

# A significant minority of respondents experienced victimisation while buying drugs in the past 6 months

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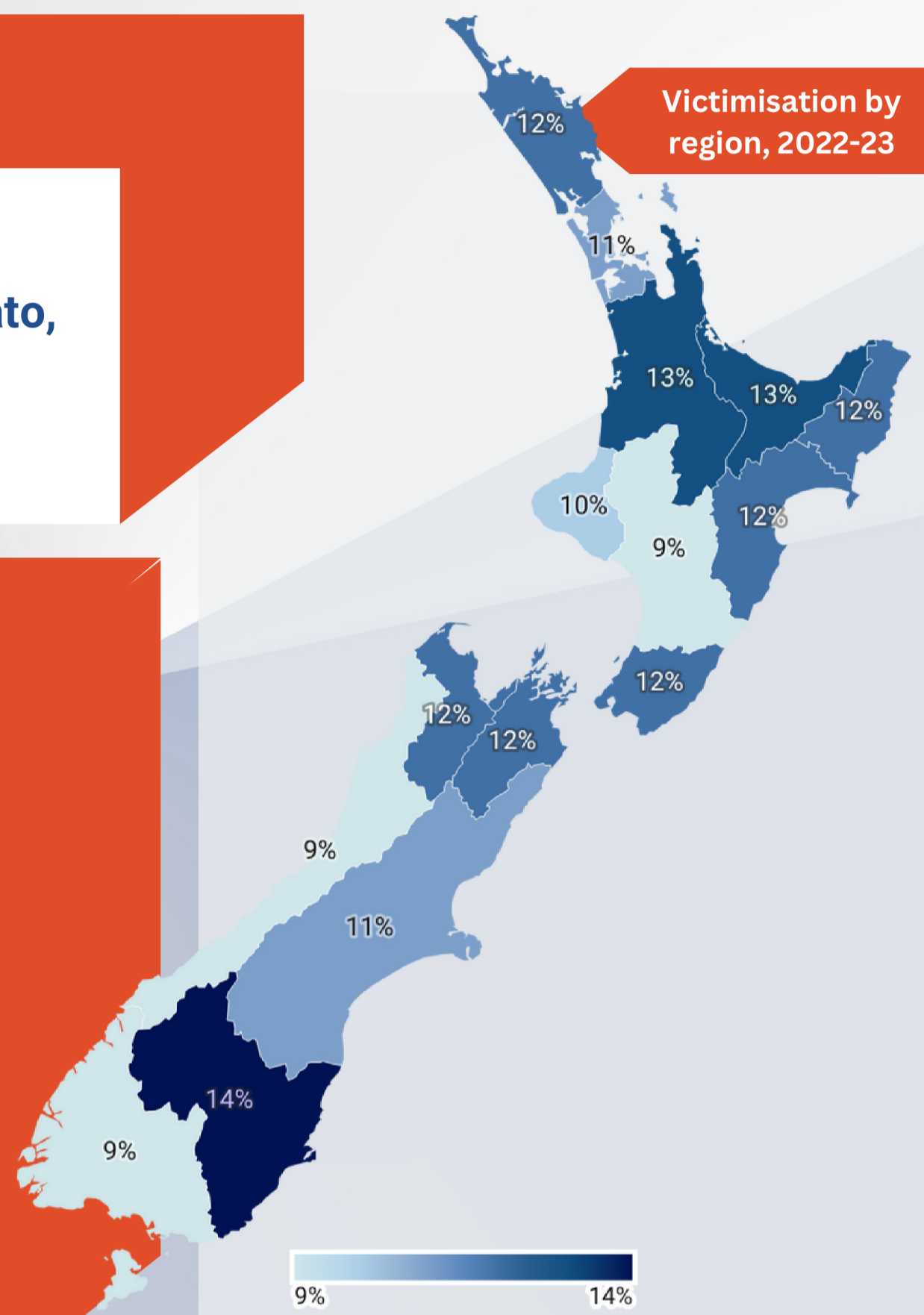
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## Key findings

