



Young people

2022 Quality of life survey snapshot

8-city

Overview

Young people aged 18 to 24 years old made up 14 per cent of the overall 2022 Quality of Life sample. They were ethnically diverse, with around one in ten selecting multiple ethnic groups. The majority stated that they were born in New Zealand. In addition, around one in five young people selected a gender or sexual identity that identified them as part of the Rainbow community.

This group were positive about their quality of life, with 81 per cent rating it as good, very good, or excellent. They were highly engaged in labour and study opportunities, with half indicating that they were a student, and many working in either full- or part-time employment. There were some ethnic group differences, with Pacific young people more likely than others to have taken on caregiving responsibilities in their families.

Mental wellbeing was an area of concern, with only half of young respondents rating their mental health positively, and a similar proportion reporting they had frequently experienced stress that had a negative impact on them. Despite this, young people were well-connected to support and had a high level of social participation.

More detail is provided in the following pages.

Young people in Aotearoa

As at the 2018 Census, young people aged 18-24 years made up 7 per cent of Aotearoa New Zealand's population. Although relatively small in size, this is a significant population as they represent an important life stage of leaving school and entering the labour market, moving into tertiary or other education, and gaining independence from their families.

This snapshot provides detailed wellbeing information about young people from the 2022 Quality of Life survey, exploring domains such as overall quality of life, housing, economic wellbeing, health, community and social participation, culture and identity, and views on climate change. This information will enable local councils to better understand the experiences and wellbeing of their young people.

Rangahau te Korou o te Ora/The Quality of Life (QoL) survey

The QoL survey is a collaborative local government project initiated 20 years ago, in response to the impacts of urbanisation on the wellbeing of New Zealand residents and communities. It is undertaken every two years.

In 2022, 7518 New Zealanders completed the survey – 6906 across the eight participating councils, of whom 969 were aged 18-24 years.

Fieldwork took place from March to June 2022.

To find out more, go to www.qualityoflife.govt.nz

Eight in ten young people were positive about their quality of life

Most (81%) young people rated their quality of life as good, very good, or excellent. Similar proportions said their quality of life increased (29%) or decreased (27%) in the 12 months prior to the survey, while 44 per cent said it had stayed the same. The top reasons for quality of life changing related to financial wellbeing, career and study opportunities, and changes in lifestyle, mental health, and relationships.

Just growing up, making better choices, better relations and working with a group of people that make me feel welcome. (Young person, 18-19 years, Hamilton)

The price of rent and property is through the roof. Prices of petrol and groceries have also begun to make life difficult. It feels like there's no light at the end of the tunnel in this country anymore. (Young person, 20-24 years, Christchurch)

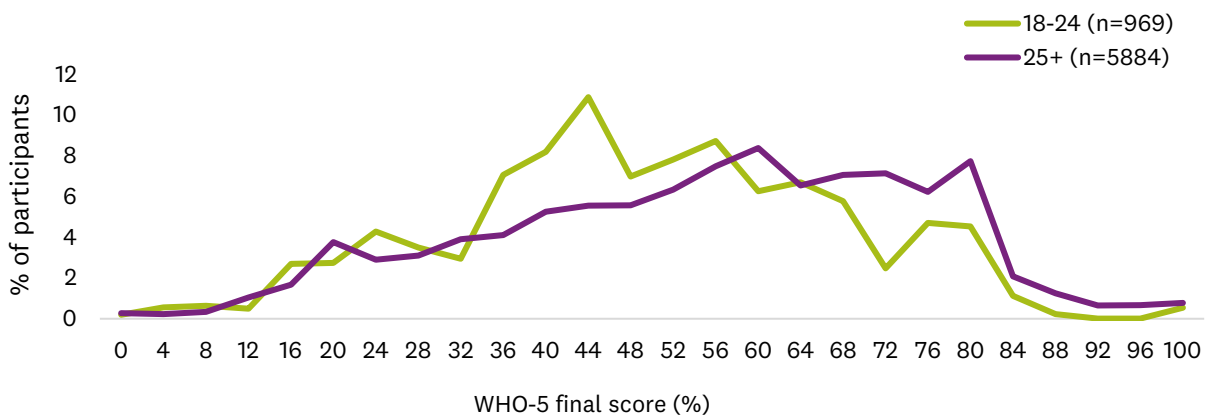
Work has given me more opportunities and I have been able to spend more time doing the things I love. (Young person, 20-24 years, Dunedin)

