

nZCTU

Te Kauae Kaimahi

MOOD OF THE WORKFORCE SURVEY 2025



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Since 2019, we have asked working people to talk about their experiences of work over the past 12 months, and what their thoughts are on issues likely to impact their work and lives in the future.

We do this because we think the voice of working people should be heard by all of us, especially by decision-makers. Too often the voices that are collated and published are only those from the boardroom or from employers. Without the voice of working people provided by this survey, and unions more broadly, we are limited to an unbalanced narrative, limited to knowing only how confident business owners feel or what a handful of high-profile directors think. When only part of the economic story is heard, fair and inclusive decisions – good decisions – are less likely to be made.

The 2025 survey reveals deep concerns from respondents regarding their work lives, housing, health care, and perceptions of the coalition government in Aotearoa New Zealand. Common themes include rising workloads without adequate staffing, financial strain from stagnant wages, and dissatisfaction with management practices and job security. Government funding cuts and restructuring have further worsened these issues, creating stress and burnout among workers.

In housing, respondents highlighted unaffordability, and inequities driven by investor activity and ineffective policies. Many expressed frustrations with rental instability and substandard living conditions. Calls for systemic change highlighted the need for affordable, secure housing as a fundamental right.

Health care concerns were focused on high costs, long wait times, and regional disparities in access. Respondents want to see increased public health funding, improved equity, and resistance to privatisation to ensure universal and quality care.

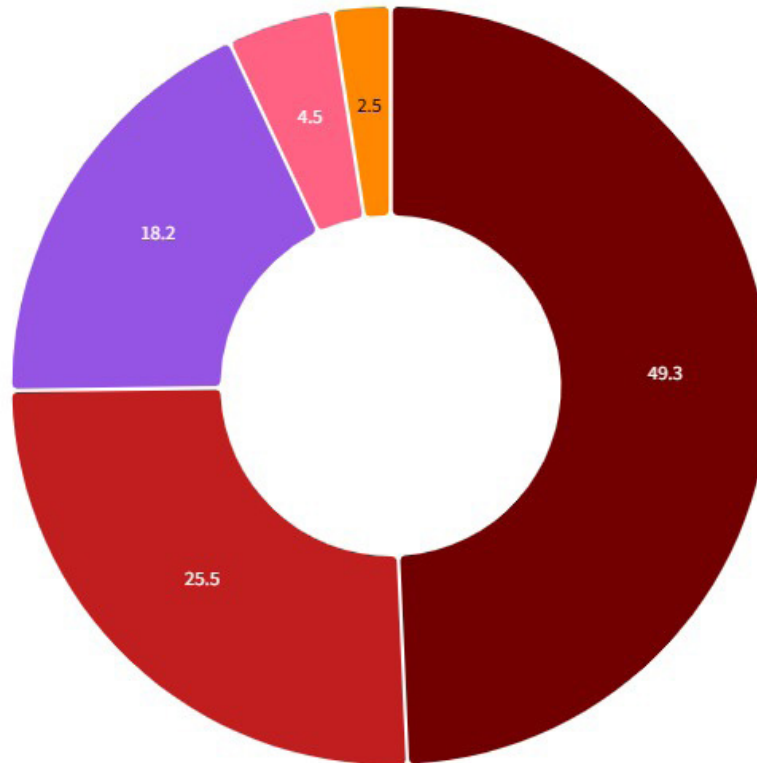
Criticism of the government was sharp, focusing on perceived corruption, economic mismanagement, and the erosion of public services. Respondents highlighted the negative impact of austerity measures and tax policies that favour the wealthy, while calling for fairer taxation, better representation, and more investment in public services and infrastructure.

The overarching sentiment across themes underscores a demand for systemic reforms to address inequality, protect workers, and strengthen public services for a more equitable society.

SECTION 1: WORKLIFE

Do you feel that your income has kept up with your cost of living over the last 12 months?

■ (1) No it has fallen behind ■ (2) It's somewhat fallen behind ■ (3) They are about the same
■ (4) It's somewhat better ■ (5) I'm better off now



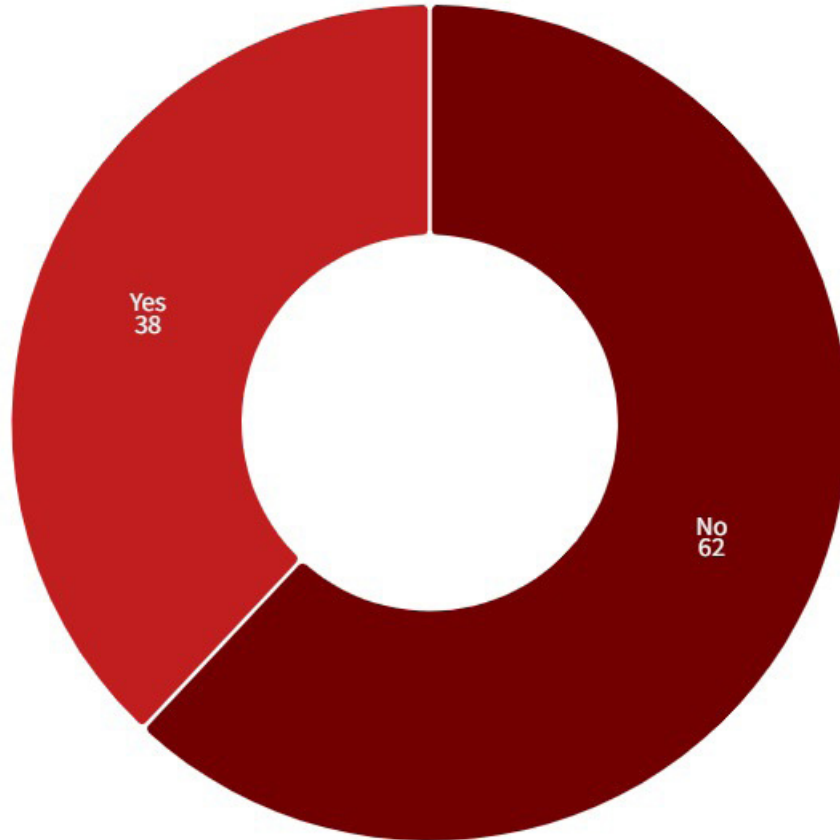
INCREASED DEMAND AND STAFFING ISSUES

Many respondents highlighted a marked increase in demand for their services without a corresponding increase in staffing levels. This imbalance has led to significant stress and decreased morale among employees. There is a common sentiment that employers have neglected to address staffing shortages and provide necessary training, further exacerbating the workload.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- A lot of work is expected to be done outside of working hours.
- Hiring freeze causes increased and unsafe workloads.
- Non replacement of staff due to government funding cuts has put increasing pressure on those remaining. I don't enjoy my job like I used to.
- Workload has got to the point of overwhelming.
- I have had been through 5 job reviews in two years which I have survived but two of us are now doing the workload of the other two who lost their jobs.
- Not replacing staff that have left has increased the workload and stress levels of myself and other staff. Consistently being told to reduce staffing levels to lower wage cost has impacted the financial situation for staff as well as increasing the workload for those that are not called off. Morale is low and I have been doing my best to avoid full burn out with little success and my mental health has suffered significantly.
- Pressure of understaffing. I work in a supermarket and having to deal with aggressive customers, getting the blame for increasing prices.

Do you feel that you are paid fairly for your work? ■ No ■ Yes



MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

A recurring theme is the dissatisfaction with management practices, particularly the management of organisational changes. Phrases like “Management of change” and “HR” evoke strong negative reactions, with many feeling that these processes have been detrimental to their mental and physical health. Communication from the top is perceived as poor, fostering an environment of mistrust and uncertainty.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- It has become much less certain and that makes me concerned. This government has destabilized the work. The focus on budget constraints leading to reviews, restructures and the disestablishment of positions at work has increased.
- People have left or been ‘optimised’ and are not being replaced. The amount of work is increased and we are expected to do

more for no increased income. People are dissatisfied, disillusioned, and burnt out.

- I work in the public sector. As well as job precarity as we await the outcomes of rolling restructures (since June 2023, with warnings of more to come at Budget 2025), we are dealing with the mental health impacts of seeing the Government constantly attacking the public service in the media.

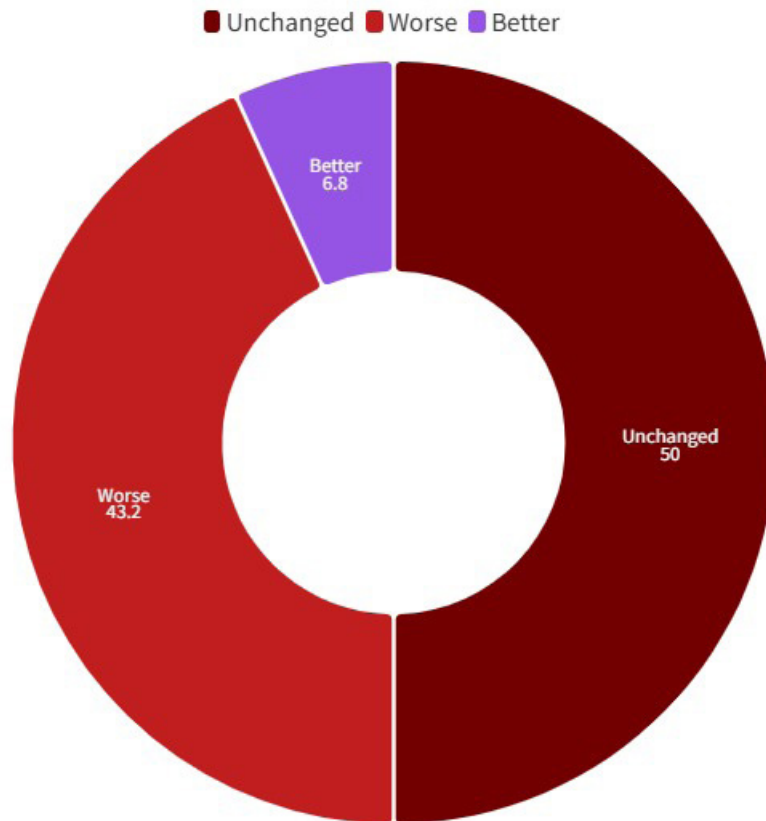
JOB SECURITY AND REDUNDANCIES

The fear of job loss and the impact of repeated staffing reviews and department mergers have created a pervasive sense of insecurity. Many comments reflect worries about the permanence of their positions, with some noting the significant impact these changes have had on workplace morale.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Constantly told to feel grateful that we have a job. You feel you are walking on eggshells

In the last 12 months, do you feel that the quality of your work-life has got better or worse in terms of hours of work?



all the time and don't rock the boat or piss off the CE, because you need to be grateful you have a job.

