Research NewZ

August 2026

Rangahau Aotearoa
Research New Zealand

August news update

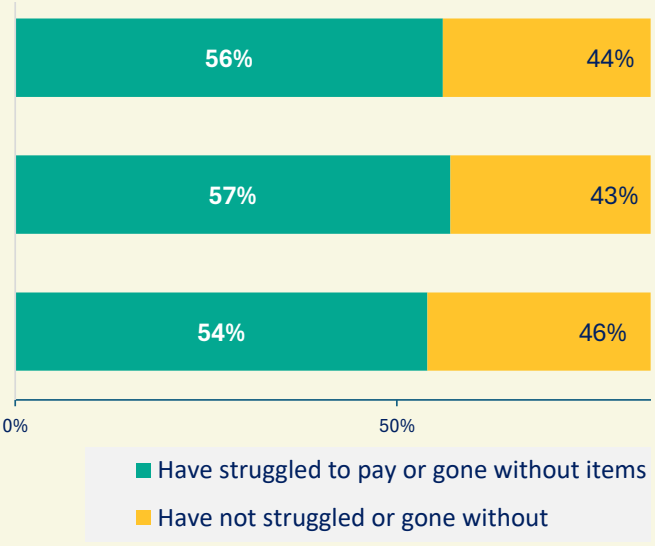


A lot has happened since our last newsletter in March, including the on-off war in the Straits of Hormuz, the Football World Cup, the Commonwealth Games and closer to home, Matariki, the start of the Māori New Year.

However, the general state of the economy and the cost of living crisis continue to put a damper on things as we approach the upcoming General Election in November. With this in mind, we conducted another one of our 'cost-of-living' polls late in July (the last almost 6 months ago) and this shows how difficult many of us are finding it at the moment. This poll, the seventh in the series since March 2023, continues to paint a very gloomy picture with inflation expecting to rise beyond 4%.

As Figure 1 shows, well over 50% of respondents said they had struggled or gone without one of the six everyday items covered by the poll: transportation, medical care when feeling unwell, power and other utility bills, mortgage or rent bills, food and groceries, and clothing, including school supplies.

Figure 1: The proportion who indicated they had struggled or gone without in the last three months, in at least one of the areas measured