Despite poorer mental health, young people were connected to support



Two-thirds of young people (68%) rated their physical health as good. However, only half (49%) rated their mental health as good, and were less likely than those aged 25 years and over (70%) to rate their mental health this way.

Lower mental wellbeing among young participants was reflected in their WHO-5 scores. Half (51%) of young participants had a WHO-5 score of below 52 (compared to 38% of the rest of the sample).



The WHO-5 is a measure of emotional wellbeing. A percentage score of 0 represents the worst possible emotional wellbeing while 100 per cent represents the best possible emotional wellbeing. Scores below 52 are considered indicative of poor emotional wellbeing.

Poor mental health was also reflected in their experiences of stress that had a negative effect on them. Almost half (47%) said they had 'always' or 'most of the time' experienced this type of stress in the previous 12 months, compared to 24 per cent of the rest of the sample.

Despite frequent feelings of stress, young people said they were well-connected to support systems. In the event of a serious injury or illness, 91 per cent said they could turn to someone for practical support and 86 per cent said they could turn to someone for emotional support.

Young people were positive about their culture and identity



When asked to think about living in their local area or city, 70 per cent of young people agreed they felt comfortable dressing in a way that addressed their identity in public and 66 per cent agreed they could participate, perform, or attend activities or groups aligned with their culture. Around half (55%) agreed they felt accepted and valued for their identity by people in their local area or city.

While positive about their own culture and identity, young people were more likely to view racism and discrimination as a problem in their local area or city in the previous 12 months (61%, compared to 52% of the rest of the sample). In line with this view, they were also more likely (63%) to have witnessed prejudice, intolerance, or discrimination towards others in their local area or city in the previous three months, than the rest of the sample (48%).

Despite a large proportion noting they had witnessed prejudice, a smaller proportion (39%) said they had personally experienced it in their local area or city in the previous three months. Young people were more likely to report experiencing prejudice based on gender (17%), age (13%), a physical or mental health condition (12%), and sexual orientation (8%), compared to those aged 25 and over (7% gender, 7% age, 5% physical or mental health condition, and 2% sexual orientation).

Young people had a high level of social participation but often felt lonely and were less connected to their local community

Young people had a high level of participation in social networks and groups, with three-quarters (75%) participating in at least one social network or group in the previous 12 months. The most common types of social networks included: hobby or interest groups (32%), professional or work networks (25%), group fitness or movement (22%), clubs and societies (23%), faith-based groups or church communities (20%), and volunteer or charity groups (10%).

Of the young people who had participated in at least one social network or group, most (87%) participated in 1 to 3 social groups (40% took part in just one, 29% took part in two, and 18% took part in three groups). The remaining 13 per cent said they took part in at least four social groups.



Despite a high level of social participation, one-quarter (25%) of young people said they had 'always' or 'most of the time' felt lonely or isolated in the previous 12 months. This was much higher than for those aged 25 years and over (9%).



In addition, half (56%) agreed that it was important to them to feel a sense of community with others, but fewer (32%) agreed that they did feel a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood.

