

DESIRED OUTCOMES

All people are satisfied with their participation in leisure and recreation activities. All people have adequate time in which they can do what they want to do and can access an adequate range of different opportunities for leisure and recreation.

Leisure and Recreation

INTRODUCTION

Both leisure and recreation are crucial components of a balanced and healthy lifestyle. Leisure time is a time when people can do what they want, separate from work and other commitments.

Recreation and leisure play an important role in social wellbeing by providing people with a sense of identity and personal autonomy. Involvement in leisure-time activities gives greater meaning to individual and community life and contributes to people's overall quality of life. Recreation can encourage personal growth, self-expression and increased learning opportunities, satisfying needs not met in people's non-leisure time.

For many people, participation in leisure and recreation improves physical and mental health. Recreation often involves a physical activity or sport. Increased physical activity can lead to fewer health problems and higher productivity at work, especially when combined with a balanced diet and healthy lifestyle.

The benefits for mental health are equally important. Several studies have demonstrated links between regular physical activity and a reduction in the symptoms of mild or moderate depression, stress and anxiety. Passive leisure also has benefits for mental health, by providing an outlet for the mind. It may provide physical rest, tension release and opportunities to enjoy nature and escape from the daily routine.

Participation in leisure and recreation activities can also have social benefits. It creates opportunities for socialisation and contributes to social cohesion by allowing people to connect and network with others. It can also contribute to family bonding as families do things together in their leisure time.

INDICATORS

Three indicators are used in this chapter. They are: satisfaction with leisure time, participation in sport and active leisure and participation in cultural and arts activities. Together, these indicators present a picture of how people feel about their leisure time and also what they do in their leisure time.

The first indicator is satisfaction with leisure time. This measures how people feel about both the quantity and quality of leisure time available to them.

The second indicator measures people's participation in sport and active leisure. Moderate physical activity can improve a number of health outcomes, risk factors and diseases. This indicator gives us a sense of how active New Zealanders are.

The final indicator, participation in cultural and arts activities, measures people's involvement in cultural activities. Cultural activities contribute to individual growth, as well as provide opportunities for social cohesion and the passing on of cultural traditions.

Satisfaction with leisure time

DEFINITION

The proportion of people aged 15 and over who are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their leisure time as reported in the *Quality of Life in New Zealand’s Largest Cities Survey 2004*.

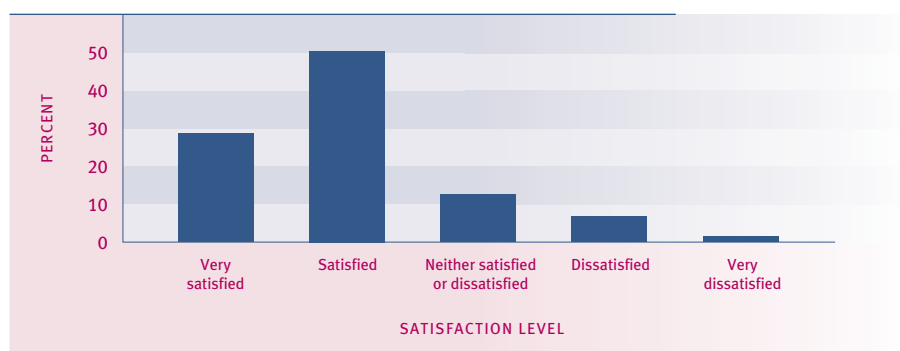
RELEVANCE

Leisure time is a crucial component of a balanced and healthy lifestyle. It is a time when people can do what they want, separate from work and other commitments. New Zealanders’ subjective feelings about their leisure time provide information on how people feel about both the quality and quantity of their leisure.

CURRENT LEVEL AND TRENDS

According to the *Quality of Life in New Zealand’s Largest Cities Survey 2004*, four in five New Zealanders (80 percent) are satisfied overall with their leisure time. Specifically, 51 percent are “satisfied” and 29 percent are “very satisfied”.

Figure L1.1 Satisfaction with leisure time, people aged 15 and over, 2004



Source: Auckland City Council et al (2005) *Quality of Life in New Zealand’s Largest Cities*

SEX DIFFERENCES

There are minimal differences between the sexes in reported satisfaction with leisure time. Eighty percent of men and 79 percent of women report they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their leisure time.

