



*Ngā mihi nui ma te Tau Hou nā te New Zealand
Council of Christian Social Services.
Warm greetings for the New Year from the
New Zealand Council of Christian Social Services.*

Introduction

“It would be awesome if [2011] was remembered for the beginnings of a movement that rises up to protest the increasing income disparity”

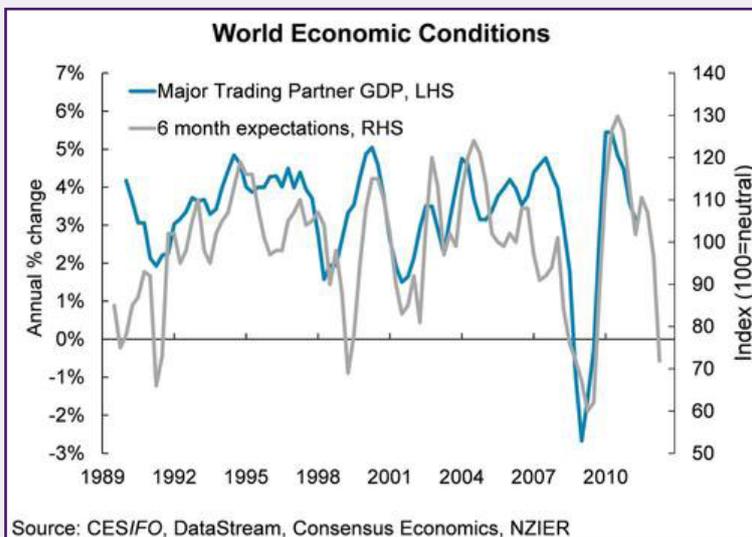
Ruby Duncan, NZCCSS President

Christmas is over and the New Year has arrived. We have things to do, ideas of how we would like them to be, and the messy reality of how things actually are. We re-elected the Government. And the Occupiers are still Occupying. Overseas, the OECD declared doubts about the survival of Europe’s monetary union the cause of stalled global economic growth, and the main risk to the world economy (BusinessWeek, 28/11/11). Last November, the NZIER labelled government economic forecasts “far too optimistic”. “A European slow-down would hit exports, tourism and the ability to borrow, as well as hitting New Zealand’s other trading partners” Dominion Post 29/11/11.

The eleventh Vulnerability Report covers the trends experienced in government agencies and community based organisations in the third quarter of 2011. Data from October and November has been included when available.

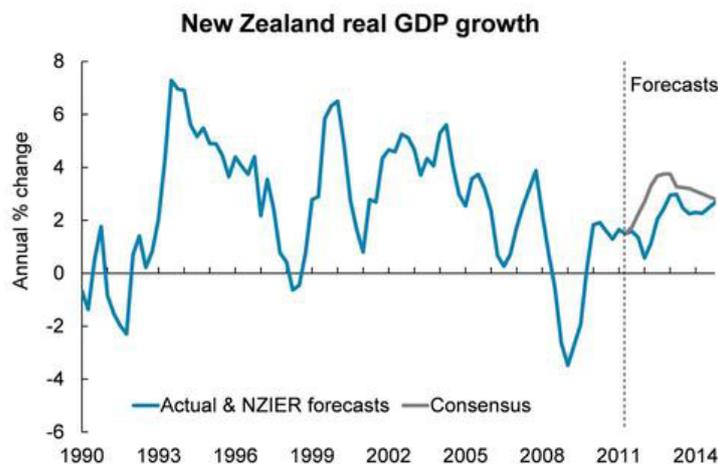
Economic overview

The NZIER has pointed to a ‘rapidly worsening global economy’, affecting both tourism and exporting. Expected global conditions are illustrated in the diagram below with the six month expectations graph pointing solidly downwards.



Source: CESIFO, DataStream, Consensus Economics, NZIER

Locally, little growth in domestic demand is likely, although rebuilding Canterbury should provide a boost in building activity. “Businesses are cautious about investing” (Source: NZIER). Forecasters appear divided in their opinions about the growth rate with actual and NZIER forecasts pointing downwards and consensus forecasts pointing upwards. Meantime prices continued to increase faster than wages, and the foodbanks saw larger numbers of people earning wages and salaries.



Source: Statistics NZ, Consensus Economics, NZIER

“The total interventions for our core services (emergency assistance, budgeting, community welfare, and counselling) were 8,253. The previous year this figure was 5,860 and in 2008/09 it was 5,150. Therefore we have seen a 60% increase ...”

Presbyterian Support Otago, (2011) *Voices of Poverty*.

In earthquake affected Canterbury, The Salvation Army undertook 78 home visits and responded to 389 phone calls. There were 56 referrals from The Salvation Army Community Ministries, school community workers and campervan teams, as well as from Ministry of Education school social workers and the Christchurch City Council.

How much does daily life cost?

The Consumer Price Index rose by 0.4% during the September quarter. The annual increase was 4.6% (including a 20% increase in GST during the October-December 2010 quarter).

