

Research Note on Experiences and Attitudes Going Forward with and Beyond Omicron (March)¹

Charles Crothers

School of Social Sciences

Auckland University of Technology

Abstract

The attitudinal base of support for the current Covid strategy in NZ is assessed using current and recent survey data – covering attitudes and reports in relation to vaccination, Covid-management issues and the various feelings and views in coping with Covid Delta and then Omicron. Evidence is compiled, too, on attitudes towards any resetting of New Zealand’s Covid-19 regime and possible pivots to alternatives. As NZ develops its way of dealing with the Omicron variant, the attitudinal and behavioural concomitants can be traced based on longitudinal surveys.

Keywords: New Zealand, Auckland, Covid-19, Omicron, lockdowns. Border, mask-wearing, social distancing, stress, economic difficulties, surveys

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¹ Material is updated until the 13th March, with earlier material covered in Crothers (2021a).

With the second anniversary of the advent of Covid now having passed the relevant research landscape has reached some maturity of development. Many of the outpouring of studies in the first lockdown wave have not been continued. However, Some Stats NZ and other regular survey programmes now have data which allow comparison of Covid with earlier periods: these are not covered here. Covid related questions are often now included in other regular surveys. And research carried out on earlier manifestations of Covid is now beginning to be reported. For relevant data from a Pew Survey see Crothers, 2021b).

1 Recent History of Covid Management Rules

[Derived from <https://www.nzdoctor.co.nz/timeline-coronavirus>]

15 October 2021: prefiguring that alert level system would soon be dropped in favour of a "traffic light" system, officially called the [COVID-19 Protection Framework](#) or the "traffic light system". This three-tier system uses vaccination rates to determine the level of restrictions needed. The three levels are Red when the health care system is at risk of being overloaded, Orange when there is pressure on the health care system, and Green when hospitalisation levels are manageable

3 December: Auckland and areas with low vaccination were started on the Red setting while the rest of the country starts on the Orange setting.

15 December: Auckland border lifted: Most people can travel out of Auckland if they are double vaccinated or have a recent negative test result. COVID-19 Protection Framework level change: Northland, currently at red, joins the rest of the country at orange at 11.59 tonight.

23 January: COVID-19 Protection Framework level change: All of New Zealand goes to red, from orange. New mask rules: Medical type masks become mandatory for workers subject to compulsory vaccination and in a public facing role. Masks worn by the public in places where they are mandatory can no longer be a T-shirt, bandana or scarf.

15 February: moves to phase 2: of the Government's Omicron plan. Self-isolation period reduces to 10 days. Household contacts of cases must self-isolate for 10 days and no more than the 10 days' recovery period of cases in their household unless the contact becomes a case. The self-isolation period for other close contacts reduces to seven days, from 10. "Critical worker" close contacts who can't work from home can keep going to work under the "close contact exemption scheme" if they are asymptomatic, vaccinated and return a daily negative rapid antigen test. Notification of cases and contact tracing will be based more on text messaging and online form-filling, rather than on phone conversations.

24 February: Phase 3 of the Government's Omicron plan comes into effect - only household contacts will be counted as contacts, RAT-detected cases will self-notify their result to the official register, cases will be asked to notify their own contacts, and supervised RAT tests is being introduced at Auckland general practices and urgent care clinics.

27 February: Border: fully vaccinated New Zealanders returning to New Zealand are subject to self-isolation, not MIQ.

2 March: Border rules: fully vaccinated New Zealanders and other eligible people entering from Australia do not have to isolate. They must return a negative pre-departure test result. They must also return negative RAT results on arrival and on day 5/6; those who are COVID-positive must report the results and self-isolate.

4 March: border: fully vaccinated New Zealanders and others with Immigration eligibility can enter from anywhere and do not need to isolate.

8 March: COVID-positive critical workers can return to work in some circumstances.

9 March: Isolation: Government announces case and household contact isolation period to reduce to seven days.

2 Unobtrusive Measures

Besides survey data various 'big data' have been mobilised to help understand people's behaviours, often revealing patterns not directly intended by those carrying them out.

2.1 The Disinformation Project <https://www.tepunahamatatini.ac.nz/2021/11/09/mis-and-disinformation/>

Research by Auckland and Victoria University researchers carried out between August 17 to November 5 2021, analysed hundreds of millions of data points and found there was "a sharp increase in the popularity and intensity of Covid-19-specific disinformation and other forms of 'dangerous speech' and disinformation" over the 12 weeks of the Delta lockdown on Facebook, Telegram, Instagram, Twitter and other platforms (The project did note that anti-vaxxers also used more traditional channels, such as misinformation leaflets delivered to letterboxes)

2.2 Gross National Happiness

A measure of the New Zealand public's evaluative mood is derived from Twitter data, scaled between 0 (lowest) and 10 (highest), with 5 being neutral, thus neither happy nor unhappy. (Additionally, each tweet's underpinning emotions are analysed. Currently, a distinction is made between eight emotions: sadness, surprise, disgust, anticipation, fear, anger, trust, and joy. This data is not used here.) Happiness took a hit during 2020 lockdowns but is only very slightly dented in 2021. See also Morrison et al 2021.

Table 2-1: Gross National Happiness

Year	Month	Mean	Std. Deviation
2020	1	7.1591	.29702
	2	7.2581	.18007
	3	6.8063	.22995
	4	6.9976	.16676
	5	7.0391	.19377
	6	6.9952	.23487
	7	6.9511	.24827
	8	6.9519	.29256
	9	7.0243	.16973
	10	7.1696	.19651
	11	7.0937	.18640
	12	7.3393	.29289
2021	1	7.0396	.32456
	2	7.0865	.21568
	3	7.1571	.25145
	4	7.3233	.23301
	5	7.2711	.20348
	6	7.2276	.24220
	7	7.2064	.20910
	8	7.0850	.23451
	9	7.1640	.24034
	10	7.1284	.25922
	11	7.2026	.22617
	12	7.2563	.26849
2022	1	7.0913	.23507
	2	7.2581	.18007

Source: Stats NZ

2.2 Social Listening

Kate MacNamara Covid 19 'social listening reports': Why won't Government release them? 5 Mar, 2022 <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/covid-19-social-listening-reports-why-wont-government-release-them/H2E6TIALUTXR6NUYGLUFWGYNOY/>

The Government has paid an estimated \$200,000 for a long-running series of "social media listening reports", aimed at gathering information on Kiwis' online posts and conversations relating to Covid-19 rules and policies. However, to date, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (DPMC), has refused to make the reports public, along with the scope of the "listening", its methodology, and the themes it has encompassed. Fifty-two such reports were commissioned in the past full financial year, one per week, at a rough cost per report of \$2,500, and continued since. The work has been conducted by the New York head-quartered company Annalect, which has no New Zealand office. The "top three themes" of the reports were: travel, alert levels and vaccines.

2.4 Locations/ Mobility

Omicron has hobbled NZ's movements - except to the supermarket Chris Hyde, Mar 09 2022 Google Movements data based on smartphone location data ²shows the variant has been far from mild in its effects on central cities around the country, particularly in the North Island, as more people opt to, or are forced to, work from home. A decline in CBD traffic has been noted around NZ in recent weeks, and the data shows few regions have been spared. New Zealanders spent 11% more time at home than normal, and 11% less time at work in the five weeks to March 4. Supermarkets and pharmacies time was up on normal by 15%. Public transport use is (ever since Delta was first detected in Auckland), still down 50%. The number of people going to work is at pre-pandemic levels (up 1%), though time spent at home is also up 6%, suggesting some are sheltering in place or isolating. The amount of time Kiwis are spending at home during the Omicron outbreak is up 11% on normal, but it could be argued that number is not as definitive as expected, given there are now more than 200,000 active community cases isolating. Park visits across the country are down 2% in the past five weeks.

