QUALITY OF LIFE

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QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY 2016

Executive Summary and Research Design

Quality of Life Survey 2016

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A joint project between the following New Zealand councils

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The 2016 Quality of Life survey is a partnership between nine New Zealand Councils. The survey measures perceptions in several domains including: quality of life; health and wellbeing; crime and safety; community, culture and social networks; council decision making processes; environment; public transport; economic wellbeing; and housing. These insights are based on the seven cities' results (n=5,904).

Method

The survey was carried out using a sequential-mixed methodology. A random selection of residents from each Council was made from the electoral roll and respondents completed the survey online or via a hardcopy questionnaire. Fieldwork took place from 14 March to 22 June, 2016. In total, 7,155 respondents took part.

QUALITY OF LIFE

81%

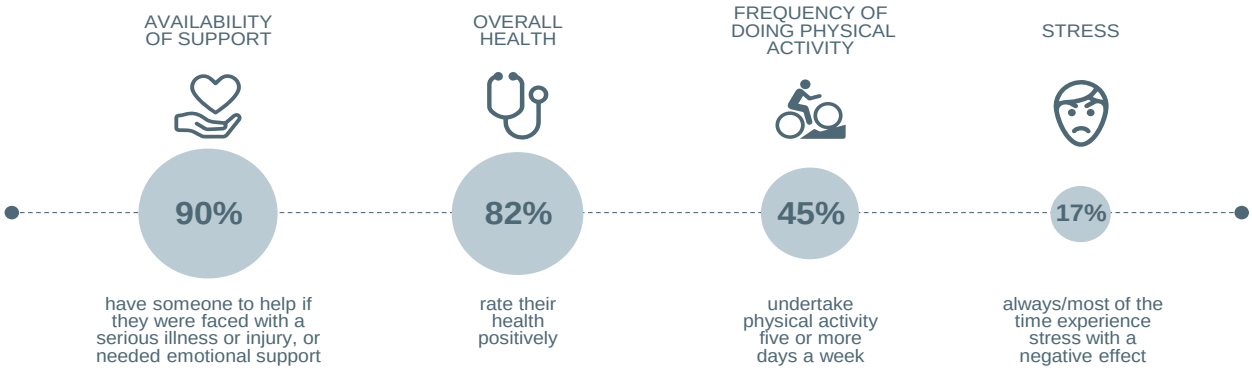
RATE THEIR OVERALL QUALITY OF LIFE POSITIVELY

27%

SAY THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE HAS INCREASED COMPARED WITH 12 MONTHS AGO

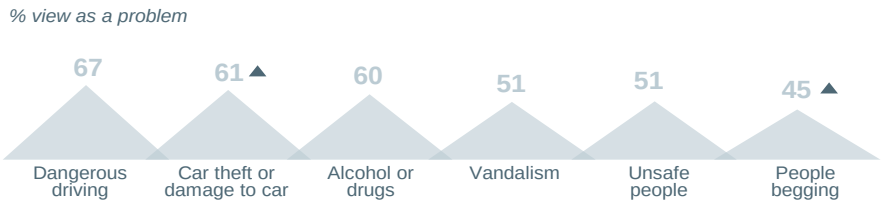
DRIVERS OF OVERALL PERCEPTION OF QUALITY OF LIFE

HEALTH AND WELLBEING



CRIME AND SAFETY

PERCEPTIONS OF CRIME AND OTHER UNDESIRABLE PROBLEMS



SENSE OF SAFETY

= during the day

= after dark

▲▼ = Significant increase/decrease from 2014 (based on six-city comparison)

COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND SOCIAL NETWORKS

77% BELIEVE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD IS IMPORTANT

58% EXPERIENCE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD

MOST COMMON SOCIAL NETWORKS	NEIGHBOURLY CONTACT	SENSE OF ISOLATION	CULTURAL DIVERSITY	ARTS AND CULTURE
43%	97%	68%	56%	66%
belong to an online network or social group	had positive interactions with neighbours	never or rarely feel isolated	say cultural diversity makes their city a better place to live	agree their city has a culturally diverse arts scene

COUNCIL DECISION MAKING PROCESSES

32%	61% ▲	39%	40%
understand how their local council makes decisions	want to have more say in what their local council does	are confident in their local council's decision-making	believe the public has an influence on Council decision-making