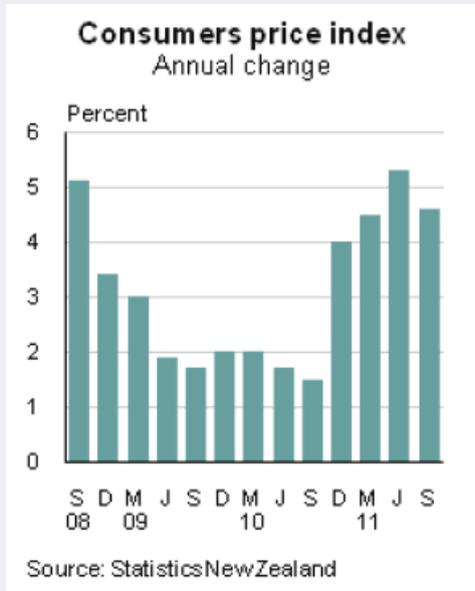
During the year to September:

- Petrol increased by 18%
- Cigarettes and tobacco increased by 12%



- Electricity – up 4.6%
- Local authority rates and payments – 6.6% increase
- Average rents increased by 1.9% between September 2010 and 2011.

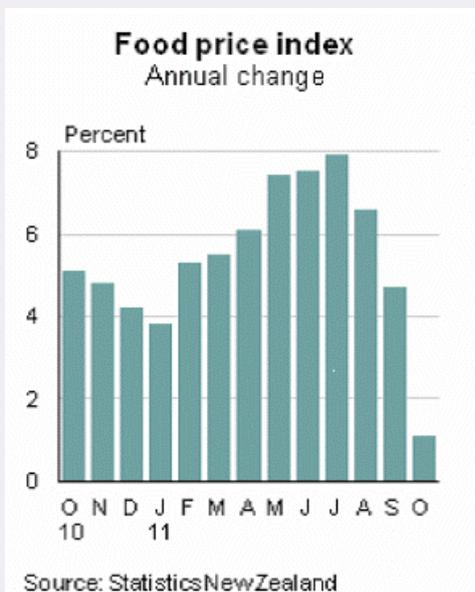
Sources: Statistics New Zealand; Department of Building and Housing



Food

Food prices increased by 1.1% in the year to October 2011. This is less than recent annual increases, partly because the October 2010 GST increase no longer contributes toward annual increases (Statistics New Zealand, Food Price Index, October 2011). The most significant changes in food prices during the October 2011 year were:

- Bread 6.1%↑
- Ice cream 6.9% ↑
- Fruit and vegetables 8.8% ↓



What about paying for it?

Median hourly earnings increased by 1.9% in the year to June. This is the lowest recorded increase since the June 2000 quarter. Median hourly earnings are now \$20.38. Median weekly income for all people from all sources is \$550.00, an increase of \$21.00 in the last year. For wage earners, wages increased by 3.2% in the year to September.

Housing costs are a large part of most people’s budgets. Costs in this area have increased in the last two years, while household incomes have remained largely unchanged. Income spent on housing increased from 15.1% in 2008/09 to 16.0% in 2010/11. “The proportion of households spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs increased from 19.5% in the year to June 2009, to 21.8% in the year to June 2011.” Housing expenditure increased from 33.8% to 39.1% of income for those who did not own their home (Household Economic Survey).

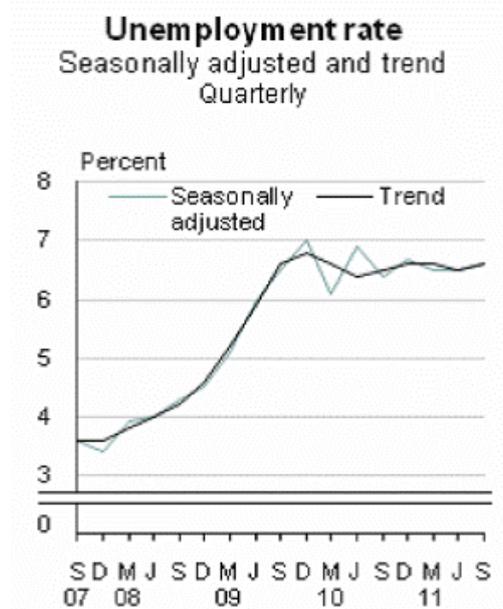
Sources: Statistics New Zealand, Household Economic Survey: Year ended June 2011; Statistics NZ, Quarterly Employment survey; Statistics New Zealand, NZ Incomes Survey June 2011 Quarter.

Who is unemployed?

Household Labour Force Survey – Quarterly changes

- The unemployment rate rose a tiny amount in the September quarter (0.1 of a percentage points to 6.6 per cent).
- Unemployment rose by 3,000 people.
- Employment increased by 5,000.
- The employment rate was 63.9 per cent (largely unchanged).