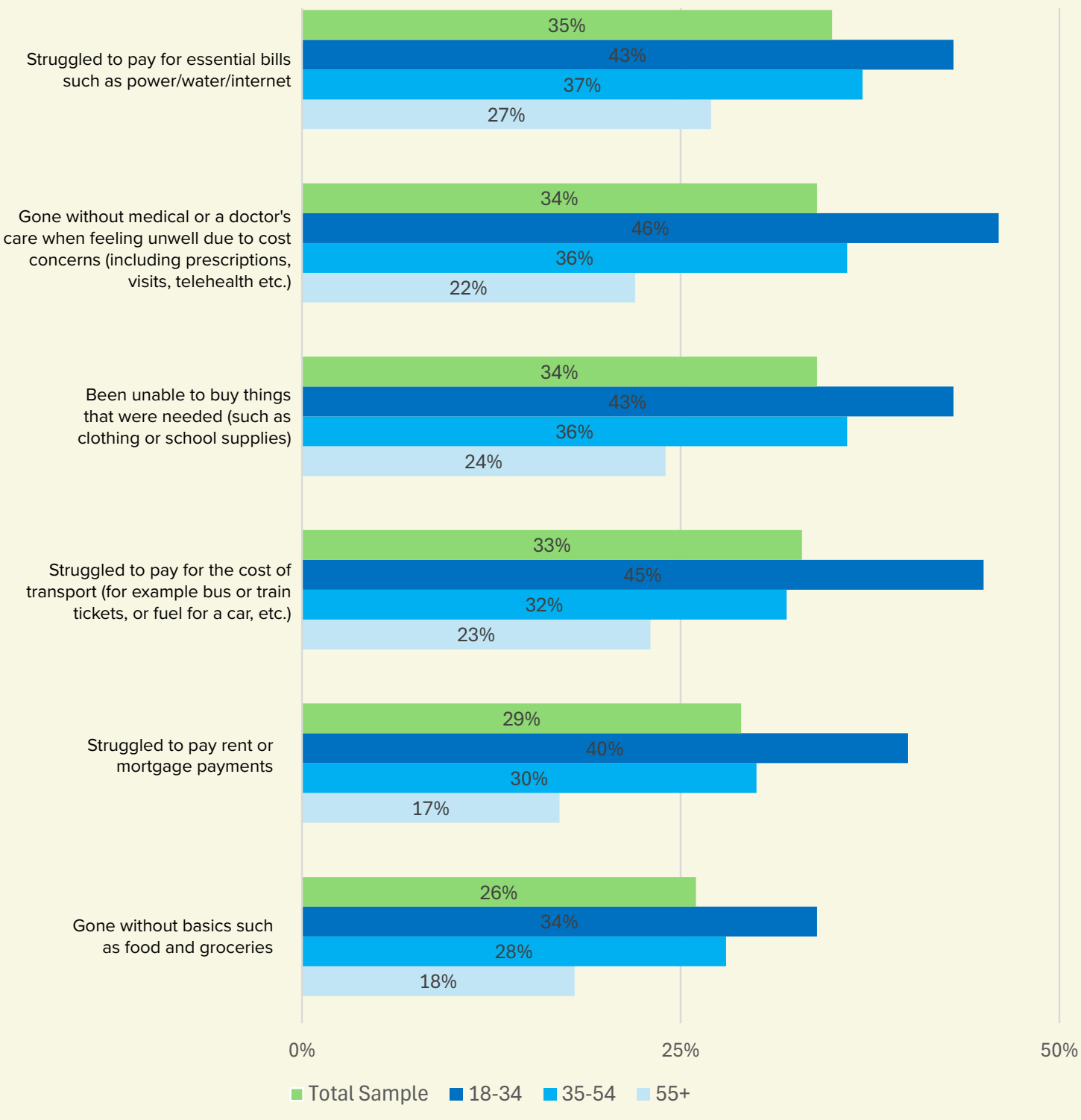


Looking a little more deeply at the detail, all six everyday expenditure items continue to have significant numbers of New Zealanders (between 26% and 35%) saying they have 'struggled to pay for or gone without' the item in the 3 months prior to the poll.

Particularly hard hit are young adults (18-34) when compared with other age groups – with this cohort including those living with their parents, in a flatting situation and those with young children.

The table below shows the July results by age.

Figure 2: Time series - Given the current cost of living crisis, which of the following (if any) have applied to you in the last three months? Have you ...?





In other polling news, particularly appropriate given the General Election is in 3 months' time on 7 November, our March 2026 poll found that the large majority of respondents (93%) agreed with at least one of five proposed parliamentary reforms. The most popular were:

- Setting limits on the amount individuals can donate to political parties (69% agreed).
- Providing more education about how our Parliament works (81% agreed).

In comparison, the least popular were:

- Increasing the parliamentary term from 3 to 4 years (46% agreed).
- Making voting compulsory (50% agreed).
- Dropping the voting age from 18 to 16 years (22% agreed).

And whilst we're still in the depths of Winter, a poll in March 2026 found that 38% of respondents wanted daylight savings to either end (so that we permanently stayed on (Winter) NZ standard time) or we put our clocks forward permanently (so that daylight saving becomes the new normal NZ standard time). However, a significantly higher percentage (47%) stated they favoured the current system. When we compare these results with those of the same poll five years ago, our overriding conclusion is that there has been no change in opinion!

If you would like to contact us, please do so by ringing Emanuel Kalafatelis (Managing Partner) on **027 500 4401**, or emailing him on **emanuel@researchnz.com**.

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