
New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples

2019 Annual Survey



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Comment from the Executive Director

Since 1997, the Foundation's *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey has captured the impact of current events on New Zealanders' perceptions of the Asian region and its peoples. These have included natural disasters, economic crises, political changes, security concerns and sporting events, to name just a few.

Despite annual fluctuations, the overall trend has been positive: New Zealanders are becoming more knowledgeable and confident in Asia and, as their connections deepen, their Asia-savvy skills are also improving.

The latest *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey was taken in November 2019, before the outbreak of COVID-19. The results reveal that New Zealanders feel closer to Asia compared to five years ago. Two out of three believe it is important New Zealand continues to develop ties with Asia; and self-assessed knowledge of Asia is improving year-on-year.

By January 2020, the mystery virus that became known as COVID-19 had grown to become arguably the biggest global event the Foundation had seen in its 26-year history. In March 2020, we asked Colmar Brunton to carry out a mini-poll to see how the spread of COVID-19 might have affected perceptions of Asia.

That poll showed that significantly more New Zealanders felt it was important for New Zealand to develop political, economic and social ties with Asia (79 percent in March 2020, compared to 67 percent in November 2019). Some, however, acknowledged the pandemic had negatively impacted their view of Asia.

One of the recurrent findings of *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* is the importance of face-to-face connections, and there is no doubt COVID-19 has put a significant dent in New Zealand's ability to connect with Asia. Border restrictions have not only placed limitations on outward travel, but also on New Zealand's ability to welcome overseas visitors, international students and new migrants.

The survey confirms New Zealanders like to travel; and while New Zealanders may have to cool their heels as the world recovers from COVID-19, we can expect they will once again set off and explore in due course.

Fortunately, New Zealanders' wide range of Asia-interests, including food, languages, arts and culture, business and sport, should keep them engaged in the meantime.

But New Zealanders also have some concerns about Asia. In the 2019 survey, we asked about the environment, and 40 percent told us they considered environmental issues in Asia are likely to negatively impact New Zealand over the next two decades.

The survey finds growing levels of awareness and an increasingly nuanced view of regional developments impacting New Zealand such as the Indo-Pacific construct; the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade agreement and the Belt and Road Initiative. It also tests New Zealanders' appetite for hosting APEC in 2021.

Finally, I would like touch on the Christchurch mosque attacks on 15 March 2019. Included in this report is a mini-poll that explores how this devastating event impacted New Zealanders and their perceptions of Asia - noting that more than half of the Muslim world lives in Asia. The results show a high level of empathy towards people of Asian ethnicity, but also recognition that much more could be done to build stronger, closer relations.

As we eventually heal and look to the future, we can be confident Asia will be part of New Zealand's growth story. More and more New Zealanders identify as Asian; and many more recognise the value of deep connections with the region.

Simon J Draper

Asia New Zealand Foundation
Te Whītau Tūhono



Our approach

The Asia New Zealand Foundation has been surveying New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia for more than two decades. The annual survey supports an informed public conversation about New Zealanders' engagement with the countries and peoples of Asia, and it also guides the Foundation's own work: equipping New Zealanders to thrive in Asia.

This report presents the results of four significant surveys:

- 1.** A major quantitative *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey of 2002 New Zealanders aged 15 years and over, conducted in November 2019. The results have been weighted so that they are representative of New Zealanders by age, gender, ethnicity and location;
- 2.** Quotes and insights taken from four qualitative focus groups that were held in parallel with the *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey to provide more depth of understanding about perceptions of major Asian countries. Those recruited were people who had at least some knowledge of international relations;
- 3.** A survey of 1000 New Zealanders taken in March 2020 exploring the perception of Asia following the outbreak of COVID-19; and
- 4.** Another survey of 1000 New Zealanders taken in June 2019 looking at the impact of the Christchurch terror attack on New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia.

The COVID-19 results are included throughout this report, to offer a comparison between November 2019, when the main survey was conducted, and March 2020, when the COVID-19 survey was conducted.