- My heart goes out to those who have lost their jobs and the impact of that for families and communities. I am grateful to be employed but as a public servant feel much less valued and my job security feels more tenuous. Despite being employed, I wonder what next year will bring as the Government continues to 'find' savings.
- I feel my employer has started to feel emboldened to make me work beyond reasonable as they know that the job market is so tight and that it will be hard for me to find work elsewhere.
- We have gone into a long drawn out restructure, with a long period of being disestablished but having to continue to work as if not disestablished and still not certain of what the future options are.

GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC SECTOR SENTIMENT

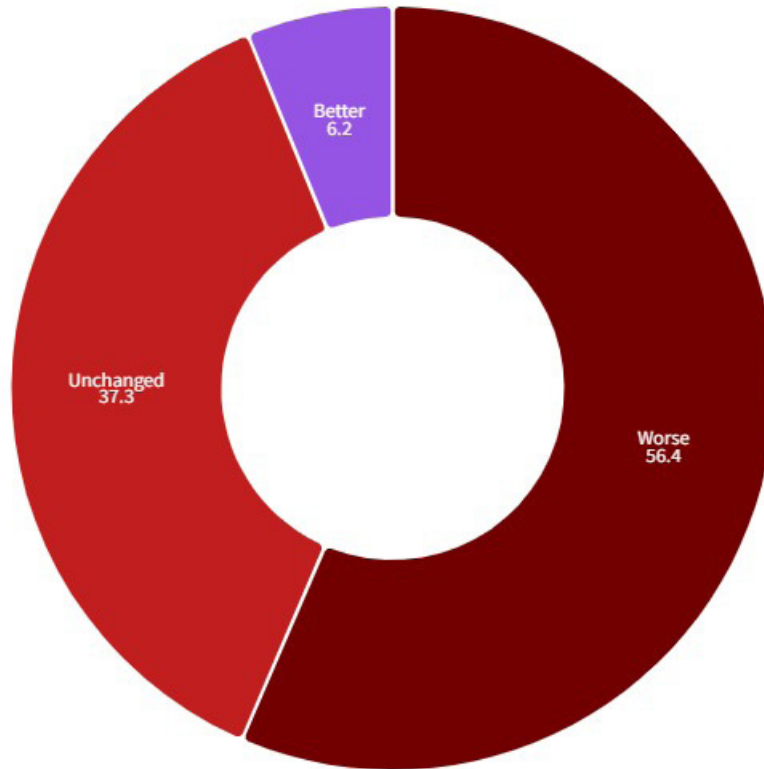
Employees in the public sector expressed profound disillusionment with the Government's treatment of public servants. There is a strong feeling of betrayal and a belief that the Government has shown contempt for the sector. Respondents call for better support and strategic thinking from leadership.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- The government's underfunding of my sector is driving my colleagues overseas - and I have applied for jobs overseas too. I love my job but the funding situation shows no signs of getting better so we will keep seeing job cuts, and below-inflation pay-rises. There is no incentive to stay in Aotearoa.
- There's a great uncertainty with work security due to cuts driven by the current Government, and it will continue. ... In all things there are benefits and negatives;

In the last 12 months, do you feel that the quality of your work-life has got better or worse in terms of workload?

■ Worse ■ Unchanged ■ Better



sometimes the negatives outweigh the benefits but as Ministers of the crown are blinded by the driving agenda of cutting government staff, they don't realise the harm they create which will filter through to the NZ people over years to come.

- Funding cuts to the social services frontline sector mean that those left in work are doing more with less resources. Workers are burning out, overwhelmed & constantly fearful about the next round of funding cuts & possible losing their jobs.
- It's been an extremely bleak year of government funding cuts leaving holes and disconnection between Public Services for the those in desperate need.

FINANCIAL STRAIN AND COMPENSATION

Financial concerns are widespread, with many employees feeling that their pay has not kept up with the rising cost of living. The lack of pay raises over recent years has

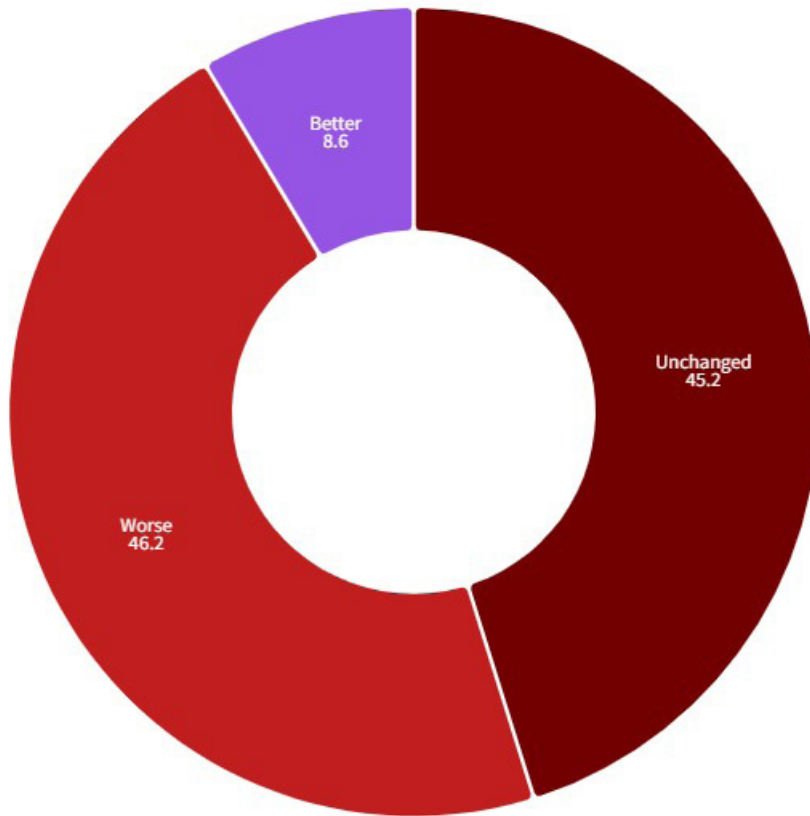
led to financial strain and a sense of being undervalued. This is being compounded by government policy. Some respondents mention that they feel more appreciated by their clients than by their employers.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- The cost of living has been much higher than my pay increase. It has made it difficult to leave a relationship that was harmful to me as suddenly everything was far outside what I could afford.
- Work load is getting worst and salary is not keeping up with high prices.
- Job cuts and constant restructure across the public workforce I am in makes me constantly anxious about keeping a job in a time where cost of living is so high. I would have to sell my house if I lost my job.
- The amount we are paid (minimum wage) has not increased to match increases in costs of living (especially rent).
- Cost of living is depressing.

In the last 12 months, do you feel that the quality of your work-life has got better or worse in terms of work-life balance?

■ Unchanged ■ Worse ■ Better



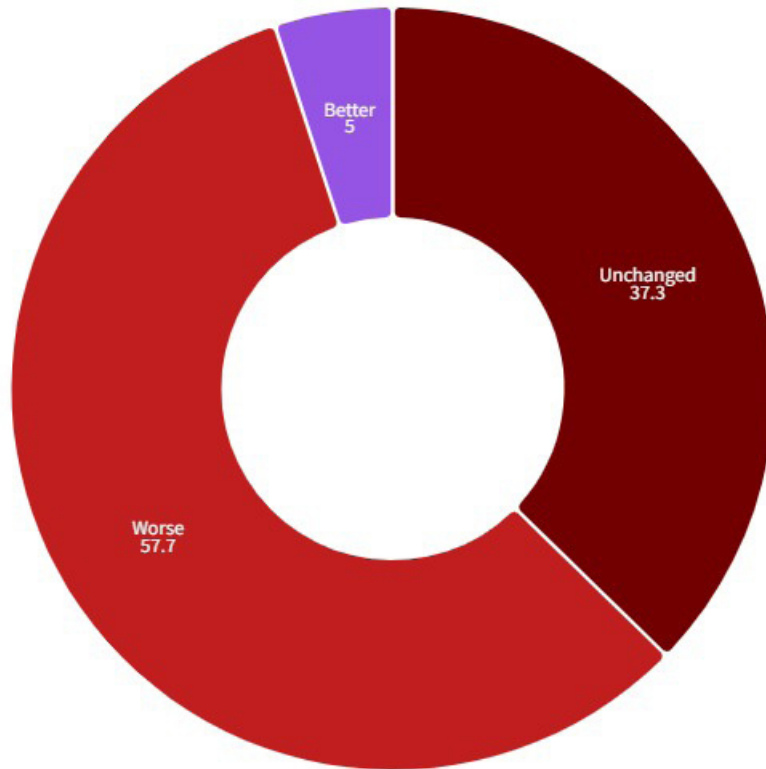
GENERAL DISCONTENT AND DISILLUSIONMENT

There is an overarching sense of discontent and disillusionment among the respondents. Factors contributing to this include poor negotiation outcomes, job cuts, excessive expectations beyond working hours, and unresolved issues such as unpaid holiday pay. Many feel exploited and undervalued in their roles.

