



QUALITY OF LIFE



COLMAR BRUNTON  
Social Research Agency

# QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY 2016

---

Drivers of Quality of Life and Comparisons with  
Previous Years

---

# Quality of Life Survey 2016

## Drivers of Quality of Life and Comparisons with Previous Years

A joint project between the following New Zealand councils



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	1
12. DRIVERS OF QUALITY OF LIFE .....	2
13. COMPARISONS WITH PREVIOUS YEARS .....	6

## 12. DRIVERS OF QUALITY OF LIFE

The previous sections in this report present results on residents’ perceptions and experiences across a range of social, economic, cultural and environmental aspects, all of which contribute to their overall quality of life. This section reports on the results of two multivariate analyses that were undertaken on these aspects, or ‘attributes’, that aimed to explore their relative impact on residents’ overall quality of life.

A two stage process was followed:

- **Factor analysis** was undertaken to explore the relationships between the attributes in the survey, and to group together similar attributes into a group of ‘factors’.<sup>1</sup>
- A **drivers analysis** was then undertaken to explore the relative impact of these factors on overall perception of quality of life.<sup>2</sup>

The multivariate analyses are based only on the seven cities’ results, for consistency with the rest of the topline report (i.e. Waikato and Greater Wellington regional results were excluded from analyses).

### Factor analysis

Ten independent ‘factors’ (or drivers of residents’ overall quality of life) were identified from 39 survey attributes. These are listed in the chart below, along with their relative importance in driving the overall quality of life measure.

Factor definitions	Importance of factor on driving overall life quality	Importance of attribute on factor
<b>Emotional and physical health</b>	<b>10.5%</b>	
Not experiencing stress that has had a negative effect (Q26)		34%
Not feeling lonely or isolated (Q24)		27%
Positive overall health rating (Q18)		20%
Satisfied with work/life balance (Q17)		19%
<b>Housing</b>	<b>8.8%</b>	
Can afford to properly heat home (Q8)		21%
Heating system keeps home warm (Q8)		21%
Home has no problem with damp/mould (Q8)		16%
Type of dwelling suits needs of household (Q7)		16%
Ability to cover costs of everyday needs (Q20)		14%
Housing costs are affordable (Q7)		12%
<b>Local community</b>	<b>4.5%</b>	
Location of home is suitable (Q7)		31%

<sup>1</sup> The factor analysis identified the common dimensions in respondents’ ratings of 39 attributes included in the questionnaire. This stage was important as there was a high degree of correlation between attributes.

<sup>2</sup> This used a combination of regression and correlation techniques.

Factor definitions	Importance of factor on driving overall life quality	Importance of attribute on factor
City/local area perceived as great place to live (Q6)		30%
Proud of look and feel of city/local area (Q3)		21%
Experience a sense of community (Q21)		18%
<b>Sense of safety*</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	
Feel safe in city centre during the day (Q9)		29%
Feel safe in own home after dark (Q9)		25%
Feel safe in city centre after dark(Q9)		25%
Feel safe walking alone in neighbourhood after dark (Q9)		22%
<b>Support in difficult times</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	
Support/help available in difficult times (Q25)		100%
<b>Cultural diversity</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	
Arts scene considered culturally rich and diverse (Q27)		65%
Greater cultural diversity perceived to make city/local area a better place to live (Q28)		35%
<b>Crime</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	
Minimal problems with vandalism (Q11)		18%
Minimal problems with graffiti or tagging (Q11)		17%
Minimal problems with car theft or damage to cars (Q11)		14%
Minimal problems with alcohol or drugs (Q11)		14%
Minimal problems with people you feel unsafe around (Q11)		14%
Minimal problems with dangerous driving (Q11)		12%
Minimal problems with people begging on the street (Q11)		11%
<b>Council decision making</b>	<b>0.3%</b>	
Perceive general public to have influence on Council decision making (Q15)		35%
Have confidence in Council decision making (Q14)		33%
Understand how Council makes decisions (Q14)		32%
<b>Pollution</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	
Minimal problems with <u>air</u> pollution (Q11)		42%
Minimal problems with <u>water</u> pollution (Q11)		30%
Minimal problems with <u>noise</u> pollution (Q11)		28%
<b>Public transport*</b>	<b>0.1%</b>	
Frequent public transport (Q13)		23%

Factor definitions	Importance of factor on driving overall life quality	Importance of attribute on factor
Easy to access public transport (Q13)		22%
Reliable public transport (Q13)		20%
Feel safe using public transport (Q13)		20%
Affordable public transport (Q13)		16%

\*Underlying attributes sum to more than 100% due to rounding.

### Driver analysis

Once the 10 independent drivers of life quality had been identified, it was then possible to map these factors in terms of their relative importance (impact on quality of life rating) and favourability scores (how favourably respondents rated the underlying attributes in each factor). By examining these results together, we can establish the indicators that, if enhanced, will have the greatest impact on improving people’s overall quality of life.

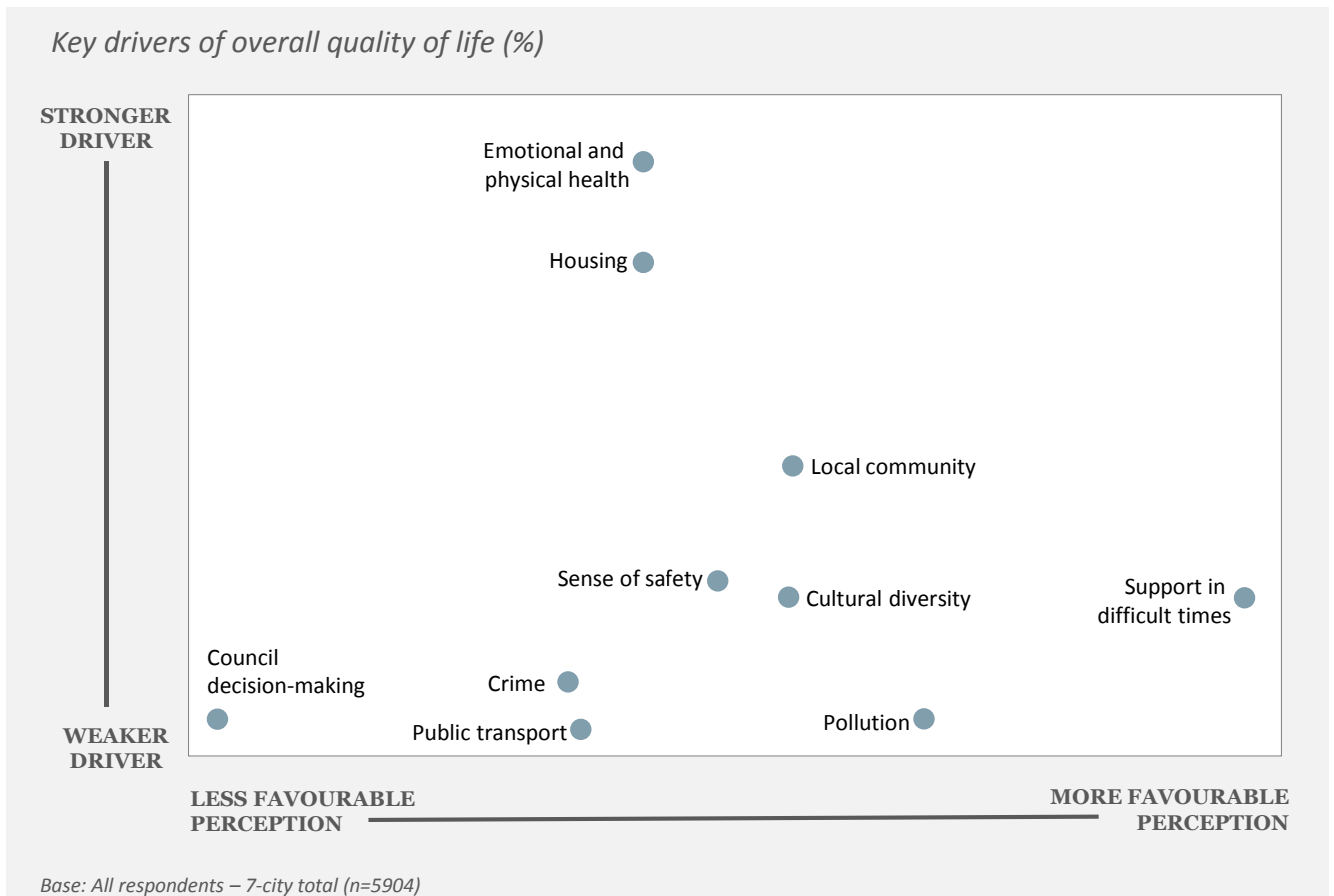
The results are shown in the chart on the next page. The chart shows the 10 drivers mapped against two dimensions:

1. Their relative level of importance (impact on quality of life rating) (shown on the vertical axis) – drivers towards the top of the chart have the greatest impact on overall quality of life and the drivers towards the bottom of the chart have the least impact.
2. Their relative favourability scores (how favourably respondents rated the underlying attributes in each factor)<sup>3</sup> (shown on the horizontal axis).

