

2016 Quality of Life survey - executive summary of Auckland results

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Introduction

The 2016 Quality of Life survey was a joint project between nine New Zealand councils.

The survey aims to measure respondents' perceptions in several domains, including:

- Quality of life
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture and social networks
- Council processes
- Built and natural environment
- Public transport
- Economic wellbeing; and
- Housing.

A combined nine Council 'topline report' is available on the Quality of Life website.

<http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/survey.htm> and an Auckland report is being prepared by RIMU (due late October).

The results from the survey are used by participating councils to help inform their policy and planning responses to population growth and change.

A total of 7155 New Zealanders completed the Quality of Life survey – 2720 of whom were Auckland residents.

The 2016 Quality of Life survey was conducted by research company Colmar Brunton, and was jointly funded by the participating councils.

Methodology

This survey was carried out using a sequential mixed methodology. A random selection of Auckland residents was made from the Electoral Roll and respondents were encouraged to complete the survey online or via a hard copy questionnaire posted to them.

Fieldwork took place between 14 March and 22 June 2016.

Full details of the survey methodology can be found in the Quality of Life Survey 2016 Technical Report, available on the Quality of Life website: www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz.

Overview of results for Auckland

Quality of life

The majority (79%) of Auckland respondents rate their overall quality of life positively, with 19% rating it as *extremely good* and 61% as *good*.

Just over a quarter (26%) of respondents living in Auckland feel their quality of life has increased when compared with 12 months prior.

Health and wellbeing

Eight in ten (80%) Auckland respondents rate their health positively, responding with a rating of either *excellent* (13%), *very good* (28%), or *good* (39%).

Four in ten (43%) Auckland respondents report they have been active on five or more days in the week prior to the survey.

Almost one in five (17%) Auckland respondents stated they had experienced stress that had a negative impact on them in the previous 12 months, with 3% experiencing stress *always* and 14% experiencing stress *most of the time*.

The majority (89%) of respondents living in Auckland say they have someone to turn to for help if they are faced with a serious illness or injury, or need emotional support during a difficult time.

Crime and safety

Perceptions of problems in local area

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which various social issues have been a problem in their local area in the previous 12 months. The most commonly perceived problem is dangerous driving (63% rate this as *a big problem* or *a bit of a problem*), followed by car theft or damage to cars (57%), alcohol or drugs (51%), vandalism (44%), the presence of people they feel unsafe around (47%) and people begging on the street (38%).

Sense of safety

The majority of Auckland respondents feel safe in their home after dark (87%), and in their city centre during the day (88%). However, a lower proportion (60%) said they feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, and less than half (39%) feel safe in their city centre after dark.

Community, culture and social networks

Sense of community

Three quarters (77%) of respondents living in Auckland agree it is important to feel a sense of community with the people in their local neighbourhood, responding with a rating of *strongly agree* (17%) or *agree* (60%).

Just over half (56%) of the respondents living in Auckland agree they actually feel a sense of community with others in their local neighbourhood, with 7% agreeing strongly and 49% agreeing.

Social networks

The most commonly mentioned social networks that respondents living in Auckland belong to are *online network through websites such as Facebook / Twitter, online gaming communities and forums* (44%) and *people from work or school* (33%).

Contact with neighbourhood people

Within the previous 12 months, two thirds (64%) of Auckland respondents had some positive contact with people in their neighbourhood such as a nod or saying hello, 41% had positive contact (e.g. a visit, or asking each other for small favours) and 19% had strong positive contact (e.g. support or close friendship). Less

than one in ten (8%) reported having some negative contact with people in their neighbourhood in the previous 12 months (e.g. not getting on with them), and 5% reported negative contact, where there has been outright tension or disagreement.

Feeling of isolation

Just over two thirds (67%) of Auckland respondents have not felt isolated or lonely over the previous 12 months, with 31% saying *never* and 36% saying *rarely*

Impact of greater cultural diversity

Just over half (52%) of respondents living in Auckland feel that New Zealand becoming a home for an increasing number of people with different lifestyles and cultures from different countries makes their local area a better place to live, with 17% saying it is *a much better place to live* and 35% saying it is *a better place to live*.

Culturally rich and diverse arts scene

Two thirds (66%) of respondents living in Auckland agree Auckland has a culturally rich and diverse arts scene, with 14% who *strongly agree* and 52% who *agree*.

Council decision-making processes

Just over a quarter (29%) of all respondents living in Auckland agree they understand their Council's decision making process, responding with a rating of either *strongly agree* (2%) or *agree* (27%).

Nearly four in ten (35%) have confidence that Council makes decisions in the best interests of their city, responding with a rating of either *strongly agree* (3%) or *agree* (32%).

Nearly one in four (36%) Auckland respondents consider that the public has an influence on the decisions the Council makes, with 5% saying the public has a *large influence* and 31% *some influence*.

Two thirds (66%) agreed that they would like to have more of a say in what Council does.

Built and natural environment

Local area as a great place to live

Nearly eight in ten (79%) Auckland respondents agree that their local area is a great place to live, responding with a rating of either *strongly agree* (23%) or *agree* (56%).

Pride in the look and feel of local area

Nearly two thirds (64%) of Auckland respondents agree that they have a sense of pride in the look and feel of their local area with 15% who *strongly agree* and 49% who *agree*.

Perceptions of rubbish and pollution

Just under half (46%) feel that *graffiti and tagging* and *noise pollution* have been problems in their local area in the previous 12 months. This is followed by *water pollution (including pollution in streams, rivers, lakes and in the sea)* (42%) and *air pollution* (25%).

Public transport

Over a quarter (26%) of Auckland respondents stated they are regular users (*twice a week or more often*) of public transport, with 14% using it five or more times a week.

While 73% of Auckland respondents agree that public transport is safe, and 65% agree that it is easy to get to, about half agree that public transport is frequent (50%), reliable (46%) or affordable (44%).

Economic wellbeing

Employment status

More than half (55%) Auckland respondents were employed full time (for 30 hours or more per week).

In addition to this, another 15% were in part time work. Almost one in ten (6%) Auckland respondents were not in paid employment and not looking for work and almost a fifth (18%) were not in paid employment and looking for work.

Balance between work and other aspects of life

Six in ten (60%) of Auckland respondents who were in paid employment were satisfied with the balance between work and other aspects of life, with 13% rating *very satisfied* and 47% rating *satisfied*.

Ability to cover costs of everyday needs

Almost one in ten (8%) Auckland respondents consider that they have *more than enough* money to cover the costs of their everyday things such as accommodation, food, clothing and other necessities. An additional three in ten (29%) report they have *enough money*.

Over a third (37%) report that they have *just enough money*, while 21% report that they *do not have enough money* to meet their everyday needs.

Housing

Affordability and suitability of housing

Four in ten (41%) Auckland respondents agree that their housing costs are affordable (housing costs include expenses like rent or mortgage, rates, house insurance and house maintenance), with 5% who *strongly agree* and 35% who *agree*.

A large proportion (81%) of Auckland respondents agree that the type of house or apartment they live in and that the general area or neighbourhood their house or apartment is in suits their needs and needs of others in the household (84%).

Problems with damp and mould

Over a quarter (28%) agreed that they had experienced problems with damp or mould in their home during winter.

Heating in winter

Just over two thirds (69%) agreed that their heating system keeps their house warm when it is use during winter, and 60% agreed that they can afford to heat their home properly during winter.

RIMU has a full data set available. If you have any queries please contact:

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