In conclusion, the verbatim comments reveal a workforce under significant pressure, struggling with increased demands, poor management practices, job insecurity, and inadequate compensation.

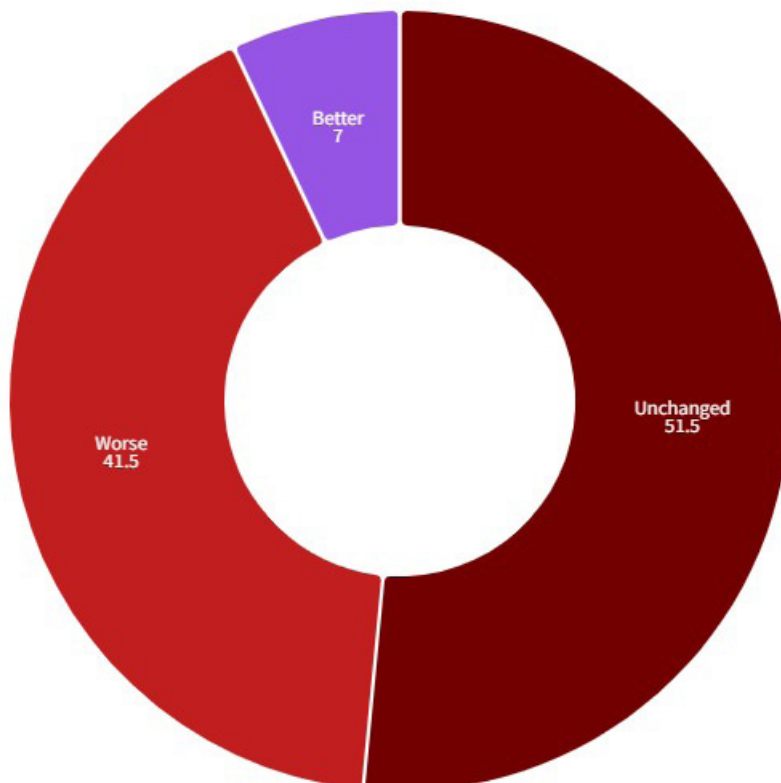
In the last 12 months, do you feel that the quality of your work-life has got better or worse in terms of job security?

■ Unchanged ■ Worse ■ Better



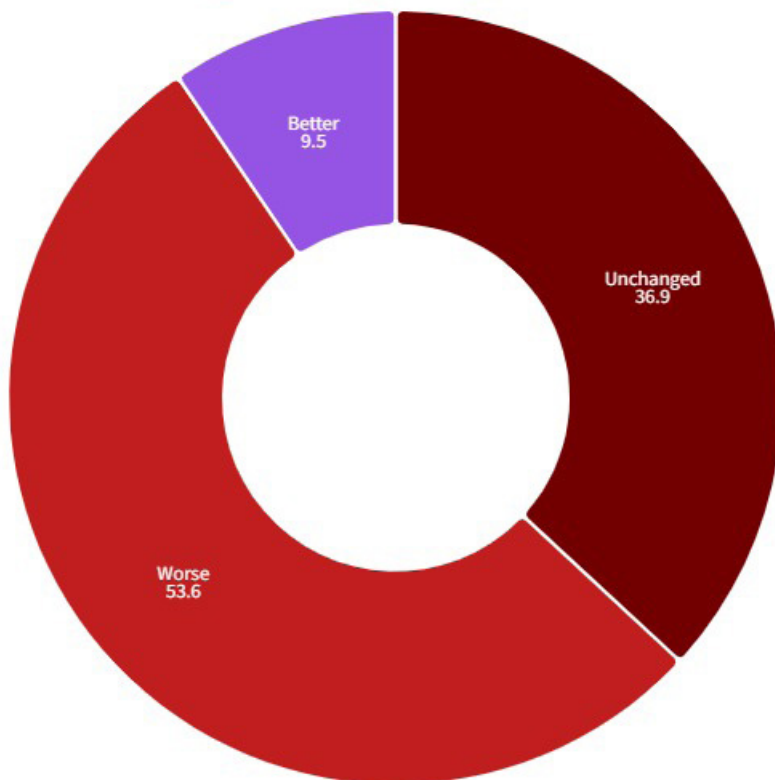
In the last 12 months, do you feel that the quality of your work-life has got better or worse in terms of access to training/professional development?

■ Unchanged ■ Worse ■ Better



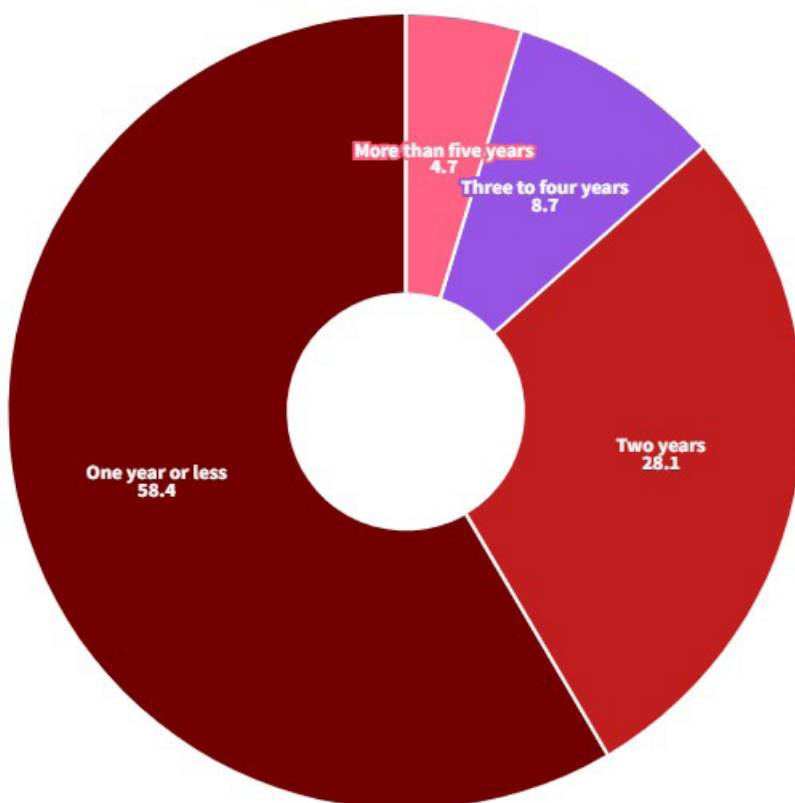
In the last 12 months, do you feel that the quality of your work-life has got better or worse in terms of job satisfaction?

■ Unchanged ■ Worse ■ Better

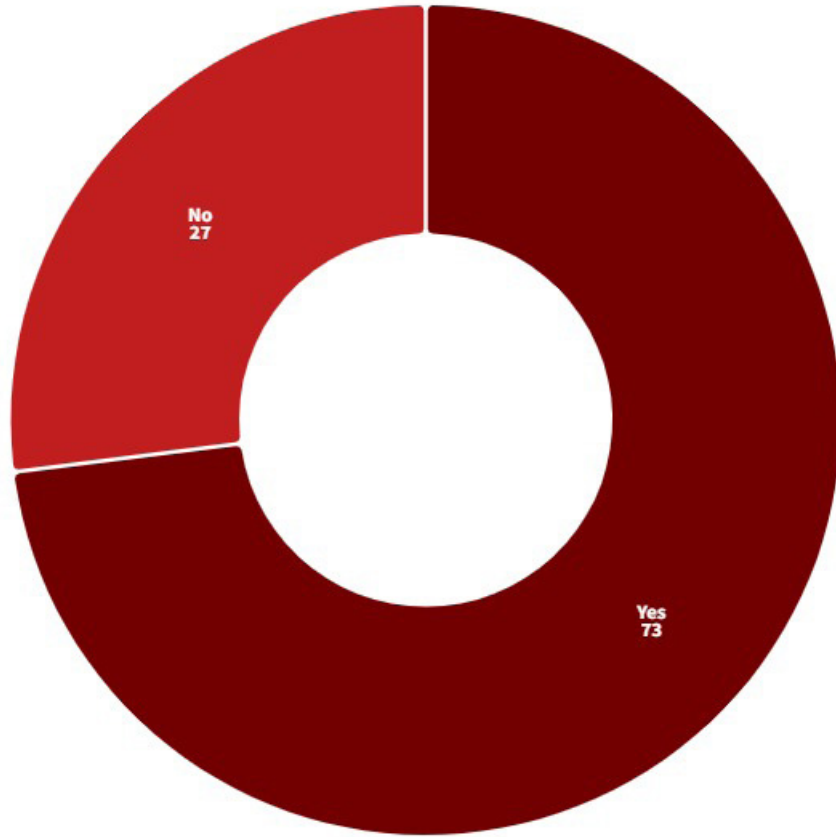


How long has it been since your last pay rise? ■ One year or less ■ Two years ■ Three to four years