3 Polls

3.1a The Protestors

The convoy of protestors has attracted much attention and even some studies. Journalistic accounts of its organisation are given in various articles (especially Stuff). "The platform" engaged Farrar's *Curia Research* to conduct a survey <https://theplatform.kiwi/> 21st Feb' Curia Anti-mandate. 312 were interviewed [maximum sampling error is plus or minus 4.6 per cent] out of an estimated 1000 on Sat 19th & sun 20th, ^{with} an estimated response-rate of c95%.

While 64.4 per cent of protestors were European, very close to its share of the population, there were almost twice as many Māori respondents compared to their share of the adult population. About 27.2 per cent of protestors were Māori, while 14.8 per cent of the adult population is Māori. Asian and Pacific Island ethnicities were under-represented at 4.2 per cent and 2.6 per cent. There were relatively few protestors from rural areas and Auckland,

² Google's baseline of "normal" is the five weeks from January 3 to February 6, 2020, before NZ, and much of the world, had recorded a single Covid case.

about 7.7 per cent and 17 per cent respectively. About 8.7 per cent of protesters were from Wellington and 6.7 per cent were from Christchurch, close to its share of the population. And 41 per cent of protesters at Parliament are from provincial cities – almost twice as high as their share of the population.

Labour and National voters were underrepresented at 29.8 per cent and 15.9 per cent. The most over-represented were the Māori Party at 3.6 per cent - three times greater supporter amongst protesters than in the 2020 election and the Greens who have twice as much at 15.9 per cent. ACT had 1.6 times as much support with 11.9 per cent. Other significant parties voted for were New Conservative at 8.7 per cent, and Advance New Zealand at 6 per cent.

To ascertain rationales for attendance open ended responses were sought and the top 10 listed: these concerned various mixes of Freedom of choice, mandate and vaccination. But did not seem to be successful in revealing motivations.

Table 3-1 Characteristics of Occupiers

Residence	%s
Provincial City	41
Town	19
Auckland	17
Wellington	9
Christchurch	7
Rural	8
Age	
18-40	41
41-60	47
60 +	13
Assumed gender	
Female	55
Ethnicity	
European	64
Maori	27
Asian	4
Pacific Island	3
2020 Voting	
Labour	30
Green	16
Act	12
National	16
MP	4
New Conservatives	9
Advance NZ	8
Other	7
Did not vote	19
Vax status	
Unvaxed	77
1 vax	5
2 vax	14
3 vax	3

3.1b Support for Protest: Horizon

(Luke Malpass Parliament protest Feb 18 2022)

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/127808790/parliament-protest-new-poll-shows-30-per-cent-of-kiwis-support-antimandate-protest>

A mid-February snap poll showed 30 per cent of Kiwis support anti-mandate protest. The poll was self-commissioned as part of Horizon's public interest programme, that sees it conduct polls several times per year. Horizon also conducted most of the Ministry of

Health's vaccine survey work through 2021. The snap poll was in the field from Wednesday afternoon until noon on Thursday. It sampled 520 people in Horizon's online polling panel and has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 per cent. Results are weighted by age, gender, personal income, educational level, ethnicity and party voted for at the 2020 general election.

30 per cent of New Zealand supports the protest, while 61 per cent oppose the occupiers and 9 per cent don't know. The poll did not ask respondents why they supported the protest.

It found that support or opposition for the vaccine mandates was entrenched, with 64 per cent of the country supporting the mandates, 28 per cent opposing and 7 per cent saying they were neither for nor against. Only 1 per cent didn't know. Late last year, another survey found support at 74 per cent and opposition at 20 per cent. It appears from similar response-rates that opposition to the mandates at 28 per cent and support for the protest at 30 per cent might be related.

Both support for mandates and opposition to the protest run along age lines, with older respondents being most likely to support the vaccine mandate and most likely to oppose the protesters in Parliament. Of all the age groups, those between 35-44 were the most likely to support the protest with 51 per cent opposed compared to 44 per cent in favour. Support for mandates peaks at 79% among those aged 75 or older and 74% among 55 to 64 year-olds. Opposition to mandates is highest among those aged 34-44 years (43%). Of this age group 53% support mandates.

3.2 Colmar Brunton

In the 1News Colmar-Brunton Poll March 5-8, 2022 (n=1000) Support for mandates³ drops to 60% The poll showed that since November support for mandates has dropped by 14 percentage points. In the November 2021 poll, 74% of people said they supported the mandates, and 20% were opposed. In this poll, 60% supported the mandates and 32% opposed. Those more likely than average to support mandatory vaccinations for certain workforces include Labour Party supporters, Green Party supporters, those aged 70 or older and Asian New Zealanders. People more likely than average to oppose include ACT Party supporters, National Party supporters, women aged 18 to 34, Waikato residents and NZ Europeans.

A slight majority of Kiwis support the way the Government handled the anti-mandate protest at Parliament, A slight majority (46%) said they approved, 43% said they disapproved and 11% didn't know. .More likely than average to support it were Labour supporters, men aged 18 to 34 and Wellington region residents. Those more likely to disapprove were ACT Party and National Party supporters, women aged 18 to 34 and Waikato residents.

The majority of Kiwis want New Zealand's borders to open now to international tourists and visitors, as long as they test negative for Covid on arrival, the latest 1News Kantar Public Poll

³ *"In recent months the Government has introduced mandatory vaccinations for certain public-facing workforces, including teachers and health care workers. Do you support or oppose the Government's move to mandate vaccinations in certain workforces?" Do you approve or disapprove the way in which the Government handled the recent protest at Parliament?"*

has revealed.⁴ There was 75% who answered yes, 20% who said no, and 5% either did not know or refused to answer. The groups of people who were more likely than average (75%) to want the borders to open up were people with annual incomes of more than \$100,000 (87%), ACT and National supporters (86%), and men (78%). The people who were more likely than average (20%) to not want it to open up to tourists and visitors were Northland residents (38%), Pacific Peoples (32%), Māori (29%), people with annual household incomes up to \$30,000 (27%), women aged 35-54 (26%) and Labour supporters (26%).

When voters were asked how they felt the economy would be in 12 months' time, 28 per cent said better, up six points from January, while 18 per cent said the same, down 11, and 53 per cent said worse, up 4 per cent. Confidence in the economy has dropped to its lowest rate since 2008.

3.3 Ipsos Poll Bridie Witton (2022) Poll Half of New Zealanders think Covid-19 rules strike the right balance. Feb 22 2022

An IPSOS poll was conducted online between February 4 and 11 using a sample of 1004 people. Fully half of New Zealanders think the Government's red traffic light restrictions designed to slow the pace of infections and keep the health system functioning strike the right balance between restriction and freedom. The remainder were evenly split: a quarter of respondents said the Covid-19 red traffic light restrictions were too tight while one in four wanted stricter rules. The research found the number of people angry about restrictions has grown – 12 per cent of poll participants said they were angry about the restrictions on their freedom – a jump from 6 per cent of participants in February last year. The figure sat at 9 per cent during the first lockdown in 2020. Attitudes towards restrictions are divided over ethnic and regional lines: Asian people are much more likely to think there should be more restrictions ... people in Canterbury think there should be less. Aucklanders are far less likely to think New Zealanders should loosen restrictions. Those polled who think restrictions are too tight, said they wanted borders to open, a full return to normal, and the removal of masks in schools, hospitality limits and vaccine mandates.