Broadly speaking, the chart can be read as follows:

- the top left quadrant is showing the factors that the 7 cities might need to pay attention to as they are stronger drivers of quality of life and are doing relatively ‘poorly’ (as they are generally rated less favourably in the survey)
- the top right quadrant shows the factors that are also stronger drivers of quality of life but are doing okay (as they are generally rated favourably in the survey)
- the bottom left quadrant shows the factors that are weaker drivers of quality of life, but are doing poorly (as they are generally rated less favourably in the survey),
- the bottom right quadrant shows the factors that are weaker drivers of quality of life but are doing okay (as they are generally rated favourably in the survey).

<sup>3</sup> The rating scales used in the questionnaire varied in terms of the number of rating points (3, 4 and 5-point scales were used). To enable favourability ratings to be compared, all scales were standardised to 5-point scales as part of the statistical analysis. Most attributes in the survey used a balanced scale. However, a small number of scales were positively or negatively skewed which results in a degree of overstating or understating favourability ratings when comparisons are made. In particular, the health favourability ratings (which contributes to the emotional and physical health factor) may be somewhat inflated as the scale is positively skewed. Conversely, the crime and pollution favourability ratings may be somewhat understated as the rating scale was negatively skewed.



**Key findings**

Key patterns from this analysis are listed below. Among the attributes measured in this survey:

- Residents’ sense of personal emotional and physical health is the strongest driver of overall quality of life, with not experiencing stress that has a negative effect and a lack of loneliness being the strongest determinants of this factor.
- Housing is also a strong driver of overall quality of life, with heating being especially important. Residents’ ratings of their health and housing situation are moderately favourable (relative to other drivers). However, because they are such strong drivers of overall quality of life, any improvements in perceptions of these aspects will result in marked gains in perceptions of overall quality of life.
- Cultural diversity and people’s satisfaction with their local community are rated fairly similarly in terms of favourability scores, with positive perceptions of the local community being quite a strong driver of overall quality of life.
- Council’s decision-making is rated most poorly, but along with public transport and pollution it is one of the weakest drivers of the overall quality of life.

For more detail on the multivariate analyses technique please refer to the Quality of Life Survey 2016 Technical Report.

### 13. COMPARISONS WITH PREVIOUS YEARS

The following charts show the results of selected questions compared to the 2014 and 2012 results.

The 2016 results are based on six cities only and exclude Hamilton City. This is because results for Hamilton City were not collected in the 2012 or 2014 surveys.

Across the questions shown here, there have been four significant shifts in results since 2014:

- Increase in proportion of respondents who perceive car theft and damage to be a problem in their city or local area (61%, compared with 55% in 2014) (see 13.5)
- Increase in proportion of respondents who perceive people begging on the street to be a problem in their city or local area (44%, compared with 33% in 2014) (see 13.9)
- Decrease in proportion of respondents who feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (33%, compared with 38% in 2014) (see 13.9)
- Increase in proportion of respondents agreeing they would like to have more say in what their Council does (61%, compared with 55% in 2014). (see 13.15)<sup>4</sup>

#### 13.1 Overall quality of life

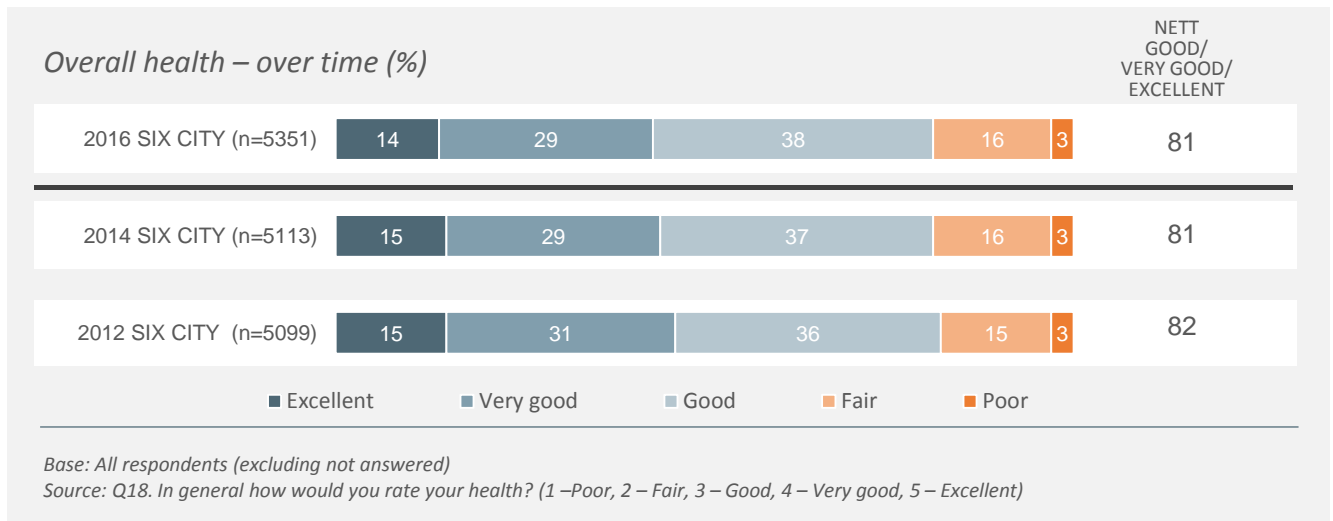


<sup>4</sup> Comparisons with 2014 are only reported where two criteria are met:

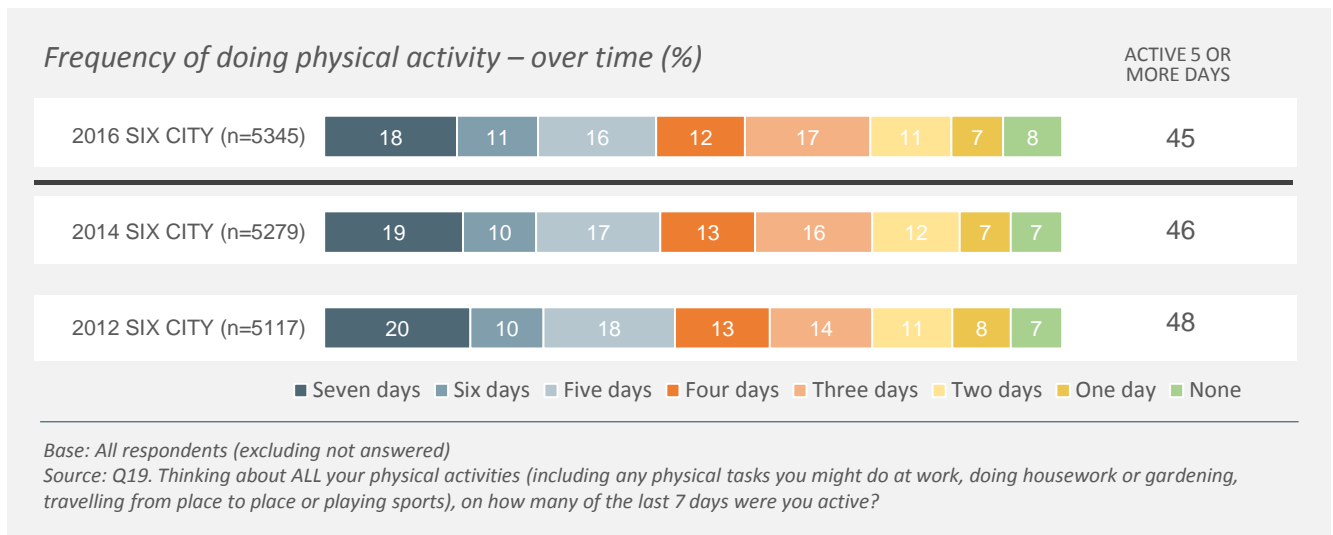
- The difference is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, and
- The raw difference in results is 5% or greater.