Source: Statistics New Zealand: Household Labour Force Survey Sept 2011





Annual Changes

- **Unemployment** has remained static; i.e. it has ranged between 6.4% and 6.6% since March 2010.
- The actual number **unemployed** increased by 7,000 (4.6%), with female unemployment decreasing by 0.1% and male unemployment increasing by 9.8% (largely due to an increase in male labour force involvement).
- **Employment** increased in Auckland (9.1%↑) and decreased in Canterbury (8%↓) during the last year.
- Total **employment** increased by 25,000; self-employed people accounted for over two thirds of this increase.
- The number of people **jobless** increased by 4.5% in the year to September. These are people who are either officially unemployed, available but not actively seeking work, or are actively seeking work but not immediately available for work.
- **Long term unemployment** (people unemployed for longer than 26 weeks) increased by 7.8% to 41,300 during the year to September.

Source: Statistics New Zealand: Household Labour Force Survey Sept 2011

Our young people

Māori youth unemployment (aged 15 -24) decreased from 26.8% to 25.7% during the year. Parallel figures for Pasifika youth were 29.8% down to 29.6%. Total youth unemployment was 16.2%; the same as the September quarter in 2010.

We also try and measure youth disengagement by looking at numbers who are “not in employment, education or training” (NEET). Currently, 7.2% of 15-19 year olds and 11.7% of 20-24 year olds are in the NEET category (Department of Labour, *Employment and Unemployment, September 2011 Quarter*).

Want a job? Don't live in Wellington

The Auckland/Canterbury phenomenon shows up in the unemployment statistics. The Auckland unemployment rate reduced from 7.4% to 6.8% over the September year. The Canterbury unemployment rate increased from 4.8% to 5.5%. However, the earthquakes do not seem to have done as much damage as cuts to government spending. Unemployment in Wellington rose from 4.8% to 6% over the year. Wellington economic activity expanded by only 0.2% in the September quarter (0.6% nationally; 1.25% in Auckland). Hotel and motel guest nights in the city fell to an eight year low (0.8 %↓) during the quarter (Dominion Post 16/11/2011).

In fact, despite the Rugby World Cup, unemployment rates increased everywhere except for Auckland and the Bay of Plenty (7.8%) where they decreased and in Southland (4.8%) where

unemployment was unchanged. Northland has the highest unemployment rate (8.7%) and Tasman, Nelson, Marlborough, West Coast – the lowest at 3.9%.

Unemployed people are over twice as likely (18%) to report they are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their lives overall than people not in the labour force (7%). They are more than three times as likely to be dissatisfied or very dissatisfied as those who are employed (5%).

Sources: Statistics New Zealand: Household Labour Force Survey Sept 2011, NZ General Social Survey, 2010

What's happening in the community?

*I ... have toast for tea because there's only
enough food for the kids*

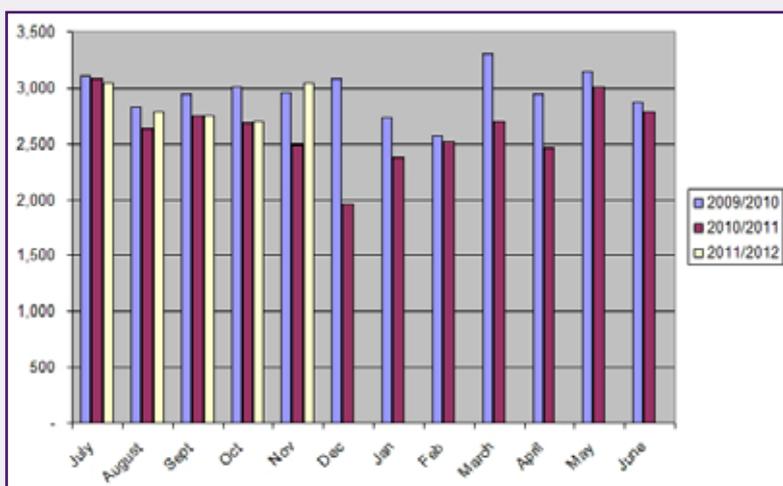
Presbyterian Support Otago

- VisionWest Foodbank in Auckland reported a drop in demand for food parcels and a reduced number of people visiting the foodbank during the September quarter.
- Demand for The Salvation Army food grants fell by 16% in Auckland and Northland in the three months to September. October food parcel numbers were 22% lower than in October 2010.
- *Increasing poverty of families indicated by increased numbers coming to school not having had breakfast. Started Breakfast Club on Mondays with just Weetbix to address this ...*
(Presbyterian Support Northern).
- Hamilton's Catholic Cathedral Centre served 812 Tuesday meals in the September 2011 quarter, in contrast to 756 people in the same quarter in 2010 (a 7% increase). “Many of these folks came back for seconds/thirds and were obviously hungry. There has been a noticeable increase in both men and women attending.”
- *From September 2010, to September 2011, the number of food parcels delivered has increased by 49%. In September 2011, there were 327 more adults (13 years and over) and 215 more children accessing the foodbank than at the same time last year* (Hamilton Combined Christian Foodbank).
- Food banks in other parts of the Waikato tell a similar story. *The foodbank has experienced a 34% increase in demand from last year. The previous year the demand was up 108%. The depth of the need has increased with clients presenting an increasing number of times* (Tokoroa).
- Food assistance provided by The Salvation Army during the year to September:



- Reduced by 2% in the Waikato / Hawkes Bay region compared to the previous year
- Increased by 14% higher in the Central Region
- Was 45% higher in the South Island even after excluding direct earthquake relief.