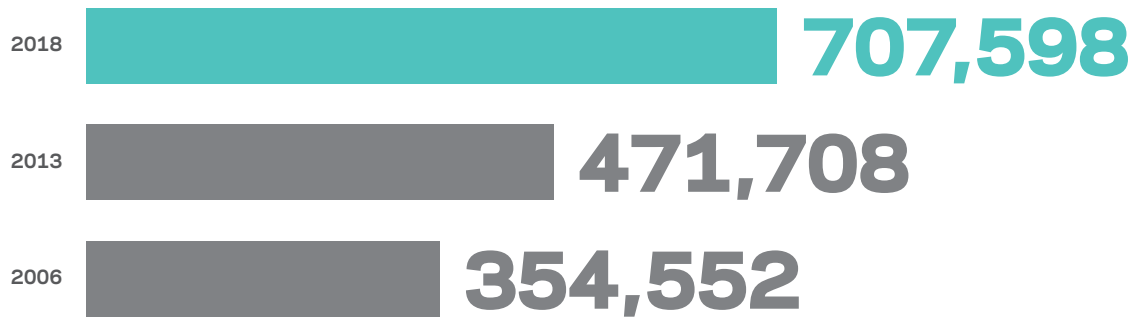
The Christchurch terror attack survey results are included as a stand-alone feature at the end of the report.

Since this research began more than 20 years ago, New Zealand has experienced a number of demographic changes. One prominent feature of change has been our growing ethnic diversity, with 707,598 New Zealanders, 15 percent, self-identifying as being of Asian ethnicity in the 2018 Census, compared to 354,552 in 2006. Of these, our biggest communities are of Chinese and Indian ethnicity, followed by Filipino and Korean (see Figure 1 overleaf).