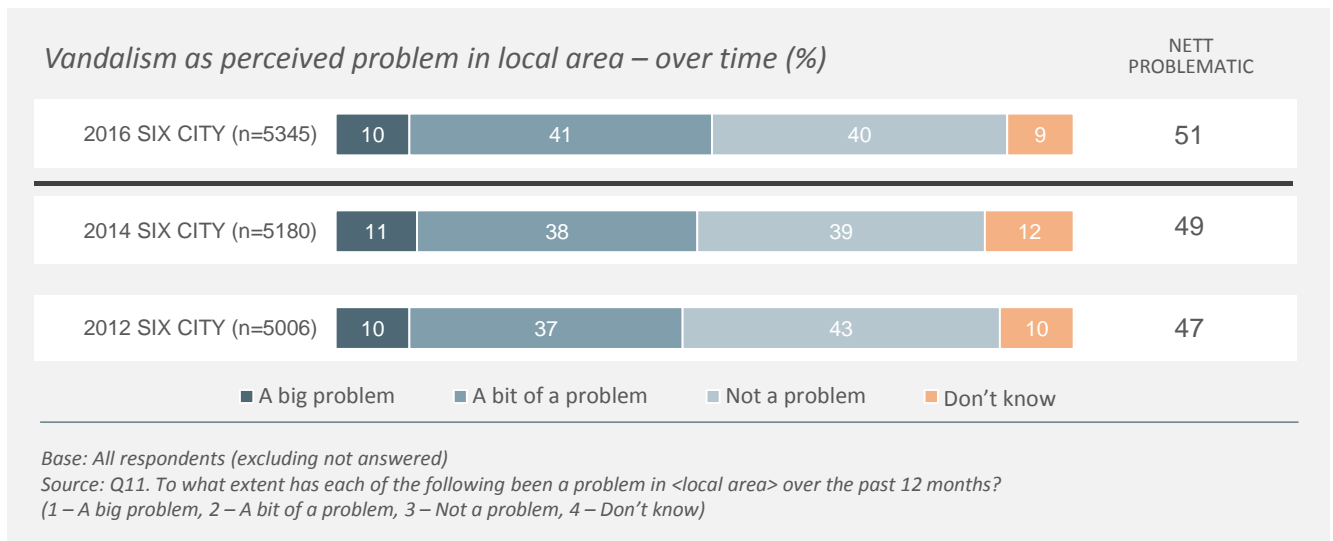
### 13.2 Overall health



### 13.3 Frequency of doing physical activity

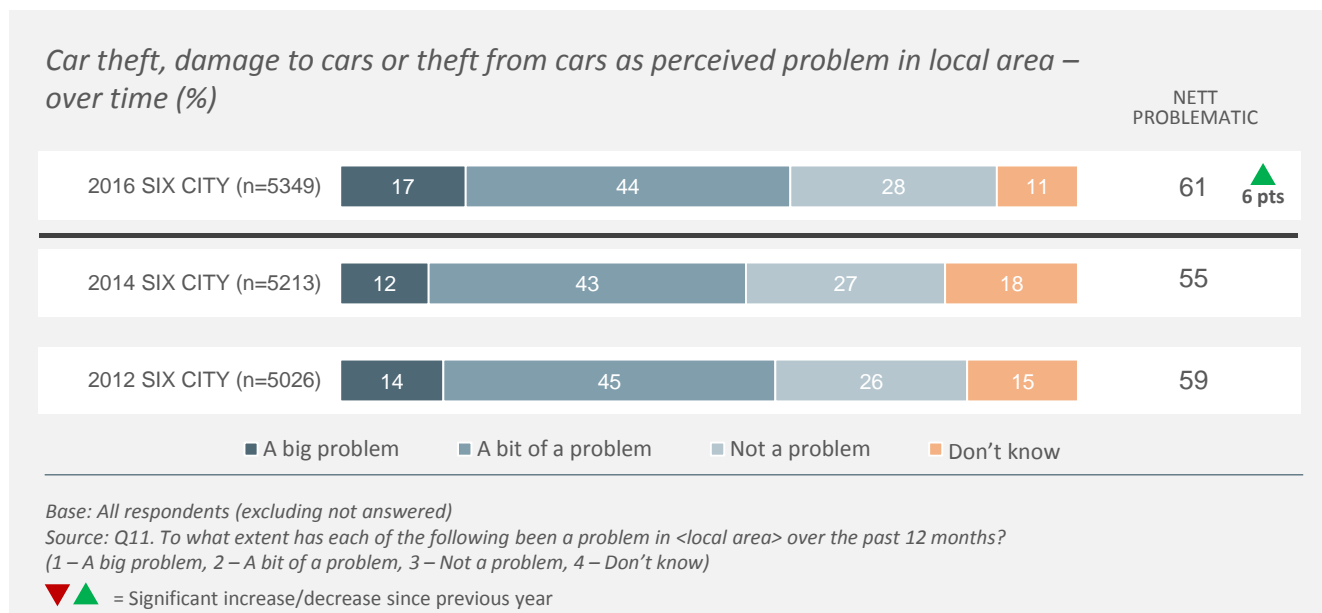


### 13.4 Vandalism as perceived problem in local area

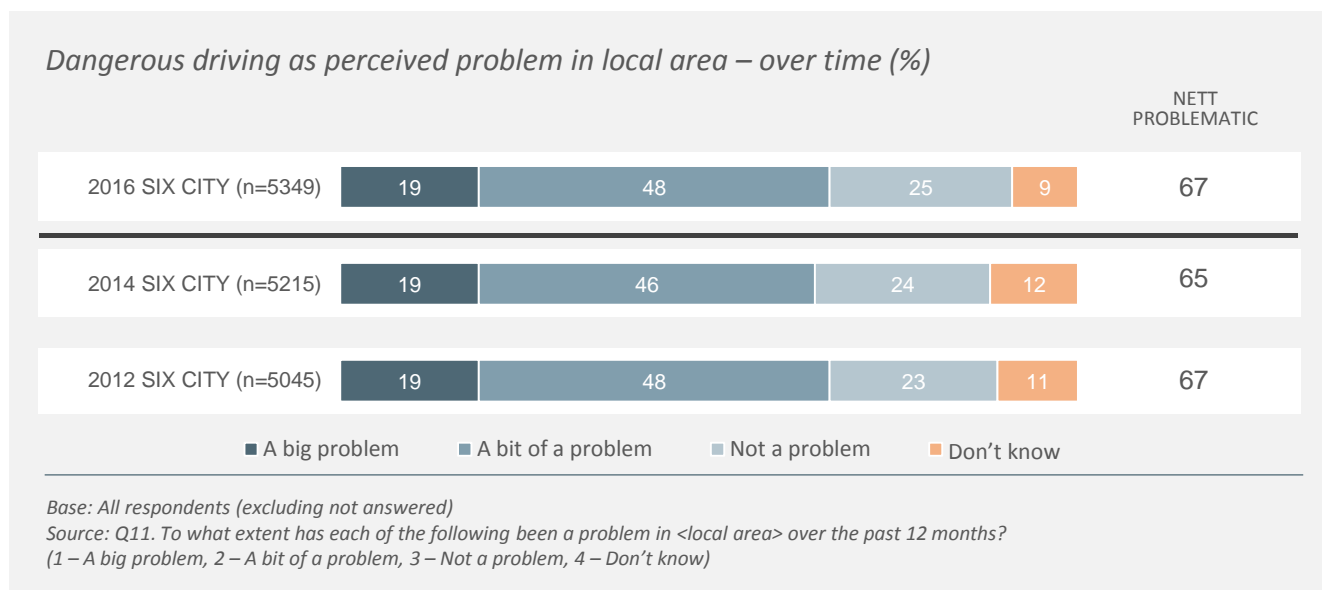


### 13.5 Car theft, damage to cars or theft from cars as perceived problem in local area

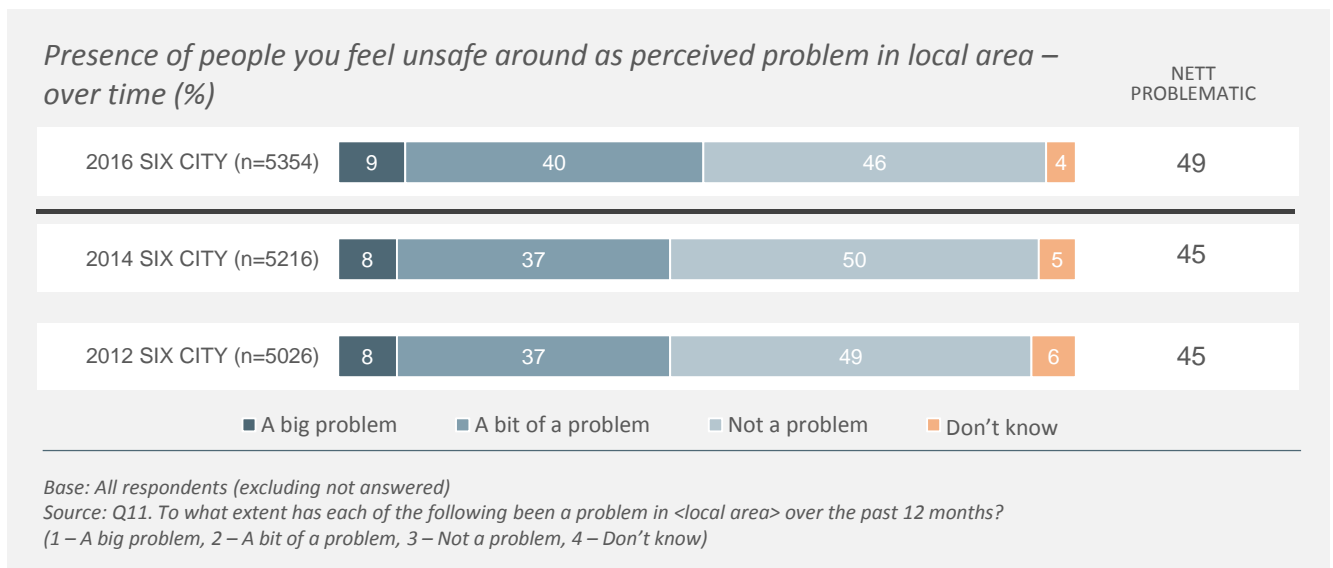
There has been a significant increase since 2014 in the percentage of respondents who perceive car theft and damage to be a problem in their city or local area in the previous 12 months.