- Demand for Home of Compassion meals in Wellington in November has increased significantly since both November last year and October this year. Home of Compassion staff report many new faces arriving for breakfast (see graph of meals provided below).



Source: Home of Compassion, Wellington

- Catholic Social Services in Wellington issued 20 vouchers to families experiencing 'significant financial difficulty' in this quarter in contrast to only 10 in the previous quarter.
- In September, 1,000 people applied for 170 supermarket jobs in Ilam, Christchurch (Newstalk ZB 21 September).

How Many Receive Benefits?

I'm sick of being looked at like some kind of bum, it totally pisses me off. 'Cos I'm on a sickness benefit people kind of look down their noses at you, it really gets up on me. We try just as hard as the next person.

Presbyterian Support Otago

Numbers on main benefits



Source: Benefit Fact Sheet, MSD

Main changes over the last year to September 2011 include:

- Numbers receiving unemployment benefits fell by almost 15% (9,620 people).
- People receiving Domestic Purposes Benefits increased by 1.2%. (1,382 people).
- Numbers on all other benefits reduced, and the total number of people receiving benefits declined by 2.9% or just under 10,000.

Numbers of people receiving main benefits at the end of September 2009 - 2011

End of quarter	Unemployment Benefits	Domestic Purposes Benefits	Sickness Benefits	Invalid's Benefits	Other main benefits	All main benefits
Sep-09	60,660	107,658	56,384	85,015	17,094	326,811
% change 09-10	7.6%↑	4.7%↑	4.0%↑	0.3%↑	-5.2%↓	3.5%↑
Sep-10	65,281	112,765	58,661	85,305	16,200	338,212
% change 10-11	-14.7%↓	1.2%↑	0.0%	-0.9%↓	-4.2%↓	-2.9%↓
Sep-11	55,661	114,147	58,651	84,524	15,513	328,496
% change 09-11	-8.2%↓	6.0%↑	4.0%↑	-0.6%↓	-9.2%↓	0.5%↑

Source: Benefit Fact Sheet, MSD

This table refers to people aged 18 - 64 years, to reflect the minimum age of entitlement of most benefits and the age of eligibility for New Zealand Superannuation.

UB Comprises Unemployment Benefits and Unemployment Benefits – Hardship.

DPB Comprises Domestic Purposes Benefits – Sole Parent, Domestic Purposes Benefits – Care of Sick or Infirm, Domestic Purposes Benefits – Women Alone, and Emergency Maintenance Allowances.

SB Comprises Sickness Benefits and Sickness Benefits - Hardship.

OB Comprises Emergency Benefits, Independent Youth Benefits, Unemployment Benefits – Training and Unemployment Benefits – Hardship – Training, Unemployment Benefits – Student – Hardship, Widow's Benefits, and (until April 2004) Transitional Retirement Benefits.



- 103,058 or 31% of people receiving benefits came from the Auckland region.

When we look further back to 2009:

- There has been a small increase in numbers of benefit recipients (0.5%).
- This has largely been driven by increases in domestic purposes benefits (6% or 6,489) and sickness benefits (4% or 2,267).

Who gets what benefit?

Domestic purposes benefits

- Recipients are 87.7% female and 42.4% are Māori.
- Nearly 20% are aged 18-24.
- 46% are aged 25-39.

People living in one parent family households are more than twice as likely to say they are ‘very dissatisfied’ or ‘dissatisfied’ with their lives overall than people in couple households with or without children. They were also more likely to report feeling they did not have enough money, major problems with their house or flat, discrimination, feeling unsafe walking in their neighbourhood, and isolation ‘most’ or ‘all of the time’ (Statistics New Zealand, New Zealand General Social Survey 2010).

Invalid’s benefits

- Just over half are male
- 37.7% are aged 40-54
- Around 30% have a psychological or psychiatric condition

Sickness benefits

- Māori are over-represented (27.6%)
- Nearly 15% are aged 18-24
- Almost 42% have psychological or psychiatric conditions

Unemployment benefits

- Just over 70% are male (70.8%)
- 36.2% are Māori
- 28.1% are aged 18-24
- 12.5% are aged 55-64
- Nearly one third (32.6%) have been receiving a benefit of some sort between one and four years.
- Most (74%) have been receiving their current benefit for less than one year.

A November newspaper article suggests addictions are a major problem. The article cited figures provided under the Official Information Act and said “as of June 2011, 1,956 Aucklanders were on a Sickness or Invalid’s benefit with substance abuse the

primary reason for incapacity.” People with addictions become incapacitated because of the problems that go with addiction, e.g. liver disease, gastrointestinal problems, and bacterial infections etc (Stuff 03/11/11).