■ More than five years

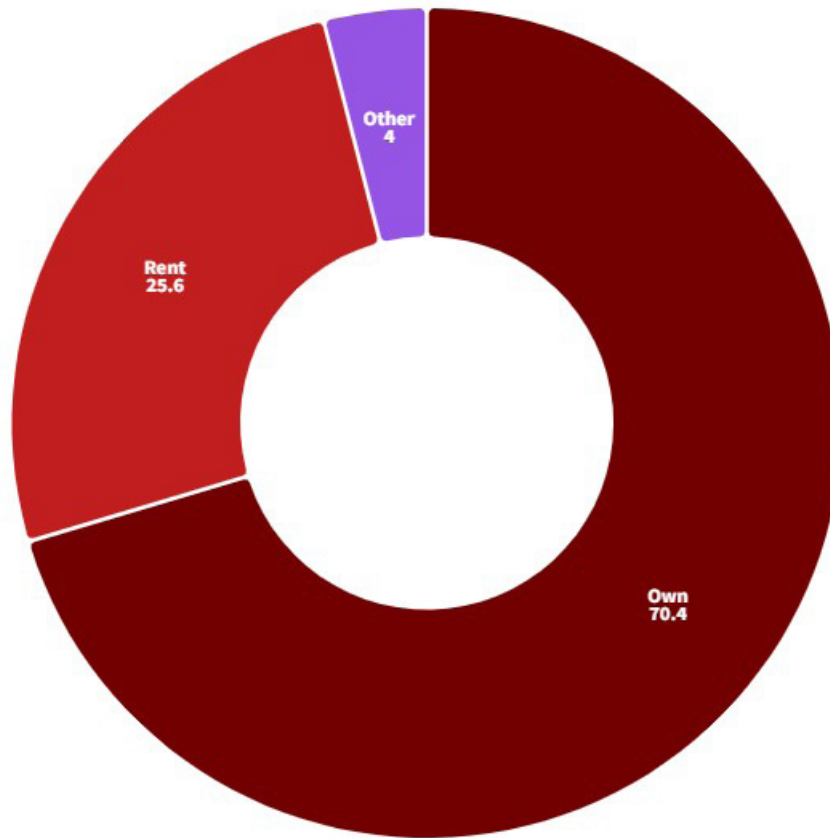


Do you feel able to have a say about health and safety in your workplace? ■ Yes ■ No



SECTION 2: HOUSING

Do you rent or own the home you live in? ■ Own ■ Rent ■ Other



The verbatim comments for Question 2 of the survey reveal several prominent themes regarding housing issues. The responses highlight the diverse and critical concerns faced by the respondents concerning housing affordability, availability, and the broader social and economic implications.

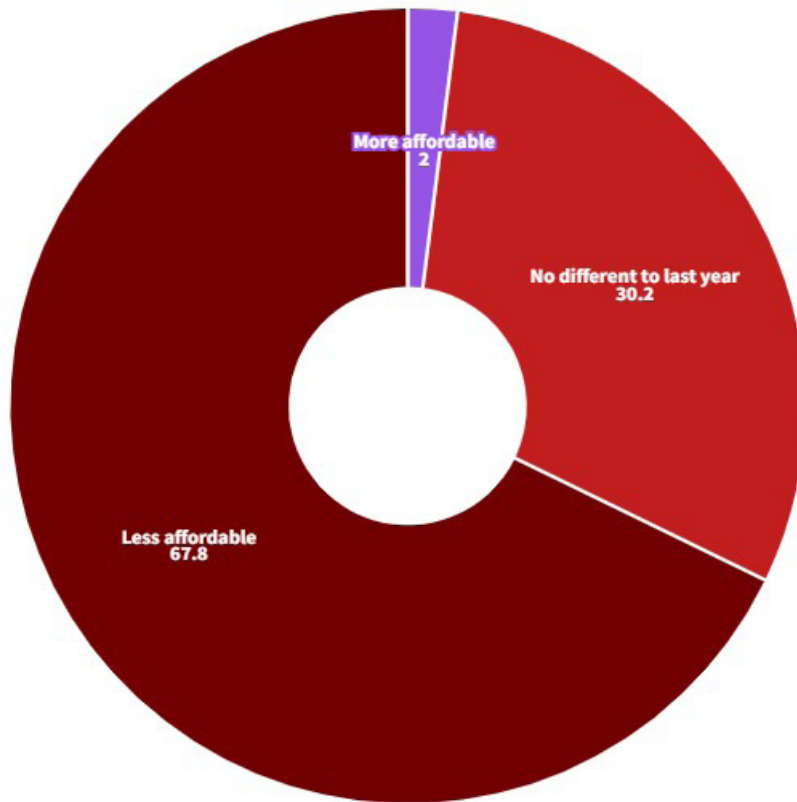
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

A recurring theme is the frustration with the skyrocketing house prices and the increasing difficulty in affording a home. Many respondents shared personal stories about how rising interest rates and housing costs have put homeownership out of reach. The sentiment is that housing has become unaffordable for low and middle-income families. The comments suggest that government policies favouring the rich contribute to this affordability crisis.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Rents and house prices feel totally decoupled from wages and very unaffordable.
- My husband and I have good incomes, but we are struggling to manage high rental and save for a house with the current costs of living. It's never been this hard, and it's frustrating as we've worked so hard to get where we are, but it feels like we can't make enough progress to actually get on the property ladder.
- I live in an area where the average house costs approximately \$700k but the average income is only approximately \$50k/year. Most housing has to be new builds which is far out of reach for the average person. Rates have increased exponentially as has rental costs and rental homes are few and far between.
- My partner and I cannot afford a house deposit and mortgage in an area that's

How affordable has your housing felt in the last year? ■ Less affordable ■ No different to last year
■ More affordable



close enough to commute to work, even with dual income no kids. We are stuck renting for the foreseeable future and are very sick of moving house every year at the whim of our landlords. We will likely move to Australia this year for better pay and cheaper housing.

IMPACT OF INVESTORS AND TAX POLICIES

Respondents frequently mentioned the role of investors in driving up housing prices. There is a call for a fairer tax system, including the implementation of a capital gains tax to reduce investor activity in the housing market. The belief is that such measures could make housing more accessible to prospective buyers by reducing speculative investments.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- There needs to be more social housing. There needs to be a tax on housing speculation. There also needs to be options

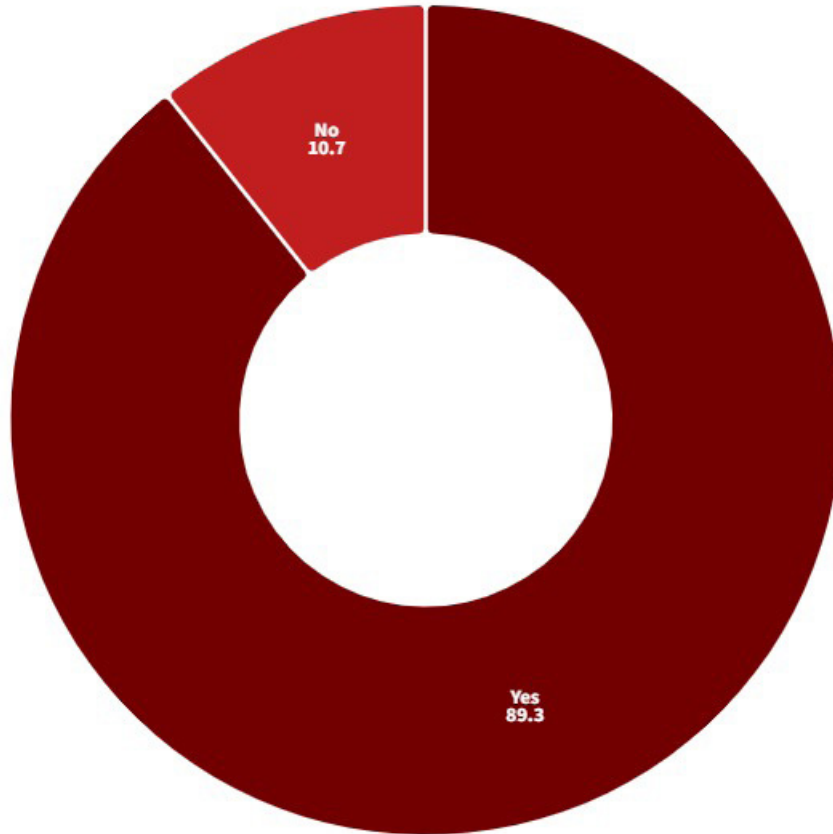
to rent to buy for people wanting to get on the housing market - its impossible to get onto the housing market now.

- I am appalled by the level of incentivising of home hoarding as a form of tax evasion and passive income by the current government which is driving housing insecurity.
- I can only put it this way, when my landlord lost his tax breaks he put the rent up by \$50 per week, but when the current government restored the tax breaks he put the rent up another \$50 p/w. I think it tells a story.
- NZ has high building costs and land costs accelerated by the capital gains and benefits to property investors. Having high home ownership would lead to better suburbs where people could put down roots and offer stability of living situation.

ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Access to affordable housing is seen as a fundamental right and an essential aspect of a functioning society. Many comments

Is access to affordable housing an issue in your community? ■ Yes ■ No



reflect the sentiment that access to housing has deteriorated, particularly for marginalised groups such as Māori and Pacific peoples. There are concerns about the inability of younger generations to afford rent or save for a deposit, leading some elders to consider sacrificing their own security to help their families.