Ratings of the Government's performance in managing the virus has dropped to 63 per cent positive – a figure which sat between 80 per cent to 90 per cent over the past two years. People were also less likely to leave the house without a face mask. Only 44 per cent of respondents felt comfortable leaving home without a mask, compared to 83 per cent in February 2021. See also time-series below. The Government has released under an OIA request Ipsos tracking surveys re vaccination carried out weekly through May 2021.

3.4 Newshub-Reid Research poll: Nearly 40 pct of people think National's Christopher Luxon is doing a good job 08/02/2022

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/politics/2022/02/newshub-reid-research-poll-nearly-40-pct-of-people-think-national-s-christopher-luxon-is-doing-a-good-job.html>

⁴ Those polled were asked, "Do you think New Zealand should open up our borders to overseas tourists and visitors now, as long as they test negative on arrival?"

The Newshub-Reid Research poll was conducted between 22 January – 4 February 2022 with a margin of error of 3.1 percent. When asked, do you think the Government has prepared well enough for an Omicron outbreak? 44.5 percent said yes while 44.3 percent said no.

3.5 NZ Direction Approval (2007-2022: Wikipedia)

Approval of the direction in which NZ is heading is a blunt measure of satisfaction with government handling of all matters, but including Covid. Wikipedia conveniently aggregates this data⁵ and Curia data has been added below. Both time series show a sinking approval rating. Curia respondent rating on handling of Covid and health Labour was seen as having twice the competence of National.

Table 3-5 Approval of NZ Direction (Source: Wikipedia)

Date ^[a]	Polling organisation	Sample size	Right direction	Wrong direction	Do not know	Lead
31 Jan – 27 Feb 2022	Roy Morgan	963	42.5	47.5	10	6.5
4–30 Jan 2022	Roy Morgan	951	48.5	42	9.5	6.5
22 Nov – 19 Dec 2021	Roy Morgan	967	42.5	44.5	13	2
25 Oct – 21 Nov 2021	Roy Morgan	951	46	44.5	9.5	1.5
1–8 Nov 2021	Taxpayers' Union–Curia	1,000	44	45	11	1
27 Sep – 24 Oct 2021	Roy Morgan	929	48	38.5	13.5	9.5
28 Sep – 5 Oct	Talbot Mills	1,200	63	30	7	33
30 Aug – 26 Sep 2021	Roy Morgan	940	57	32	11	25
26 Jul – 22 Aug 2021	Roy Morgan	940	52.5	37.5	10	15
28 Jun – 25 Jul 2021	Roy Morgan	945	55.5	34.5	10	21

⁵ Electors were asked: “Generally speaking, do you feel that things in NZ are heading in the right direction or would you say things are seriously heading in the wrong direction?” #Roy Morgan GCR = Roy Morgan Government Confidence Rating (The Roy Morgan GCR is 100 plus the difference between the percentage of Kiwis who say the country is “heading in the right direction” and the percentage who say the country is “seriously heading in the wrong direction”).

Date ^{La}	Polling organisation	Sample size	Right direction	Wrong direction	Do not know	Lead
31 May – 27 Jun 2021	Roy Morgan	927	57	33	10	24
26 Apr – 23 May 2021	Roy Morgan	932	62.5	28.5	9	34
29 Mar – 25 Apr 2021	Roy Morgan	933	62.5	26.5	11	36
21–28 Mar 2021	Roy Morgan	924	61.5	26	12.5	35.5
25 Jan – 21 Feb 2021	Roy Morgan	924	69.5	20	10.5	49.5
4–24 Jan 2021	Roy Morgan	937	71.5	18.5	10	53
23 Nov – 13 Dec 2020	Roy Morgan	923	71.5	18	10.5	53.5
26 Oct – 22 Nov 2020	Roy Morgan	939	69.5	20	10.5	49.5

Table 3-6 Taxpayers Union Curia Poll: Country direction over time

Mth/Year	Right	Wrong
Jan 21	71	19
Feb	70	21
Mar	62	27
Apr	63	28
May	62	29
June	58	33
July	55	35
Aug	52	38
Sept	51	28
Oct	41	36
Nov	32	41
Dec	51	39
Jan 22	42	38
Feb	41	41

4 Polls

4.1 Research NZ: Stopped/Reduced activity n=1001 3-8 Feb

A Research NZ poll found that the population was divided into those who were avoiding a few activities and those avoiding many – especially eating out but also attending large events.

Table 4-1 Avoiding Activities bc omicron.	Total	Auckl and	Well	Rest of NI	Canterbury	Rest of SI	18-34	35-54	55+

Attending events where there are large numbers of people	54	61	55	51	52	46	58	59	47
Eating out at restaurants/cafes	54	59	48	52	58	52	58	57	48
Using public facilities (e.g. libraries/pools)	50	60	45	48	49	40	60	52	41
Travelling on Pub transport	37	45	43	31	34	29	49	37	26
Using Health facilities (e.g. dentists/doctor)	29	37	19	30	20	21	32	30	24
Going to the supermarket	28	30	27	28	26	32	29	30	28
Going into work	20	28	23	16	14	12	33	21	7
No. activities stopped									
Less than 3	47								
3	13								
More than 3	40								

Source: Research NZ

4.2 Perceptive Jan 22 and February 13

Perceptive carried out further rounds of their survey in late January and then mid-February and late-February, and some of their material from the end of 2021 is also relevant.

New Zealanders remain concerned about the change in economic conditions as a result of COVID-19 (53%) as well as a forthcoming resurgence of the virus (50%).

General approval on red alert level: Most New Zealanders agree with the decision to place New Zealand in the red setting (51%), with an equal divide between the remaining Kiwis who believe the decision is too strict (21%) or not strict enough (20%). Perceptions that *the virus will continue to mutate, and we just have to live with it* (85%) and *the Omicron variant is not as bad as the Delta variant* (55%) are the leading reasons behind lower concern among unconcerned Kiwis.

Intent towards getting the booster jab is high: Following the months after the push to get New Zealanders vaccinated, almost two-thirds of all New Zealanders over the age of 18 years old are eligible for their booster jab (64%). Intent towards getting the booster jab is high, encompassing a strong majority of the eligible New Zealand population who are over 18 years old (84%) – higher among 65+ year olds (89%).

Perceptive have added a January and 2 February rounds of their ongoing survey. There was also a December round. Given the Covid situation and its regulation have been different in Auckland the overall NZX and Auckland d specific responses have been separated. In general Auckland respondents are very slightly more concerned than for NZ as a whole. Concern has nudged up from mid-February to late-February.

