant improvements in design compared with its predecessor, the New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS). The differences in design mean that direct comparison of NZCVS results with its predecessor NZCASS is potentially misleading, even within similar offence types.
3. *NZCVS 2021 and the COVID-19 lockdowns.* This report is based on data collected between November 2020 and November 2021. Interviews were paused from 18 August to 17 September 2021 in response to the COVID-19 nationwide Alert Level 4 settings. Interviewing was also paused in Auckland, Waikato and Northland during further COVID-19 Alert Level restrictions in these areas. As a consequence, interviewing continued later into the year than planned and achieved a lower number of responses than in previous cycles, 6,244 instead of 8,000. Nonetheless, a high response rate of 76 percent was achieved, just slightly lower than the response rate in 2020 (80 percent).