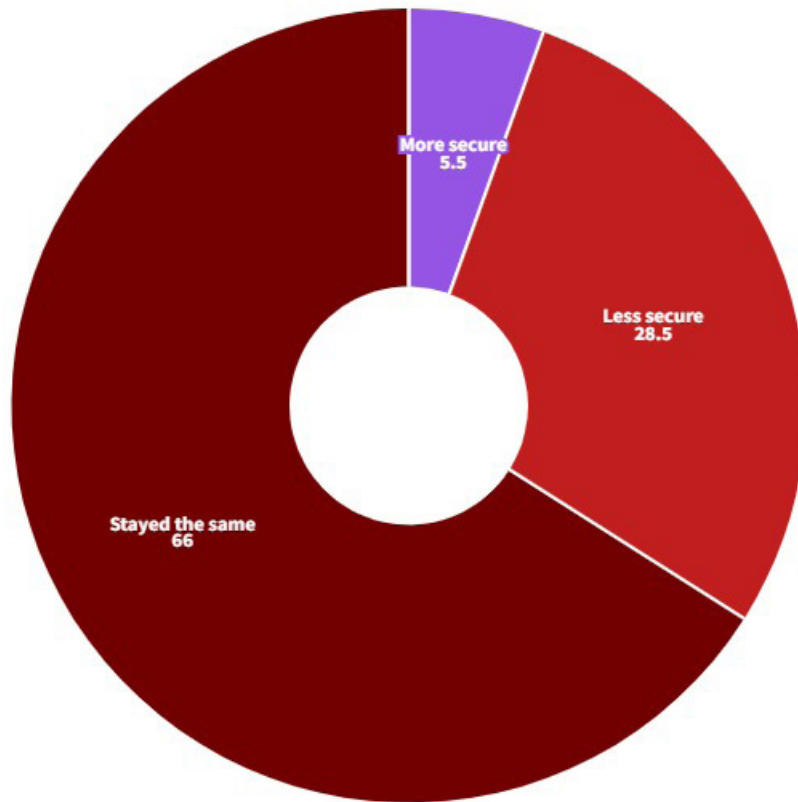
WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- We would lose our home if one of us loses their job. Huge mortgages on inflated house prices has cost security for us and all of our friends.
- We have had a 70 year old friend living in our garage because it's too expensive to live alone. We gratefully share our space as much as we can but it's not fair that someone who has worked all their life is in such a situation.
- Feel so lucky to have our own home, due to shortage of both jobs and rentals we currently have all our adult children living with us. The rental market is horrendous

for first time renters and for those at the bottom end of the market.

- I am appalled that young people in this country have had the opportunities for home ownership ripped from them by inflated and ridiculous costs for housing and the reasons why housing has become so inaccessible. I hate that so many children and families live in cars!
- I'm getting my kids out of NZ. Without family wealth which I don't have, they can't own homes which means lifelong instability. I think a wiser choice is to fund a relocation to Australia once their degrees are complete.
- Access to housing is a real problem for Māori and Pacific peoples in our area. I am concerned for our mokopunas' parents who can't afford rent or don't earn enough to get a deposit for their first home. So, we are considering moving out into a small unit so they can move into our 4 bedroom house! But, this puts us at risk in our senior years.

How secure does your housing situation feel compared to last year? ■ Stayed the same ■ Less secure
■ More secure



RENT AND LANDLORD ISSUES

The challenges of renting, including high costs and the power dynamics between landlords and tenants, are significant themes. Respondents lament the non-existence of affordable rental options, with landlords hiking prices due to desperate demand. There are mentions of tenants being kicked out or rents being increased to unaffordable levels when complaints are made.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- I rent and while we have lived in the same house for 4 years (the longest in one place in our adult lives) we are constantly aware that we may need to move at some point if our landlord decides so, for whatever reason. Our house also has several issues that need to be fixed, or would be fixed if it were the landlords primary place of residence, but we tend to only bother asking for vital things to be fixed so as to not seem like “nagging” tenants. We

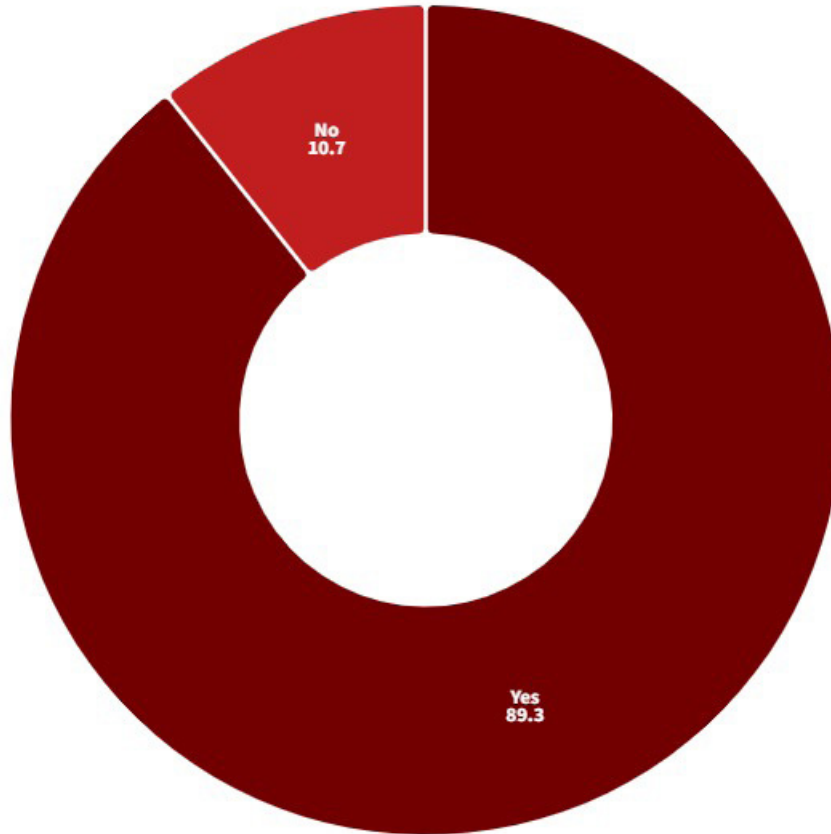
wish we could buy an affordable home but are not yet in a position to do so, and affordable homes don’t seem to exist anymore.

- I live in constant fear of my landlord.
- I am fortunate to be able to afford my rent but - based on past experience - have a constant low-level humming fear of being randomly evicted.
- I feel scared of what not being able to find another house if this one was sold etc.
- I feel scared of what not being able to find another house if this one was sold etc. Landlords have the upper hand because they know there is a shortage. No cause evictions has reduced opportunity to bargain for fairness.

HEALTH AND HOUSING QUALITY

Several comments link poor health outcomes to insecure and substandard housing. The lack of adequate housing is seen as both immoral and economically

Is access to affordable housing an issue in your community? ■ Yes ■ No



expensive. Respondents working in health care express concern over the negative impact of poor housing conditions on community well-being.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- I live in a below par house with my family because it's affordable. If I rocked the boat around the mold and rot in the house too much, I'm sure the landlord would just put it on the market. My husband and I are working hard to be in a position to buy a house, but with 20% deposit required, it means we have to continue living in an affordable unhealthy house, or move to a better place and forego the dream of home ownership.
- Although I'm lucky enough to be in a good housing situation currently, I know not everyone is, and I believe that safe, warm, dry & affordable housing is a human right that everyone should have access to.
- Everyone has the right to warm dry adequate and affordable homes. There

should be no one on the streets, living in cars or tents in this country.

GOVERNMENT PROJECTS AND POLICIES

There is some frustration with government projects and policies related to housing. A specific example is given of a Kainga Ora project in Christchurch that was slated to proceed but then halted without explanation. Additionally, concerns are raised about government charges and their impact on making housing less affordable despite tax cuts.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Govt polices favouring landlords haven't helped those who have to rent. Sadly I think it is getting harder and harder for young NZers to own their own home.
- Govt need to allow Kāinga ora to recommence their former building programme. Councils need to get on with changes that allow developers to build and new developments to provide churn in

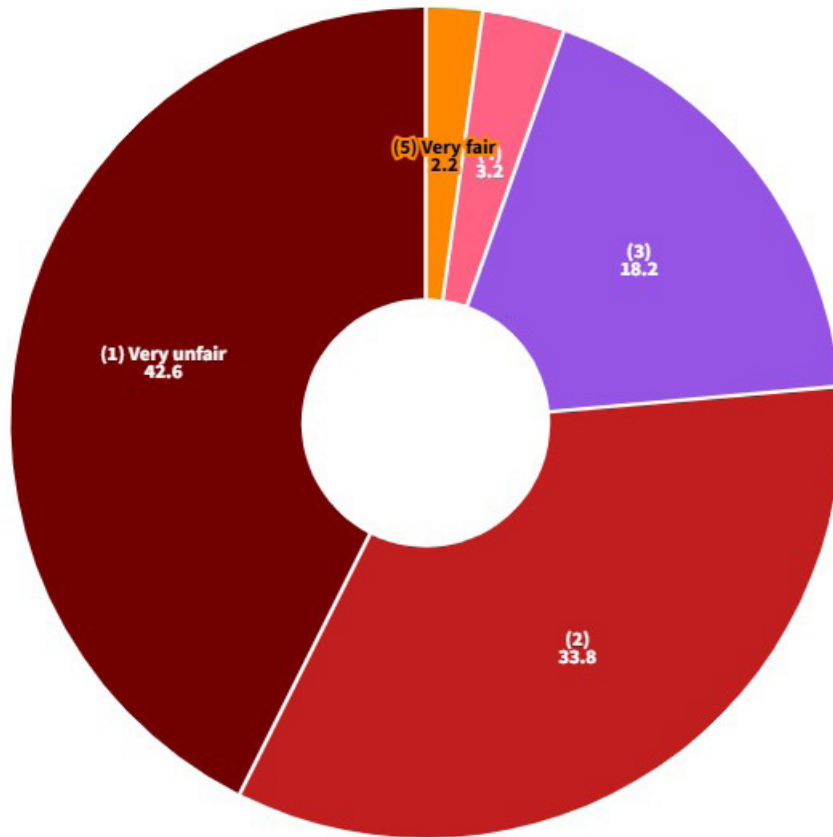
existing housing that allow 1st home buyers into the market.