Table 4-2	NZ	NZ	NZ	NZ	Auckld	Auckld	Auckld	Auckld
	Dec		Feb 13		Dec			Feb 22
Labels	2021	Jan 22		Feb 22	2021	Jan 22	Feb 13	
n	1007	985	1044	1016	392	363	395	369
month	12	1	2	2	12	1	2	2
date	4	28	13	22	4	28	13	22
Feeling	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Loving	53	56	53	51	53	53	51	50
Happy	55	55	56	52	54	53	57	51
Positive	54	53	55	51	54	52	54	52

Content	44	51	48	47	43	47	47	44
Stressed	25	25	25	27	29	25	25	26
Joyful	37	40	37	35	35	39	37	36
Scared	13	10	9	8	19	12	10	8
Sad	17	15	16	15	21	18	15	15
Negative	19	17	17	16	26	20	19	16
Angry	16	13	13	13	21	16	13	13

Concern (high)	47	41	38	38	54	45	48	45
Negative impact..	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Other NZers H&WB	70	73	72	74	77	73	72	78
Globally Health & WB	79	81	81	81	83	80	81	82
International businesses	78	79	79	81	84	79	79	83
Local businesses	78	81	82	86	88	82	85	86
My children's education	31	25	28	27	44	34	37	32
My friends/families health	51	50	49	54	60	53	54	59
My ff mental health	54	52	51	54	66	58	60	59
My health	43	40	43	44	53	44	51	49
My mental health	45	43	44	46	58	51	52	52
My/your family's financial situation	46	45	45	49	57	50	52	54
The global economy	81	82	83	85	85	82	84	83
NZ economy	77	80	82	85	84	79	84	86
NZ healthcare system	76	79	78	81	82	77	78	80
INFORMATION: Government	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
I receive a lot but this is necessary	59	53	57	56	59	53	62	57
I receive a lot of information & feeling overwhelmed	28	29	27	25	27	28	25	24
I feel I'm not getting enough	9	13	11	13	11	14	9	13
I am not getting any and prefer this	4	5	5	6	4	6	4	6
Media	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
I receive a lot but this is necessary	54	46	49	47	58	51	56	52
I receive a lot of information & feeling overwhelmed	34	39	37	37	30	34	34	34
I feel I'm not getting enough	7	9	9	9	8	9	7	8
I am not getting any and prefer this	5	6	5	7	4	5	4	7
Government Performance	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Yes: the government doing as much as it can	51	43	48	45	51	42	48	40
Yes but should do more	28	31	31	29	28	32	31	36
No, not enough	15	20	29	17	17	20	15	18
Don't know/prefer not answer	6	6	17	7	4	7	6	5

In addition, Perceptive includes results from further questions or analyses not conveyed by its tracked dash-board.

January

Business decision-makers are more concerned about COVID-19 compared to the rest of New Zealand (47% vs. 33%)

- Business decision-makers are **most** concerned about economic conditions (53%) and are significantly more likely to be concerned about unemployment, job security or finding a new job (36%).
- Compared to non-decision-makers, they are **more** concerned about the pandemic negatively impacting their friends/family's mental and physical health (47% vs 30%) and their friends/family's financial situation (37% vs 20%).
- COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting the mental health of decision-makers (33% vs 17% of non-decision-makers).
- 2 in 5 indicate it is impacting both their mental and physical health (39%).

Concern towards Omicron

When asked about how concerned they were about this new variant entering New Zealand, Kiwis responded with:

- 73% concerned or very concerned.
- 17% neutral.
- 11% not at all concerned or not concerned.

Of those who said they were not at all concerned or not concerned, 70% say they are not concerned because the virus will continue to mutate and we have to learn to live with it, while 30% think it won't be as bad as the Delta variant.

January

- Perceptions that *the virus will continue to mutate, and we just have to live with it* (85%) and *the Omicron variant is not as bad as the Delta variant* (55%) are the leading reasons behind lower concern among unconcerned Kiwis.

New Zealanders remain concerned about:

- The change in economic conditions as a result of COVID-19 (53%).
- A forthcoming resurgence of the virus (50%).

Most New Zealanders agree with the decision to place New Zealand in the red setting (51%), with an equal divide between the remaining Kiwis who believe the decision is too strict (21%) or not strict enough (20%).

Following the months after the push to get New Zealanders vaccinated, almost two-thirds of all New Zealanders over the age of 18 years old were eligible for their booster jab (64%).

- Intent towards getting the booster jab is high, encompassing a strong majority of the eligible New Zealand population who are over 18 years old (84%) – higher among 65+ year olds (89%).
- The remaining population are either unsure or not intending on getting the booster jab (including unvaccinated New Zealanders).

With the Pfizer vaccine now approved for 5-11 year olds, the majority of parents have now either had their children vaccinated or are intending to.

This compliance increased among parents of older children.

- 5-7 year olds: 80%
- 8-9 year olds: 83%
- 10-11 year olds: 89%
- 12-17 years old: 97%

On Wednesday the 24th of November, the New Zealand Government announced its plan to reconnect New Zealand. From 11.59pm on the 16th of January, fully vaccinated New Zealanders and other eligible travellers to travel to New Zealand from Australia without staying in MIQ.

Overall, nearly 3 in 4 Kiwis (74%) say this is the right decision, however, 34% of this group also say the decision should be reviewed closer to the time. Two-thirds agree that fully vaccinated New Zealanders should be able to self-isolate from home rather than in MIQ.

However, a quarter of New Zealanders disagree with the government's self-isolation strategy saying that the main reason is because they don't trust people to follow the rules and self-isolate at home (68%) and believe there is too much risk involved (57%). Twenty-nine per cent don't think the government will be able to mandate it properly either.

Less enthusiasm for New Zealanders to return from abroad and opening NZ to all fully vaccinated foreign nationals

From Sunday the 13th of February 2022 New Zealand will open to fully vaccinated NZ citizens, residence-class visa holders, and other eligible travellers but from all high risk countries.

- Overall, 52% of New Zealanders either agreed or strongly agreed with this decision. One quarter (25%) neither agreed nor disagreed, while 22% disagreed or strongly disagreed. *The New Zealand Government has announced that from the 30th of April 2022 New Zealand will open to all fully vaccinated foreign nationals (possibly staged by visa).*
- Agreement to fully re-open New Zealand in April 2022 is the lowest by comparison to the rest of the reconnecting New Zealand plan. Just under half of New Zealanders agree with this decision (47%). Twenty-nine per cent of Kiwis remain neutral (neither agreeing nor disagreeing), just under a quarter (24%) disagree or strongly disagree.

25 February

Vaccinated more concerned about Omicron than unvaccinated

- 69% of vaccinated New Zealanders are concerned about the Omicron outbreak. This level of concern significantly decreases to 24% among unvaccinated New Zealanders.
- Of those not concerned, 88% say their primary reason for not being concerned is *'the virus will continue to mutate, and we will have to live with it'* followed by *'the variant is not as deadly as Delta'* (47%).

Only 22% of New Zealanders fully support the Convoy 2022 Protest

- 44% of New Zealanders do not support the protests at all.
 - 27% do not support the protests but support their right to protest.
- Among those who entirely support the protests (22% of New Zealanders). Almost all state being against the mandates as their reason. Half are against vaccination requirements.

