

## **Netsafe's research reveals New Zealanders escalating negative online experiences for 2023**

Findings released by Netsafe as part of its 2023 annual population survey data reveal the state of New Zealanders experiences with harm as compared to 2018 when the research was last performed.

Nearly half of Māori (46%) have experienced harmful digital communications in the past year that include unwanted sexual advances, false allegations, racist remarks and online stalking.

Thirteen percent of all New Zealanders have personally experienced online hate speech in the past year. Compared to 2018, fewer New Zealanders now report not experiencing any form of online hate speech in the past year.

New Zealanders under the age of 30, those who are neurodiverse, LGBTQIA+ community members, those with long-term health issues and Auckland residents are more likely than average to have experienced hate speech in the last 12 months.

Perceived reasons for being targeted by hate speech most often include ethnicity, race, gender, and political views.

In the research, Netsafe revealed that nearly half, 46%, for both the general population and Māori population have received experienced harmful digital communications in the past year.

It also revealed that digital harm hurt just over a tenth (14%) of the general population's lives, compared to over a third (39%) of Māori.

We need first-hand knowledge from New Zealanders to truly understand what is going online says Netsafe CEO Brent Carey.

“These stats across our research show us Māori, New Zealanders under the age of 30, those who are neurodiverse, LGBTQIA+ community members, are at the forefront of digital harm and are being attacked more than any other group. Everyone deserves to use technology without the fear of being attacked online.”

“Even though people are aware of online harm, it can still hurt someone's mental well-being. Helplines, the health sector and community support services are important for assisting all New Zealanders to report and recover from online harm.”

“If you're Māori, or neurodiverse, from the LGBTQIA+ community the data shows you are much more likely to become a victim of online harm,” says Carey.

Now that we have up to date information from 2023 about the size of the online harm problem, we need to start mobilising support and resources for various communities and addressing perpetrators behaviours online.”

Just under a quarter (24%) of Māori and the general population who experienced unwanted digital communications sought support services, something Carey wants to see increase in the coming years.

“We want people to contact Netsafe and other helplines for help and support and for additional funding of programs to be developed that focus on the perpetrators of online harm to dissuade perpetrators from hurting people online.”

## **Ends**

### **About Netsafe**

Netsafe is an independent non-profit organisation with an unrelenting focus on online safety. We keep people of all ages safe online by providing free support, advice and education. Visit [netsafe.org.nz](https://netsafe.org.nz) for free resources and to report incidents of online harm.

### **Netsafe’s 2023 annual population data**

The research was commissioned by Netsafe and carried out by Kantar Public.

<https://netsafe.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/NetSafe-trended-APS-report-28082023.pdf>  
(Trended APS)

<https://netsafe.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/NetSafe-online-hate-speech-APS-report-28082023.pdf> (Online hate speech)

<https://netsafe.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/NetSafe-Maori-population-APS-report-28082023.pdf> (Māori Population)

<https://netsafe.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/NetSafe-2023-APS-report-28082023.pdf>  
(General Population)

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