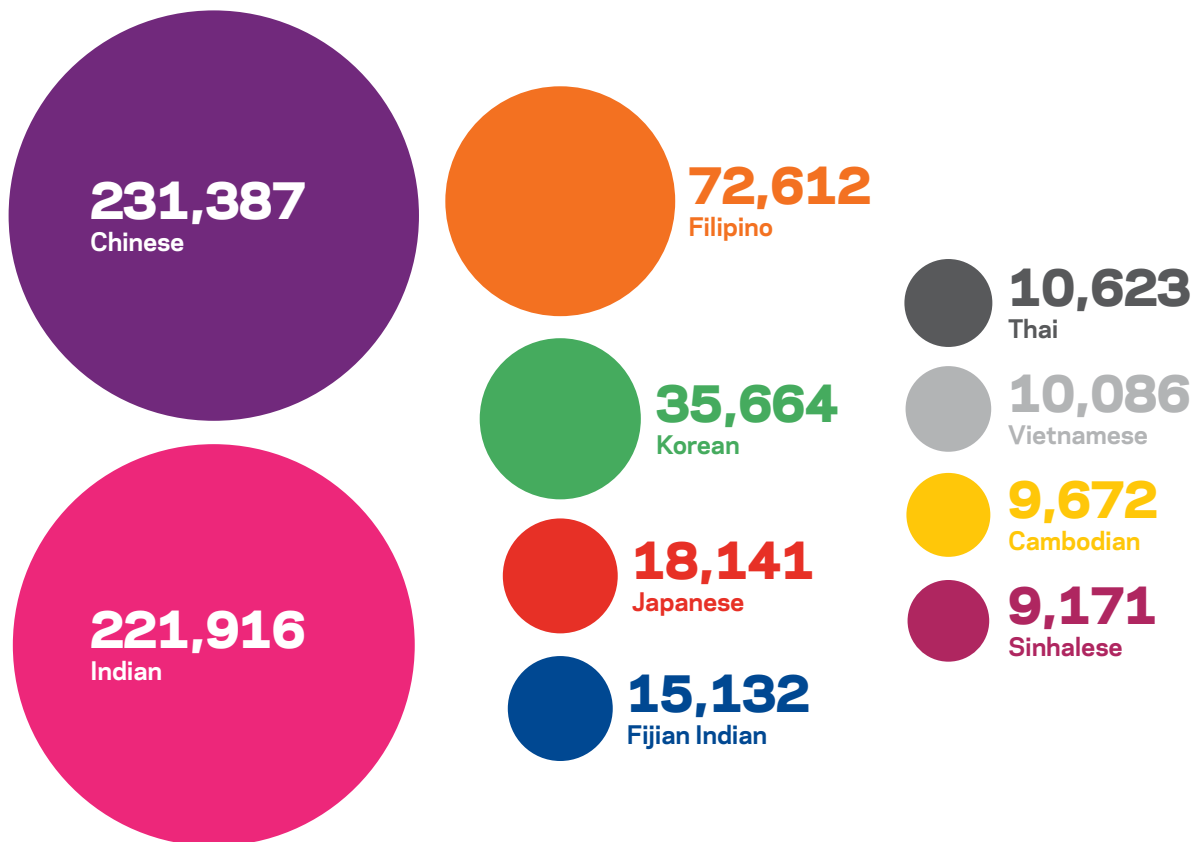


Figure 1

Census 2018: Asian New Zealanders



Largest 10 Asian ethnic groups in 2018 Census



Changes to the report and questionnaire

Last year's survey, alongside recurrent longitudinal survey questions, included a number of new questions that provide extra insight into how New Zealanders perceive Asia and its peoples:

- A general knowledge test, in which respondents were asked to identify five Asian countries on a map of the region. From this, we can look at the link between self-assessed and actual knowledge;
- Discussion of how New Zealand might grow its key Asia relationships and why;
- Questions about attendance at and the impact of Asian arts and cultural events;
- Questions about APEC, the "Indo-Pacific" and the "RCEP" trade deal;
- A word association for the word "Asia" both before and after COVID-19; and
- Questions about the impact of the 2019 Rugby World Cup on perceptions of Japan.

In the qualitative discussion, which took place prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, we explored:

- New Zealand's place in the world, as a neighbour to Asia;
- Perceptions of places in Asia and their relationship with New Zealand;
- Attitudes to some of the largest countries in Asia;
- Media sources and influences.

More details of the qualitative research are included in the last section of this report.

Following Brexit, the United Kingdom has been separated from mainland Europe in the knowledge and importance questions. Other minor changes and improvements to the survey questions and response options gleaned from the 2018 results were also made.

Comparison between 2014 and 2019 surveys

In this year's report we have provided some comparisons between 2014 and 2019 survey results, to show the changing trends in New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia over the last five years. Although the survey methodology has changed over this period – from telephone interviews to online questionnaires – the questions used for the comparison have remained largely unchanged.

A focus on Māori and young people

Where possible, the report highlights differences in perception between New Zealanders of different age groups, with a particular focus on those aged under 30-years-old. We also highlight the perceptions of Māori where they might differ from the national average.

Context for the survey

New Zealanders' responses are inevitably influenced by events happening at the time the survey is conducted. The following topics received media coverage around the time the quantitative and qualitative survey fieldwork was being conducted in November 2019 and may have influenced New Zealanders' responses:

- Coverage of Greta Thunberg and climate change issues;
- Forest fires in Indonesia;
- Sri Lankan presidential elections;
- ASEAN summit meetings in Bangkok, Thailand;
- Controversy over political party donations and perceived "Chinese political influence" in New Zealand universities;
- Coverage of trade tensions between China and the USA;
- Fire at SkyCity Convention Centre, Auckland, in October 2019.

For the two smaller surveys, looking at New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia following the outbreak of COVID-19 and the Christchurch terror attack, these two events were the single biggest media items.



Do we view Asia as an important part of our future?

This section asks New Zealanders to consider the importance of New Zealand developing ties with Asia, and how Asia might impact New Zealand's economy, cultural diversity, productivity and outlook.



Key findings



Developing ties with Asia is considered highly important for New Zealand's future. Two out of three New Zealanders (67 percent) say it is important for New Zealand to develop ties with Asia.

New Zealand is expected to benefit most from tourism, technological developments and innovation from Asia. Economic growth in Asia and investment from Asia in New Zealand are also seen to have a positive impact.

