



people's panel



People's Panel Survey – Auckland's global identity

July 2015

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2 Key findings

Key findings

Auckland's uniqueness overall

- When panellists were asked which one word came to mind to describe Auckland, the most common included busy, congested or crowded (17%), diverse and multicultural (12%), alive, vibrant and energetic (10%) and sprawling (9%).
- When all responses were presented in a word cloud, particular words to describe Auckland became even more prevalent. In particular, diverse, expensive, busy, home, vibrant, beautiful, and sprawling, stood out.
- Around a third (31%) feel Auckland city's diverse and multicultural population is unique compared to other places in New Zealand, while nearly a third (29%) feel the harbours, isthmus and Gulf Islands make Auckland unique.
- Other aspects mentioned included the beaches (21%), the city's size or population (14%), its close proximity to outdoor pursuits, regional parks, bush and green spaces (12%) and the volcanic cones (12%). However a few feel traffic congestion and traffic concerns make Auckland unique (9%).
- One in five Aucklanders feel the city's harbours and isthmus are unique compared to other cities overseas (20%). Other differentiating features included access to beaches and coastline (16%), being a small city, not too crowded (15%), the outdoor activities available, access to parks, reserves and bush (14%) and Auckland's diversity, cosmopolitan, multicultural population (13%).

Auckland's distinct identity

- When panellists were asked how important they thought it was for cities to have a distinct identity, a majority said it was important (72%), with a third saying it was extremely important (35%).

A changing Auckland

- Panellists were asked how they had seen Auckland change in the past decade. The most common responses included population growth and a change in the city's cultural diversity (32%), increasing traffic and congestion and increasing transport concerns (27%), increased housing issues with increased house prices, infill housing and housing shortages (23%).
- When asked how Auckland is likely to change in the next decade, around a quarter said the city was likely to get bigger, busier, more crowded, and over populated (23%), and around a fifth said the city would see better public transport and cycle lanes with less dependence on cars (19%).
- Other changes predicted for the city included more high rises, apartments, and intensification (17%), increased cultural focus and diversity but also more cultural divide (16%), increased traffic and congestion (14%), more expensive housing, increased cost of living and continuing housing shortages (13%).

3 Background

3.1 Survey background

Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) is Auckland's economic growth agency. It helps to promote Auckland to New Zealanders and the rest of the world, to encourage more visitors, businesses, investors, skilled migrants and international students to come to Auckland.

Auckland has embarked on an important review of its global identity and story by asking a diverse range of Aucklanders what makes their city unique. ATEED wish to articulate what makes Auckland unique on a global level, and express this in an inspiring and compelling way.

In particular they are looking for feedback on Auckland's uniqueness overall, Auckland's distinct identity, and the way Auckland is changing or will change in the next decade.

The following report summarises the key results and comments identified in the survey.

3.2 About the People's Panel

The People's Panel aims to provide an opportunity for Aucklanders to get involved with a range of council issues, giving feedback by regularly completing online surveys and getting involved with focus groups and other activities as needed.

The panel ideally supplements other research, consultation and engagement activities used to provide public perceptions to help inform decision-making processes. Panellists are recruited to be 'typical' members of the public – that is they include members of the public who come from a range of backgrounds and a range of levels of involvement with the council.

At the time of surveying there were over 20,000 people registered with the panel, with representation from residents of each local board area and by age group and ethnicity. The People's Panel is not yet representative of the wider Auckland population and ongoing recruitment is conducted to improve participation from particular areas, age groups and ethnicities.

For more information about the People's Panel visit

www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/peoplespanel

3.3 Methodology

The survey was open from 02 July 2015 to 12 July 2015 and one reminder was sent to those who had not responded. In total 4,078 completed surveys were received.

The feedback has been analysed in two ways:

- For the tick box questions, responses to each option have been reported as proportions of the total sample and presented as charts (and tables in the appendix).
- Responses to open-ended questions ranged from one-word answers to lengthy comments with several points and ideas. Key themes from these comments have been identified and ordered by frequency. A selection of comments has been included in the report, to illustrate these themes. Note that in some cases a random sample of 500 comments only has been coded, due to the volume of feedback received.

Results in charts and tables presented in this report may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were allowed for some questions and/or as a result of rounding.