AGE DIFFERENCES

While the majority of New Zealanders are satisfied with their leisure time, those aged 25–49 years are less satisfied overall (74 percent). This age group tends to have larger work and family commitments than other groups, which may impinge on the time they have available for leisure. In comparison, those aged 15–24 years, and those aged 50–64 years are more likely to report being satisfied with their leisure time with total satisfaction levels of 78 percent and 83 percent respectively. Those aged 65 years and over report the highest levels of overall satisfaction with their leisure time (92 percent).

Figure L1.2 Satisfaction with leisure time, by age, 2004



Source: Auckland City Council et al (2005) Quality of Life in New Zealand's Largest Cities

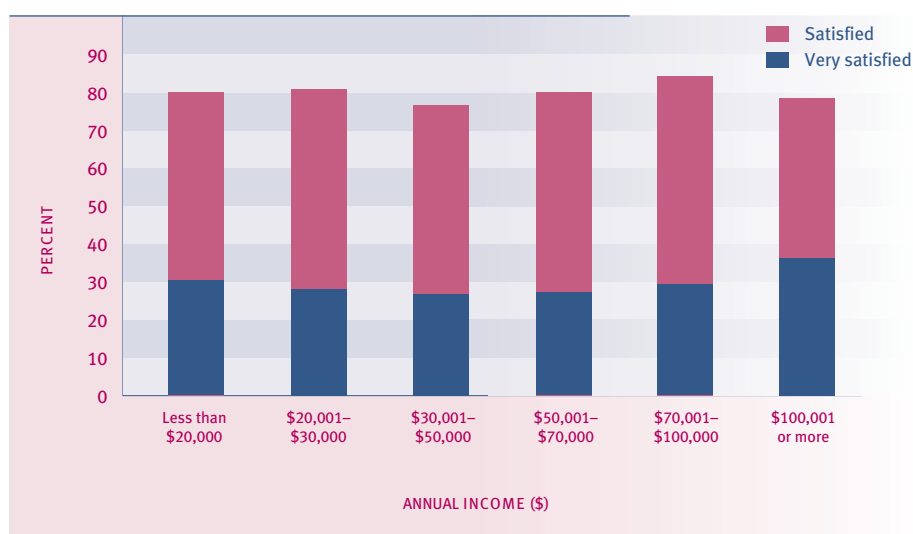
ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

Most New Zealanders, regardless of ethnicity, are satisfied overall with their leisure time. The European ethnic group reports the highest level of total satisfaction (81 percent), followed by Māori and those of the “Other” ethnic group (both 77 percent), and Pacific peoples (73 percent). The Asian/Indian ethnic group reports the lowest level of satisfaction (71 percent).

PERSONAL INCOME DIFFERENCES

Levels of satisfaction with leisure time vary slightly by the level of personal income, but not in a consistent way. In 2004, satisfaction with leisure time was highest for people with a personal income between \$70,001 and \$100,000 per year, with 84 percent of the people in this income range saying they were either “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with their leisure time. Two income groups had below average levels of satisfaction – they were those with a personal income of between \$30,001 and \$50,000 (76 percent) and over \$100,001 (78 percent).

Figure L1.3 Satisfaction with leisure time, by personal income, 2004



Source: Auckland City Council et al (2005) Quality of Life in New Zealand's Largest Cities

Participation in sport and active leisure

DEFINITION

The proportion of adults aged 18 years and over and young people aged 5–17 years who were physically active, as measured by the Sport and Physical Activity Surveys of 1997/1998, 1998/1999 and 2000/2001. Being physically active means they took part in at least 2.5 hours of sport and/or leisure-time physical activity in the seven days before being interviewed.

RELEVANCE

Participation in sport and active leisure is a source of enjoyment and entertainment. It can contribute to personal growth and development and is a good way to meet new people. It also has positive benefits for physical fitness and mental wellbeing.

CURRENT LEVEL AND TRENDS

Seventy percent of adults aged 18 years or over and 66 percent of young people aged 5–17 years were reported to be physically active in 2000/2001.