Those with greater connections to Asia tend to rate it as more important.

Younger New Zealanders are becoming more positive about the impact of Asia.

Environmental issues in Asia are considered to have the greatest potential to negatively impact New Zealand in the next two decades.

Māori have a slightly less favourable opinion of Asian investment in New Zealand, expressing caution about the impact on land ownership and employment.



Most New Zealanders say ties to Asia are important

Two out of three New Zealanders (67 percent) believe it is important to develop political, economic and social ties with Asia (see Figure 2). Support is broad-based across most demographic groups, including age, gender, education and living situation. The discussion groups suggest that for Māori, the desire to connect with Asia comes from social and cultural drivers, even though Māori are overall slightly less supportive of developing close ties with Asia (61 percent) due to concerns such as land ownership and employment. Under 30-year-olds, support for developing ties with Asia was comparable to that of all New Zealanders at 66 percent.

“It’s about whakapapa you know, because many of us connect to other countries and it’s about going back to those places and exploring one’s heritage.”

From a Māori view, [foreign ownership] is just perpetuating that sense of loss of land.

I haven’t seen those jobs that they keep talking about that will be realised. You know what I mean? I don’t see them advertising jobs for all this investment they’re supposed to be doing.”

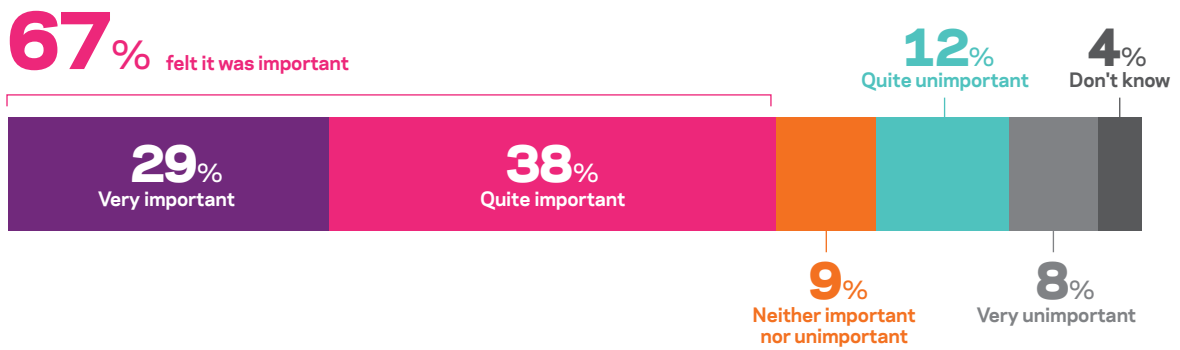
Female, 43
New Zealand Māori,
Hawke’s Bay



Figure 2

How important do New Zealanders think it is to develop political, economic and social ties with the peoples and countries of Asia?

All New Zealanders



COVID-19 poll - March 2020*

79% felt it was important



COVID-19 poll:

Significantly more New Zealanders (79 percent), particularly those in Auckland, Waikato and Wellington, felt it was important for New Zealand to develop political, economic and social ties with Asia, up from 67 percent in late 2019.

Source: Q1aii - Overall, how important do you think it is for New Zealand to develop political, economic and social ties with the peoples and countries of Asia?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

*COVID-19 Minipoll Base: n=1,005

How do New Zealand's regions perceive Asia?

We consistently see some parts of New Zealand place less importance on developing ties with Asia compared to other parts of the country. There are three distinct groups:

- Very supportive regions - representing 55 percent of New Zealand, in which 70 percent or more say it's important to develop ties with Asia.
- Supportive regions - representing 30 percent of New Zealand, in which 60 to 69 percent say it's important to develop ties with Asia.
- Less supportive regions - representing 15 percent of New Zealand, in which less than 60 percent say it's important to New Zealand to develop ties with Asia.

