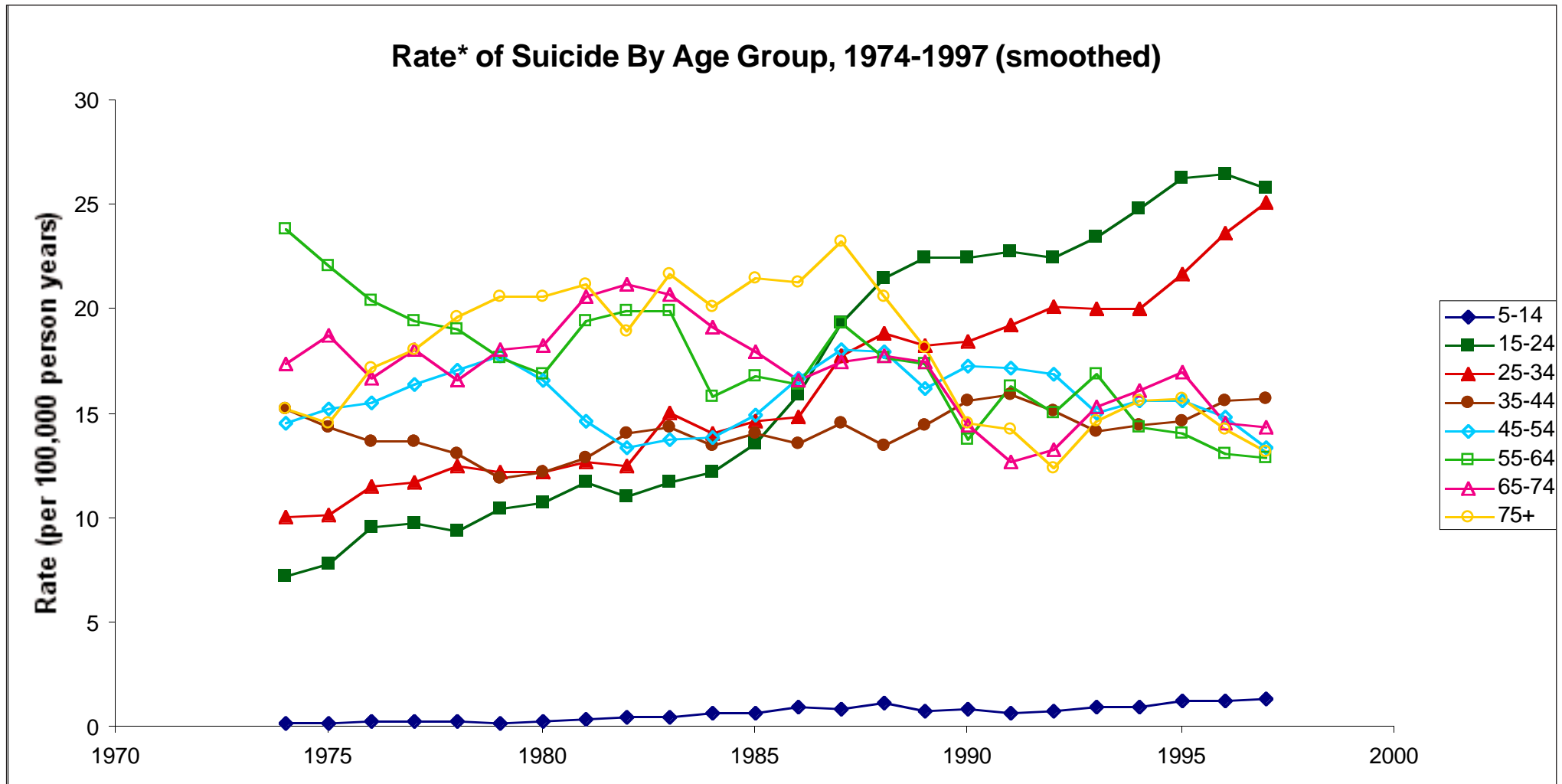


# Suicide

Number 19

The following graphs and tables show the trends in rates and percentages of suicide for specific age groups in New Zealand 1974-1997.



\* Smoothed Rate: Because of large variations in yearly estimates rates and percentages have been calculated using 3 years of data, e.g. the 1980 rate uses data from 1979-1981.