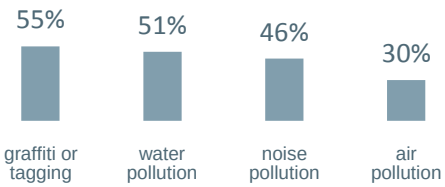
BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

79% THINK THEIR CITY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

62% ARE PROUD OF HOW THEIR CITY LOOKS AND FEELS

PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES IN THEIR CITY:

% Big or bit of a problem

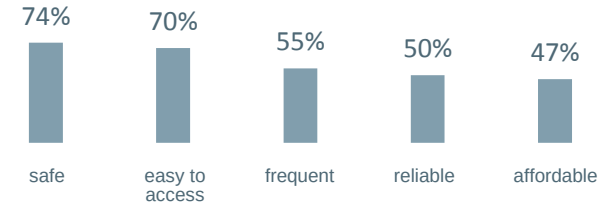


TRANSPORT

25% USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT WEEKLY (OR MORE OFTEN)

PERCEPTIONS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN THEIR LOCAL AREA:

% Strongly agree or agree



ECONOMIC WELLBEING

69% EMPLOYED (FULL OR PART-TIME)

61% SATISFIED WITH WORK/LIFE BALANCE

40% HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH OR ENOUGH INCOME TO COVER COSTS OF EVERYDAY NEEDS

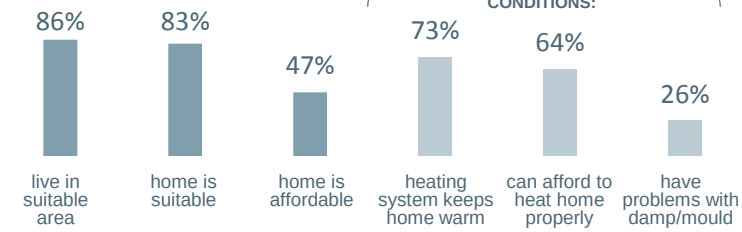
Additional **35%** say 'just enough'

HOUSING

PERCEPTIONS OF HOUSING:

% Strongly agree or agree

HOUSING IN WINTER CONDITIONS:



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The 2016 Quality of Life survey is a collaborative local government research project. The primary objective of the survey is to measure residents' perceptions across a range of measures that impact on New Zealanders' quality of life. The Quality of Life survey was originally established in response to growing pressures on urban communities, concern about the impacts of urbanisation and the effect of this on the wellbeing of residents. The results from the survey are used by participating councils to help inform their policy and planning responses to population growth and change.

The survey measures residents' perceptions across several domains, including:

- Overall quality of life
- Health and wellbeing
- Crime and safety
- Community, culture and social networks
- Council decision-making processes
- Environment (built and natural)
- Public transport
- Economic wellbeing, and
- Housing.

1.2 Council involvement

The Quality of Life survey was first conducted in 2003, repeated in 2004, and has been undertaken every two years since. The number of participating councils has varied each time.

A total of nine councils participated in the 2016 Quality of Life survey project, as follows:

- Auckland Council
- Hamilton City Council
- Hutt City Council
- Porirua City Council
- Wellington City Council
- Christchurch City Council
- Dunedin City Council
- Waikato Regional Council
- Greater Wellington Regional Council.

It should be noted that as two of the councils listed above are regional councils, there are overlaps in the boundaries of participating councils.[1] The Waikato region includes the area covered by Hamilton City Council;

[1] Territorial authorities (e.g. city councils) in New Zealand are responsible for a wide range of local services including roads, water reticulation, sewerage and refuse collection, libraries, parks, recreation services, local regulations, community and economic development, and town planning. Regional councils are primarily concerned with environmental resource management, flood control, air and water quality, pest control, and, in specific cases, public transport, regional parks and bulk water supply. For further information on local government in New Zealand, and to access maps showing the location and boundaries of the nine participating councils refer to the Local Government New Zealand website. http://www.lgnz.co.nz/home/nzs-local-government/

and the Greater Wellington region includes the areas covered by Hutt City, Porirua City and Wellington City Councils. The two regional council areas also include smaller towns as well as rural and semi-rural areas.[2]

Throughout this report, the results for all nine council areas are reported on separately, and in addition to this, the aggregated results for the seven non-regional councils are provided (referred to throughout as the 'seven city total'). In light of the original reason for establishing the Quality of Life survey (discussed above), the focus of the text in this report is on the seven cities, as these are substantially urban areas.[3]

Results for the Waikato region include results for Hamilton City area and results for the Greater Wellington region include results for Hutt City, Porirua City and Wellington City areas.