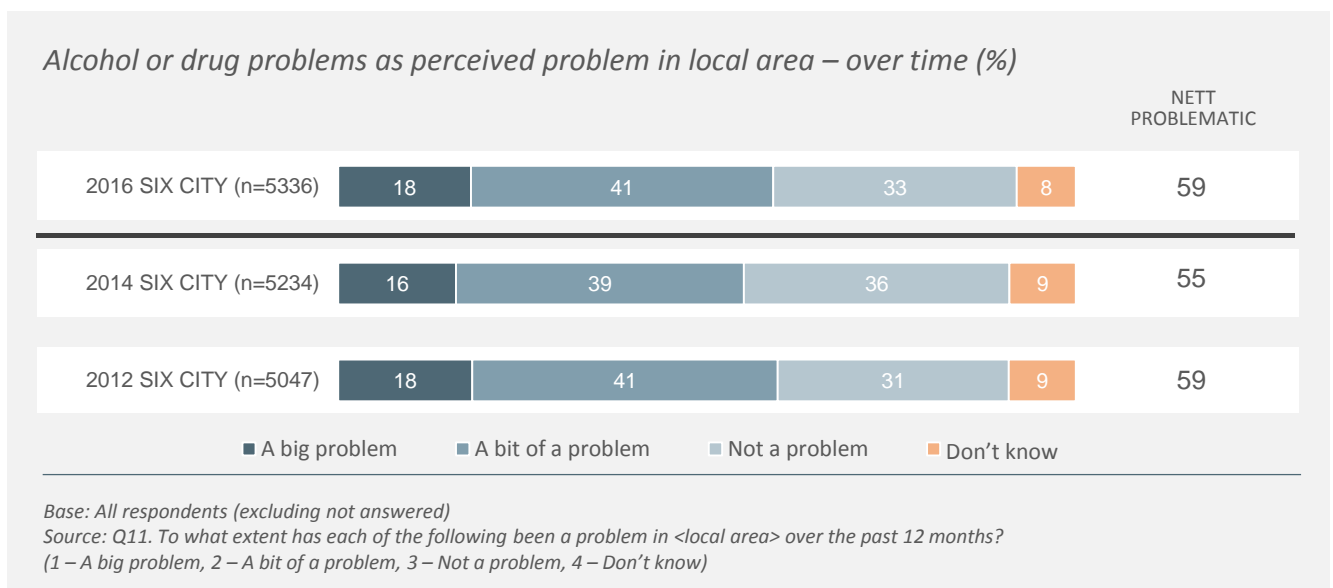
### 13.6 Dangerous driving as perceived problem in local area



### 13.7 Presence of people you feel unsafe around as perceived problem in local area

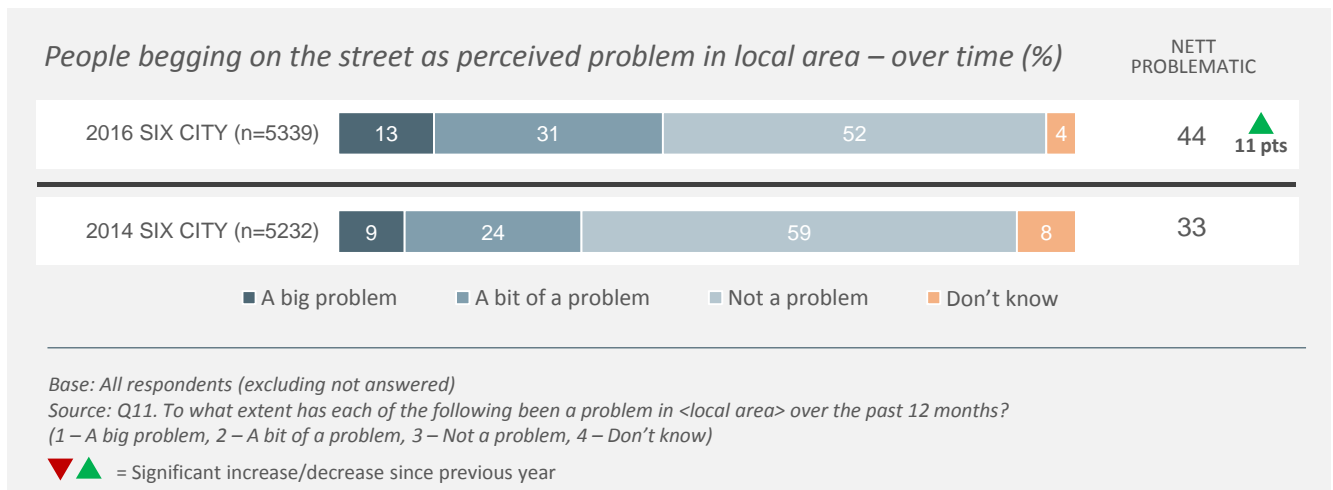


### 13.8 Alcohol or drug problems as perceived problem in local area



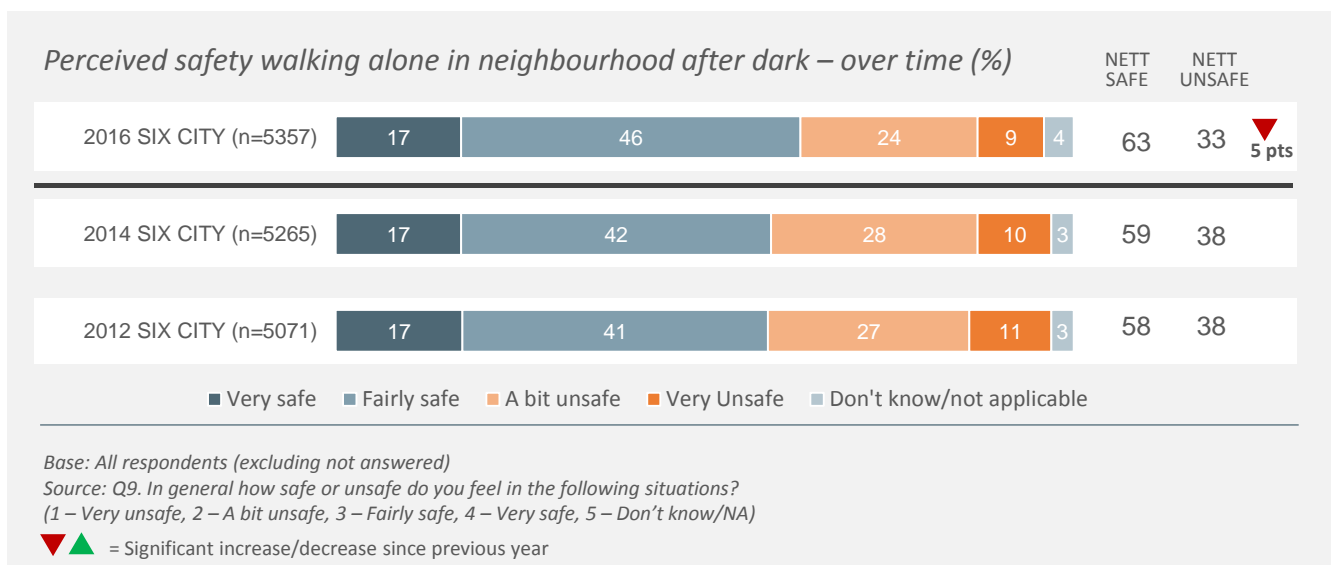
### 13.9 People begging on the street as perceived problem in local area

There has been a significant increase since 2014 in the percentage of respondents who perceive people begging on the street to be a problem in their city or local area.