4.3 Ipsos

Besides its regular monitoring of MIP and satisfaction with government performance, Ipsos released a long term Covid-related study: [COVID-19 – Mind and Mood of New Zealanders: The Arrival of Omicron](https://www.ipsos.com/en-nz/covid-19-mind-and-mood-new-zealanders-arrival-omicron) <https://www.ipsos.com/en-nz/covid-19-mind-and-mood-new-zealanders-arrival-omicron>

Table 4-3a MIP

Month	Year	Housing	Poverty/ Inequality	Healthcare/ hospitals	Inflation/ CPI	Crime/ law	Climate change concern	Environment/ waste concerns	Economy	Unemployment	Petrol prices	Drug/ alcohol abuse	Immigration	Trans/ infrastructure	hh /per s debt
feb	18	41	29	27	22	24	16	13	11	12	8	.	.	.	.
jul	18	50	32	31	26	24	13	17	9	10	16	.	.	.	.
oct	18	45	24	25	29	18	14	12	13	8	31	.	.	.	.
mar	19	49	24	29	26	21	20	16	11	7	11	.	.	.	.
apr	19	41	30	25	28	25	20	13	12	7	11	.	.	.	.
jul	19	42	28	29	24	20	20	17	14	8	14	.	.	.	.
nov	19	42	29	25	25	23	22	20	12	9	12	.	.	.	.
mar	20	49	30	30	25	25	.	.	13	8	13	.	.	.	.
may	20	33	24	25	23	12	.	.	47	41	6	.	.	.	.
jly	20	34	26	27	23	16	.	.	40	31	7	.	.	.	.
sep	20	37	27	27	22	16	.	.	42	27	4	.	.	.	.
nov	20	53	31	26	23	14	.	.	34	21	4	.	.	.	.
feb	21	60	28	23	24	16	.	.	23	14	8	.	.	.	.
jly	21	53	26	27	27	21	.	.	22	11	7	.	.	.	.
oct	21	54	26	35	31	24	23	12	23	7	10	.	.	.	.
oct	21	54	23	28	34	24	19	9	26	.	11	9	9	9	9
feb	22	51	20	27	53	19	16	9	24	5	25	7	5	7	7

Table 4-3b Rating of Government Performance

Month	Year	Govt performance-ave (Rating)	GP:Top	Neutral	Bottom	DK
jy	17	4.90	26	47	26	.
sep	17	5.00	31	41	30	.
jul	18	5.40	38	36	22	4
oct	18	5.70	42	35	20	4
mar	19	5.50	41	32	23	4
apr	19	6.60	60	24	12	4
jul	19	5.70	43	34	19	4
nov	19	5.70	44	35	18	4
mar	20	5.80	45	34	18	4
may	20	7.60	75	17	6	2
jly	20	7.30	72	17	8	3
sep	20	7.20	70	19	9	2
nov	20	7.30	70	18	8	4
feb	21	6.80	63	23	10	3
jly	21	6.10	58	24	16	3
oct	21	6.20	54	25	18	2
feb	22	5.70	48	27	24	2

Table 4-3c Concerns

Month	Year	Thinking one month from now, how concerned are you about the Omicron variant wave of COVID-19?	I will be diagnosed with COVID-19	A close friend or family member will be diagnosed with COVID-19
may	20	.	15	.
jly	20	.	13	19
sep	20	.	17	28
oct	20	.	17	23
nov	20	.	15	26
dec	20	.	15	23
feb	21	.	17	26
feb	22	47	35	46

Table 4-3d What level of threat do you think the coronavirus or COVID-19 poses to each of the following?

Month	Year	The world	Your country	Your job or business	Your local community	Your family	You personally
mar	20	90	74	54	54	43	37
apr	20	88	67	54	47	37	32
may	20	.	42	36	36	.	.
jly	20	84	38	19	29	.	14
sep	20	79	40	21	30	18	16
oct	20	76	31	18	28	21	15
nov	20	80	25	17	22	17	12
dec	20	76	23	17	24	16	13
feb	21	78	32	21	29	19	15
feb	22	63	46	36	34	30	25

Table 4-3e Attitudes Towards New Zealand's Response

			Which statement do you most agree with when it comes to the red alert level of the COVID-19 Protection Framework (traffic lights)?							
Month	Year	Too restrictive / NZ should loosen restrictions	Good balance between controlling the outbreak & allowing our daily lives to continue	Not restrictive enough / should have more restrictions	We should restart the economy and allow businesses to open or operate as they choose	How good a job is the NZ Government doing to help NZ contain the spread of the virus and deal with recovery ?	How good a job are NZ businesses doing to help NZ contain the spread of the virus and deal w recovery	How good a job is your employer doing to help NZ contain the spread of the virus and	We should keep the borders closed, and not allow anyone in or out until the virus is proven to be contained	I feel confident New Zealand borders are being managed well
mar	20	.	.	.	.	92	79	84	.	.
apr	20	.	.	.	.	89	75	85	.	.
may	20	.	.	.	46	93	80	85	.	.
jly	20	.	.	.	.	81	80	82	80	.
sep	20	.	.	.	46	84	83	89	72	.
Oct	20	.	.	.	58	86	85	88	70	.
Nov	20	.	.	.	51	87	84	87	75	.
Dec	20	.	.	.	62	87	83	86	74	.
Feb	21	.	.	.	55	83	83	86	75	66
Feb	22	26	51	24	62	63	71	82	47	47

Table 4-3f Which best describes how you are feeling today?

Month	Year	Happy to have time to spend time with family	Anxious about my health	Angry about the restrictions on my freedom	Concerned for those who are vulnerable or weak	Inspired by how people are adapting	Lonely	Curious about how this is impacting the world	Impatient to get back to normal life	Hopeful to see how the environment is improving during this time	Worried about my job or financial security	Bored
mar	20	52	26	9	69	39	16	55	24	53	.	.
jly	20	59	16	6	35	24	14	40	12	22	23	12
nov	20	54	22	7	30	20	16	25	17	28	27	11
feb	21	50	18	6	22	15	14	25	17	20	25	13
feb	22	44	16	12	27	13	12	23	26	17	14	12

Table 4-3g - Risks

Month	Year	How comfortable would you be leaving your home without a face mask in the next few weeks?	Even if businesses are allowed to open, I am going to be very nervous about leaving my home
may	20	75	55
jly	20	87	44
sep	20	69	46
Oct	20	83	41
Nov	20	78	44
dec	20	85	43
feb	21	83	41
oct	21	.	.
feb	22	44	47

Table 4-3h Views On Covid-19 Vaccine Policies / Regulations

COVID-19: Views on Vaccine Mandates (Feb '22)	Support	Oppose
Requiring people to have a vaccine before returning to normal activities such as travel	78%	19%
Sporting events requiring proof of vaccination before allowing entry to events	78%	19%
Restaurants requiring proof of vaccination to eat inside	77%	21%
Your employer requiring a vaccine before returning to the workplace	73%	23%
Making a COVID19 vaccine mandatory for anyone over the age of 18	64%	32%
Making a COVID19 vaccine mandatory for anyone over the age of 50	63%	33%
Making a COVID19 vaccine mandatory for anyone eligible to receive one	62%	34%

4.4 The Managed Isolation and Quarantine (MIQ) Experience Survey – Uiuī mō te Wheako Noho Taratahi a te Kāwanatanga (MIQ) asks for feedback from people staying in all MIQ facilities in New Zealand.

The survey went live in May 2021 and helps us understand what is working well, and where we could make improvements. The survey asks questions about each stage of the returnee journey, from planning their travel through travel, arrival in New Zealand and their time in the facility itself. Only results for the latest month (October, 2021) are included.

People staying at MIQ report an overall positive experience, with the overwhelming majority of people staying at MIQ reporting that they feel safe, are being treated well and are well informed about their stay. Some people also tell us that they are unhappy with the cost of MIQ and that some had difficulties with the usability of the booking system. The response rate in October is considered very good at 57%.