4 Survey results

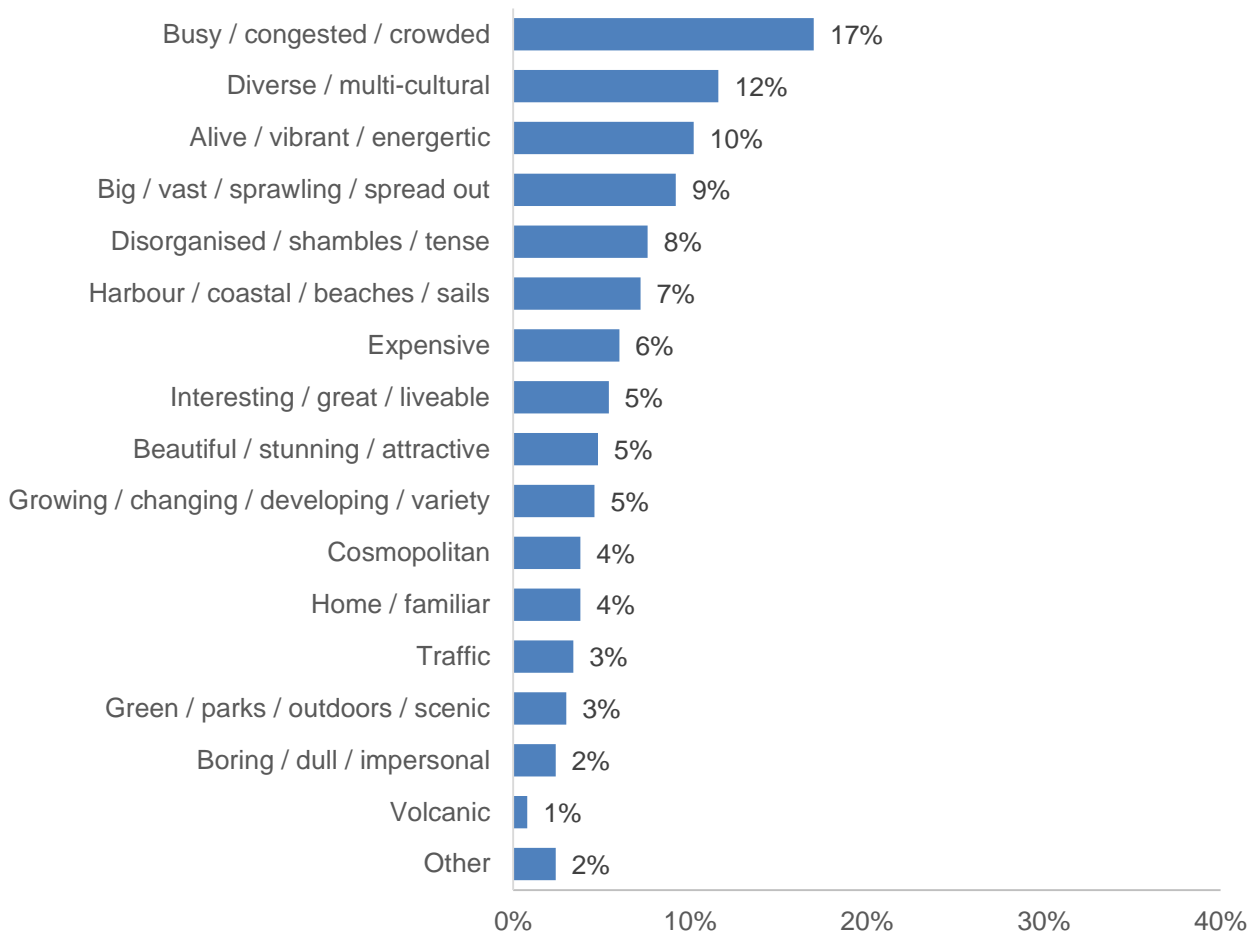
4.1 Auckland's uniqueness overall

Q1A. Firstly, thinking about Auckland overall... which one word comes to mind that you would use to describe Auckland?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n=4,078.

Panellists were asked which one word came to mind to describe Auckland. When all responses are presented in a word cloud, particular words to describe Auckland stand out as being mentioned frequently - in particular, diverse, expensive, busy, home, vibrant, beautiful and sprawling.



Base: Panellists participating in survey n=4,078. 500 responses were coded above. Multiple responses were allowed, responses add to over 100%.

When responses were coded into thematic categories, as shown in the graph above, similar themes emerged regarding the ways in which Aucklanders described their city. The most common words given by panellists included busy, congested or crowded (17%), diverse and multicultural (12%), alive, vibrant and energetic (10%) and sprawling (9%).