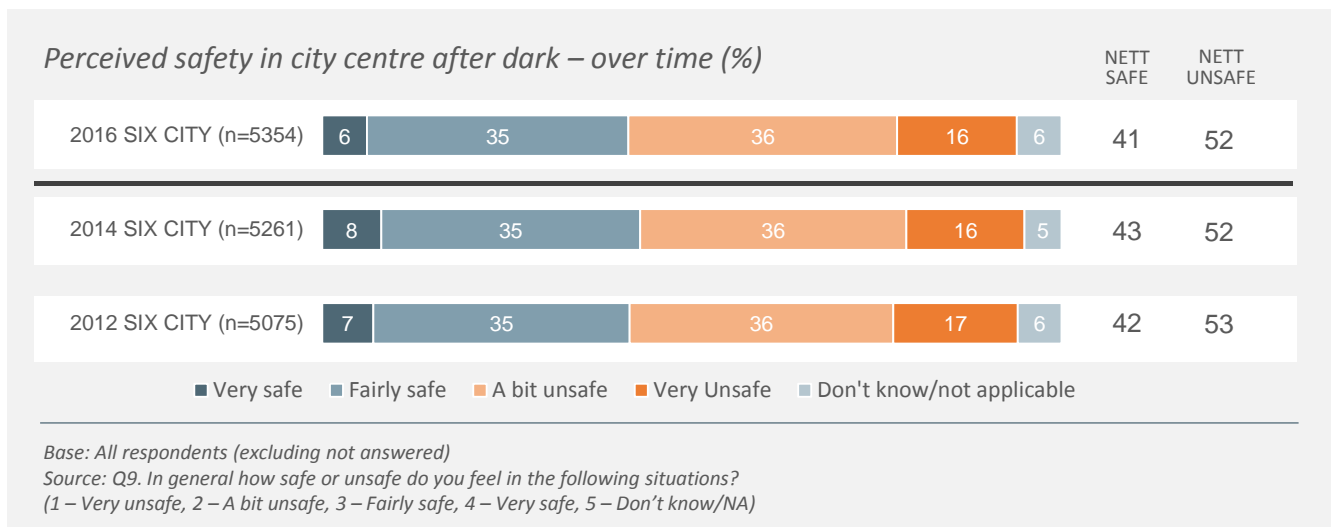


### 13.10 Perceived safety walking alone in neighbourhood after dark

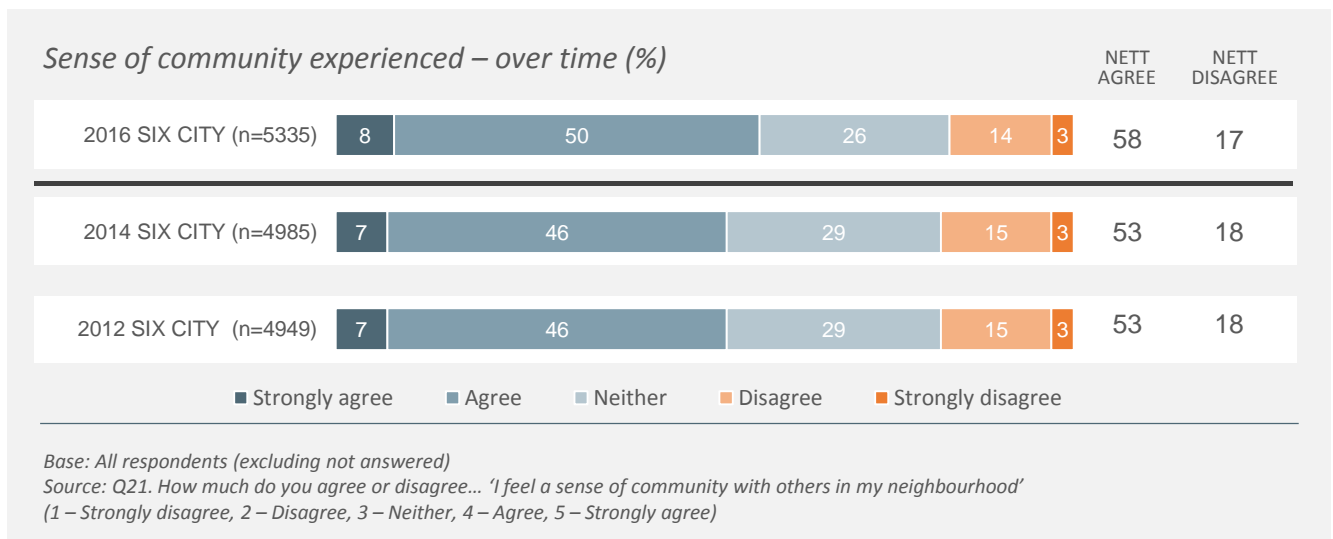
There has been a significant decrease since 2014 in the percentage of respondents who felt unsafe walking alone after dark in their neighbourhood.



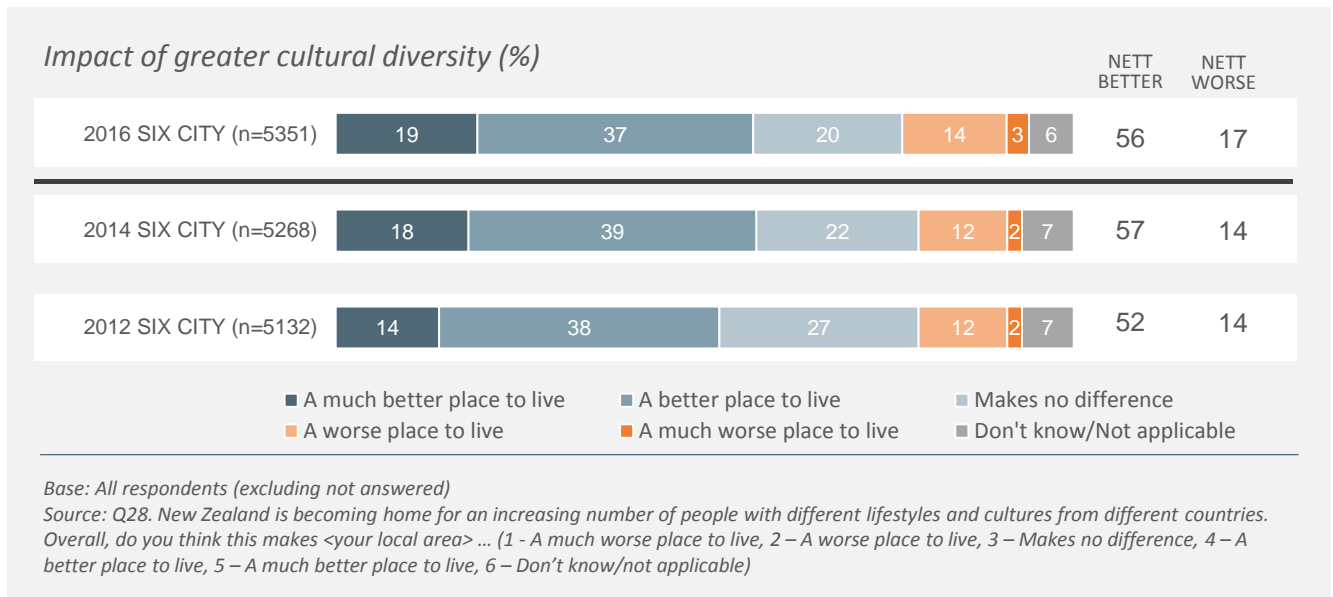
### 13.11 Perceived safety in city centre after dark



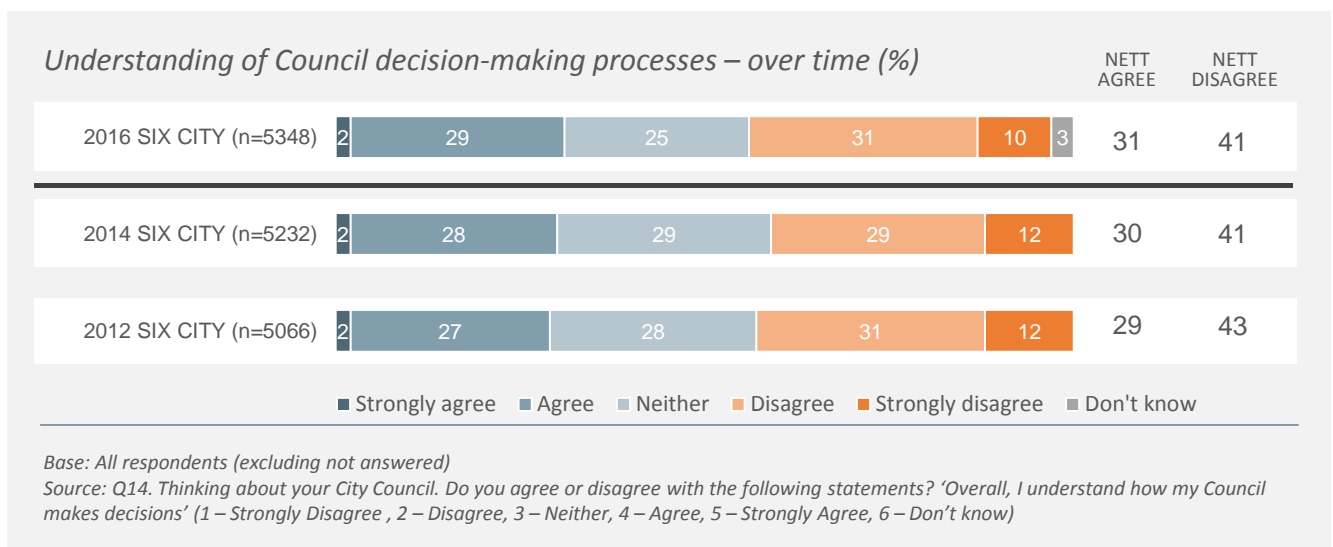
### 13.12 Sense of community experienced