- Overall experience: 66% positive responses
 - Response rate: 57%
 - Responses: 2433
- Satisfaction by journey phase**
- Satisfied with MIQ while planning travel to New Zealand: 72% positive responses
 - While travelling to New Zealand: 78% positive responses
 - While arriving at MIQ: 80% positive responses
 - While staying at MIQ: 86% positive responses
- Satisfaction with communications**
- Information on the MIQ website: 76% satisfied
 - MIAS Portal (booking system): 69% satisfied
 - General information before and during their stay at MIQ: 83% satisfied
- Satisfaction with pastoral care**
- Felt safe: 91% positive responses
 - Wellbeing needs met: 80% positive responses
 - Treated with respect: 91% positive responses
 - Treated fairly: 91% positive responses
- Highest ranked questions**
- Did you feel safe while in managed isolation or quarantine? (91% positive responses)
 - Overall, did staff treat you with respect while you were in managed isolation or quarantine? (91% positive responses)
 - Was it clear to you why you were placed into quarantine rather than isolation? (90% positive responses)
- Lowest ranked questions**
- I was able to book accommodation on the MIAS close to the time I wanted to travel (50% positive responses)
 - The Managed Isolation Allocation System (MIAS) was easy to use (57% positive responses)
 - The MIQ website was easy to use (67% positive responses)
- Comments**
- 26% positive comments
 - 40% neutral comments
 - 34% negative comments

5 Older Polls

This section includes results from 2021.

5.1 Lord Ashcroft Poll.

Lord Ashcroft carried out a poll (see Stuart Duncan 2022) in NZ driven by three ideas:

- deep interest in New Zealand, having visited here many times and having friends who live here.
- aligned with the IDU (The International Democrat Union, which includes the National Party)) which is a global alliance of centre-right parties for whom he has been exploring social dynamics on a comparative nation-by-nation basis.
- fascination by the success of Jacinda Ardern’s leadership and his poll was a means of assessing whether the factors at work here are.

The poll report is based on public polling between August 9th – 24th of 5,129 individuals as well as upon eight focus groups conducted up and down the country in September 2021 including Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Manawatu and Tauranga. Cross-tabulation data is also provided breaking down the results in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, and region and recalled and likely voting. Results related to Covid are reported here. (The report only analyses in terms of political affiliation.)

At the time of data collection, the following were supported (in a forced choice format):

- regulation
- mandates
- protection of safety/security
- confidence in government abilities
- the government has underreacted to the pandemic and should have put more restrictions in place.

When asked “when it comes to dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, how well or badly do you think the government has done in each of the following areas?” satisfactory responses were: Protecting jobs/incomes, right timing of restrictions, sensible/proportionate rules, clear communication of rules.

Comparing National and Labour effectiveness in relation to various issues Labour was preferred substantially over National especially in relation to health care generally and Covid in particular.

Of Issues facing NZ Covid was given a very high score, but was eclipsed by a concern for mental health.

Table 5-1 Lord Ashcroft Poll

74.40	Statement A:- Regulation is often necessary to protect workers, consumers and the public
23.30	Statement B:- Regulation is often an unnecessary burden on businesses stifling growth
69.50	Statement A:- It is right for the government to mandate vaccination in certain circumstances to protect society from infectious diseases
29.10	Statement B:- The government should not interfere in people's private healthcare decisions by making vaccinations compulsory
42.50	Statement A:- It is more important to protect our freedom, privacy and civil liberties

53.90	Statement B:- It is more important to protect our safety and security
69.90	Statement A:- The way our authorities have responded to the Covid-19 pandemic has given me greater confidence in their ability to make the right decisions during a crisis
28.50	Statement B:- The way our authorities have responded to the Covid-19 pandemic has undermined my confidence in their ability to make the right decisions during a crisis
35.50	Statement A:- The New Zealand government overreacted to the Covid-19 pandemic and put too many restrictions on normal daily life
57.80	Statement B:- The New Zealand government underreacted to the Covid-19 pandemic and should have put more restrictions in place
.	When it comes to dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, how well or badly do you think the government has done in each of the following areas...?
4.90	Controlling the spread of the virus
6.70	Introducing restrictions at the right time
4.40	Following the right scientific advice
6.50	Having rules that are sensible and proportionate
6.70	Communicating the rules clearly
-0.62	Providing New Zealanders with a Covid-19 vaccine
9.00	Protecting people's jobs and incomes

%. Labour	Which party do you think would do the best job when it comes to each of the following issues?
40.90	Healthcare
65.80	Dealing with Covid-19
37.00	Immigration and border control
38.40	The economy and jobs
42.30	Income inequality
32.00	Taxes
41.20	Education
34.10	National security and defense
47.10	New Zealand's standing in the world
28.90	Crime
35.70	Race relations
24.30	Environmental issues and climate change
50.60	Social security/welfare
30.40	Indigenous peoples' rights
37.60	Transgender rights
30.50	Housing
43.90	Social care/care for the elderly
32.60	Government borrowing and debt
	Concerns

81.20	Climate change
83.20	The risk of a new economic and financial crisis
51.90	Immigration
76.10	Inequality in society
26.90	Military conflict with another country
55.80	Terrorism within New Zealand
75.20	Division and polarisation in society
89.80	Mental health issues (e.g. depression)
83.10	Covid-19
85.50	Obesity
70.50	Opioid abuse
59.90	Attacks on freedom of speech

5.2 **READ NZ NATIONAL READING SURVEY 2021** Horizon carried out a survey for Read NZ.

Effect of the pandemic on reading: More respondents (30%) had found reading to be more important since COVID-19 arrived in New Zealand than had found it less important (6%) whereas for 60%, the advent of the pandemic had created no change in the importance of reading to their overall wellbeing and a further 4% were “not sure”.

Māori, Pasifika and Asian respondents were above average in reporting reading as more important, while “Other European”¹ respondents were below average.

Reading changes in the March/April/May 2020 lockdown. 21% of respondents had increased their reading during the lockdown period, 10% had reduced their reading while 18% said they had not read any books at all. 4 out of 10 of these people have since read some books in the past 12 months.

- For just over half of the people who said they had read more during the 2020 lockdown period the increase was temporary and they reverted to their original levels post lockdown. They had been, in general, reading a lower-than-average number of books.
- Around a third had maintained their reading at the increased level where One in seven had subsequently increased their reading even more than they had during lockdown. For 20% of the respondents who said they had been reading less during lockdown, the decrease was temporary, and they reverted to their original levels post-lockdown.

5.3 **CARUL Collective** CARUL Collective – International social science research on Care and Responsibility under Lockdown. (wordpress.com)

International social science research on Care and Responsibility under Lockdown has produced a range of studies: see appendix for listing to date

https://carulcollective.wordpress.com/our-publications/?fbclid=IwAR3_Jio3xpv3-JVbFrC-rgDi4RhDvBRdJZhEYm4IMnbUf-S9oeRjXjlsr8

5.4 Survey sheds light on New Zealanders' housing dreams for 2022.

A survey of more than 1,300 Westpac customers found the COVID-19 pandemic has forced many Kiwis to think long and hard about the space they live in as they look forward into 2022. New Zealanders want bigger houses and better lifestyles, and some are ready for a move out of the city. Findings include that 19% of people want a bigger house, rising to 29% for households with children and 39% for those considering moving house this year. Of those staying put, 34% are considering renovations, as people reconsider their needs in the COVID era. Nearly a third of those surveyed reported spending more money on their house than before the pandemic and 36% spending more on their garden. This response was even higher for those under 35. Having more space was a key motivator for 32% of people considering moving. But lifestyle was the most commonly cited reason at 47%. Other reasons for wanting to move included downsizing (16%), better return on investment (16%) and lower costs (15%). People have got creative around working from home arrangements, with 24% of respondents who work from home spending most of their time in the kitchen or dining room, 23% in the living room and 12% in a bedroom. Just over a third did most of their work in a study or home office. 29% of people feel more positive about their home since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, compared to just 8% who feel more negatively about it. The remainder felt about the same as before