Hardship Assistance

Sept Quarter	Special Benefit (SB)	SB annual change	Temporary Additional Support (TAS)	TAS annual change	Total (SB+TAS)	Total annual change
2008	16,716		32,232		48,948	
2009	12,854	-23.1%↓	50,101	55.4%↑	62,955	28.6%↑
2010	10,300	-19.9%↓	54,725	9.2%↑	65,025	3.3%↑
2011	8,149	-20.9%↓	53,579	-2.1%↓	61,728	-5.1%↓

Source: MSD

Hardship Assistance fell in the last year in all categories. Special Benefit and Temporary Additional Support (TAS) numbers decreased by just over 5 per cent during the year to September 2011. This contrasted with a 3.3% increase in the 2010 year, and a 28.6% increase in the year before that. Special Benefits were replaced with TAS on 1 April 2006 and have been declining ever since. Māori are over represented in the numbers of people receiving hardship assistance in the September quarter 2011: Special Benefit (20%); and Temporary Additional Support (28%) (Source: MSD statistics).

Sept Quarter	Special Needs Grants (for Food)	Annual change	% Māori	Benefit Advances for Electricity, Gas and Water	Annual change	% Māori
2008	98,126		43.6	9,844		44.5
2009	131,750	34.3%↑	43.1	15,541	57.9%↑	43.6
2010	149,658	13.6%↑	44.9	13,978	-10.1%↓	44.4
2011	102,001	-32%↓	41.9	9,962	-28.7%↓	44.3

Source: MSD

Provision of Special Needs Grants (for food) was 32% lower in the September quarter of 2011 than during the same quarter in 2010. Benefit advances for electricity, water and gas also fell (29%). Māori consistently comprise around 41-45% of hardship assistance recipients.

Two likely reasons for decreased overall benefit numbers and decreased hardship assistance could be the impact of government Future Focus policies and reduced unemployment in Auckland owing to Rugby World Cup associated employment. Around 30% of beneficiaries come from the Auckland region, and if more of them have got jobs, the demand for financial assistance is likely to fall.



Future Focus policies introduced last September which tighten benefit eligibility are also likely to have an impact. Measures include:

- ‘Part-time work tests for Domestic Purposes Benefit-Sole Parent clients with children aged six years and over;
- Unemployment Benefit recipients need to reapply after 12 months, and undergo comprehensive work assessment;
- Graduated sanctions if obligations are not met;
- Repeat applicants for one-off hardship payments required to complete a budgeting activity (budgeting activities range from simple self-directed activities to attending budgeting seminars and seeking advice from budgeting services);
- More frequent medical assessments for Sickness Benefit clients in the early stages of receiving a benefit;
- From May 2011, Sickness Benefit recipients for more than 12 months receiving compulsory reviews.’

According to the Ministry of Social Development, by 30 June 2011:

- 5,374 Domestic Purposes Benefit-Sole Parent clients with part-time work obligations had cancelled their benefits
- ‘7,423 unemployment-related benefits were cancelled as a result of the 12 month reapplication process’
- ‘There were just over 120,000 referrals to some kind of budget activity because of the new hardship model’

(Source: MSD Annual Report 2010-11).

Statistics New Zealand provides an enlightening picture of life on a benefit. For every dollar average wage and salary households spend on their weekly expenditure, average beneficiary households spend 46 cents. Particular items are illustrated in the table below. They do not allow for average differences in household composition.

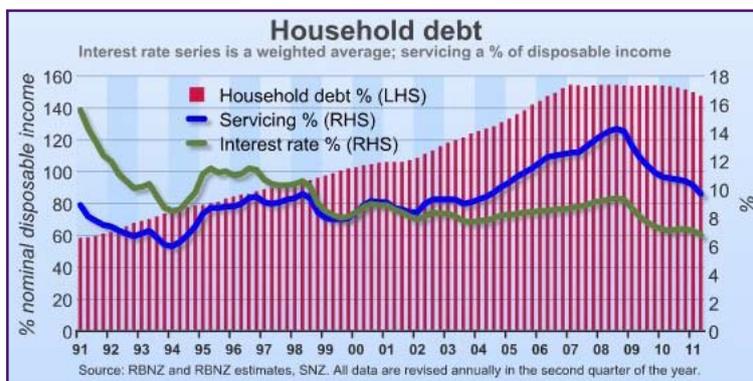
Beneficiary household expenditure for every dollar of wage/salary household expenditure (averages)	
Fruit and vegetables	50 cents
Health	38 cents
Alcoholic beverages	19 cents
Housing / utilities	74 cents

Source: Statistics New Zealand Table Builder

What about Debt?

Our typical client is nearly \$25,000 in debt and \$4,400 of that is already overdue

NZ Federation of Family Budgeting Services



Total housing and consumer loan debt increased around six-fold in dollar amounts between 1991 and 2011. Household debt in June 2011 was around 147% of household income after tax. This is about two and a half times what it was (58%) in March 1991. However, the graph above appears to indicate household debt as a percentage of household income has stabilised in recent years and declined during the last year (Source: Reserve Bank of New Zealand – Household Debt).