The level of support for developing ties with Asia largely reflects the level of connection a region has with people, cultures, events and information from Asia. The key points of connection which appear to have an impact on perceptions are:

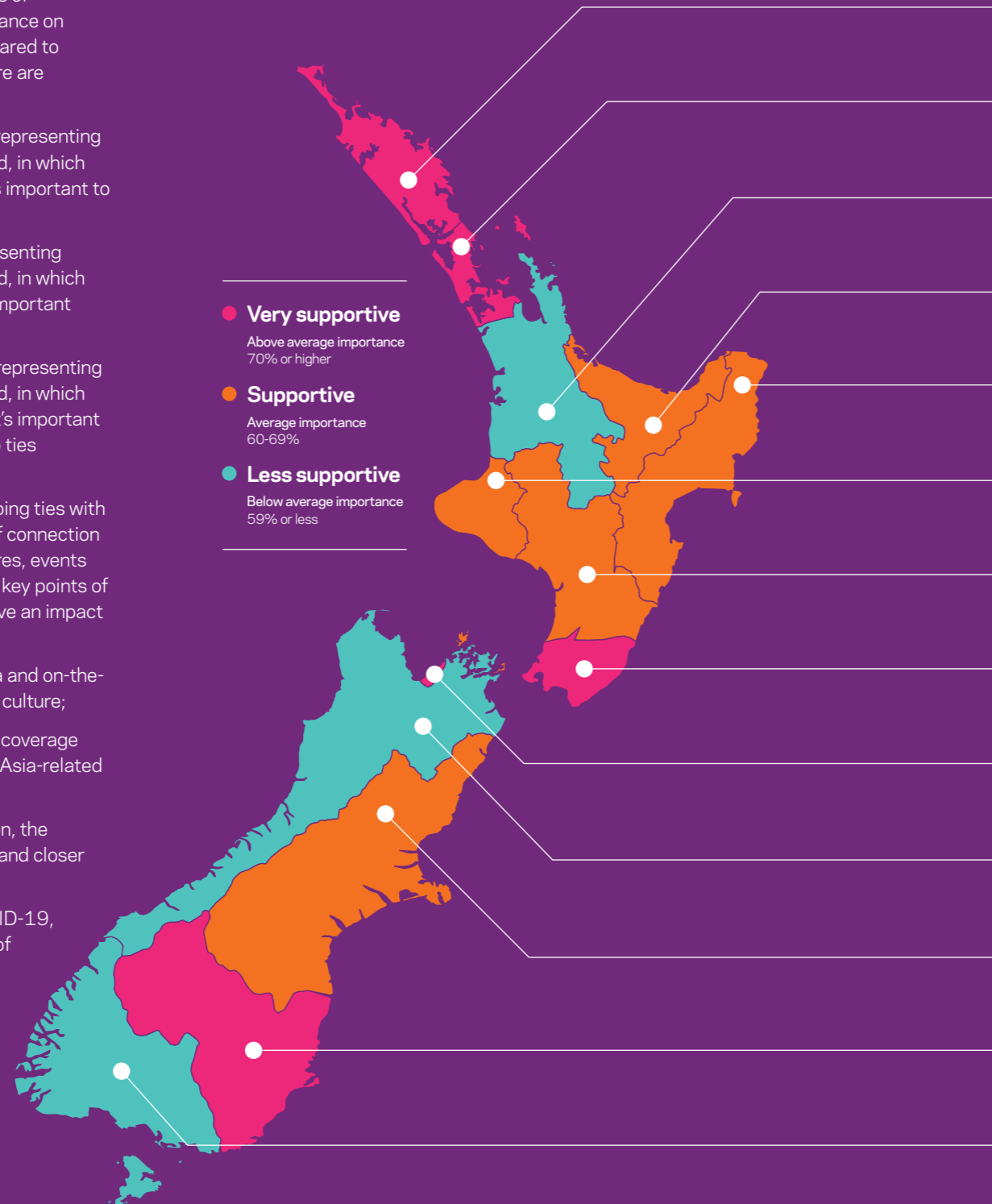
- The extent of travel to Asia and on-the-ground immersion in Asian culture;
- Recent exposure to media coverage on Asia or interaction with Asia-related events and cultures.

For regions with less connection, the support for developing deeper and closer ties with Asia also diminishes.