5.5 Experiences with working from home. Christina Leung and Sarah Hogan [Zooming into better work-life balance? Gender and equity insights from New Zealanders' Experiences with working from home](#) 08 March 2022

NZIER conducted a survey for ASB of working New Zealanders to better understand what their experiences of working from home had been during and outside of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Key findings indicate:

- Both men and women had an overall positive experience of working from home during lockdowns, agreeing that achieving a better work/life balance, avoiding long commutes and overall cost-effectiveness are major benefits of working from home. This is in line with research showing that reduced commuting can significantly benefit workers, particularly those who work in major urban centres.
- Women are most likely to report that they did most or all of the childcare and home-schooling during COVID-19 lockdowns, confirming many published studies, including a New Zealand study
- Women were significantly less likely than men to report having the ideal equipment and a space designed for working effectively and comfortably from home, which impacted on their experience of working from home during COVID-19 restrictions and their view of this as a motivator for not working from home.
- When choosing where to work, men are more likely than women to be motivated by the need to be seen in the workplace or the need to be seen as adaptable. In contrast, women were more likely than men to say professional and social connections motivated them to be physically present and work-life balance motivated working from home, demonstrating that the concept of ideal worker culture may be stronger in men than in women.

- Respondents agreed that the major challenge of working from home was the ability to connect with colleagues. This result is confirmed by numerous studies, with younger workers, in particular, more susceptible to experiencing negative career impacts due to working from home because of this issue.
- Women in management roles were significantly less likely than their male counterparts to express a preference for their staff to be physically present in the workplace, demonstrating what published studies indicate: That women in management roles have a higher level of confidence managing remote workers.
- Women were more likely to report finding it harder to justify taking sick leave when working from home, increasing their risk of burnout.
- Nearly half of respondents said that the ability to work from home was important, very important or essential. Employers can act to ensure remote working improves both productivity and equity.

6 Voluntary organisations:

6.1 Catalytic etc repeated the survey of charity organisations they had run in 2020, with a report written by Stephen McTaggart et al.

(https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedwaynz/pages/298/attachments/original/1633653204/2021_Covid-19_Charity_and_Community_Needs_Report_%28Catalytic_Foundation%29.pdf?1633653204]

The Catalytic Foundation has run a series of three surveys aimed at New Zealand charities to gauge the impact of COVID-19. Each survey was conducted around periods of COVID-19 lockdown. Across these surveys, there were over 560 responses from charities.

- The first survey was conducted in March/April 2020 as NZ went into Level 3-4.
- The second survey was run in April/May 2020 as NZ moved out of Level 4-3 to Level 2.
- The third survey was conducted as New Zealand went into L4 lockdown on 17 August, 2021.

In the 2021 Community Needs Survey:

- 180 community organisations responded to this year's survey.
- 28 nationwide organisations responded, as well as 152 local or branch charities from all across New Zealand.

The types of organisations who responded were split across the groups they support, with the majority providing support for more than one group. Charities providing community support, family support and support for our oldest and youngest were the majority of respondents. What do charities need?

The most common issue charities reported was an immediate need for support with operational costs and expenses – comments suggested these related to:

- Difficulty of paying salaries;
- Paying rent;
- IT support/equipment needs;
- Inadequate premises and other equipment needs.

44% of charities indicated a need for immediate additional financial support.

However, 57% of respondents stated they had a funding shortfall of \$25k or more – so the

need actually seems greater than indicated.

Charities have reported an increase in the amount of financial support they need compared to previous surveys.

The most significant change is in the upper bands of funding – over 25% selected \$100k+ (compared to 11% in previous survey), 20% selected \$50k (compared to 5% in previous survey).

The need for paid staff was indicated by 33% of respondents

Staff/volunteering/resourcing needs

- There is a significant increase in the number of professional skilled volunteers and staff needed to help with charity support services compared to the community needs surveys run last year.
- This year's survey showed 45% needing volunteers for charity support services, followed closely by professionally skilled volunteers at 45% (compared to the 17% from the previous survey and 12% before that).
- Professional skill requirements most commonly mentioned were accounting, legal, social work and administration skills.
- There is also significant demand for staff/volunteers with language skills other than English.
- A smaller share of charities mentioned they needed manual labour/general help, telecommunication skills (e.g. phoning people in need; fundraising), and virtual volunteers.
- Only 22% of charities indicated they had no additional volunteering needs.
- A new question in this year's survey asked charities what resources they needed. The top three resource needs were for laptops (58%), followed by food (44%) then mobile phones (31%), which indicates a need for technology and basic needs.

6.2 State of the Arts Survey Adrian Field, Sarah Greenaway & Adela Wypych (2021) State of the Arts Survey, Aotearoa, Report on survey findings. September-October 2021.

<https://www.tetaumatatoaiwi.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Q2-2021-22-National-State-of-the-Arts-211208.pdf>

530 respondents nationwide were included with the approach in this survey refined from the previous survey (State of the Arts June-July 2021), although this survey included additional questions about the impact of COVID-19 and the resulting lockdowns that began in August 2021. The survey was distributed via the SurveyMonkey online platform and respondents were recruited through a combined method of own database distribution (via Te Taumata Toi-a-Iwi, Arts Wellington's, Creative Waikato, and the Ministry's network relationships), the database from the previous State of the Arts survey, and social media, targeting users that work in the Arts, Culture & Media sector.

Respondents' perceptions of audience appetite for their creative work seem to have decreased: With 32% reporting audience appetite being more than usual, 31% reporting that it was the same as usual and 25% reporting that it was less. Overall, the average rating was 2.1 out of 3. This is lower than the average rating of the June-July survey (2.3) which was captured during an Alert Level 1 setting. The timeframe that respondents expected to be impacted by the latest COVID-19 lockdowns was largely between four months to two years: Nearly all (95%) respondents reported being affected by the latest COVID-19

outbreak and subsequent lockdowns. Nearly half of respondents indicated their creative work would be impacted by more than six months (47%), with 16% indicating seven months to one year, 20% indicating one to two years, and 11% indicating two years or more. Recognition of the role arts, culture and creativity plays in a COVID environment and emergency funding were most important to respondents: Creatives were asked a series of statements about what is important for the arts, culture, and creative sector as it faces ongoing disruption from COVID-19 (from 1 meaning strongly disagree to 4 meaning strongly agree). Statements that were most important to respondents where more than 90% either strongly agreed or agreed were: Recognition of the role arts, culture, and creativity plays in a COVID environment; Emergency relief / resilience funding to support core operations during Alert Levels 4, 3, 2; Mental health and wellbeing support; and sector guidelines and resources for operating at different alert

7 Business Surveys

Intelligence about firms is continually carried out by business umbrella groupings, although web searches revealed little recent survey work.

7.1a The ELMO Employee Sentiment Index. New Zealand workers' divided on the state of the economy; support for stricter COVID-19 measures at work rises October 2021
a quarterly research survey of working New Zealanders is commissioned by ELMO Software and conducted by independent research firm Lonergan Research each quarter among more than 500 geographically dispersed working New Zealanders. Now in its fourth consecutive quarter of reporting, analysis of the full 2021 Employee Sentiment Index data has revealed the impact that COVID-19 has had on perceived job and economic insecurity The ELMO Employee Sentiment Report was initiated to gain data and insights into the attitudes, actions and concerns of employees. Respondents were asked to reflect on their actions in the three month period of July 2021 to September 2021. Lonergan Research surveyed 565 New Zealand workers aged 18 years and over between 13 September and 23 September, 2021. The research was conducted through a 14-question online survey. Respondents were members of a permission-based panel, geographically disbursed throughout New Zealand including both capital city and non-capital city areas. After surveying, data was weighted to the latest population estimates sourced from Stats NZ.