More adults were physically active in 2000/2001 than in 1997/1998 (67 percent). Over the same period there was no significant change in the proportion of young people who were active. However young people who were sedentary (who had done no activity in the past two weeks) increased from 8 percent to 13 percent.

Table L2.1

Activity level (%) of adults and young people, by sex, 2000/2001

Activity level	Young people 5–17 years			Adults 18 years and over		
	Boys	Girls	All	Men	Women	All
Sedentary	11.6	14.1	12.8	8.9	9.6	9.3
Relatively inactive	17.9	23.4	20.7	21.0	20.7	20.9
Inactive	29.5	37.6	33.5	30.0	30.4	30.2
Relatively active	20.9	26.1	23.5	13.3	18.3	15.9
Highly active	49.6	36.3	43.0	56.7	51.4	54.0
Active	70.5	62.4	66.5	70.0	69.6	69.8

Source: Sport and Recreation New Zealand (2003a)

SEX DIFFERENCES

Men and women were equally likely to be physically active in 2000/2001. This resulted from an increase in the proportion of women who were physically active, from 65 percent in 1997/1998 to 70 percent in 2000/2001. In each of the survey years, men were more likely than women to be highly active (five hours or more in the seven days before the interview).

In 2000/2001, a smaller proportion of girls (62 percent) were physically active than boys (70 percent) and boys were much more likely to be highly active than girls. An increase in the proportion doing no physical activity at all in the past two weeks occurred for boys and girls between 1997/1998 and 2000/2001.

AGE DIFFERENCES

Adults aged 65 or over became the most active adult age group in 2000/2001 (76 percent), with the proportion of active adults of this age increasing from 67 percent in 1997/1998. Smaller but significant increases were also apparent for 50–64 year olds and 35–49 year olds.

Comparing across all age groups, 16–17 year olds were the least likely to be active (49 percent in 2000/2001). The proportion of young people aged 13–15 years old that were active fell from 74 percent in 1997/1998 to 62 percent in 2000/2001.

ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

European adults were more likely to be physically active than adults of other ethnic groups in 2000/2001. In that year the proportion of Europeans who were physically active reached 72 percent, an increase from 68 percent in 1997/1998.

Young Māori and Pacific peoples were much less likely to be physically active in 2000/2001 than in 1997/1998. The proportion of young Pacific people who were sedentary (did no activity in the two weeks before the interview) rose from 6 percent in 1997/1998 to 33 percent in 2000/2001. The proportion of young Māori who were sedentary rose from 6 percent to 18 percent over this period.

Table L2.2

Activity level (%) of young people aged 5–17 years, by ethnic group, 2000/2001

Activity level	European	Māori	Pacific	Other
Sedentary	9.3	18.4	32.9	7.1
Relatively inactive	21.7	15.9	19.8	24.0
Inactive	31.0	34.3	52.7	31.1
Relatively active	23.8	18.4	21.7	38.0
Highly active	45.2	47.3	25.6	30.9
Active	69.0	65.7	47.3	68.9

Source: *Sport and Recreation New Zealand (2003b)*

Table L2.3

Activity level (%) of adults aged 18 years and above, by ethnic group, 2000/2001

Activity level	European	Māori	Pacific	Other
Sedentary	7.8	14.8	9.5	21.0
Relatively inactive	19.8	20.9	28.2	30.0
Inactive	27.6	35.7	37.7	51.1
Relatively active	16.1	13.4	14.8	19.3
Highly active	56.4	50.9	47.5	29.6
Active	72.4	64.3	62.3	48.9

Source: *Sport and Recreation New Zealand (2003b)*

Participation in cultural and arts activities

DEFINITION

The proportion of the population aged 15 and over who had experienced one or more of the cultural activities included in the *2002 Cultural Experiences Survey*. Respondents were asked to report on activities they experienced over either a 12-month period (for goods and services accessed or experienced relatively infrequently) or a four-week recall period (for activities experienced on a more regular basis).