There were few differences in the prevalence of these themes across the different demographic groups within the survey sample, however men were more likely than women to use the words disorganised, shambles, and tense (63% vs. 34%). Pacific panellists were more likely to use the words diverse and multi-cultural (7%). Those in the Upper Harbour local board area were more likely to use the words big, vast, sprawling, and spread out (15%).

Q1B. What, if anything, do you think is unique about Auckland compared to other places in New Zealand?

Around a third (31%) feel Auckland city's diverse and multicultural population is unique compared to other places in New Zealand, while nearly a third (29%) feel the harbours, isthmus and Gulf Islands make Auckland unique. Other aspects mentioned included the beaches (21%), the city's size or population (14%), its close proximity to a range of outdoor pursuits, regional parks, bush and green spaces (12%) and the volcanic cones (12%). However a few feel traffic congestion and traffic concerns make Auckland unique (9%).

What, if anything, do you think is unique about Auckland compared to other places in New Zealand?	Number of responses n=500	% of responses
Diversity / multicultural population / cosmopolitan	153	31%
Harbour/s / location / isthmus / Gulf Islands	146	29%
Beaches / coast	105	21%
Size/ population	69	14%
Close proximity of / outdoor pursuits / regional parks / bush / green spaces	60	12%
Volcanic cones	58	12%
Traffic / transport concerns / congestion	44	9%
Entertainment and facilities - theatres, galleries / events	38	8%
Lots to do in general	37	7%
Beautiful / visually appealing / great location	33	7%
Climate	32	6%
Detractor comments	32	6%
Vibrant / dynamic	28	6%
Busy / crowded / overpopulated	21	4%
Comments regarding council / bureaucracy	21	4%
Peaceful / relaxing / great lifestyle / opportunities	20	4%
Food / restaurants	20	4%
Expensive to live / buy property	20	4%
General positive feel / has it all	15	3%
Maritime / sailing	13	3%
History / buildings	12	2%
Shopping	11	2%
Economic hub	10	2%
Other	23	5%

Selection of comments

- *"A lot more diverse than other places in New Zealand. More tolerant towards people from other countries."*
- *"Auckland is very multicultural compared to other places in NZ."*
- *"Huge diversity in nationalities, it's a huge melting pot."*
- *"Cultural blends...nowhere else in NZ can you see such a dynamic mix of cultures. The shops and eateries reflects this."*
- *"Diversity of subcultures (e.g. music scenes) compared with smaller places"*
- *"The varied and cosmopolitan resident population. It makes for a vibrant city"*

where you have easy access to a global smorgasbord.”

- *“You are never far from a look out point over the sea. And Rangitoto is an icon.”*
- *“Auckland is the only city that is built on two harbours and 50 volcanic cones, some of which are filled with beautiful mangroves. Another beautiful and unique feature is its harbour and the many coastal cliffs and beaches with overhanging pohutukawas.”*
- *“The harbour and gulf with its islands, the topography with volcanic cones, the abundance of greenery and public reserves”*
- *“Beautiful harbour, green spaces in and around the city, beautiful beaches around the city on both coasts, a mild and moderate climate with no extremes of weather.”*
- *“Close mixture of urban and non-urban lifestyles. The city is close to many other environments, e.g. beaches, DOC parks, forests, sea.”*
- *“Horrible traffic jams and far too difficult to get around.”*
- *“Severe traffic congestion.”*

Q1C. And what, if anything, is unique about Auckland compared to other cities overseas?

One in five Aucklanders feel the city's harbours and isthmus are unique compared to other cities overseas (20%). Other unique factors included our access to beaches and the coast (16%), being a small city, that is not too crowded (15%), the outdoor activities available, access to parks, reserves and bush (14%) and Auckland's diversity, cosmopolitan, multicultural population (13%). Some feel Auckland's global uniqueness comes from its volcanic cones (11%), while a few feel it stems from the city's lack of efficient public transport (10%).