1.3 Project management

Since 2012, the Quality of Life survey project has been managed by a steering group made up of representatives from the following four councils:

- Auckland Council [4]
- Wellington City Council
- Christchurch City Council
- Dunedin City Council.

The steering group manages the project on behalf of all participating councils. This includes commissioning an independent research company and working closely with the company on aspects of the research design and review of the questionnaire.

Colmar Brunton was commissioned to undertake the 2016 survey on behalf of the participating councils.

1.4 Final sample

In 2016 a total of 7155 New Zealanders completed the Quality of Life survey – 5904 of whom were residents of the seven cities.

The table on next page shows the sample size that was achieved by participating council area, and also shows the proportionate distribution of respondents within the seven cities.

Almost two thirds (60%) of the total seven city sample were based in Auckland. This is a reflection of population size and sampling design (refer to section 2 for more detail on sample design and Appendix II for a breakdown of demographic characteristics of the seven city sub-sample).

[2] The Auckland region also includes several smaller towns, rural and semi-rural areas. However, the majority (over 90%) of the Auckland population lives in the urban area.
[3] The 'seven cities' are all exclusively urban areas, with the exception of Auckland, however the majority of Auckland's population lives in the urban area, as mentioned above.
[4] Prior to local government amalgamation in 2010 in Auckland, the four city councils in Auckland region were involved: Auckland City, Waitakere City, North Shore City and Manukau City Councils.

Council area	Number of residents surveyed Unweighted sample size	Proportion of 7-city total (n=5,904) Weighted %
Auckland	2720	60
Hamilton	537	6
Hutt	540	4
Porirua	535	2
Wellington	545	8
Christchurch	520	15
Dunedin	507	5
Seven city sub-total	***5904***	***100***
Waikato Region (excluding Hamilton)	743	N/A*
Greater Wellington Region (excluding Hutt, Porirua and Wellington city)	508	N/A*
Total sample	***7,155***	-

*Not included in 7-city total.

1.5 Previous surveys

The results for a selection of questions that were asked in previous Quality of Life surveys (2014 and 2012) are shown in Section 13. In making comparisons with results for 2016, results are based on six cities only, and exclude Hamilton City. This is because Hamilton City Council did not participate in the 2012 or 2014 survey.

While results for these selected questions are largely consistent with previous years, there have been four statistically significant changes since 2014 among those questions:

- 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)
- 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)
- Decrease in proportion of respondents who feel unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (33%, compared with 38% in 2014)
- Increase in proportion of respondents agreeing they would like to have more say in what their Council does (61%, compared with 55% in 2014).

Quality of Life survey results from 2003 onwards are available on the Quality of Life website: http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/survey.htm

2. RESEARCH DESIGN

This section covers details key elements of the survey methodology, sampling frames, and reporting process. More detailed information is provided in the Quality of Life Survey 2016 Technical Report.

2.1 Methodology and sampling overview

The target population was New Zealanders aged 18 and over, living within the areas governed by the participating councils.

Methodology

The 2016 survey employed a sequential mixed-method methodology, enabling respondents to complete the survey either online or on paper. Respondents were encouraged to complete the survey online in the first instance, and were later offered the option of completing a hard-copy (paper based) questionnaire.[5]

Similar to previous years, 62% of respondents completed the survey online and 38% completed it on paper.

In order to seek cost efficiencies, the research took place in two waves from 14 March to 22 June 2016. The average completion time for the online survey was 18.6 minutes.

Sampling frame and recruitment

The New Zealand Electoral Roll was used as the primary sampling frame. This enabled identification of potential respondents' local council, and a mailing address for survey invitations.

A sample frame was drawn and potential respondents were sent a personalised hard copy letter with a Quality of Life letterhead (including the Colmar Brunton logo) that outlined the purpose of the survey and explained how to complete the survey online.

A further sample was also drawn from Colmar Brunton's online panel to boost the number of Pacific and Asian peoples, in order to ensure robust analysis by ethnicity. These potential respondents were emailed a survey invitation and completed the survey online (a total of 201 respondents participated using this method).

As an incentive to participation, respondents were offered the chance to enter a prize draw for five chances to win Prezzy cards, with a top prize of $1000 and a further four prizes of $250.