### 13.13 Impact of greater cultural diversity

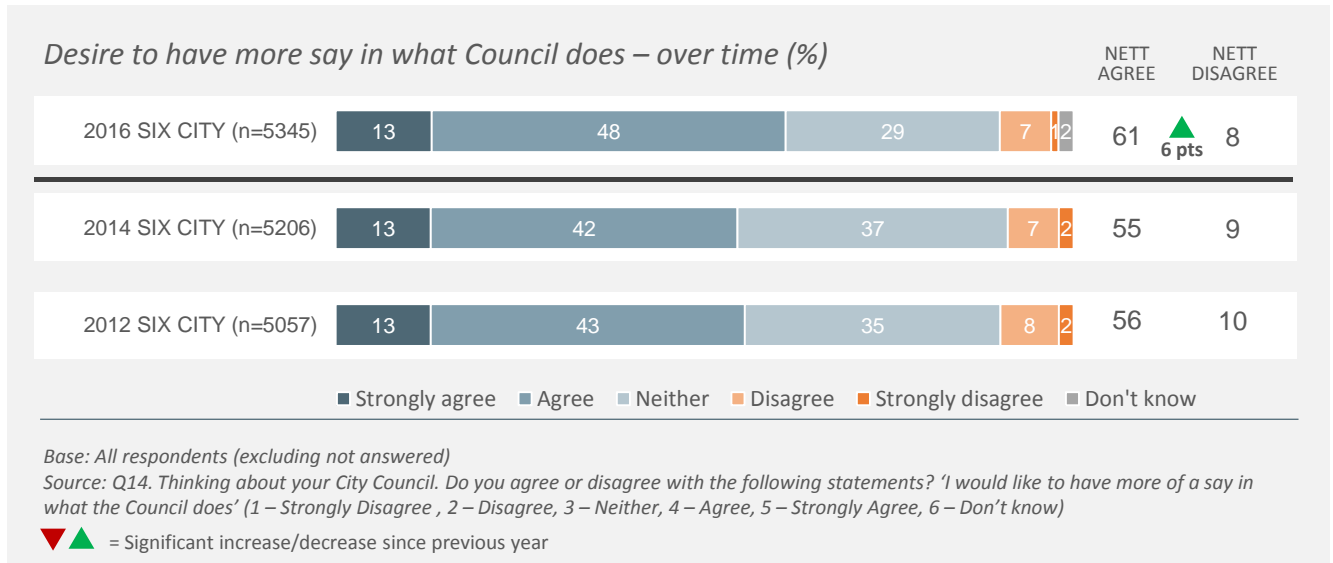


### 13.14 Understanding of Council decision-making processes

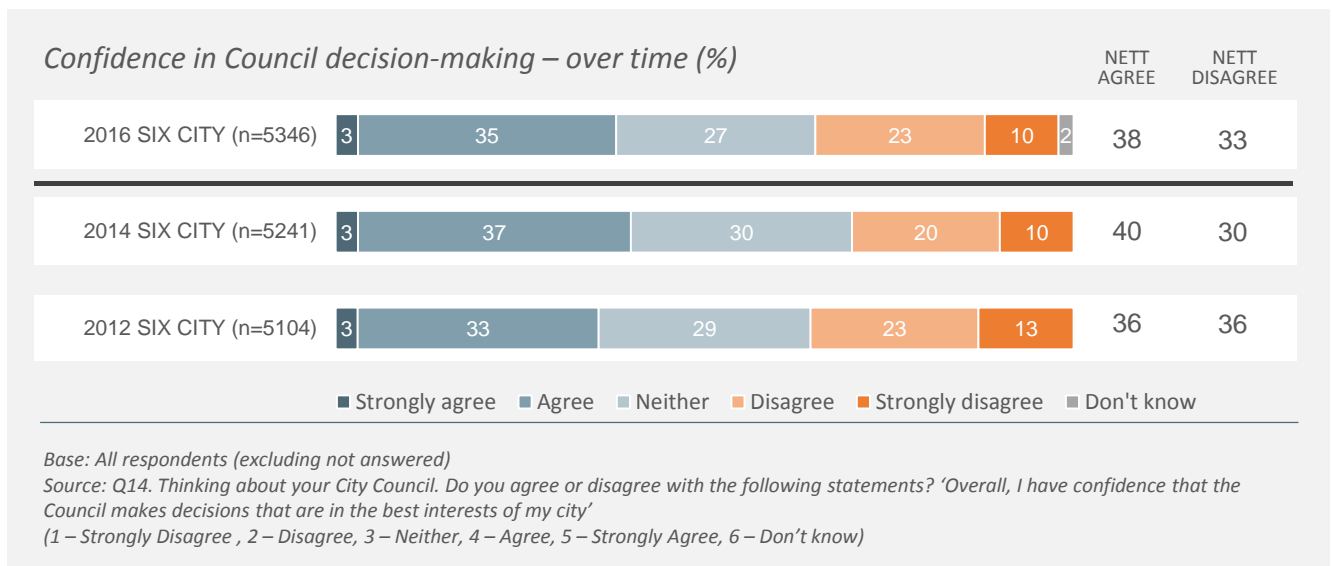


### 13.15 Desire to have more say in what Council does

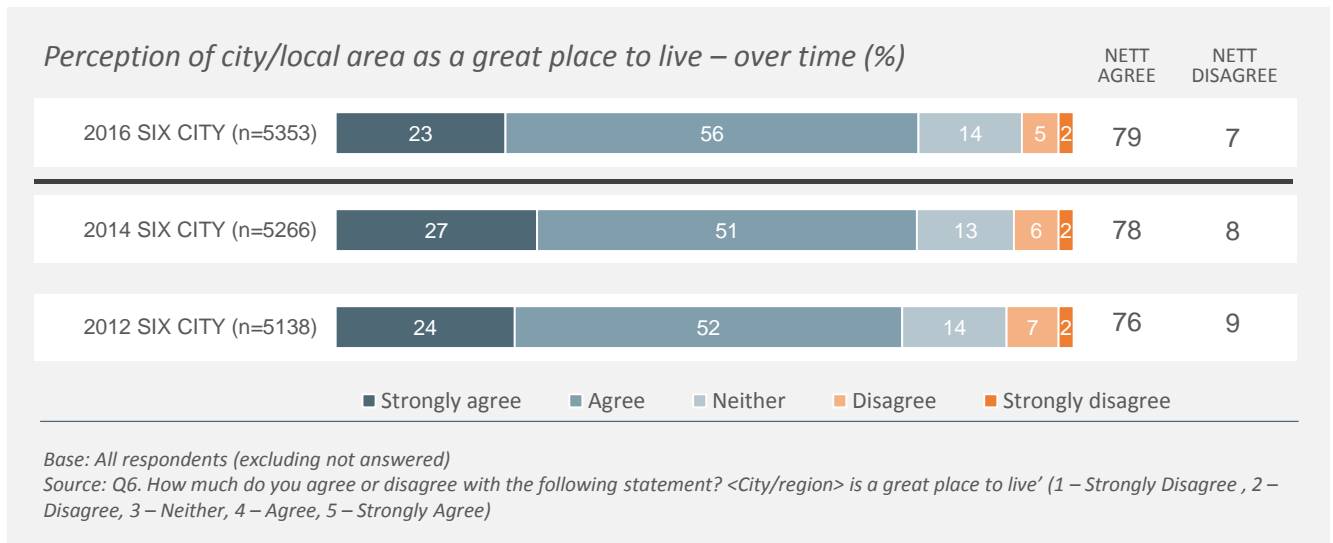
There has been a significant increase since 2014 in the percentage of respondents who would like to have more of a say in what their local Council does.



### 13.16 Confidence in Council decision-making

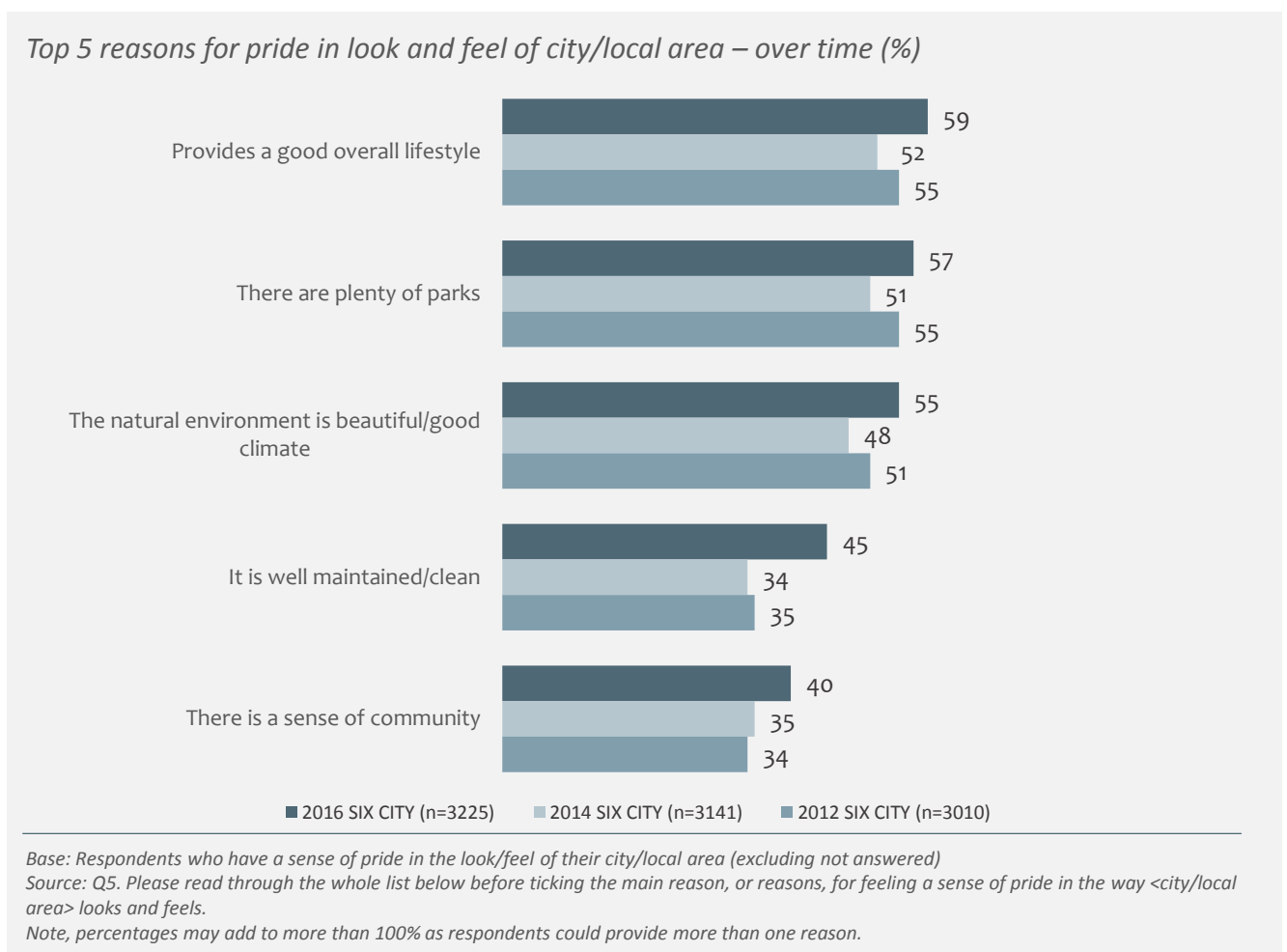


### 13.17 Perception of city/local area as a great place to live



### 13.18 Most common reasons for pride in look and feel of city/local area

The have been significant increases since 2014 in the proportions of respondents mentioning each of the reasons listed below for feeling a sense of pride in the look and feel of their city or local area.