- I feel that housing development in the area I live in isn't required at the growth it's happening at ... A lot are sitting empty. Targeting development to areas of the country in more need is important
- How many houses and apartments in NZ are sitting empty while there are people experiencing homelessness and overcrowded housing situations. Housing is very expensive in this country and it is a fundamental human right to have access to warm secure housing. Decades of tax policies in favour of making money out of residential real estate have exacerbated this issue.

In summary, the verbatim comments paint a picture of a housing crisis marked by unaffordability, investor-driven price hikes, inadequate government response, and significant social and health ramifications. Respondents are calling for systemic changes to ensure housing is accessible, affordable, and of good quality for all members of society.

SECTION 3: TAXATION

How fair is our tax system for working people? (1) Very unfair (2) (3) (4) (5) Very fair



The verbatim comments for Question 3 reflect varied perspectives on Aotearoa New Zealand's tax system. Several recurring themes have emerged from the responses.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX

Many respondents expressed strong support for the introduction of a capital gains tax. They believe it will promote fairness, reduce wealth hoarding by a few families, and shift the focus from housing as a business to housing as a home. Some suggest that the capital gains tax should be applied to investment properties while providing exemptions for primary residences. Overall there is a sense that a capital gains tax is overdue and essential for equity.

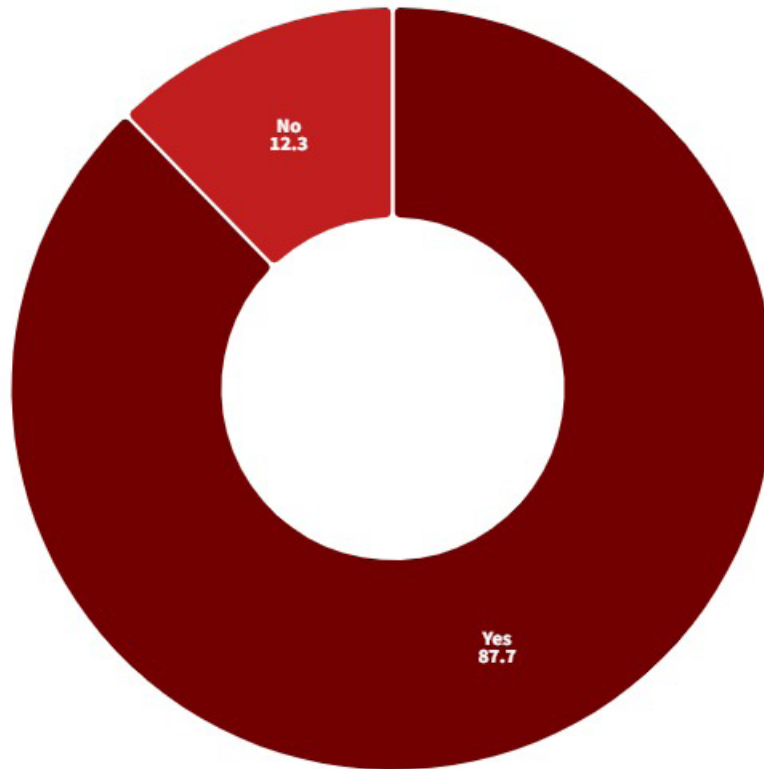
WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- A capital gains tax is essential to bring equity to the broader taxpayer base.

- Capital gains tax is way overdue. Income tax for the rich needs to be adjusted.
- Ridiculous. No capital gains or inheritance tax. Yet a third of my wages is gone in tax. Need a high tax free threshold for low earners too.
- Introducing capital gains and wealth taxes is vital for our future. Everyone must pay their fair share so we can all live in a more equitable society.
- Other countries have a capital gains tax and benefit hugely as a society. New Zealand needs to catch up.
- We need a capital gains tax for NZ. Not for family homes, but for investment properties.
- With no capital gains, inheritance or windfall taxes, NZ is a very unequal and unfair place to live. It is indefensible that a single person earning \$50-70k pa with dependent children is paying tax, while someone who inherits a property

Should a greater share of public services such as health and education be paid for by taxing non-income profit via a capital gains tax, wealth tax, or similar?

■ Yes ■ No



from wealthy parents can sell that property (often for \$1m+) and pay no tax whatsoever.

- We would be hit hard personally by a capital gains tax, but it is a fairer system than the current one.

FAIRNESS AND EQUITY

A significant number of comments highlight the need for a broader and fairer tax system. Respondents argue that the current system disproportionately benefits the wealthy, who can exploit loopholes to minimise taxes. There is a call for measures that ensure a fairer distribution of tax burdens, particularly focusing on creating a more equitable system for low and middle-income earners.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Rich people swapping houses, untaxed. Working waged people P.A.Y.E and G.S.T, again a two tiered system.
- A more progressive income tax system would help to address some inequities. An

initial income amount tax free and higher top tax rate.

- Trickle down tax breaks do nothing to help the majority and provide unfair advantage to a few.
- We are stealing from our children when we don't have a tax system that fairly covers off our basic infrastructure needs. We are living off infrastructure built, in some cases, 100 years ago. The utter failure to address this is the responsibility of successive governments, but it must end or we are staring down major catastrophic breakdown of key life essentials: hospitals, schools, housing, transport, ports, water, air quality, climate.
- We need to start from where we want to be as a nation. The gap between rich and poor needs to close. Social mobility has to be possible. Everyone needs a warm and dry home. Taxation should not fall as unevenly as it does now.

TAX BASE BROADENING

Several participants advocate for broadening the tax base to address the structural deficit and ensure sustainable funding for public services. They suggest that this could be done in a cost-neutral manner to make it more politically acceptable. Broadening the tax base is seen as critical for maintaining the quality and reliability of public services.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- A broader, fairer tax system is a critical element in fixing our structural deficit. I'm deeply concerned at how the public services we all rely on will continue to be funded without broadening our tax base.
- A broadening of the tax base is now overdue. I feel this can be done in a way that is overall cost neutral, which may make it more politically palatable.
- We need to find ways to ensure that wealthier people pay more, especially business owners who get tax breaks through their businesses that the average NZer is not able to get.
- The tax system should also figure in carbon and industrial pollution punitively at a rate that makes any business or farm quickly consider incentives to clean up their act. It's should also make sure that there is no stock buy back schemes happening, no off shoring of profits and sign global contracts with countries that will not do business with multinational companies that remove the wealth and therefore health of the workers in those countries.

INCENTIVISING PRODUCTIVE INVESTMENTS

A recurring sentiment is that the tax system should discourage unproductive property speculation and instead encourage investments that generate real economic value. Many believe that the current system fosters unproductive

economic activities, and reforms are needed to incentivise productive investments.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Not taxing capital is why were so unproductive - we incentivise property speculation and disincentivise genuine work and value add. Our economy is a housing market with work tacked on.
- A capital gain tax on investment properties is essential to encourage investment in productivity as well as to create greater fairness and shift perspective from housing as a business to housing as a home.
- A large portion of the economic activity in this country is made up of pointless and unproductive property speculation. Our tax system should be penalizing this behaviour and encouraging the creation of products and services of real value.

HIGHER INCOME TAX BRACKETS

Some respondents propose the introduction of higher income tax brackets for high earners. They argue that this would contribute to a fairer tax system and help redistribute wealth more effectively.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- The rich seem to get richer while those on a lower wage seem to sink lower. When a prime minister can boast about being okay because he is rich should be cause for questions asked on their suitability to govern.
- The very wealthy and esp. the mega rich need to pay more tax.
- The rich keep getting richer and paying less tax. Workers are struggling to survive - everyone deserves to earn enough money to live a good life.

PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE

A few comments emphasise the importance of protecting vulnerable groups, such as

retirees and families who might own a second home for supportive reasons. They suggest that any new tax measures should consider exemptions or protections to avoid undue burdens on these groups.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- A wealth tax and/or a capital gains tax with possible carve-outs where appropriate, would help address the inequities in our current tax system which punish wage earners and reward financial investment/speculation.
- Strongly support a CGT on shares, property other than the family home (that's still a big part of people's retirement savings), etc.

