

The New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS) was introduced in 2018. In less than 3 years this face-to-face survey interviewed more than 23,000 randomly selected adult New Zealanders (15 years and older) and released almost 40 documents available through the Ministry of Justice public website. The NZCVS is the only source of comprehensive victimisation data in New Zealand. Administrative data does not provide a full picture of crime and victimisation because only one quarter of incidents are reported to police.

Victimisation surveys are unique in their approach to design and statistical analysis due to highly sensitive questions, difficulties in coding, interpretation and presenting of data. In addition to the above issues, the third cycle of the survey was interrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic and some additional safety measures had to be implemented for further field work.

The survey has explored some special topics such as highly victimised people, offences by family members and public perceptions of the criminal justice system. This presentation will summarise key lessons learnt from three years of data collection, analysis and reporting. We will also discuss the future of victimisation surveys in New Zealand and their importance for decision making and policy development.