

SOCIAL ISSUES & YOUR BUSINESS

New Zealand faces some significant challenges that directly or indirectly affect your business. What are some of these issues, and what can be done?

EMPLOYMENT AND GENERAL WELLBEING

The unemployment rate in New Zealand sits at 6.7% as of March 2012.

Commentary from the New Zealand Institute summarises the issues of unemployment well:

Unemployment can be a source of problems throughout society. Individuals, households, and the overall economy are affected immediately and there are future consequences as well. For individuals, unemployment is associated with serious problems including reduced self-esteem, higher rates of depression, more risk of illness, a greater likelihood of committing crime and higher risk of suicide.

The 2010 General Social Survey from Statistics New Zealand shows that 33.3% of people who are employed are 'Very Satisfied' with their life, compared to 12.9% who are unemployed. Further

social issues associated with unemployment are highlighted below.

Similarly, under-employment is associated with negative social outcomes. US-based market research organisation Gallup estimated that in 2010, 54% of under-employed workers were struggling, compared to 42% of fully employed workers.



As a business, you touch many in your community. Whether or not you currently have paid work to offer, might there be work experience opportunities or skills you could share?

HEALTH & PRODUCTIVITY

At present a profile of adult New Zealanders, including those in the workforce, shows that:



24% of men and 22% of women currently smoke



More than half of all NZ adults are overweight or obese



Half of all adults do not do the recommended minimum of 30 minutes of exercise a day on at least 5 days a week



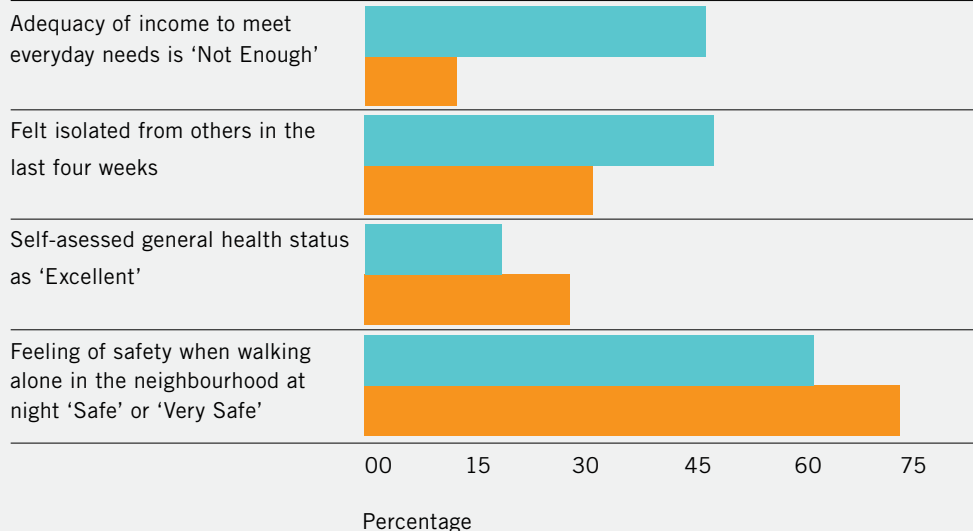
1 in 5 of all adults over 45 years of age reported that they had been diagnosed with heart disease

*According to the Auckland Regional Public Health Service

A healthy workforce is good for business. Well-designed workplace health promotion programmes can improve worker health, save money and increase productivity. Why not implement such a programme in your workplace?

EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND SOCIAL ISSUES
Selected Variables, General Social Survey 2010

■ Unemployed
■ Employed



CRIME & ITS COSTS TO YOUR BUSINESS

The cost of crime in New Zealand society is estimated to be 6.5% of GDP.

This is larger than many of our key industries:

5.3% Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing

4.7% Retail

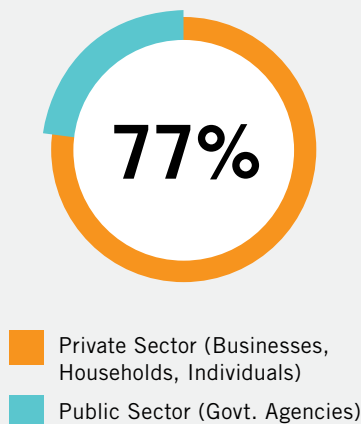
5.7% Construction

Even if your business hasn't directly experienced crime, it's likely that your staff, customers and fellow businesses have. And it's also not the government that bears the financial brunt of crime.

The Treasury estimated in 2003/04 that the cost of crime was \$9.1 billion. Of this, \$7 billion was borne by the private sector (businesses, households and individuals). This includes \$985 million in lost worker output. Over 50% is from violence.

RESEARCH ALSO SHOWS THAT THE COST OF VANDALISM ON SME BUSINESSES IS 13.5% OF NET PROFIT.

WHO BEARS THE COST OF CRIME?



Partnering with community organisations to reduce the risk of crime could save your business money, time and energy.

What organisations are there in your region that support healthy, safe communities?

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

One way is to partner with a charity to work to solve these challenges.

By partnering with a charity, your business has the opportunity to make a difference to your staff, customers and your short and long term profit margins.

Partnering with a charity is not about just making an open-handed donation, it's about sharing resources, skills and ideas. Both partners give and receive. It can also be great for your brand, open opportunities with new customers, and increase your connection with existing customers. Nielsen Research shows that 66% of kiwis are more likely to buy from a company that supports a worthy cause.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF WHEN APPROACHING THIS OPPORTUNITY:

1. What are the challenges in my community that impact my business, staff and/or my customers which I would like to change?
2. Who is already working in the community to solve these challenges and how could we work together?
3. What are the resources I can afford to commit to the community (time, knowledge, skills, networks)?
4. How can we make this happen and set it up for success?
5. What is the value of this engagement/relationship to my business and are there ways my customers and employees could be involved?

If you're looking for assistance in addressing these questions, please email:

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