POLITICAL WILL AND IMPLEMENTATION

Some respondents mention the role of government in implementing tax changes. They believe that the current Government could enact fairer tax laws if there is sufficient political will.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

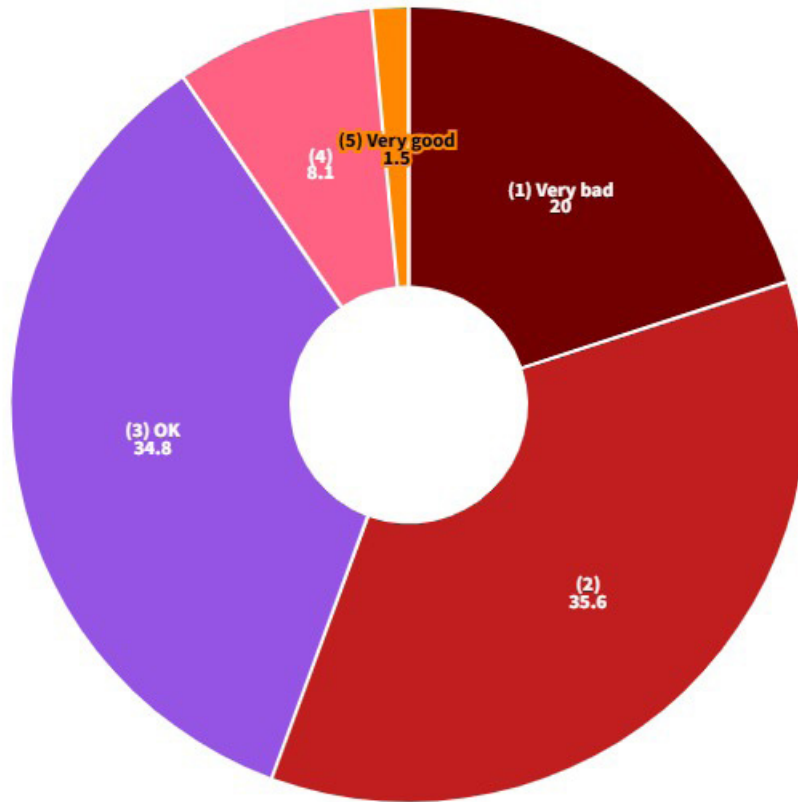
- The gap continues to increase, and the current government seems intent on giving wealthy people tax breaks, while punishing the poor for trying to access govt support.

- Tax cuts in a recession crazy and subsequent cuts to services only benefit those on high incomes who have XS money. Govt not here for ordinary people.
- Labour was cowardly in backing off a capital gains tax. There are ways to better structure our system to benefit everyone and this would help significantly.
- It's time for a capital gains tax - plus reverse the tax break given to landlords. None of which will happen under the current Govt.

Overall, the responses indicate a strong desire for a fairer, more equitable, and transparent tax system that discourages wealth concentration and promotes productive investments.

SECTION 4: HEALTH CARE

How do you rate Aotearoa New Zealand's public health system? (1) Very bad (2) (3) OK (4) (5) Very good



HIGH COSTS OF HEALTH CARE

One of the most prominent themes in the comments is the high cost associated with accessing health care services. Many respondents expressed frustration over the expensive fees for doctor visits, medications, and after-hours services, which make it difficult for individuals, especially those without community services cards, to afford necessary care. Many respondents identified themselves as health care workers with firsthand experiences.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- I forgo seeing a doctor when I might need to (haven't been in months) because GP visits are too expensive and my medication is not subsidised.
- Often myself and many people I know will not seek out healthcare at all - no doctors, no dentist - because it is too expensive and

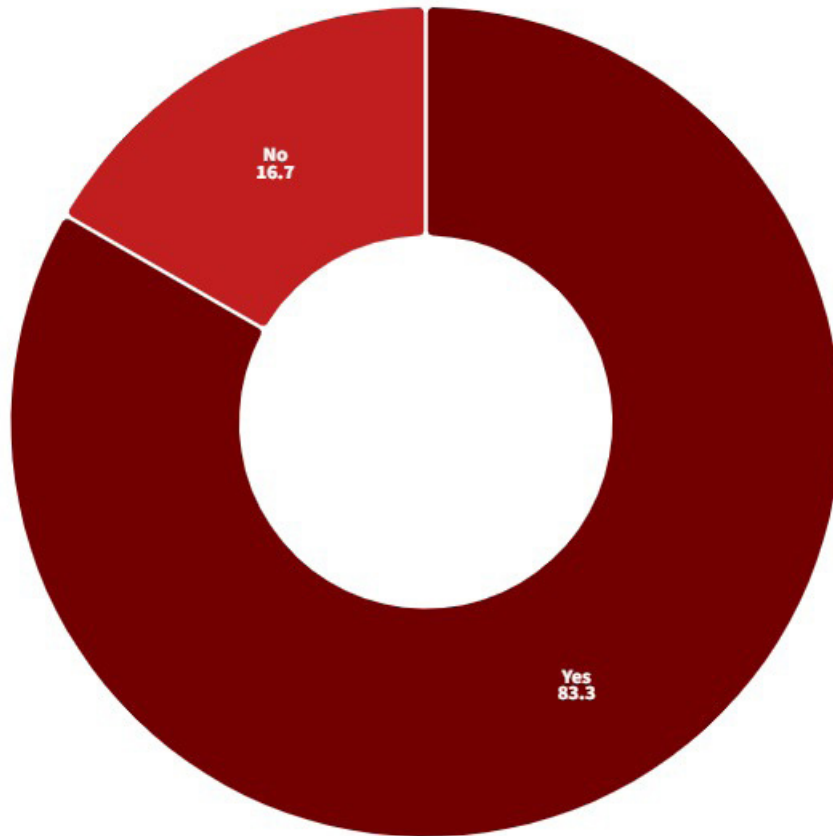
the support received is sub-par. It's just not worth it.

- I struggle to choose between a doctor's appointment and affording groceries every week. I can't afford to get my teeth fully sorted out and constantly live in a cycle of working hard to pay dental debt to try and sort out my dental issues, then being too physically sick to work, then getting in too much debt, then working to pay a dentist yet again.

LONG WAIT TIMES

Another significant issue highlighted by the respondents is the lengthy wait times for appointments with general practitioners (GPs) and specialists. Comments indicated frustrations with waiting weeks or even months to see a doctor, which can exacerbate health issues and reduce the quality of care received.

Is access to affordably health care an issue for you and/or your community? ■ Yes ■ No



WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Right now I have been waiting for 15 months on an important brain MRI. Many others are in an even much worse predicament.
- Cannot get into local GP. On waiting list for urgent cardiac care. Our health system is 3rd world.
- My sister lives in Brisbane and was treated the week after diagnosis, my niece in Levin had to wait 6 weeks before her treatment was even discussed with her. I am ashamed of our health care system.
- I just suffered a seizure and am waiting a year to get an MRI.

PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE HEALTH CARE

A recurring theme is the debate over public versus private health care. Many respondents expressed a strong preference for a publicly funded health system that is accessible to all, arguing that the move towards privatisation is detrimental and increases inequality. There

is a clear call for more investment in primary health care to ensure it remains universally available and free.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- A private Health Care system is NOT a good option for the majority of NZ. Our public Healthcare system used to be great (many years ago), it absolutely needs to become a priority again, for all age groups and incomes.
- The Government want us to take out private health insurance and at the same time that same private health insurance cost has shifted upwards so rapidly that what the Government is saying is moot.
- My family have had many interactions with the health system in Aotearoa New Zealand this past year. Some have had to be in the private healthcare system due to lack of access in the public system, which highlights the privileges money buys. We need to be increasing the money given to the public

health system, not putting arbitrary cuts in place across the whole network.

REGIONAL DISPARITIES

Comments also touched on regional disparities in health care access and infrastructure. There were specific calls for the urgent construction of new health facilities, such as the Dunedin hospital, to address the pressing needs in certain regions.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Unfair for Māori and other identifiable groups. Post code differences mean for example HB men get far worse urology treatment than Auckland men.
- Living in the regions makes access to healthcare harder and more expensive to travel to tertiary hospitals. My dad died last year because he could not get a helicopter or ambulance to CHCH in enough time to have clot removal surgery!
- The lack of access to medical services in regions e.g. East Cape is horrific.
- It is a lottery. I have had cancer and was meant to have a scan at 6 months. Now nearly a year. Weekend doctors now cost \$120 on a CS card in Kapiti. Wages have not moved.
- We are in a rural and are losing a lot of services due to lack of staff. This impacts on the remaining services like age care.
- Women can no longer have their babies at our local hospital. They have to go to a city that is about 1.5 hours travel away. This impacts families at a time when they should be celebrating. The costs are both financial and social.

EQUITY IN HEALTH CARE

Equity and fairness in health care delivery were highlighted as crucial factors. Respondents emphasised the need for

everyone, regardless of age or socioeconomic status, to receive the same level of care. There were concerns that certain groups, particularly the elderly, are being neglected.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- The current downgrading of the health system provides inequalities in society. The wealthy have access to private health, while those without have to wait for healthcare. Easy and cheap access to primary health care is important so that medical conditions are not exacerbated to the point where more expensive, longer, and complex management is needed.
- My whānau (moko and their parents) cannot afford to see the doctor, so I am paying for them to go but won't be able to continue to do this when I retire in a few months.
- We have a two-tier health system which is already morally wrong and contrary to NZ's egalitarian ideals and is not sound long term policy and we have to work hard to make sure it doesn't get worse.