Key Findings:

- The proportion of workers ranking the economy as 'not secure' has reached its highest level so far this year
- Perceptions of job security reach their lowest recorded levels this year
- Employers mandating COVID-19 vaccinations among their employees is supported by two thirds (66%) of New Zealand workers
- Workers are also happy for their employer to know their COVID-19 vaccination (89%) and test status (91%)
- Half of New Zealand workers say they are uncomfortable going into work if their colleagues are unvaccinated

7.1b New variants of COVID-19 making workers' concerned about a return to the workplace; workers' plans for 2022 signals arrival of 'Great Resignation' February 2022

Key Findings:

- New COVID-19 variants are making 64 per cent of workers concerned about being in the workplace
- Working alongside unvaccinated colleagues makes 63 per cent of workers uncomfortable, up from 50 per cent in Q3 2021
- ‘Great Resignation’ arrives in New Zealand as 43 per cent of workers plan to search for a new job in 2022, 31 per cent plan to quit their jobs as soon as they secure a new position
- A quarter of workers (25%) say the economy is ‘not secure’
- Burnout reaches record levels with 43 per cent of workers feeling burnt-out.

The research also discovered that more than two in five New Zealand workers (43%) plan to actively search for a new job in 2022, while 15 percent plan to quit without another job lined up.

7.2 Auckland CoC

Survey finds over 70 percent of Auckland businesses expect to close because of COVID isolation rules. 19/02/2022 <https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2022/02/survey-finds-over-70-percent-of-auckland-businesses-expect-to-close-because-of-covid-isolation-rules.html>

Auckland Chamber of Commerce surveyed small and medium businesses mid-February. Of the thousand who responded, 41 percent had one person isolating, 9 percent had three to five and 6 percent had more. 72 percent are at risk of closing and 96 percent would happily pay for their own RATs.

Covid-19 Omicron outbreak: Survey shows business frustration with red-light rules. 2 Feb, 2022

A late January survey of 1500 Auckland businesses conducted by the Auckland Business Chamber showed that 89 per cent of businesses expect the economic environment will be the same or worse over the next six months. Just 11 per cent of thought the business climate would improve in the next six months. Of the businesses surveyed, 86 per cent said they are struggling with the red-light system. If they were available, 83 per cent of businesses would be using RATs. <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/covid-19-omicron-outbreak-survey-shows-business-frustration-with-red-light-rules/OGR2IUMVMDBQW6ZDROLM53ZVUQ/>

7.3 Business survey

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/business/covid-19-omicron-rats-rapid-antigen-tests-just-10-per-cent-of-small-businesses-have-tests/HEYMLWGRF5TJY2IEVGFZST7NK4/>

Damien Venuto

(Feb) Covid 19 Omicron RATs / rapid antigen tests - just 10 per cent of small businesses have tests. 18 Feb, 2022

A MYOB survey of 502 small to medium-sized New Zealand businesses found that Only 10 per cent of small to medium-sized businesses have managed to secure a supply of rapid antigen tests to monitor the Covid status of their employees. More than half (58 per cent), expect to see a negative impact on the financial health of their business if New Zealand stayed in the red light setting for more than a month, and almost a quarter (23 per cent) believed they would take a significant financial hit. Business owners said they would be open to using RATs once they became more widely available in the market: 33 per cent

saying they will request that employees take a test weekly before coming into work, and 10 per cent saying they would like to test staff daily. 45 per cent are concerned they may not have enough employees to continue to operate their business at the same capacity. Almost 35 per cent said they will have to temporarily close their business if their employees become infected or designated close contacts, while the same number also said some of their employees cannot do their jobs from home. 31 per cent of SMEs said they will have zero or limited cashflow if most or all employees have to isolate because they've contracted the virus or are a close contact.

8 Future Surveys

Further studies are being rolled out, some in reaction to changes in the Covid situation.

8.1 New Zealand Vaccine Preferences Survey

A team of researchers at the School of Pharmacy and School of Population Health, University of Auckland is asking Kiwis what they need to know about vaccines and their preferences for vaccination. As part of an effort to combat misinformation and vaccine hesitancy similar studies have been conducted overseas in the UK, Europe, Asia, US and Australia looking into people's preferences for vaccines, such as the flu, chickenpox, meningitis or general vaccines. This is the first study that looks at what features Kiwis want in a vaccine.

Survey asks Kiwis to express vaccine preferences 10 February 2022

<https://www.auckland.ac.nz/en/news/2022/02/09/survey-asks-kiwis-to-express-vaccine-preferences.html>

8.2 AUT: Survey of Vaccine Hesitancy The Vaccine Trust Programme (VTP)

<https://healthfutures.aut.ac.nz/current-projects/addressing-vaccine-hesitancy>. partnered with Northland District Health Board This research aims to find out why vaccination rates for communicable diseases in general are dropping — and what can be done about it. People will be interviewed about their views and options on immunisation, and will look at those who influence others' views, and why they made a decision to get vaccinated or not. Conspiracy theories will be looked at – why do people pay attention to them and how feelings of control might make them more likely to believe in them. Social data analysis will look at the long-term effect of not being immunised, using integrated child data and immunisation records, linking them to school outcomes, hospitalisation and other variables.

8.3 Need for survey “NZ needs high quality Covid-19 infection surveys now”

Siouxie Wiles 05:00, Feb 28 2022 <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/300525890/nz-needs-high-quality-covid19-infection-surveys-now>

The UK's [ONS prevalence survey](#), which is carried out by the Office of National Statistics in collaboration with the universities of Oxford and Manchester, UK Health Security Agency, the Wellcome Trust and others was launched as a pilot in mid-April 2020. Nose and throat swabs as well as blood are taken from a representative sample of people in the UK. The blood is tested for antibody levels, either from infection and/or vaccination, and the swabs are tested for the Covid-19 virus, with positive samples then genome sequenced. From this, researchers can estimate how many people have Covid-19, what variants are circulating,

how antibody levels are holding up and whether they are still protecting people from infection or reinfection.

8.4 Stuff Prospective poll

Matthew Slaughter. If you have mild symptoms, will you get a Covid-19 test? Feb 18 2022 <https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/300521097/poll-if-you-have-mild-symptoms-will-you-get-a-covid19-test>

Question: If you are vaccinated and have mild symptoms, will you get a Covid-19 test?

8.5 NZ study on Covid-19 impacts launched 8 February

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/national/461056/nz-study-on-covid-19-impacts-launched>

People who have had Covid-19 are being asked about the support they received, and ongoing effects of the virus, in a survey that will be used to advise health officials. Researchers are interested in hearing about the support people received, the quality of health services, financial impacts, and any long Covid symptoms. The effects of Covid-19 on Māori, Pacific communities and whānau hauā (disabled communities) are a key focus of the research.

The study, *Impacts of Covid-19 in Aotearoa Ngā Kawekawe o Mate Korona*, will be carried out by VUW and has been funded by the Ministry of Health, at a cost of \$1m. It aims to survey people aged 16 and over who have had Covid-19 or were a probable case before 1 December, 2021. The research includes online surveys and interviews. The researchers plan to contact nearly 9000 people by letter and text.

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