2.2 Response rates

A total of 25,081 respondents were randomly selected from the Electoral Roll, and invited to participate in the survey. A total of 6,953 completed questionnaires resulted from this recruitment method. The response rate for the survey is 31% (excluding those who could not participate in the survey due to death/having moved residence/no such address).

A total of 1,333 survey invites were sent to Pacific and Asian peoples with valid email addresses, selected from Colmar Brunton's online panel. 201 people completed the survey using this method. A further 335 people attempted to do the survey, but did not qualify because they lived outside of the areas covered by the survey or the area quotas were already full. The response rate for the ethnicity booster sample is 20%.

Further detail on the research method and design, including response rates by council area, is provided in the Quality of Life Survey 2016 Technical Report.

[5] This methodology was also used successfully in the 2014 and 2012 surveys, whereas in previous years the survey was carried out using a computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) approach.

2.3 Questionnaire design

There were some slight differences in question wording depending on individual Council requirements, and the size of the council jurisdiction. For example, the Christchurch survey asked residents about the impacts of the earthquakes, while others did not. It should also be noted that Auckland, Waikato region and the Greater Wellington region questionnaires referred to 'your local area' throughout the survey, whereas all other questionnaires referred to the specific city name (e.g. 'Hutt City'). The respondent's address on the Electoral Roll was used to direct them to the appropriate survey for the Council area they live in.

A full version of the Wellington City Council questionnaire is included in Appendix IV. For further details on the slight wording differences between questionnaires, and all changes made to the questionnaire from the 2014 version, please refer to the Quality of Life Survey 2016 Technical Report.

2.4 Notes about this report

This report outlines results to all questions asked in the 2016 Quality of Life survey, by council area. Results are presented in tabular format with short accompanying text.

As discussed in section 1.2 above, the analysis includes a specific focus on the results for the aggregated seven-city sample. The results for all nine council areas are reported on separately, and in addition to this, the aggregated results for the seven non-regional councils are provided (referred to throughout as the 'seven city total'), and the text discusses results for the seven city sample only.

Council area results

The results for each city are sampled and weighted to be representative by age within gender, ethnicity and ward/local board. It should be noted that within each council area, there are a range of results that may differ significantly (e.g. by ward or local board).

Results for the Waikato region include results for Hamilton City area, and results for the Greater Wellington region include results for Hutt City, Porirua City and Wellington City areas. These individual city results contribute towards the regional results to a greater extent than the individual city populations contribute to the regional population. For example, Hamilton city results make up 42% of the Waikato results, however the population of Hamilton city is only 36% of the Waikato regional population. For this reason, city area results are post-weighted when regional results are analysed so that regional results accurately reflect the regional population (e.g. Hamilton's contribution to the Waikato regional results is reduced from 42% to 36%).

Nett counts

Nett results reported in this document are based on rounded figures shown in the charts.

Base sizes

All base sizes shown on charts and on tables (n=) are unweighted base sizes. Please note that any base size of under n=100 is considered small and under n=30 is considered extremely small. Results should be viewed with caution.

Margin of error

All sample surveys are subject to sampling error. Based on a total sample size of 5,904 respondents, the results shown in this survey for the seven city total are subject to a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 1.3% at the 95% confidence level. That is, there is a 95% chance that the true population value of a recorded figure of 50% actually lays between 48.7% and 51.3%. As the sample figure moves further away from 50%, so the error margin will decrease.

The maximum margin of error for each of the council areas is:

Location	Sample target	Sample achieved	Maximum margin of error (95% level of confidence)
Auckland	2500	2720	1.9%
Hamilton	500	537	4.2%
Hutt	500	540	4.2%
Porirua	500	535	4.2%
Wellington	500	545	4.2%
Christchurch	500	520	4.3%
Dunedin	500	507	4.4%
7-city total	**5500**	**5904**	**1.3%**
Waikato Region	1200	1280	2.8%
Greater Wellington Region	2000	2128	2.3%

Reporting on significant differences

Unlike previous Quality of Life topline reports, this report does not include any information on statistically significant differences across the seven cities. It was felt by the steering group that a comparison of broad geographic areas such as these, particularly in Auckland, masks significant intra-city differences and the results are not particularly meaningful.

Significant differences are reported in Section 13. When comparing results for the six city total from 2014 with those of 2016,[6] 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.

[6] Hamilton City cannot be included as it did not participate in the 2014 survey.