PUBLIC SENTIMENT AND POLITICAL ACCOUNTABILITY

There is a strong sentiment that the current health care policies are failing the public. Many comments reflect a lack of trust in the political system, with calls for politicians to prioritise the health care needs of the population over profit-driven motives. The overarching desire is for a fair, quality, and accessible health system that serves as a measure of social success and political competence.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

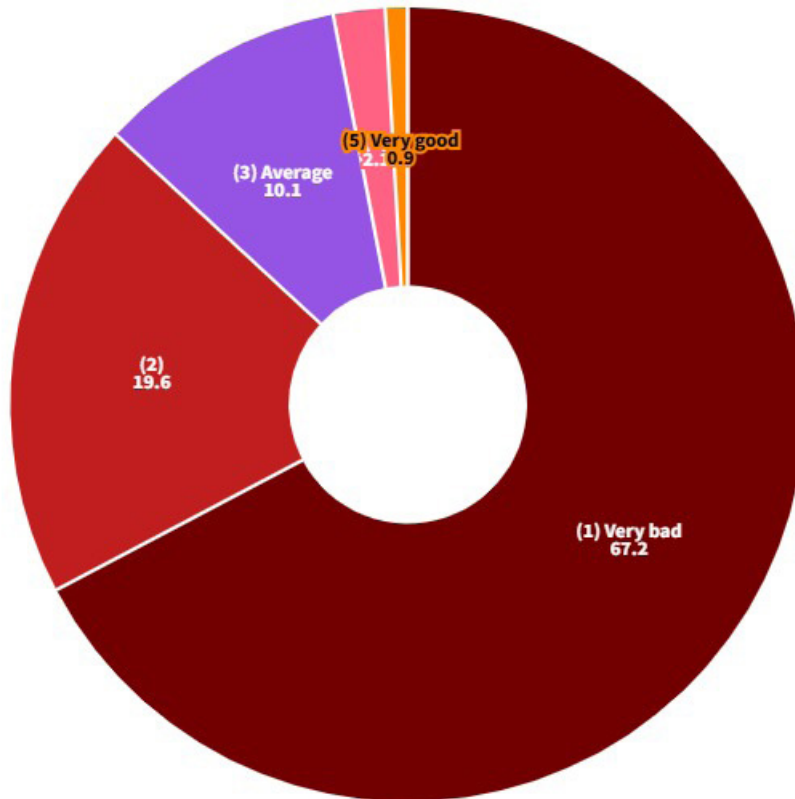
- This Government appears to have either no interest in, or understanding of, the relationship between working conditions, long term health and overloading of the NZ health system.

- The wait lists are too long. Our health staff are over worked and under paid and our hospitals are under funded. This govt. has further eroded our health system.
- Greater investment in public health is desperately needed.
- Our health care is overstretched and for many years it has been hugely under resourced. This current Govt doesn't appear to care that the public system is failing.

These key themes collectively highlight the critical areas of concern for the public regarding the health care system in Aotearoa New Zealand and underscore the need for systemic reforms to address these issues.

SECTION 5: GOVERNMENT AND LEADERSHIP

How do you rate the performance of the Government? (1) Very bad (2) (3) Average (4) (5) Very good



The responses to question 5 of the survey, which asked for further comments about the performance of the Government or its leaders, reveal several recurring themes. The comments reflect a range of sentiments, from deep dissatisfaction to specific criticisms of policies and leadership.

Frequent examples used include increased division based on race and income, and economic and health system failure with the cancellation of the Dunedin hospital build and the interisland ferries being regularly cited as representative of poor decision making.

DISSATISFACTION WITH GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

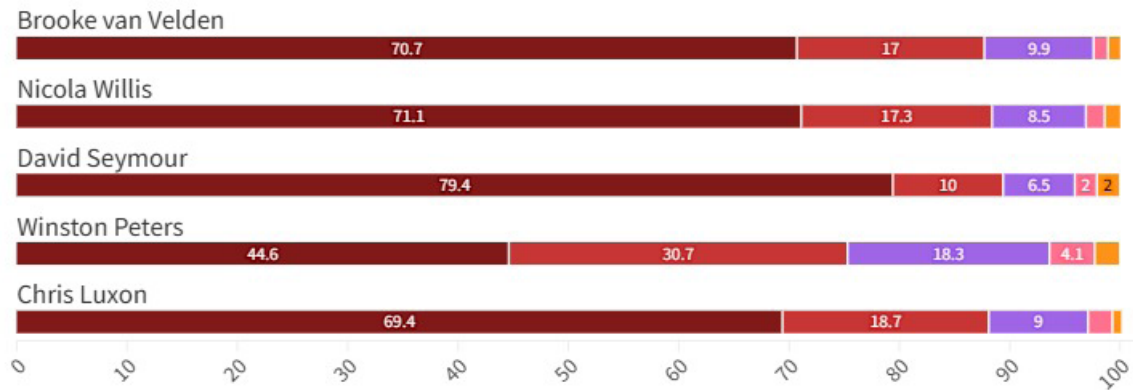
Many respondents expressed a strong sense of dissatisfaction with the overall performance of the current Government. Words like “ineptitude,” “cronyism,” and “train wreck”

were used to describe the Government’s actions and decisions. There is a pervasive sentiment that the Government has failed to serve the interests of the general population.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- They live in a world of blame, excuse and denial.
- Have created far more division in this country than the previous government. Not creating the conditions for the country to thrive and actively alienating professionals.
- The Government is trying to rebuild the economy from the top of the pyramid, and not build a solid foundation first. If they want to succeed, look at history. They are making the same mistakes that have been made before. Look back at the successes, and copy them.
- This is the worst government I have experienced. We don’t have government for

How do you rate the performance of... (1) Very bad (2) (3) Average (4) (5) Very good



the people we have pay for play politicians dancing to the tune of their donors. Our rights and environment protections are being stripped. I am afraid for the future for my children.

- The government has gone too hard with public servant cuts and through the reserve bank increasing interest rates. this is reflected in the weekly bankruptcies and lower company returns. This in turn will decrease the tax take for the government. Govt should never have given tax breaks when they had to borrow money to pay for the running of the country.
- The current government is the worst government since the Muldoon era. They are doing damage to our public services and social cohesion which will go on long after they've been voted out. The lack of investment in infrastructure which is sustainable and sensible is disappointing - the ferries being the most obvious failure.
- Chaotic, uninspiring, harmful, and apparently motivated by profits for their donors - not working for ordinary people at all.

PERCEPTION OF CORRUPTION AND FAVOURITISM

A significant number of comments highlighted concerns about corruption within the Government. Respondents mentioned "conflicts of interest," and "corruption on display" to describe their views. There is a

belief that the Government favours wealthy individuals and campaign donors, leading to policies that benefit the rich at the expense of the broader population.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- The current government is a government for the wealthy. There is no or little empathy for those who are the weakest in society. The three leaders mentioned are either socially and financially divorced from the average New Zealander, or have been in parliament too long.
- Not putting what is best for nz(ie ferries). Doing a lot of good for a few instead of most good for most people.
- I have no doubt there are competent and well-intended ministers in the coalition government but the policy agenda is completely dominated by minority interests. Significantly: an austerity programme from the Min of Finance; the ideological obsessions of the two minor coalition parties - eg ACT and neoliberalism, NZF and the interests of their donors.
- This is a government of the rich for the rich. Workers rights and conditions are being decimated to give tax relief to the wealthy. Environmental protections are being slashed to pave the way for government donors to pillage the land for private profit, leaving the taxpayers to clear up the mess.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL IMPACT

Comments frequently touched on the negative economic and social impact of government policies. Issues such as austerity, tax cuts, and economic management were mentioned, with respondents noting that these policies have harmed the working class and created long-term damage. Phrases like “generational harm” and “broken kiwis for decades” underscore the perceived severity of these impacts.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- Only interested in privatisation of public services and no true concern for welfare of NZ citizens or public services
- They are all about exploitation of people for profit. Obsessed with money, no matter the social costs.
- Their short-term solutions to solving problem is worrying. Cancelling major projects which can future proof this country is not the solution to the monetary problems. Now is the time to invest in these projects. Get people earning wages to generate taxable income instead of paying out unemployment benefits.
- I dislike their neo-liberal ideology, the undermining of all things Maori, the destruction of the public service, the riding roughshod over public opinion re smoking, guns, boot camps etc.
- Absolute train wreck leaving their ideological economic and social carnage all over Aotearoa. Damage like this will echo through the generations of broken kiwis for decades to come.

LACK OF REPRESENTATION

There is a recurring theme of inadequate parliamentary representation of the working class and marginalised groups. Respondents asserted that the Government does not represent their interests and that there is a need for political parties to advocate more

strongly for workers. The lack of balanced representation is seen as a significant issue.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

- The government isn't being transparent about performance. Has far less engagement with media which reduces their accountability.
- This government is not looking after the people and its policies are making the recession, unemployment and the cost of living crisis worse. What a terrible legacy.
- The policies and legislation they are putting forward are clearly not in the NZ public's best interest, but are designed to benefit a privileged few. Cost of living pressures have not been eased for the majority who needed it most by this coalition.
- Not listening to the public.
- This government is demonstrating zero respect for working people and their unions. They hold us in contempt. The feeling is mutual.

CRITICISM OF LEADERSHIP

Specific criticism was directed at the leadership of the Government. Comments described the Prime Minister and other leaders as “transactional,” “self-serving,” and “divisive.” There is a strong sentiment that the leadership lacks integrity and is driven by personal or ideological agendas rather than the public good.

The verbatim comments from the survey reveal a deep and multifaceted dissatisfaction with the current Government. The key themes include a perceived failure in governance, corruption, negative economic and social impacts, lack of representation, and leadership criticism.

These insights show the majority of respondents deeply feel that Aotearoa New Zealand is on the wrong track and urgent change is required to improve the lives of working people.