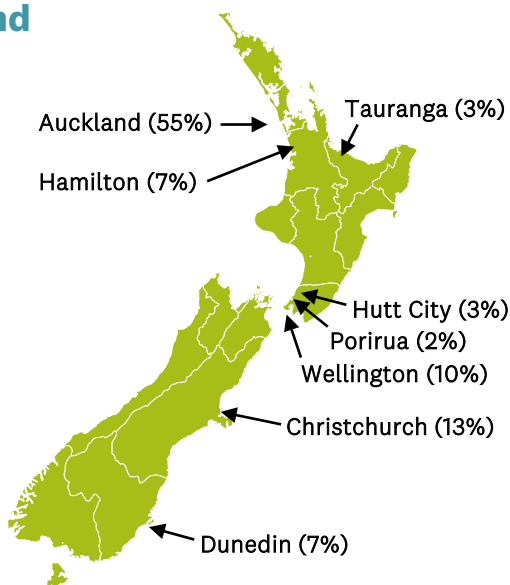
They expressed a high level of worry about climate change

Half (51%) of young people said they were worried about the impacts of climate change on their cities and its residents. Reflecting this level of worry, 78 per cent said they took at least one type of climate action. The most common types of actions taken were changing their purchasing habits (48%), managing their waste (46%), talking about climate change solutions with friends and family (44%), and changing their food habits (39%).

Most young respondents lived in Auckland

Across the eight-city sample, 14 per cent (969 people) were young people aged 18-24 years. Of this number, most (81%) were aged 20-24 years, and the remaining 19 per cent were aged 18-19 years old.

Over half (55%) of the youth sample lived in Auckland. The other two top places where young people lived were Christchurch (13%) and Wellington (10%). This reflects the overall distribution of respondents across the eight cities (57% of all respondents lived in Auckland).



They were ethnically diverse



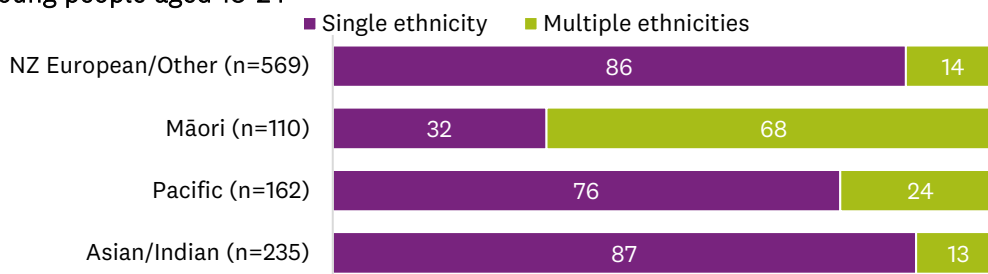
Most (79%) young people said they were born in New Zealand (compared to 62% of those aged 25 and over). Of the young people born overseas, 71 per cent had lived in New Zealand for 10+ years, 21 per cent had lived here for 5-9 years, and the remaining 8 per cent had lived here for less than five years.



Most identified as New Zealand European/Other (60%), followed by Asian/Indian (25%), Pacific (17%), and Māori (11%). Please note that these percentages exceed 100 per cent because participants could select more than one ethnic group.

Most (88%) young people selected just one ethnic group - this was slightly lower (93%) than those aged 25 and over. One in ten (12%) young people selected multiple ethnic groups. Two-thirds (68%) of rangatahi Māori selected multiple ethnicities – a much larger proportion than youth respondents of other ethnic groups.

% of young people aged 18-24



One in five young people were identified as part of the Rainbow community

Young people were more likely than the rest of the sample to be part of the Rainbow community. One in five (19%) were identified as Rainbow, compared to 7% of the rest of the sample.

There were some ethnic group differences in those who were identified as part of the Rainbow community. Slightly more New Zealand European/Other (27%) young people were Rainbow, while fewer Pacific (6%) and Asian/Indian (14%) young people were Rainbow. There were no differences for rangatahi Māori (19% were identified as Rainbow).