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, all regions, with the exception of the Bay of Plenty, Taranaki and Northland, rated Asia as more important (see COVID figures).

Figure 3

How New Zealand's regions rate the importance of developing ties with Asia?



- Very supportive**
Above average importance
70% or higher
- Supportive**
Average importance
60-69%
- Less supportive**
Below average importance
59% or less

Region	Late 2019	COVID-19 poll - March 2020*	Change
Northland	70%	70%	NO CHANGE
Auckland	70%	82%	12%PTS ▲
Waikato	58%	72%	14%PTS ▲
Bay of Plenty	67%	65%	2%PTS ▼
Gisborne - Hawke's Bay	62%	86%	24%PTS ▲
Taranaki	66%	63%	3%PTS ▼
Manawatū - Whanganui	67%	69%	2%PTS ▲
Wellington - Wairarapa	74%	89%	15%PTS ▲
Nelson	70%	91%	21%PTS ▲
Tasman - Marlborough - West Coast	51%	53%	2%PTS ▲
Canterbury	67%	81%	14%PTS ▲
Otago	73%	79%	6%PTS ▲
Southland	58%	91%	33%PTS ▲

Source: Q1a11 - Overall, how important do you think it is for New Zealand to develop political, economic and social ties with the peoples and countries of Asia? broken down by region (Q21b2).

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002) with regions ranging from n=41 to n=667
*COVID-19 Minipoll Base: n=1,005



Benefits expected from Asia connections

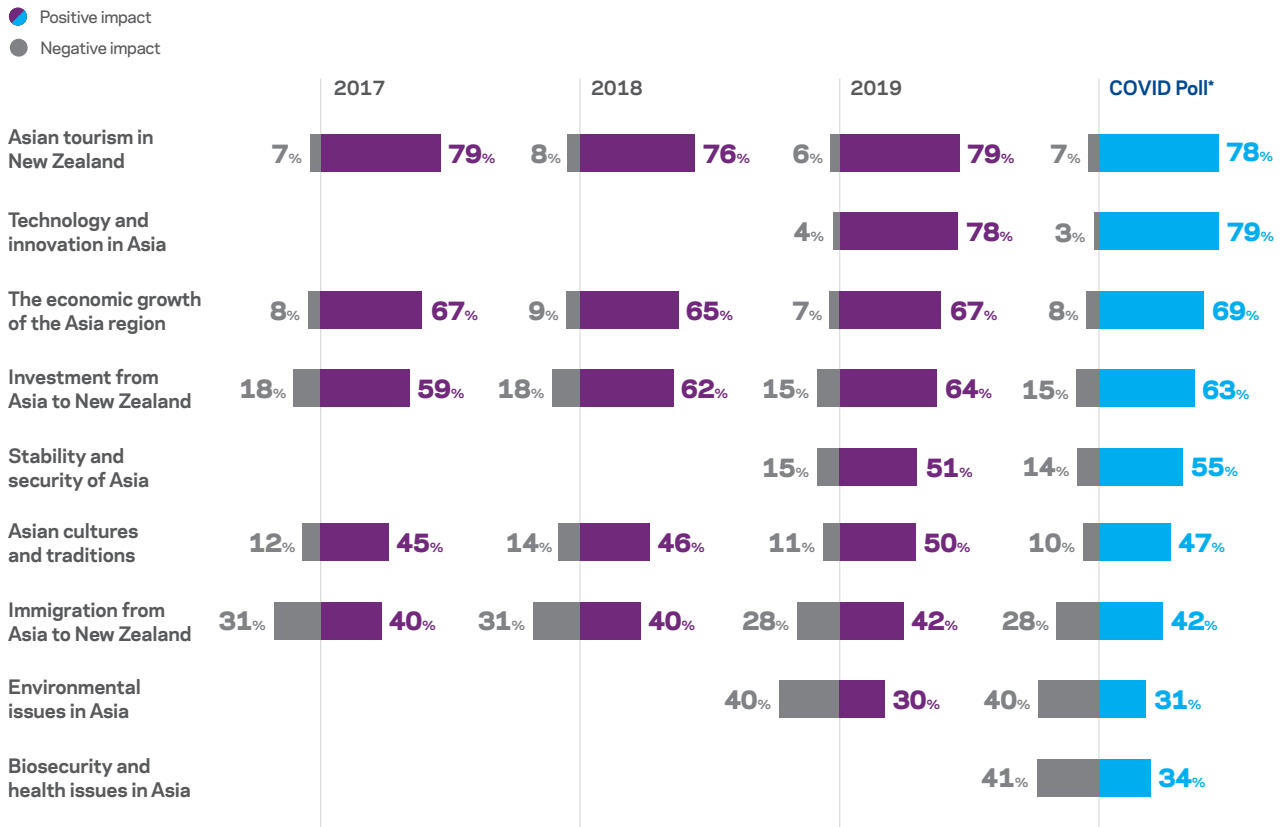
New Zealanders expect many positive benefits to come from New Zealand's connection to Asia over the next 10 to 20 years. Seventy-nine percent of New Zealanders believe tourism will have a positive impact on New Zealand and 78 percent say we will benefit from technology and innovation from Asia (a new measure in the 2019 survey). Economic growth in Asia and investment from Asia in New Zealand are also predicted to have a positive impact (67 percent and 64 percent respectively).

