



<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>OECD Trust Survey Second Wave</b>		
<b>Report No:</b>	<b>2024-0129</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>26 June 2024</b>		
<b>To:</b>	<b>Minister for the Public Service</b>		
<b>Action Sought:</b>	<b>Note and agree</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	10 July 2024
<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Josh Masson, Chief Data Officer, Strategic Information Team,</b> 9(2)(a) privacy		
<b>Encl:</b>	Yes	<b>Priority:</b>	Low
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>IN CONFIDENCE</b>		

## **Executive Summary**

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1. This report identifies the key findings of the OECD survey on the drivers of trust in public institutions conducted in late 2023.
2. Results highlighted a range of areas where New Zealand performed well, including trust in the Public Service and satisfaction with administrative services. New Zealand also performed better than the OECD average in all measures related to decision-making on complex policy issues, including the perception that the government makes decisions based on evidence.
3. The report identified risks in low satisfaction in healthcare and educational system service users, as well as the perception of the integrity of public servants.
4. The OECD will release the results on 10 July at 11:30 pm New Zealand time.

## **Purpose of Report**

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5. This report outlines the key findings relevant to New Zealand from the second wave of the OECD trust survey.

## **Analysis**

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### **The OECD considers New Zealand a country with high trust in public services**

6. The OECD selected New Zealand for a country study on trust in public institutions, conducted in 2022. This involved interviews with New Zealand leaders from civil society, government, and academia, as well as a survey of the drivers of public trust. This first wave of the trust survey in 2021/22 also took place in 22 other OECD countries.
7. The Commission funded New Zealand's participation in the second wave of the OECD trust survey in 2023, which included a total 30 countries. The outputs of the survey include a multi country report and shorter country specific New Zealand report.

8. The OECD contracted the survey to be run in New Zealand in October 2023, immediately after general election, and the survey closed on 27 November. Results presented below are based on a representative sample of 2000 New Zealanders and more than 58,000 people across the 30 countries who participated in the survey's second wave.

### **New Zealand continues to perform well on trust in the public service and satisfaction with administrative services**

9. Similarly to most OECD countries, New Zealanders placed more trust in the police (71%), the public service (59%), courts and the judicial system (60%) than in the central government as a whole (46%). More than forty percent of the population reported high or moderately high trust in local government (45%) and national parliament (41%). Political parties (32%) and news media (37%) were the least trusted institutions in New Zealand. New Zealand was among the top performers for trust in the public service, well above the OECD average, and scores improved from the 2021 survey.
10. For almost all measures, New Zealanders' satisfaction with day-to-day interactions with government was above the OECD average. For example, 70% were satisfied with the administrative services they used, compared to a 66% OECD average. Additionally, New Zealand rated in the top countries on fairness in government treatment of its citizens.
11. In the report the OECD said, "New Zealand also performed better than the OECD average in all measures of decision-making on complex policy issues." This was supported by a high level of respondents agreeing that the government takes decisions based on evidence (51%) – this is well above the OECD average (41%).
12. New Zealanders were also more optimistic than people across the OECD that the political system allows people like them to have a say in what government does - 44% of people in New Zealand thought this, compared to a 30% OECD average.

### **Risks**

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13. The report notes that there is scope for improvement in the responsiveness of public institutions to adapt services to people's needs and expectations, improving the perception of public employees' integrity, and making use of innovation and people's feedback. We measure key drivers of trust in the quarterly Kiwis Count survey.
14. The OECD found 42% of New Zealanders believed that public employees would refuse bribes to speed up service access; this is higher than the OECD average of 36% and among the top scores for this question. However, there was a decline in this score since the first wave of the survey, dropping 6 percentage points. The OECD average declined slightly, but about a third of countries improved their scores on this question.
15. In contrast, last year the Commission's Kiwis Count survey, which has 2000 participants per quarter, started regularly capturing perceptions of integrity by asking if survey participants thought that public servants are honest. Scores have remained strong at 70 -71% for the past 3 quarters.
16. Another area for improvement identified in the OECD report was satisfaction with the education system. Slightly more than half of people in New Zealand (55%) with recent

experience with the education system are satisfied with it, compared to 57% on average across the OECD. This is an improvement over the score the first wave of the survey (51%).

17. The gap in satisfaction with the healthcare system among recent users is even larger (46% in New Zealand compared to 52% in the OECD overall). This is down from 54% in the first wave of the survey. The report notes that satisfaction with the healthcare system was down in 16 of the 19 countries that participated in both survey waves. The drop may be due to timing of the first survey being during the first Omicron wave of Covid-19 that drove the largest reported infections of the pandemic which may have inflated scores.

### **Financial Implications**

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18. The cost of New Zealand's participation was €25,000 (approximately NZD\$43,000).
19. As this stage, the Commission has not committed to funding participation in the 2025 wave of the OECD trust survey.

### **Next Steps**

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20. The OECD has scheduled a virtual launch and publication of their reports on 10 July. We will provide your office with a release plan for the reports.
21. The Commission is also sharing the OECD reporting with relevant agencies and will update our website to include links to the reports when published.

### **Recommended Actions**

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We recommend that you:

- a **note** the OECD will release the results of a multi-national survey on trust on 10 July, including a short summary of New Zealand results.

*Noted*

- b **agree** that Te Kawa Mataaho release this briefing in full once it has been considered by you, and after the OECD has released the final public report.

*Agree/disagree.*

Hon Nicola Willis  
**Minister for the Public Service**