What, if anything, is unique about Auckland compared to other cities overseas?	Number of responses n=500	% of responses
Harbour / harbours / location / isthmus	101	20%
Access to beaches / coastline	79	16%
Small city / not too crowded / spread out	76	15%
Outdoor activities / access to parks, reserves, bush	72	14%
Diversity / multicultural population / cosmopolitan	63	13%
Volcanic cones	56	11%
Transport concerns / lack of public transport	51	10%
Negative in general	40	8%
Atmosphere / friendly	39	8%
Beautiful / visually appealing	38	8%
Clean / green	35	7%
Peaceful / relaxing / lifestyle	33	7%
Accessibility in general	33	7%
Safe	26	5%
Climate	13	3%
Maritime / sailing	13	3%
Comments regarding council / bureaucracy	9	2%
History / buildings / Sky Tower	9	2%
Expensive housing / cost of living	7	1%
Lots to do in general	7	1%
Entertainment - theatres, galleries	5	1%
Everything	4	1%
Other	34	7%
Don't know	18	4%
Nothing	15	3%

Selection of comments

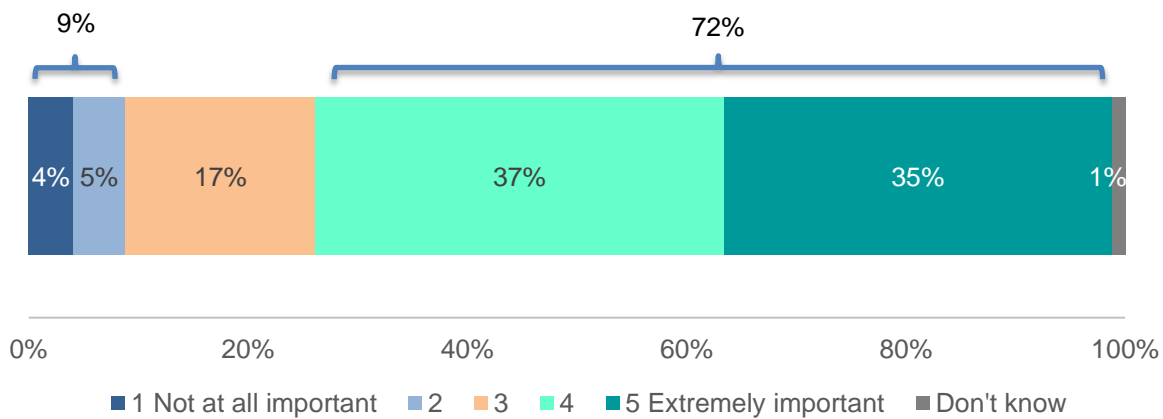
- *"Its position between two harbours. Auckland sits between 2 harbours which is unusual."*
- *"Our magnificent harbour with its islands"*
- *"It is unique in the harbour setting and the volcanoes - very beautiful."*
- *"Quick access to sea and great beaches, lush bush and wonderful islands."*
- *"It has a lot of parks and recreational facilities. It has excellent harbours, sandy and rugged beaches. It has the Waitakere Ranges so close for hiking and natural beauty."*
- *"Variety of types of areas and topography, length of coastal edge, proportion"*

of areas of natural geography with native vegetation, number of volcanoes, amount of plants and trees in many of our suburbs, different cultural activities available, ease to reach wilderness areas nearby. Areas of colourfully painted wooden houses. Wonderful big trees throughout. Poor public transport”

- *“The amount of accessible beaches here, the fact that there is rainforest, surf beaches and countryside all within an hour’s drive of the city.”*
- *“So many city beaches and parks that provide people from all over the city with outdoor fun and recreation. Most big cities are just buildings and motorways.”*
- *“Lots of parks, beaches and other recreation spaces for time out which are used by the whole population - people from lots of different cultures and socio-economic groups all mix together.”*
- *“Probably the ethnic mix of European, Asian and Polynesian is unique.”*
- *“Auckland is unique in that it is large enough to be sophisticated, cultured, multi-cultural and offers all the outdoor attractions anyone could want.”*
- *“Compared to other big cities overseas, probably not as crowded. We can still swing our arms while walking down town without being squashed by other peoples’ bodies”*
- *“Relatively small population enjoying big city advantages.”*
- *“It’s not very accessible by public transport, which is surprising for a small city.”*
- *“Unfortunately Auckland is unique for being way behind with providing affordable, reliable and fast public transport.”*
- *“Lack of decent public transport system - bus, train, ferry, light rail. We are light years behind everyone else!”*

4.2 Auckland's distinct identity

Q2A. How important do you think it is for cities to have a distinct identity?



Base: Panellists participating in survey n=4,078.

When panellists were asked how important they thought it was for cities to have a distinct identity, a majority said it was important (72%), with a third saying it was extremely important (35%). Only 9% felt it was not important.

