

Measuring the impacts of social housing

Our new working paper Measuring the wellbeing impacts of public policy: social housing - examines the impact of placement in social housing on peoples' wellbeing. The paper tests a novel method of combining administrative and survey data to connect wellbeing measures with social service usage and includes preliminary results.

The wellbeing measures used are consistent with the wellbeing domains set out in our [Wellbeing measurement approach](#).

SIA working paper, November 2018

Measuring the wellbeing impacts of public policy: social housing. Using linked administrative and survey data to evaluate the wellbeing impacts of receiving social housing

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Combining survey and administrative data to quantify impact

It is difficult to know if or how social support makes a difference in people's lives without robust evaluation of those impacts. Administrative data can provide good information on service use over time, but not a measure of service impact, or outcomes. Survey data often has good outcome measures, but typically lacks information of service usage and how this changes over time. Our social housing working paper examines the impact of social services on people's lives. It does this by linking administrative data and survey data to quantify the impact of social services in terms of the actual wellbeing outcomes experienced by a small sample of people, before and after living in social housing. Although we identified a number of methodological challenges in the analysis of social housing outcomes, the use of linked survey and administrative data in this way has strong potential to be applied to other areas of social policy.

The impact of social housing on New Zealander's wellbeing

A small sample size and difficulty in identifying people before they move into social housing mean that the results of our analysis are experimental and should not be seen in isolation from other research on the impact of social housing. However, our analysis suggests wellbeing improves for people who move into social housing. They experience improved housing quality and more free time, but report lower feelings of safety in their new neighbourhood. People also report a higher overall satisfaction with their lives.

Toward the end of 2018 we will re-execute the research with the inclusion of Statistics NZ's latest New Zealand General Social Survey data. We look forward to sharing the results early in 2019, which, together with this working paper, can support housing agencies' own thinking when developing housing policy.

Work with us

We're releasing this working paper to share our work and encourage feedback on our research method before we publish it as a final report.

Please get in contact if you have [feedback](#) or would like to [work with us](#) to apply the method to your work. Your contribution will help develop new insights and build wellbeing measurement capability across New Zealand.

Data analysts can [view or download the code](#) behind the method for their own work from the Social Investment Agency's GitHub repository. GitHub is an open source code sharing platform. Please [let us know how you get on](#).

More information

For a detailed explanation of the research method and preliminary findings, read our working paper [Measuring the wellbeing impacts of public policy: social housing \[PDF, 1.3 MB\]](#)

For media enquiries [click here](#).

Disclaimer

The results in this working paper are not official statistics. They have been created for research purposes from the Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) managed by Statistics NZ. The opinions, findings, recommendations and conclusions expressed in this working paper are those of the author(s), not Statistics NZ or other government agencies.

Access to the anonymised data used in this study was provided by Statistics NZ in accordance with security and confidentiality provisions of the Statistics Act 1975. Only people authorised by the Statistics Act 1975 are allowed to see data about a particular person, household, business or organisation. The results in this working paper have been made confidential to protect these groups from identification.

Careful consideration has been given to the privacy, security and confidentiality issues associated with using administrative and survey data in the IDI. Further details can be found in the privacy impact assessment for the IDI available from www.stats.govt.nz.

The results are based in part on tax data supplied by Inland Revenue to Statistics NZ under the Tax Administration Act 1994. This tax data must only be used for statistical purposes. No individual information may be published or disclosed in any other form, nor provided to Inland Revenue for administrative or regulatory purposes.

Any person who has had access to the unit-record data has certified that they have been shown and have read and understood section 81 of the Tax Administration Act 1994, which relates to secrecy. Any discussion of data limitations or weaknesses is in the context of using the IDI for statistical purposes and is not related to the data's ability to support Inland Revenue's core operational requirements.