Young people positive about future with Asia

Younger New Zealanders are increasingly positive about the future impact of Asia on New Zealand. Expectations about the positive impact of tourism from Asia and economic growth in Asia have improved significantly for under-30s. The percentage of young people that feel the impact of tourism will be positive has increased seven percentage points since 2017, and eight percentage points for economic growth. Concerns, such as the impact of immigration on New Zealand, have also eased over the years.

Figure 4

What impact will these sectors have on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years?



Source: Q2b - Thinking about the entire Asia region, and thinking about New Zealand in the next 10-20 years, what kind of impact do you think each of the following will have on New Zealand's future?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

*COVID-19 Minipoll Base: n=1,005



Impact of environmental issues in Asia top concern

Environmental issues in Asia are considered to have the greatest potential to negatively impact New Zealand. Two out of five (40 percent) New Zealanders believe environmental issues in Asia will have a negative impact on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years. Immigration and investment from Asia are other areas of concern (at 28 percent and 15 percent respectively).

The negative impact of environmental issues in Asia on New Zealand is most strongly linked to ethnicity and those who identify as New Zealand Europeans (44 percent) and Māori (38 percent). It is perceived to be less of a threat to New Zealand by those identifying as Asian New Zealanders (21 percent).

COVID-19 poll:

The impact of biosecurity and health issues

Following the COVID-19 outbreak, we asked New Zealanders about the kind of impact they felt that biosecurity and health issues in Asia would have on New Zealand. There were polarising opinions - 34 percent felt that they would have a positive impact, while 41 percent felt they would have a negative impact.

New Zealanders place a high value on the environment

New Zealand's isolated island geography and 'clean, green' image is perceived to be central to its character. New Zealanders interviewed in the survey told us that they place a high value on New Zealand's clean environment and are fearful of any threats to it, including pollution, unpredictable weather and rising sea levels.

"I've been here [New Zealand] for 18 years now and I can see the difference. The fluctuation [from climate change] has been significant."

Male, 36
Indian, Hawke's Bay

"People here like to protect the natural beauty... it's great, it's amazing... They keep it clean, not like other countries."

Male, 39
Bangladeshi, Auckland

New Zealanders also talked about their concern for biosecurity issues, particularly in the context of negative consequences for the agricultural sector (as a core component of the New Zealand economy) and New Zealand's native flora and fauna. In the area of sustainability (fuel, land use, food production, recycling) some New Zealanders are looking to Asia for solutions.

"I'm looking for anything that's being done to help. China now is undergoing a big revolution in how it does electric generation and clearing pollution and things like this so there is a lot of effort being put into renewable resources. But it's a case of how we make it better. They are thinking very hard about how to make better use of the resources they have and the energy that they can generate."