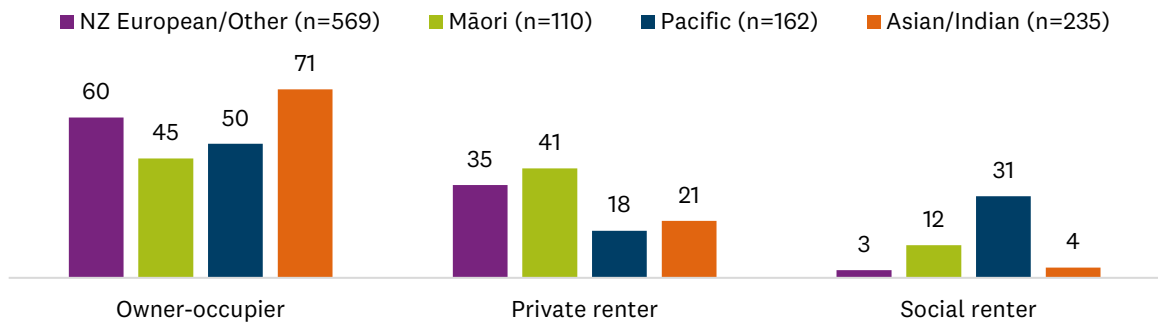
Many young people were living in a family home



Over half (60%) lived in an owner-occupier household (54% lived in a home that was owned by their parents, a partner, or other relatives and 6% owned their home or their home was held in a family trust). Another 29 per cent of young people were privately renting from a landlord and 8 per cent were renting from a social housing provider.

There were ethnic group differences in young people's housing tenure. A larger proportion of Asian/Indian young people lived in an owner-occupier household than others. More rangatahi Māori (41%) lived in private renter households and more Pacific young people (31%) lived in social renter households, compared to young respondents of other ethnic groups.

% of young people aged 18-24



Young people were largely happy with their housing situation but many considered moving elsewhere



Large proportions of young people were satisfied with their housing and the area it was in – 72 per cent agreed their home suited their needs and 76 per cent agreed their neighbourhood suited their needs. However, only one-quarter (25%) agreed that their housing costs were affordable, with 50 per cent disagreeing with the statement.

Four in 10 (44%) said they had considered moving out of their local area or city in the next 12 months, compared to the rest of the sample (36%). Auckland young people tended to note the rising cost of living and housing unaffordability as the main reasons to move, along with seeking other career and study opportunities. Young people in other parts of the country more commonly noted seeking other career and study opportunities as well as a change of scenery and lifestyle, rather than cost of living pressures and housing costs.

Living cost is too expensive and almost impossible to buy a house here. (Young person, 20-24 years, Auckland)

Cost of living is a lot more expensive compared to other cities in NZ. It would also be nice to have a change as I have lived in Auckland my whole life. (Young person, 20-24 years, Auckland)

Rising costs of living, needing to move out, better job prospects and opportunities elsewhere. (Young person, 18-19 years, Auckland)

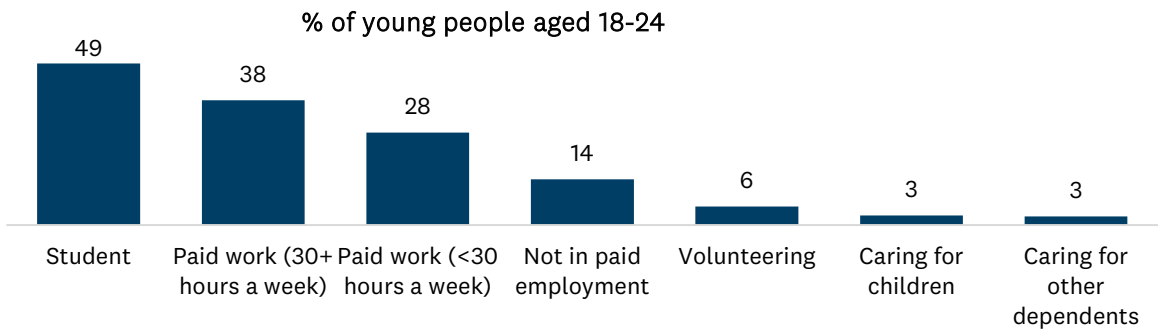
For better job opportunities and better wages to help with my family and myself, as well as following my dream in [industry]. (Young person, 20-24 years, Porirua)