While there are no significant differences in perspectives by age group or local board area, females are more likely than males to feel it extremely important for cities to have a distinct identity (37% vs.32%). Europeans are significantly less likely than those of other ethnicities to feel a distinct identity is extremely important for a city (34% Europeans, 41% Māori, 51% Pacific, 44% Asian, 50% Middle Eastern, Latin America, Africa).

4.3 A changing Auckland

Q2B. How, if at all, have you seen Auckland change in the past decade?

Panellists were asked how they had seen Auckland change in the past decade. The most common responses included population growth and a change in the city's cultural diversity (32%), increasing traffic and congestion and increasing transport concerns (27%), increased housing issues with increased house prices, infill housing and housing shortages (23%).

Some mentioned improved public transport and cycle lanes (12%), the city becoming busy, crowded and overpopulated (12%), improvements in the buildings, city centre and public spaces (12%), and having more to do with more events, restaurants and shopping opportunities (12%). Some panellists said the city had become more expensive, with an increased cost of living and reduced quality of life (11%), and some said they had seen poor planning and design with green areas disappearing, unsightly buildings, increased high-rises and loss of historic buildings. A few commented saying they had seen increased urban sprawl (10%).

How, if at all, have you seen Auckland change in the past decade?	Number of responses n=500	% of responses
Population growth - migrants/ students/ cultural diversity	161	32%
Traffic/ transport concerns/ congestion/increase	136	27%
Housing - increased prices, infill housing, housing demand/shortage	113	23%
Improved public transport/ cycle lanes	62	12%
Busy/ crowded/ overpopulated	60	12%
Improved buildings/ city centre/ public spaces	59	12%
More to do/opportunities - events, restaurants, shopping	58	12%
Expensive/ cost of living/ reduced quality of life	55	11%
Poor planning and design - green areas disappearing, unsightly buildings, high-rises, loss historic buildings	53	11%
Increased urban sprawl	51	10%
Comments regarding council/ bureaucracy/ increased rates	47	9%
Waterfront developments	40	8%
Improved roading	35	7%
More cosmopolitan/ global	34	7%
Rich/poor divide increased/ homeless, beggars	33	7%
Lack of - identity, heart, community	29	6%
Worse in general	23	5%
City Centre has no appeal/is not safe/too many low quality retail outlets	23	5%
Growth in general	22	4%
Increase in malls/decrease in traditional shopping areas/low end retail	21	4%
Bigger	20	4%
Increase in crime, pollution, areas run down, address environmental issues	12	2%
No/ not much	10	2%
Well run city/ better planning	8	2%
Less focus on locals needs	6	1%
Better economy/ commercial hub/ business/ technology	6	1%
Other	20	4%

Selection of comments

- *“It has become ethnically diverse, with all its good points and bad.”*
- *“Bigger, lots more different cultures, better at embracing its Pasifika and Maori roots. Unfortunately, also now more congested! More people and housing is more expensive, plus cost of living shoots right up”*
- *“Huge increase in population which is reflected in the number of cars clogging the roads and motorways. Huge increase in the Asian and Indian population especially noticeable in CBD. Big increase in the spread of houses in outer edges of city“*
- *“More population, easier access to the facilities, much busier traffic, more shopping choices”*
- *“The urban area has spread more, lots of poor housing development, increase in poverty. Improvement in public transport, lots more free public events. Enormous increase in housing costs.”*
- *“Grown bigger, bigger houses, more roads, thankfully more cycleways”*
- *“More up market city to live in, progressive and friendly. Terrible problems with congested roads and traffic!! A Large number of migrants and increased mix of ethnicities. Property values out of all proportion”*
- *“Diversity- people, restaurants, foods, overcrowding, commercial hub of NZ. But the above has not been done well.”*
- *“House prices climb to ridiculous levels”*
- *“More traffic on roads, house prices and rental properties sky rocketed.”*
- *“Higher house prices, more concentrated and diverse population, more civic areas and events. Some quality development.”*
- *“Improvements in the quality of urban design (Britomart, Wynyard, community buildings like local libraries). Rebuilding of beaches and investment in coastal walkways”*

Q2C. And how, if at all, do you think Auckland is likely to change in the next decade?

When asked how Auckland is likely to change in the next decade, around a quarter said the city was likely to get bigger, busier, more crowded, and over populated (23%), and around a fifth said the city would see better public transport and cycle lanes with less dependence on cars (19%).

Other changes predicted for the city included more high rises, apartments, and intensification (17%), increased cultural focus and diversity but also more cultural divide (16%), increased traffic and congestion (14%), more expensive housing, increased cost of living and continuing housing shortages (13%).