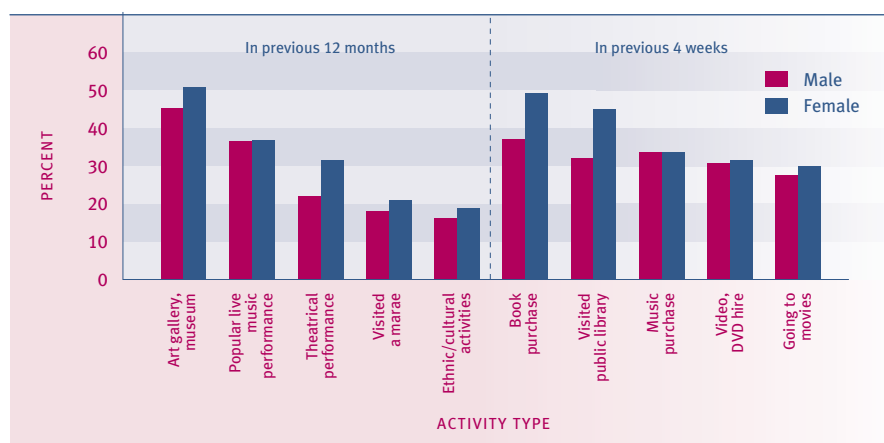
RELEVANCE

Cultural activities are an integral part of leisure and recreation. People participate in cultural activities for a wide variety of reasons: for enjoyment and entertainment, for personal growth and development, as a means of expression, to learn new skills, to meet new people and to pass on cultural traditions.

CURRENT LEVEL AND TRENDS

The vast majority of New Zealanders aged 15 and over (93 percent or 2.6 million people) experience one or more of the cultural activities included in the *2002 Cultural Experiences Survey*. The most popular of the less frequent activities included in the survey (those experienced over the past year) were visiting an art gallery or museum (48 percent) and attending a popular live music performance (37 percent). The most popular activities undertaken in the previous four weeks were purchasing books (43 percent) and visiting a public library (39 percent). Lack of time and cost were the main barriers to experiencing cultural activities more often, or at all.

Figure L3.1 **Proportion of the population aged 15 and over who experienced cultural activities, by activity type and sex, 2001/2002**



Source: Statistics New Zealand (2002a)

SEX AND AGE DIFFERENCES

Women (95 percent) were slightly more likely to experience one or more of the cultural activities included in the survey than men (92 percent). Activities with a much higher proportion of women than men participating included purchasing a book, visiting a library, and going to a theatrical performance. There was no difference in the proportion of men and women who had purchased music.

Younger people were more likely to experience at least one of the cultural activities included in the survey than people in the older age groups. In 2002, virtually all 15–24 year olds (98 percent) and 96 percent of 25–44 year olds took part in one or more of the surveyed activities. Participation was lowest among people aged 65 years and over (81 percent). Popular activities among younger people included hiring a video or DVD (53 percent) and purchasing music (49 percent). Older people (65 years and over) were more likely to visit a public library than other age groups, with 46 percent reporting this activity.

ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

Māori were more likely to have participated in at least one of the cultural activities included in the survey than European or Pacific peoples (Māori 97 percent; European 93 percent; Pacific 92 percent). Popular activities experienced by Māori included visiting a marae (69 percent) and attending a popular live music performance (40 percent). European New Zealanders were more likely to report visiting an art gallery or museum than other groups (51 percent), while Pacific peoples had the highest rate of participation in community-based ethnic or cultural activities (39 percent).

Table L3.1 **Proportion (%) of population aged 15 and over who had participated in cultural activities, by activity type and ethnic group, 2001/2002**

	Māori	Pacific peoples	European
In the previous 12 months			
Art gallery, museum	42	27	51
Popular live music performance	40	27	39
Theatrical performance	18	19	30
Visited a marae	69	22	14
Ethnic/cultural activities	20	39	14
In the previous four weeks			
Book purchase	40	29	45
Visited public library	34	31	39
Music purchase	32	33	34
Video, DVD hire	39	26	31
Going to movies	23	21	30
Any cultural activity	97	92	93

Source: Statistics New Zealand (2002a)

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

In 2002, 94 percent of people living in urban areas experienced one or more of the cultural activities included in the survey, compared to 93 percent of people living in secondary urban areas and 91 percent of those living in minor urban and rural areas. Comparing across regional council areas, Wellington had the highest proportion of people who experienced at least one of the surveyed activities (97 percent), while Taranaki had the lowest level of participation (87 percent).