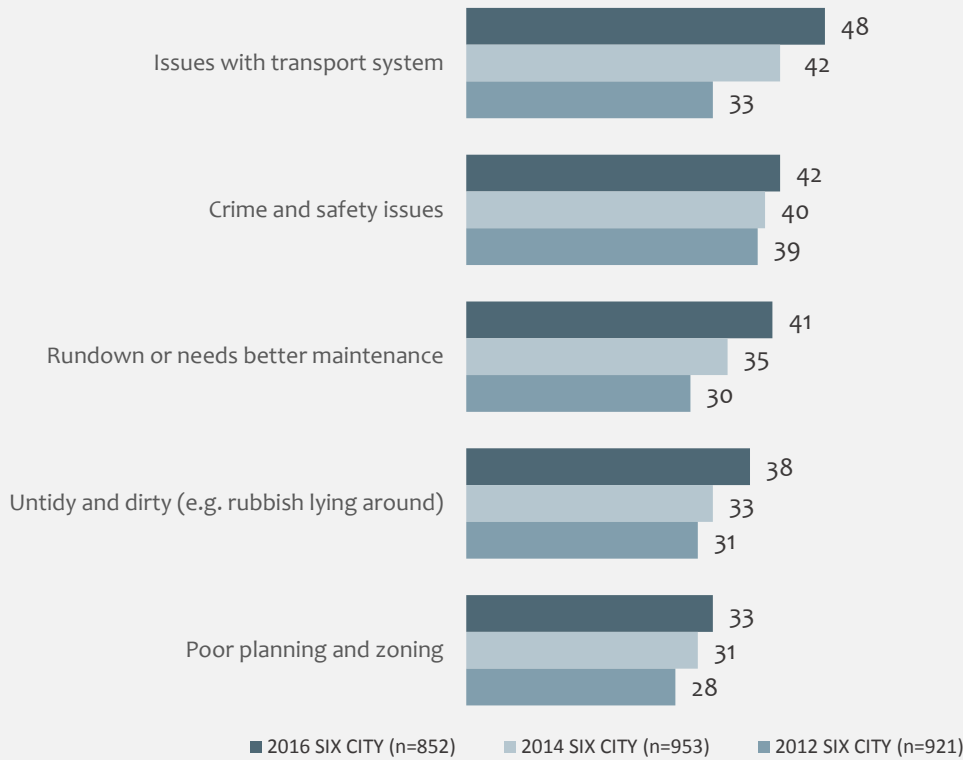




### 13.19 Most common reasons for lack of pride in look and feel of city/local area

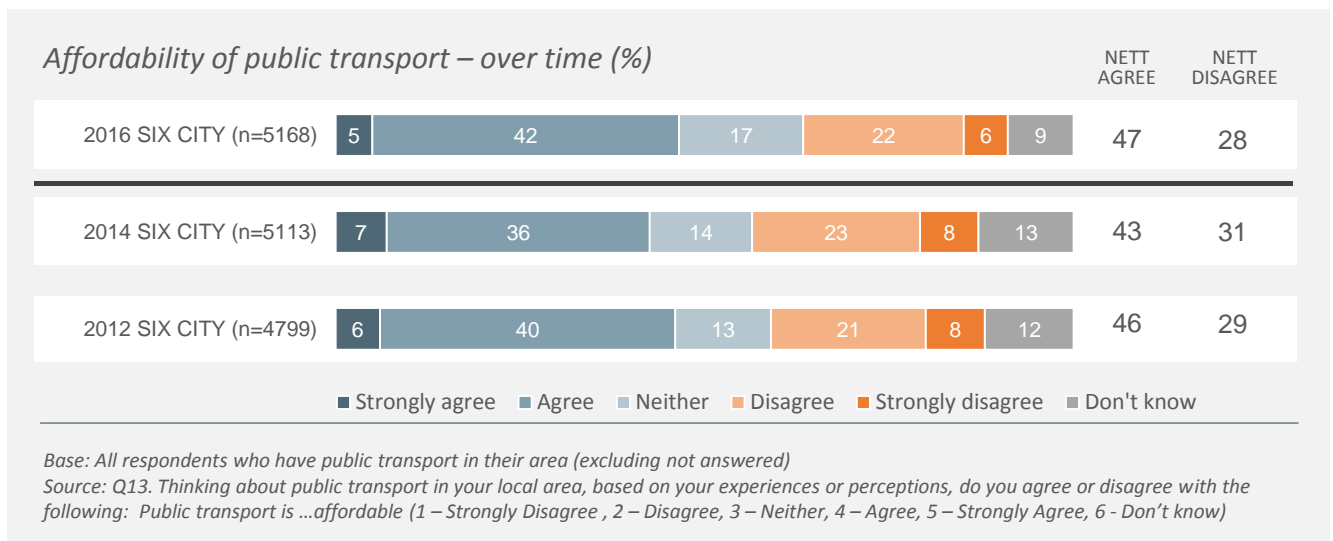
There have been significant *increases* since 2014 in the proportions of respondents mentioning the following reasons for not feeling a sense of pride in the look and feel of their city or local area: issues with the transport system, the area needing better maintenance, and the area being untidy or dirty.

*Top 5 reasons for lack of pride in look and feel of city/local area – over time (%)*

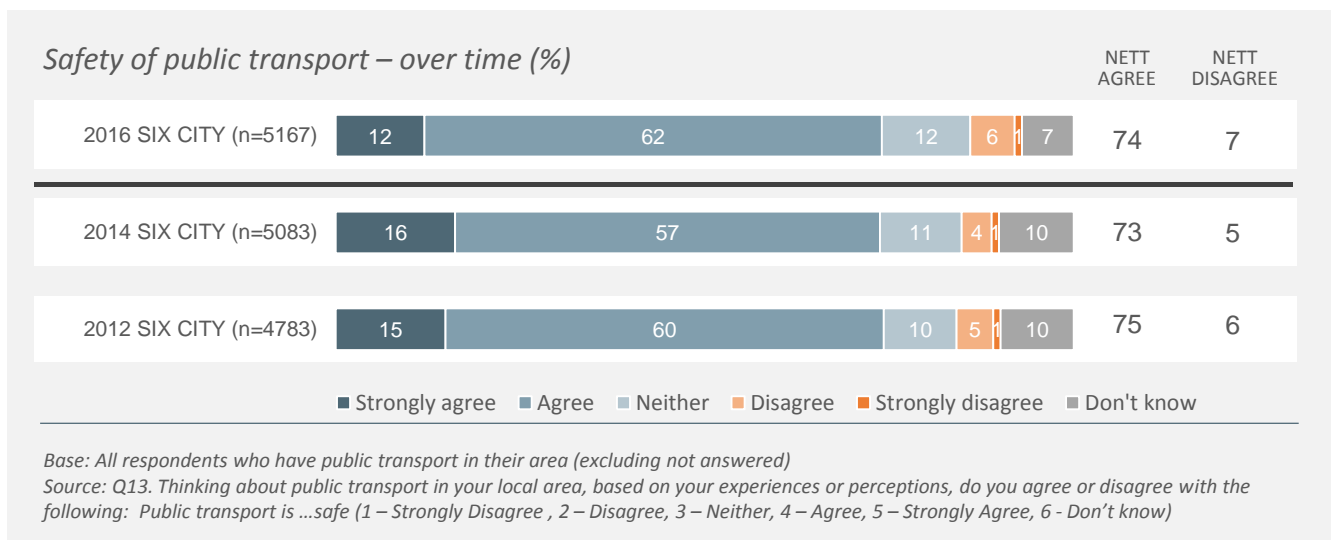


*Base: Respondents who do not have a sense of pride in the look/feel of their city/local area (excluding not answered)  
 Source: Q4. Please read through the whole list below before ticking the main reason, or reasons, for not feeling a sense of pride in the way <city/local area> looks and feels.  
 Note, percentages may add to more than 100% as respondents could provide more than one reason.*