How, if at all, do you think Auckland is likely to change in the next decade?	Number of responses n=500	% of responses
Busy/ crowded/ overpopulated/ population growth/ bigger	115	23%
Better public transport/ cycle lanes/ less car dependency	94	19%
More high rises, apartments/intensification	83	17%
Increased cultural focus/ diversity/ cultural divide/ migrants	78	16%
Traffic/ transport concerns/ congestion	68	14%
More expensive - housing, cost of living, housing shortages	67	13%
Comments regarding council/ bureaucracy/ poor planning	62	12%
General negative/ get worse	51	10%
More of the same/ a lot / continue to change	45	9%
Increased urban sprawl	44	9%
Improved infrastructure in general/ more parks/ amenities	37	7%
Rich/poor divide increase	31	6%
Loss of - community, identity, lifestyle	30	6%
Less historic places, characterless, less green spaces, poor design	25	5%
Impact on natural environment - more pollution, noise, Port encroaching	23	5%
General positive/ for the better	21	4%
More competition for jobs/ strain on infrastructure	20	4%
More housing in general	18	4%
More retail and business /commercial/ industry/ technology	14	3%
Increased rates	12	2%
More crime	7	1%
More things to do	4	1%
Other	26	5%

Selection of comments

- *“Growth! The size of Auckland is expanding and spreading so fast”*
- *“More over population problems becoming the same as other large cities”*
- *“Further improvement in trains and other public transport has to happen otherwise Auckland is going to become more and more unliveable.”*
- *“Hopefully public transport and bikes make a huge impact and improve to become the best way to move around the city”*
- *“Denser housing unfortunately”*
- *“Outer lying smaller town centres having high rise buildings/ more density of*

buildings (town houses etc.)”

- *“I fear it will become just another big Asian city, with an emphasis on commercial activities and ethnic/fast food outlets, instead of retaining the uniqueness of its natural beauty and Pacific style.”*
- *“I fear that the traditional way of life for Kiwis will change as it must to incorporate so many people from different ways of life. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but there is a danger of ghettos forming so that the different cultures keep to themselves. There is also the growing inequality of people's incomes.”*
- *“Traffic congestion will reach a critical level resulting in widespread restrictions on the use of private motor vehicles. Urban sprawl will continue because of the influx of new citizens.”*
- *“It will just get busier with more and more population. Section sizes are getting smaller and transport and facilities are getting squeezed because they can't cope with the increase of use.”*
- *“Become even more expensive making it a less liveable city*
- *“Just get worse and more expensive - become an exclusive city for rich migrants”*
- *“Priced out of the average Kiwi's range, rates too high, house prices too high, and low dollar bringing more foreign ownership and just wealthy Kiwis living here.”*

Appendix Respondent profile

	All respondents n=4078	Percentages (%) n=4078	Statistics NZ Percentages (%) 2013 census data
Gender			
Female	2345	58%	51%
Male	1575	39%	49%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	158	4%	
Age			
15-24 years	59	1%	19%
25-34 years	315	8%	18%
35-44 years	643	16%	18%
45-54 years	787	19%	18%
55-64 years	868	21%	13%
65-74 years	916	22%	9%
75+ years	275	7%	6%
Prefer not to say/Unknown	215	5%	
Ethnicity (Multiple response)			
European	3587	88%	56%
Māori	227	6%	10%
Pacific Peoples	75	2%	14%
Asian	205	5%	18%
Middle Eastern, Latin American, African	50	1%	2%
Other	2	0%	1%
Unknown	176	4%	
Local Board			
Albert-Eden	348	9%	7%
Devonport-Takapuna	259	6%	4%
Franklin	182	4%	5%
Great Barrier	6	0%	0.1%
Henderson-Massey	220	5%	8%
Hibiscus and Bays	284	7%	6%
Howick	243	6%	9%
Kaipātiki	279	7%	6%
Mangere-Otahuhu	90	2%	5%
Manurewa	105	3%	6%
Maungakiekie-Tāmaki	169	4%	5%
Orākei	281	7%	6%
Ōtara-Papatoetoe	71	2%	5%
Papakura	67	2%	3%
Puketāpapa	96	2%	4%
Rodney	244	6%	4%
Upper Harbour	124	3%	4%
Waiheke	53	1%	1%
Waitākere Ranges	205	5%	3%
Waitematā	442	11%	6%
Whau	204	5%	5%
Other/Unknown	106	2%	-

Demographics from People's Panel registration information