## Key Points

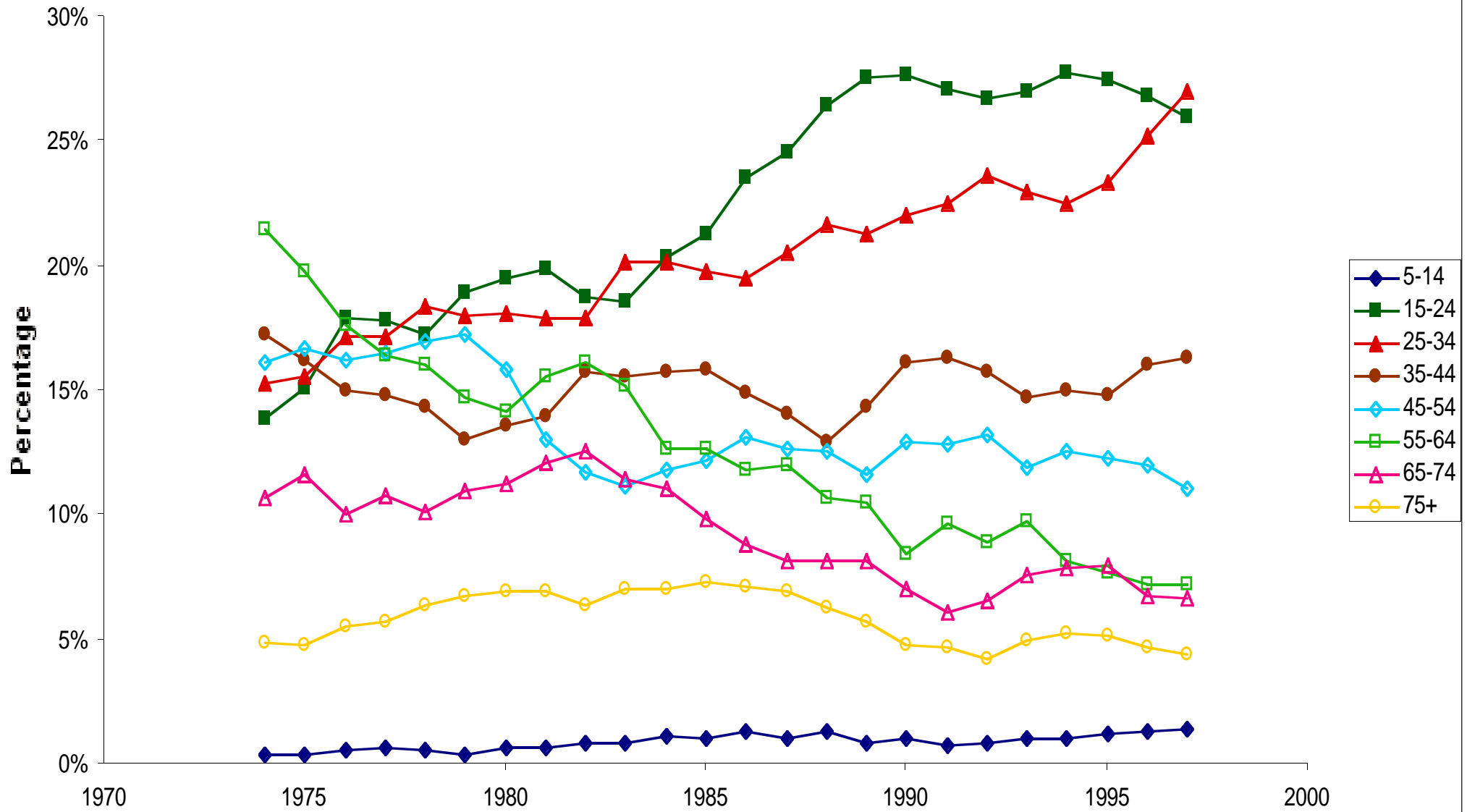
- The suicide rate for the total population has increased steadily over the period. The major contributors to the increase have been the 15-24 and 25-34 year age groups.
- The suicide rate for the 15-24 year age group has been increasing since 1974 with a marked increase in the mid to late 1980s. The 1997 rate was approximately double that of the mid 1980s.
- Within the 15-24 year age group, the suicide rate for 20-24 year olds over the last 5 years of the period, has remained relatively stable whereas the 15-19 year olds' rate increased by approximately two thirds (not shown).

- The suicide rate for the 25-34 year age group has been increasing since 1974 with a marked increase in the rate from 1994. The rate in 1997 was similar to that for the 15-24 year olds.
- The 75+ age group suicide rate was relatively stable up until 1987. There was a substantial decline in the rate over the next three years, and thereafter the rate has remained relatively stable.
- There has been a steady decline over the entire period in the suicide rate for the 55-64 age group. This rate has nearly halved during the period.
- All other age groups (5-14, 35-44, 45-54, 65-74) have had relatively stable suicide rates over the entire period.