To travel and explore new other places, most likely in New Zealand, and possibly settle on my own somewhere fresh. (Young person, 18-19 years, Dunedin)

Young people were actively participating in work and study

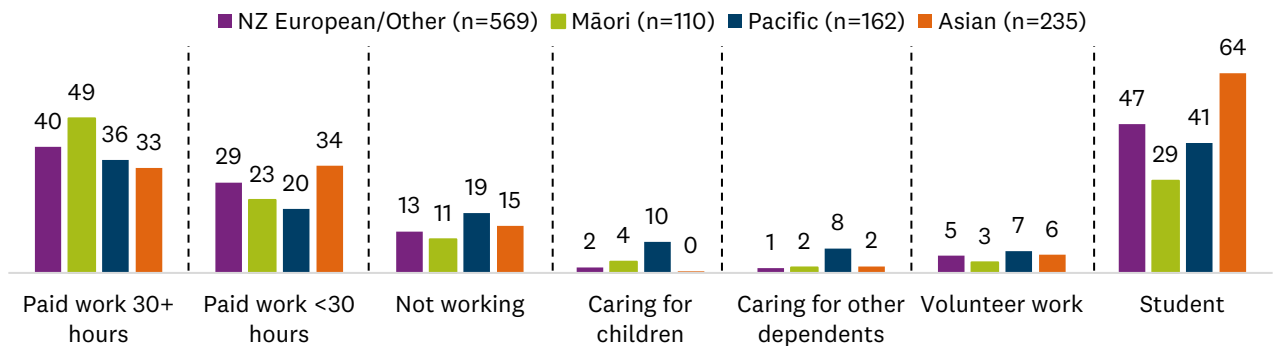
Most young people were either studying or in paid employment. Half (49%) were students. A smaller proportion (38%) were in paid work for 30 hours or more a week, and 28 per cent were in paid work less than 30 hours a week. Respondents were able to select multiple employment/study activities, so percentages exceed 100 per cent.

Many young students were also in paid employment. Of those who said they were students, 44 per cent said they were also in paid work less than 30 hours a week, while 7 per cent said they worked more than 30 hours a week.



There were some ethnic group differences in economic participation. More rangatahi Māori said they were in paid work for 30 or more hours a week, compared to young people of other ethnic groups, while more Pacific young people were involved in caregiving activities compared to other ethnic groups. In addition, a larger proportion of Asian/Indian young people noted that they were students, compared to others, while fewer rangatahi Māori said they were students.

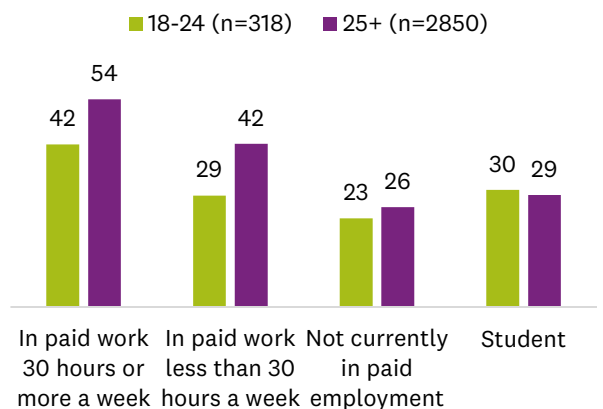
% of young people aged 18-24



One-third (33%) of young respondents said they had 'enough' or 'more than enough' money to meet their everyday needs, compared to 48 per cent of those aged 25 years and over.

However, this differed depending on their study/employment status. Of those in paid work 30 hours or more a week, 42 per cent of young people said they had enough money to meet their everyday needs, compared to 54 per cent of those aged 25 years and over. This difference probably reflects how income increases as people build experience and skills over time.

% those who had enough money





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The 2022 Quality of Life snapshot reports, prepared by Auckland Council's Research and Evaluation Unit (RIMU), are part of an ongoing series covering a range of topics and demographic groups. Further snapshot reports will be released as they become available.

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