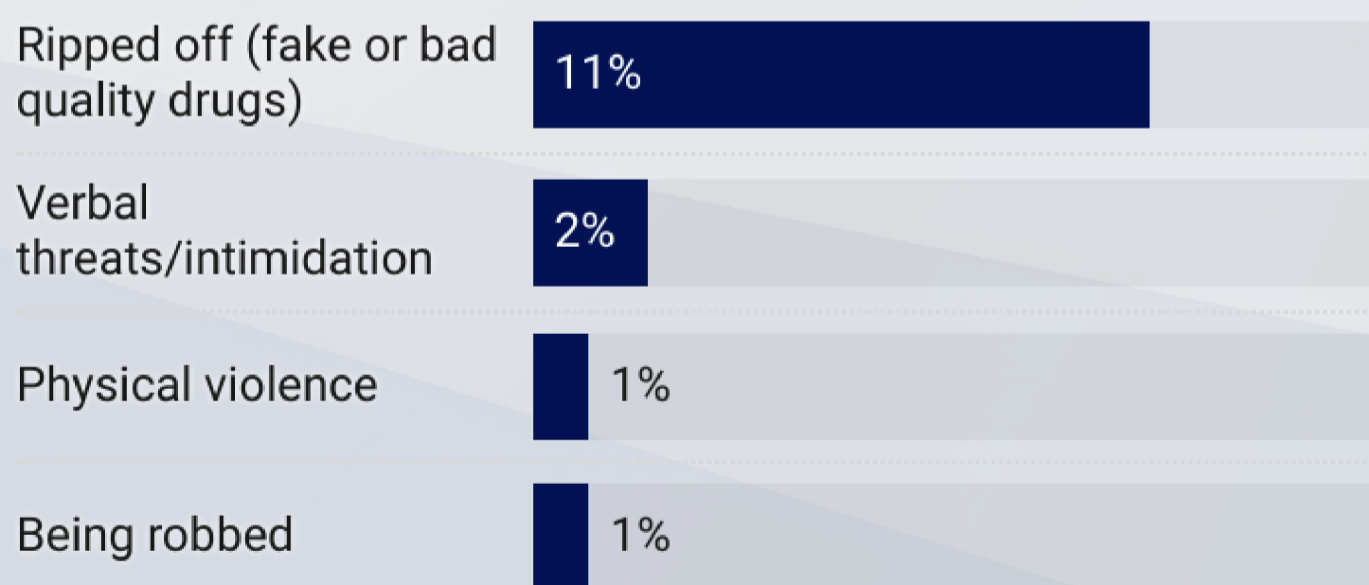
- 12% of respondents reported having experienced some form of victimisation while buying drugs in the past 6 months
- Highest rates of victimisation were reported in Otago, the Waikato, and Bay of Plenty
- Cannabis transactions accounted for 49% of victimisation experiences, and MDMA transactions for 32%

## Methods

The New Zealand Drug Trends Survey (NZDTS) is an anonymous online convenience survey designed to provide an annual snapshot of drug market trends in Aotearoa New Zealand. It surveys a very large number of people with recent experience and knowledge of drug use and drug markets across the country (i.e., key experts). The NZDTS is promoted via a targeted Facebook advertising campaign over a period of several months. Completed surveys are audited based on the extent and quality of completion. The 2022/23 survey ran from August 2022 to February 2023 and achieved a final sample of 13,026. While the NZDTS is not intended to be a representative survey, it has a sample that broadly represents the demographic profile and regional population distribution of NZ (see Bulletin 6 for details). However, related to the aims of the survey, the NZDTS sample reports much higher levels of drug use (see Bulletin 7) and is younger than the general population. For more details on methods see, Wilkins et al. (2020) Determinants of the retail price of illegal drugs in New Zealand. *International Journal of Drug Policy*. 79, 1-10.

