

# Regional Snapshot: Otago



New Zealand Council Of  
Christian Social Services

**45,300** people in Otago (18.5%) experience poverty after housing costs are paid

4,000 adults over 65 years old in Otago (9.37%) experience poverty after housing costs  
9,100 children in Otago (19.1%) live in households experiencing poverty after housing costs

**11,300** people in Otago (4.6%) are unable to afford essential items

3,900 children in Otago (8.3%) live in households that are unable to afford the essentials



## Income adequacy

The Jobseeker support is estimated to be \$123.42/week short of covering essential living costs like food, housing and power for single adult recipients in Dunedin

Average monthly power prices were \$46 higher in May 2026 compared to May 2025 in Central Otago, with Queenstown increasing by an average of \$50 and Frankton by \$42

Over the past 3 years the cheapest available home insurance premiums increased on average \$576/year

**35% of people in Otago experienced food insecurity in the past year**

## Health

More than 1 in 3 people in Otago (34.9%) had unmet dental treatment due to costs. This disproportionately impacts 25-34 year olds (56%), disabled people (43.4%) and women (41.9% compared to 28.6% of men)

More than 1 in 4 adults aged 25-34 (28.7%) were unable to access a doctor due to cost

**Otago has the second highest rate of poverty of any region. A population larger than Queenstown are experiencing poverty**

## Housing

Average rent (\$626/week) makes up 43% average weekly earnings (above the 40% national average)

Otago has the highest mortgage payments as a proportion of income, making up on average 40.6% income, compared to 35% nationally

**In 2025 two thirds of rentals inspected in Dunedin did not meet healthy home standards**

Visit our website for more information on steps we recommend to help free New Zealanders from poverty  
[nzccss.org.nz](https://nzccss.org.nz)