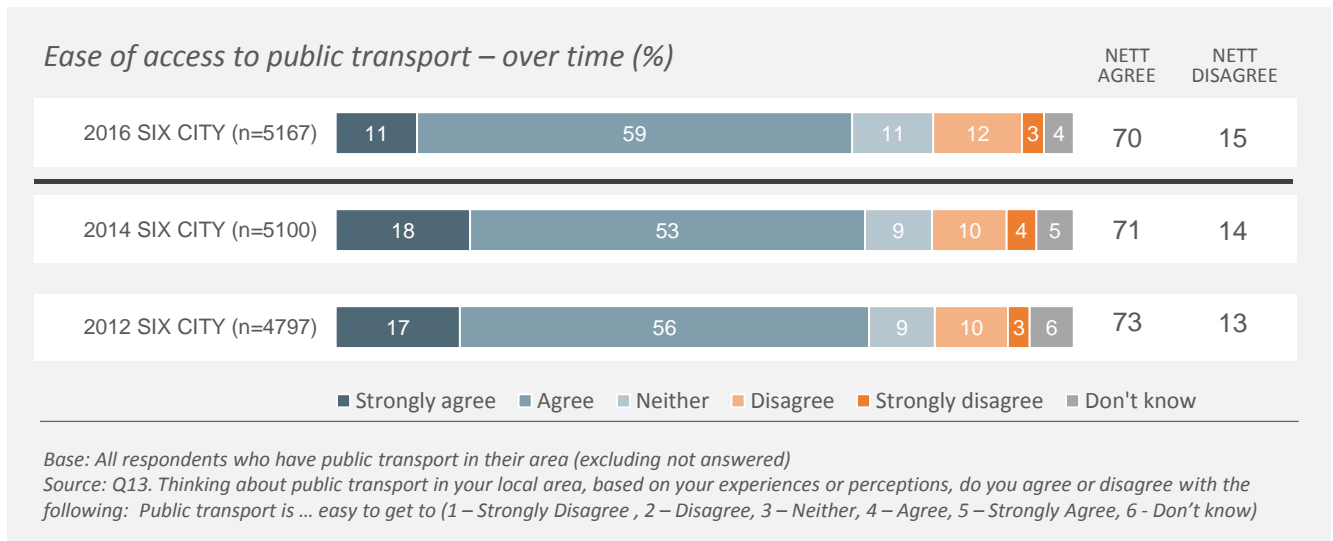
### 13.20 Affordability of public transport



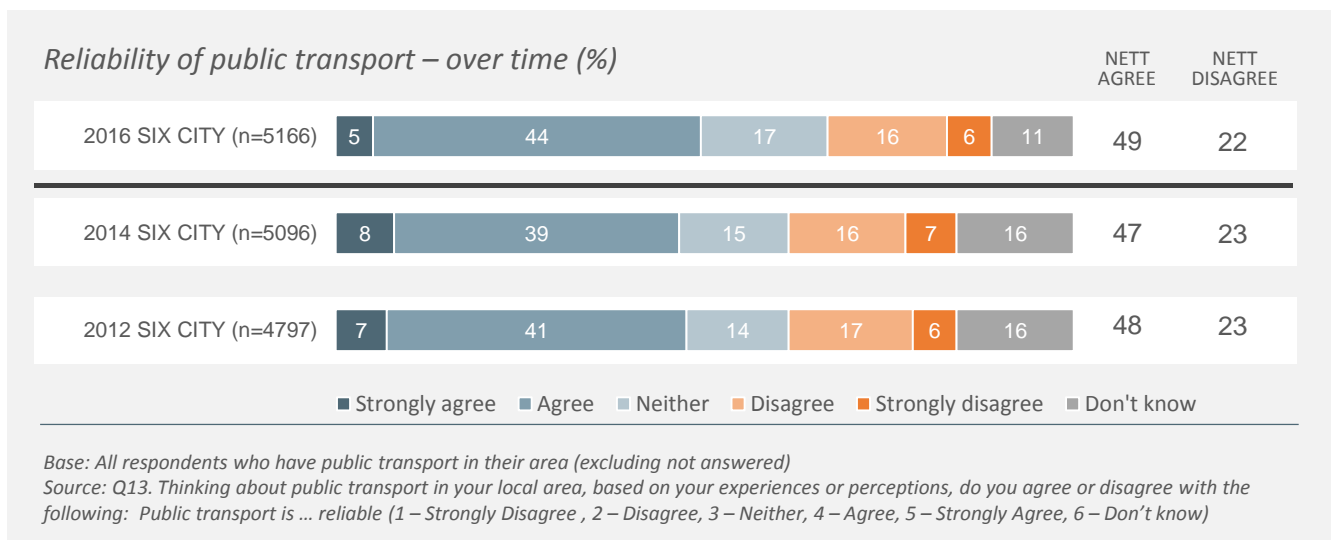
### 13.21 Safety of public transport



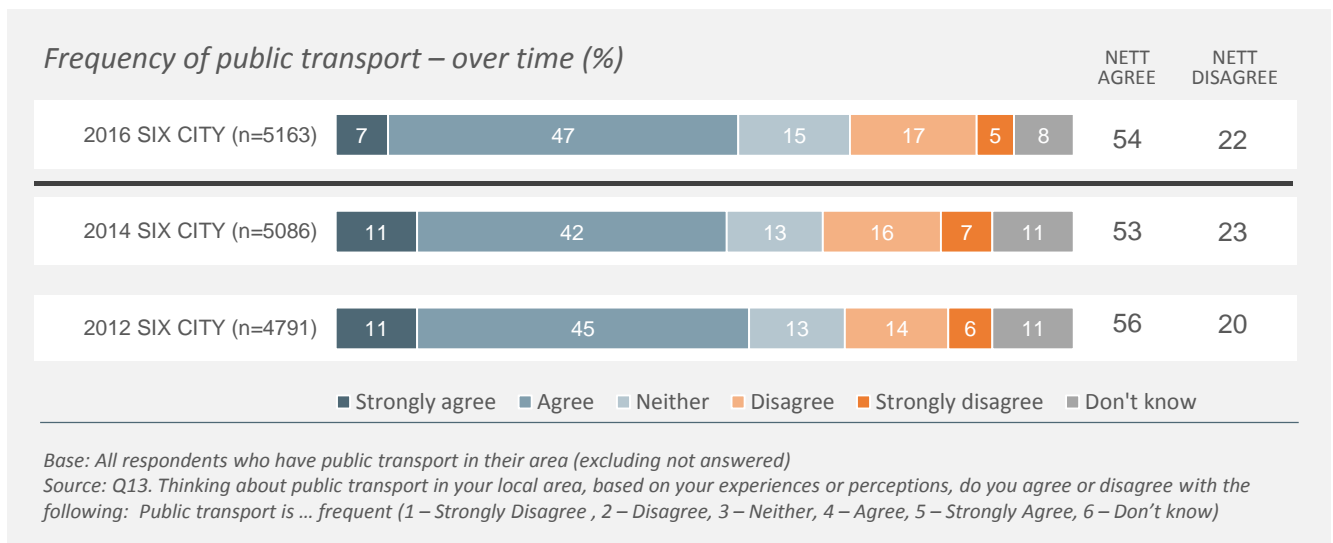
### 13.22 Ease of access to public transport



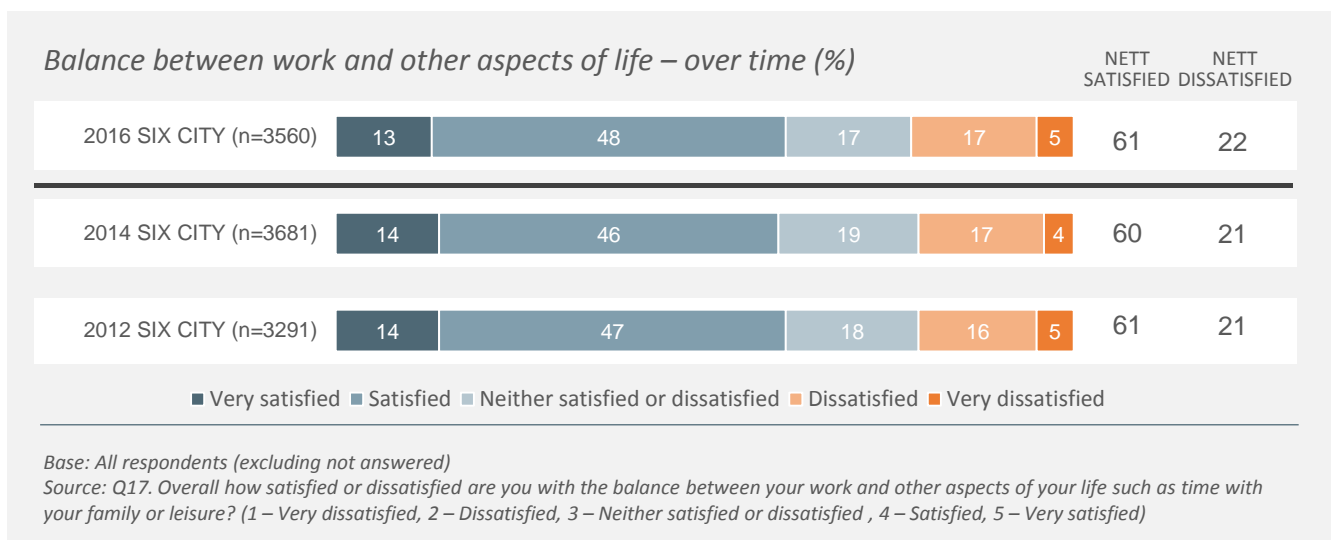
### 13.23 Reliability of public transport



### 13.24 Frequency of public transport



### 13.25 Balance between work and other aspects of life



### 13.26 Ability to cover costs of everyday needs