Bankruptcy figures fell in year to June 2011. The Ministry of Economic Development collects figures on bankruptcies and other ways of dealing with personal debts. Their figures for June years are reproduced below.

Personal Debt

	June 2009	June 2010	June 2011
Bankruptcy	2,521	3,054	2,718
No Asset Procedure	2,833	3,026	2,514
Summary Instalments	257	346	368

Source: Ministry of Economic Development

Briefly, **Summary Instalment Orders (SIO)** are formal arrangements between a debtor and creditors allowing people to pay back all, or an agreed part their debts by instalments. They are usually for three years, but can be made for five years. SIOs may be considered as an alternative to bankruptcy when a person has assets or income. Summary instalments provide a way for people to try to pay debt rather than face the considerable disadvantage associated with bankruptcy. They are designed to provide an opportunity to budget and to manage finances with the idea of preventing difficult financial positions in the future. Summary Instalment Orders have been consistently rising since June 2009.



No Asset Procedures are an alternative to bankruptcy and last for one year. During this time, creditors cannot pursue debts included in the NAP. People who qualify have no realisable assets and have total debts (excluding student loans) of not less than \$NZ 1,000 and not more than \$NZ40, 000. No asset procedures increased by 193 (nearly 7%) between June 2009 and 2010, and then fell by 512 (17%).

What’s happening in the community?

Almost half the population (48%) reported they had either not enough or just enough money to meet everyday needs

Statistics New Zealand (2011) New Zealand General Social Survey: 2010

- People with annual household incomes less than \$30,001 were more likely than others to:
 - Feel ‘dissatisfied’ or ‘very dissatisfied’ with their lives overall (12%)
 - Feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood at night (46%)
 - Report ‘poor’ or ‘fair’ health (26%)
 - Feel they had been discriminated against in the last 12 months (13%)

(Source: Statistics New Zealand (2011) New Zealand General Social Survey: 2010).

- Wellington City Mission report a 3% increase in budget advice client numbers from the previous quarter, and a 38% increase from the same quarter last year. “Much of the debt is moneys owed to finance companies.”
- *August ... we took on 60 new client budget cases; our busiest on record* (Kingdom Resources, Christchurch).
- *Last year “clients to NZFBS budgeting services arrived with ... \$428 million of debt, of which \$78 million was overdue. Budget advisers worked with clients to retire \$27 million of the overdue debt, around \$1,500 per client.*
- *Pressure on the whānau with having the appropriate paper work from a budgeter as to obtaining their entitlements which is leaving whānau tired and whakamā in having to face WINZ [Work and Income] and the SWiS [Social Worker In Schools] supporting the whānau in advocating on their behalf* (Presbyterian Support Northern).

- Groups have ‘raised concerns with Work and Income around the expectations on budgeting services e.g. wanting to see working budgets (no deficit before allowing approval for food grants; clients receiving mixed messages’ (VisionWest Community Trust).
- *It was my debt, I wanted to be responsible for it, I wanted to pay my debtors, and I didn’t want to go bankrupt ... ’cos I do want to own my own home, and I do want to be able to access credit if I do need it. So that was my decision, entirely my decision* (Presbyterian Support Otago).

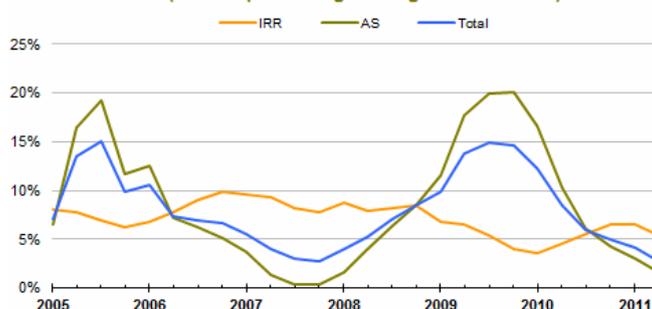
Reduced Government Help with Housing

Government assists low income families into affordable housing mainly via Accommodation Supplements (AS) and Income Related Rents (IRR) for low income state housing tenants. There were 310,406 AS recipients at the end of the September 2011 quarter. Income Related Rents tenants numbered 61,633 (June figure – September figures were unavailable at time of writing). Numbers receiving accommodation supplements increased between 2008 and 2010, but decreased by 4% during the last year.