**Rate (per 100,000 person years) of Suicide by Age Group and Year of Death, 1974-1997 (smoothed)**

Age Group	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	
0-4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
5-14	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.9	1.1	0.8	0.9	0.7	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.2	1.3	1.3	0.7	
15-24	7.2	7.9	9.6	9.8	9.4	10.4	10.8	11.7	11.0	11.7	12.2	13.6	15.9	19.3	21.5	22.5	22.4	22.8	22.4	23.5	24.9	26.3	26.5	25.8	16.6	
25-34	10.0	10.2	11.6	11.8	12.5	12.3	12.2	12.7	12.6	15.0	14.1	14.6	14.9	17.7	18.9	18.3	18.5	19.2	20.1	20.0	20.0	21.7	23.6	25.1	16.6	
35-44	15.2	14.3	13.6	13.7	13.1	11.9	12.3	12.9	14.1	14.4	13.5	14.0	13.6	14.5	13.5	14.5	15.6	15.9	15.1	14.2	14.5	14.6	15.7	15.7	14.4	
45-54	14.6	15.2	15.5	16.4	17.1	17.8	16.6	14.7	13.4	13.7	13.8	15.0	16.7	18.1	18.0	16.3	17.3	17.2	16.9	15.0	15.7	15.6	14.9	13.4	15.9	
55-64	23.8	22.1	20.4	19.5	19.0	17.7	16.9	19.4	20.0	20.0	15.9	16.8	16.4	19.4	17.7	17.4	13.7	16.3	15.1	16.9	14.3	14.1	13.1	12.9	17.5	
65-74	17.4	18.8	16.7	18.1	16.6	18.1	18.3	20.6	21.2	20.7	19.1	18.0	16.6	17.5	17.8	17.5	14.5	12.7	13.3	15.4	16.1	17.0	14.6	14.4	17.1	
75+	15.2	14.6	17.2	18.1	19.6	20.7	20.6	21.2	19.0	21.7	20.1	21.5	21.3	23.2	20.6	18.2	14.5	14.3	12.5	14.6	15.6	15.8	14.3	13.2	17.5	
Overall Age Adjusted Rate	7.8	7.9	8.4	8.7	8.8	9.0	9.0	9.3	9.2	9.9	9.6	10.1	10.7	12.2	12.6	12.4	12.4	12.4	12.3	12.4	12.8	13.3	13.4	13.2	12.30	

### Percentage\* of Suicide by Age Group, 1974-1997(smoothed)



\* Smoothed Rate: Because of large variations in yearly estimates rates and percentages have been calculated using 3 years of data, e.g. the 1980 rate uses data from 1979-1981.

## Key Points

- The suicide rate for the total population has increased steadily over the period. The major contributors to the increase have been the 15-24 and 25-34 year age groups.
- In 1974, suicides among those aged 15-24, and 25-34 each accounted for approximately 15% of all suicides. By 1997 their contributions had each almost doubled.

- Between 1992 and 1997 the contribution of 15-19 year olds to the percentage of suicides in the 15-24 year age group increased from 33% to 46%.
- Those in the 55-64 age group accounted for 21% of all suicides in 1974. By 1997 this had reduced by two thirds to 7%.

### Number of Suicides by Age Group and Year of Death 1974-1997

Age Group	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	Total	
0-4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5-14	1	1	1	3	2	0	2	4	1	4	4	4	4	8	2	8	2	4	5	3	7	6	7	8	8	92
15-24	29	50	51	61	55	46	80	62	62	69	75	72	95	115	129	129	129	124	132	121	139	153	143	140	140	2273
25-34	43	44	47	65	49	59	64	51	68	65	91	58	76	99	108	99	92	113	114	107	112	116	141	153	2042	
35-44	57	41	42	53	44	38	43	50	50	62	61	45	74	59	61	63	77	82	72	69	72	82	80	98	1477	
45-54	45	47	52	48	55	57	53	42	38	41	45	40	53	64	57	56	50	72	61	54	58	75	62	58	1293	
55-64	58	64	49	47	58	46	37	53	69	44	55	36	53	52	61	38	49	29	59	38	45	38	39	40	1168	
65-74	37	24	39	28	34	33	38	37	49	43	35	40	37	28	47	40	28	29	30	34	46	37	43	29	872	
75+	12	16	13	21	20	19	26	22	23	21	34	20	29	36	31	21	28	17	22	21	29	28	24	24	558	
<b>Total</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>455</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>508</b>	<b>535</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>9775</b>	

Data source: Mortality and Demographic Data 1974-1997, New Zealand Health Information Service (NZHIS), Ministry of Health