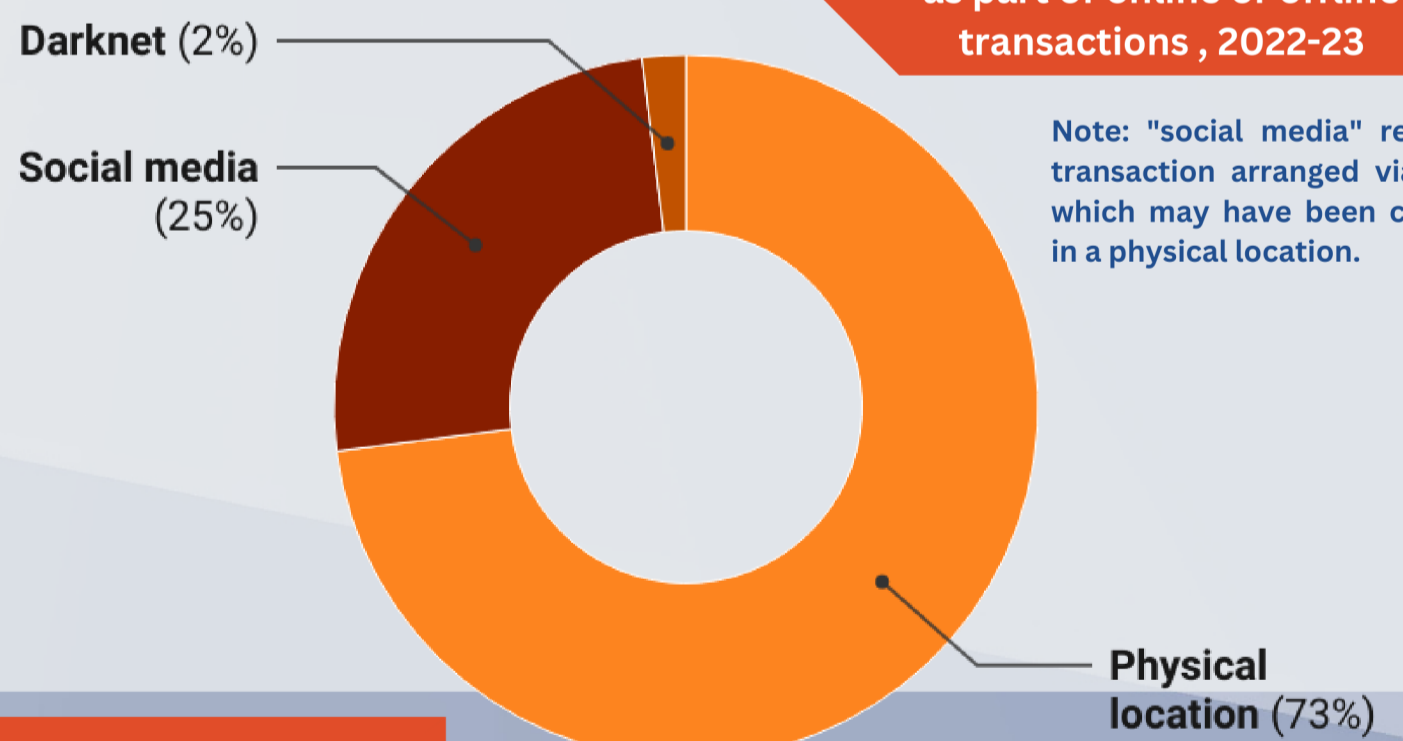


Respondent victimisation experiences in past-6 month drug trades, 2022-23



Darknet (2%)

Social media (25%)



Victimisation experienced as part of online or offline transactions, 2022-23

Note: "social media" refers to a transaction arranged via an app, which may have been completed in a physical location.

## Discussion

The illegal nature of drug transactions places buyers at risk of receiving unsafe drugs and experiencing threats to physical safety. These risks are often higher in drug markets where buyer and seller do not know one another personally, such as tinny or drug houses, and social media markets where delivery/drop off options connect buyers with unknown sellers (e.g., social media selling groups like Messenger chat groups, or some types of Discord drug server). Though violence (e.g., robbery or assault) is rare, these incidents can be traumatising, involve significant health and law enforcement resources, and lower perceptions of community safety. Higher numbers of victimisation related to cannabis and MDMA reflect both the higher prevalence of these drug types among survey respondents and the opportunities sellers have to rip off buyers in relation to these drug types (e.g., receiving fake drugs, adulteration, underweight product, etc). The decline in international MDMA supply from late 2022 to early 2023 may have also led to greater product adulteration.

% of respondents who experienced victimisation while buying each drug type, 2022-23