September Quarter	Accommodation Supplement No. recipients	Annual Change	
2008	257,136		
2009	309,932	+52,796	20.5%↑
2010	323,478	+13,546	4.4%↑
2011	310,406	-13,072	-4.0%↓

Sources: MSD; Social Housing Assistance – DBH Updated 30 August 2011

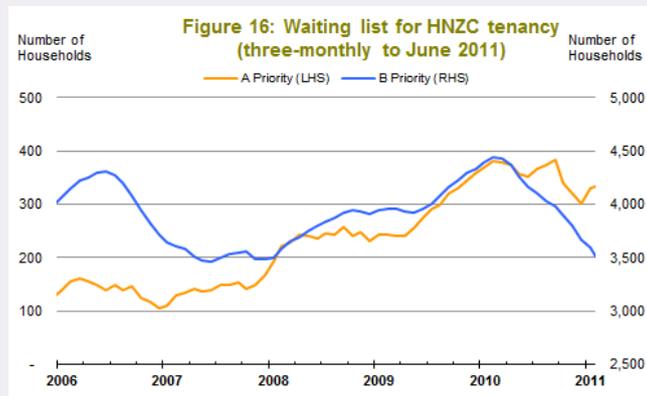
Figure 14: Government Housing Assistance (Annual percentage change to June 2011)



Source: Department of Building and Housing



Total Government housing assistance has been falling since around the middle of 2009. The waiting list for Housing New Zealand homes is also falling.



Source: Department of Building and Housing

Government housing support policies have changed. Reviewable tenancies were introduced for new state tenants on 1 July 2011, so people no longer deemed in need of a state house are ‘supported toward achieving private rental or home ownership’ (Minister of Housing, *Press Statement* 14/06/2011). This coincides with Housing New Zealand Corporation no longer adding people to the C and D waiting lists (‘moderate’ and ‘low’ need) from July 1 2011. People on the list prior to 1 July 2011 remain on the waiting list until “they accept an available state house not required by any priority applicant or exit the waiting list.” (Housing New Zealand Waiting List web page).

Housing assistance has been decreasing, but rents have been increasing. Auckland faces a significant housing shortage. New Zealand rents have increased 1.9% overall (the same as the median hourly earnings increase) in the last year. However, once we look at particular areas, a different picture emerges. In September 2011, the average weekly market rent for:

- Central Auckland was \$430, a rise of 4.4% from September 2010
- North Auckland was \$453, a rise of 8.1% from September 2010
- South Auckland was \$395, a rise of 5.9% from September 2010
- Christchurch was \$311, a rise of 6.1% from September 2010
- Dunedin was \$351, a rise of 4.8% from September 2010
- Hamilton was \$296, a rise of 1.4% from September 2010
- Wellington was \$399, a rise of 0.8% from September 2010

Wellington rent figures seem to support conclusions about sluggish growth in the region. So does the 85% increase in regional mortgagee sales during the September quarter (48 properties in contrast to 26 in the same period last year). Nationally, mortgagee

sales were 652, up from 584 in the previous 3 months. (Dominion Post Wellington 25 November – Terralink figures).

What’s happening in the community?

... changes have been made to the HNZ waiting list which is leaving whānau no options, but to seek market rent homes, living with whānau, caravan parks, living in over-crowded accommodation...

Presbyterian Support Northern.

- The Salvation Army survey in Hariana West (South Auckland) shows up to 23% of residents and 29% of children are living in crowded conditions. They estimate Auckland is 13,000 dwellings short.
- We get approximately 3 calls per day for emergency housing. Our houses are at full occupancy (VisionWest Community Trust).
- In the April to June quarter of 2011, the Downtown Community Ministry (Wellington) supported 412 people. Of these, 188 experienced some form of homelessness, and of these 188, 48 were couch-surfing and 47 were sleeping in the Night Shelter.
- *[This Housing NZ house is] way cold. And we’re still waiting for someone to come and putty up the windows. I’ve been waiting for like five and a half years for that. The windows don’t close, just all the real basic things. And the floor boards are dropping. And I’ve paid out my own money to paint in here and paint the two bedrooms and I shouldn’t have to.* (Presbyterian Support Otago, 2011, Voices of Poverty).



Children and Poverty

Number of children aged less than 18 years included in working age main benefits, as at the end of September 2011 by ethnicity of caregiver

Benefit group	Ethnic group of the caregiver					Total
	Maori	NZ European	Pacific Island	Other	Unspecified	
DPB related	84,177	60,931	21,230	15,098	2,635	184,071
IB	4,501	5,895	1,578	1,683	181	13,838
SB related	3,566	3,854	2,248	3,326	161	13,155
UB related	5,487	3,555	3,691	2,444	165	15,342
Other Main Benefits	1,545	1,000	1,154	1,315	99	5,113
Total	99,276	75,235	29,901	23,866	3,241	231,519

Source: MSD

Notes: The table includes working age caregivers (18 to 64 years)

This is a count of children, not benefits. Clients with more than one child aged less than 18 years will be counted more than once

DPB is Domestic Purposes Benefit; DPB related includes DPB-Caring for Sick or Infirm, DPB-Sole Parent, DPB-Woman Alone, and Emergency Maintenance Allowance

IB is Invalid's Benefit

SB related is Sickness Benefit and Sickness Benefit Hardship

UB related is Unemployment Benefit and Unemployment Benefit Hardship

Other Benefits include Emergency Benefit, Independent Youth Benefit, Unemployment Benefit Training, Unemployment Benefit Hardship Training, Unemployment Hardship Students and Widow's Benefit

There are 231,519 children living in households where a benefit is the source of income. Of these children, 84,177 (36%) live with a Māori caregiver receiving the DPB (September 2011). Almost 32% of all children dependent on a benefit for their economic wellbeing have New Zealand European caregivers.

