

Unpaid Work

What this is about...

People's willingness to be involved in unpaid work in the community indicates a desire to 'give something back'. It is a reflection of people's belief that they have something worthwhile to contribute. This involvement contributes to community cohesion and to people's sense of wellbeing.

This indicator outlines the percentage of residents aged over fifteen who engaged in one or more of a range of unpaid activities (in a different household than their own) in the week preceeding the 1996 Census.¹⁷⁷ It indicates levels of community involvement within each city.

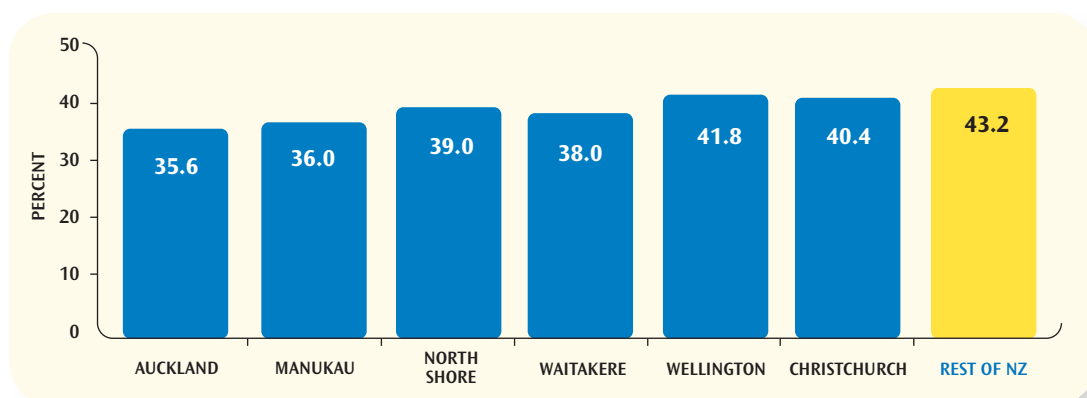
The categories of unpaid activity were:

- caring for children not living in the same household as the caregiver
- household work such as cooking, repairs, gardening, or caring for the elderly
- training and coaching
- attending meetings, such as for a group, church or marae
- fundraising.

What did we find ?

- Over a third of the population aged 15 years and over within the six largest cities had engaged in unpaid work, ranging from 35.6% in Auckland City to 41.8% in Wellington City. However, levels of volunteerism across the six cities tend to be below the level for the rest of New Zealand (43.2%).
- The proportion of residents who had engaged in voluntary work was slightly lower within the four Auckland cities compared to Wellington City, Christchurch City and the rest of New Zealand.

PERCENT OF POPULATION AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER INVOLVED IN UNPAID ACTIVITY, BY CITY (1996)



Data Source: Statistics New Zealand

Very similar patterns emerged across the six cities with regard to the type of unpaid work people had engaged in. With the exception of those living in Waitakere City, over one third of those who had engaged in unpaid work had attended a meeting (from 36.8% in North Shore City to 42.6% in Wellington). The proportion of residents in the six cities who had done this was lower, however, than the proportion for the rest of New Zealand, at 44.5%

Over a third of residents who had engaged in unpaid work had cared for children not living in the same household (this was the most common type of unpaid work among Waitakere City residents (39.1%)).

TYPE OF UNPAID WORK DONE, BY CITY (1996)

	Cared for children not living in same household %	Household work or cared for elderly, ill or disabled person %	Training, coaching, teaching %	Attended committee meeting for group, church or marae %	Fundraising, selling for group, church or marae %	Other unpaid work %
Auckland	34.8	34.8	30.0	37.6	14.3	13.1
Manukau	37.5	35.3	26.7	37.8	17.2	12.7
North Shore	35.6	31.9	30.8	36.8	15.6	12.2
Waitakere	39.1	34.7	29.0	35.3	15.0	12.7
Wellington	32.6	32.6	32.7	42.6	16.2	13.5
Christchurch	36.1	33.6	29.3	38.9	14.6	12.8
Rest of NZ	36.5	33.1	29.2	44.5	19.4	13.8

Data Source: Statistics New Zealand

Percentages do not add up to 100% as residents could have engaged in more than one activity.

In all six cities, the highest proportion of those involved in unpaid work were women - from 55.0% in Wellington to 56.1% for North Shore and Manukau. Approximately 44% of those who had engaged in unpaid work were men, in all cities and for the rest of New Zealand. This may be reflective of women's employment levels and of social expectations of women. In addition, a clear pattern emerged of a difference in the types of activities in which men and women had engaged. For example, across all cities, higher proportions of women were involved in childcare and fundraising activities, while higher proportions of men were involved in household work, cooking and repairs category.

People's willingness to give time for voluntary activity ties in with other indicators of community cohesion such as social networks and neighbourhood interaction. It is one factor that is likely to increase a sense of belonging within a community. Higher levels of involvement with other people also have links to increased health and wellbeing.