Total numbers of children living in households where benefits comprise the income have decreased in the last year by 1.3% (from 234,679). However, numbers of children with Māori caregivers where the DPB is the income have increased by almost 2% (1.98%) from 82,546 during this period.

Care and protection notifications requiring further action (FAR) decreased by almost 1% in the last year, after increasing by almost 10% during the previous year. Care and protection notifications where 'Māori' was the prime ethnicity given, increased slightly. Māori comprise around 45% of notifications where further action is required.

Child, Youth and Family

Number of Care and Protection (C&P) Notifications and Investigations Completed

Quarter	C&P Notifications FARs	% change	C&P Notifications FARs with Ethnicity Maori	% change	Investigations Completed
Jul-Sep 2009	13,820		6,513		6,700
Jul-Sep 2010	15,092	9.2%↑	6,831	4.9%↑	6,556
Jul-Sep 2011	14,968	-0.8%↓	6,881	0.7%↑	6,645

Source: Child, Youth and Family

Notes to accompany table

C&P notifications: The numbers in the tables do not represent the number of distinct clients. Some clients may have multiple notifications during the period.

Investigations Completed: Investigations carried out and completed within a certain time period are not necessarily related to the notifications received within that same period. From the September Quarter 2009 this data will include full assessments carried out which includes Child & Family Assessments and Formal Investigations. (Does not include the Safety assessment Outcomes)

Ethnicity: Please note that clients may have multiple ethnicities. Although Child, Youth and Family capture all ethnicities for a client we only report on the primary ethnicity as selected by the client and their family. Clients and their family are not always consistent in the primary ethnicity that they select. An ethnicity is not always recorded.

Out of home placements have reduced by 7.5% in the last year. Tamariki and rangatahi out of home placements have reduced by almost 9%. Māori comprise around 50% of all out of home placements.

Child, Youth and Family: Out of home placements

Quarter	All Out of Home Placements as at the end of the quarter	Māori children and young people in Out of Home Placements as at the end of the quarter
Jul-Sep 2009	4,626	2,331
Jul-Sep 2010	4,451	2,309
Apr-Jun 2011	4,153	2,053
Jul-Sep 2011	4,116	2,044

Source: Child, Youth and Family

Notes for table

Home Placements include: CYF Caregiver Placements, Residential Placements, Family/Whānau Placements, CFSS/Agency Placements, Family Home Placements, Other Placement types (including, boarding, school hostel, etc)

Ethnicity: Please note that clients may have multiple ethnicities. Although Child, Youth and Family capture all ethnicities for a client we only report on the primary ethnicity as selected by the client and their family. Clients and their family are not always consistent in the primary ethnicity that they select. An ethnicity is not always recorded.



Children and Families in the Community

What the services say

We currently have an influx of very complex family cases involving small babies and children where domestic violence is predominant. Some of this work is a “spin off” from young men coming through our domestic violence programme...

Catholic Social Services, Wellington

- Calls to the Christchurch Women's Refuge crisis line increased by 48% during the last year (Christchurch Press 30/10/2011).
- *Parents requesting disability allowance for children for counselling are being told they are to try public funded counselling providers first (such as Marinoto, CAMHS) even though we ... know full well ... they are ... funded to see the top 3% of all referrals ... These children ... go into no man's land as they have no funding to see us and are not in need enough to see the other providers* (Vision West Community Trust).
- *[A]t the end of the ten weeks they had a big presentation, certificates were given and a shared meal. I didn't go because I couldn't [take anything]* (Presbyterian Support Otago).

What the newspapers say

- Suicide figures for elderly have increased 11% to a 10 year high. Suicides amongst the 65-plus age group is growing with 54 deaths this year – around 10 per cent of all suicides (Stuff 20/11/2011).
- “...an average of 230 women and children stayed in [Women's Refuge] 45 safe houses – nine of which are in Auckland- every night in the year to August. Last year the number was 206” (Stuff 03/11/2011).

What the reports say

- 15% of Māori feel they have been discriminated against, while the figure for Europeans is 9%.
- However, Māori feel they have better face-to-face contact with whānau they don't live with than other groups. A total of 91% of Māori see their extended family, in contrast to 87% for Europeans and 57% for people from Asian communities (Source: Statistics New Zealand (2011) New Zealand General Social Survey: 2010).

About us

Vulnerability Reports are available on our website www.justiceandcompassion.org.nz. If you are involved in a social service agency and would like to contribute to future issues please contact NZCCSS on 04 473 2627 or email us at admin@nzccss.org.nz.

Disclaimer:

While every effort has been made by NZCCSS to accurately collect and interpret statistics and data provided in this report it is recommended that readers check original data sources where possible.