Male, 55
New Zealand European, Dunedin



Most New Zealanders see Asian peoples as contributors

Most New Zealanders believe people of Asian ethnicity are making a significant positive contribution to the country's culture and economy. When asked about the contribution by people of Asian ethnicity to New Zealand's economy, cultural diversity and workplace productivity, most respondents have a positive point of view:

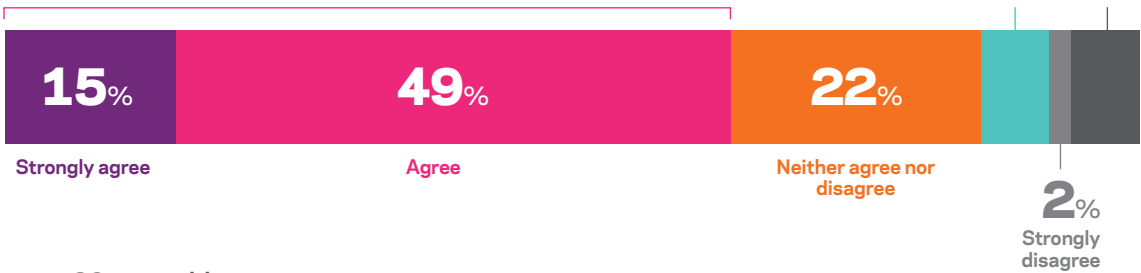
- 64 percent agree that Asian people contribute significantly to the economy (Figure 5);
- 59 percent agree that Asian immigrants bring valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand (Figure 6);
- 58 percent agree that foreign direct investment from Asia into New Zealand businesses is good for the economy (Figure 7).

Figure 5

New Zealanders who agree Asian people contribute significantly to our economy

All New Zealanders

64% agree



Under 30-year-olds



Māori



Source: Q5a - How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: That Asian people contribute significantly to our economy?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

“They contribute through investment, technological partnerships and so on, but also migrant workers do essential jobs i.e. Filipino workers have contributed greatly to many industries.”

Online survey respondent
November 2019

“We exist in a global economy. Having a diverse, globally oriented, immigrant population can only improve New Zealand’s position in that economy.”

Online survey respondent
November 2019

Figure 6

New Zealanders who agree Asian immigrants bring valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand

All New Zealanders



Under 30-year-olds



Māori



Source: Q5a - How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: That Asian immigrants bring a valuable cultural diversity to New Zealand?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)



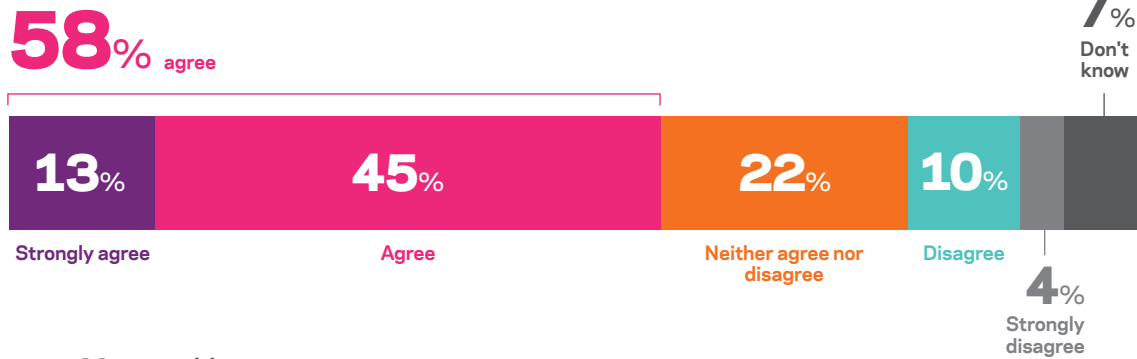
“New Zealand is a tiny market. Tying up with Asian countries opens up the marketplace for our businesses.”

Online survey respondent
November 2019

Figure 7

New Zealanders who agree that it is good for our economy that companies in Asia invest in New Zealand businesses

All New Zealanders



Under 30-year-olds



Māori



Source: Q5a - How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: That it is good for our economy that companies in Asia invest in New Zealand's businesses?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

Asia second-most important region

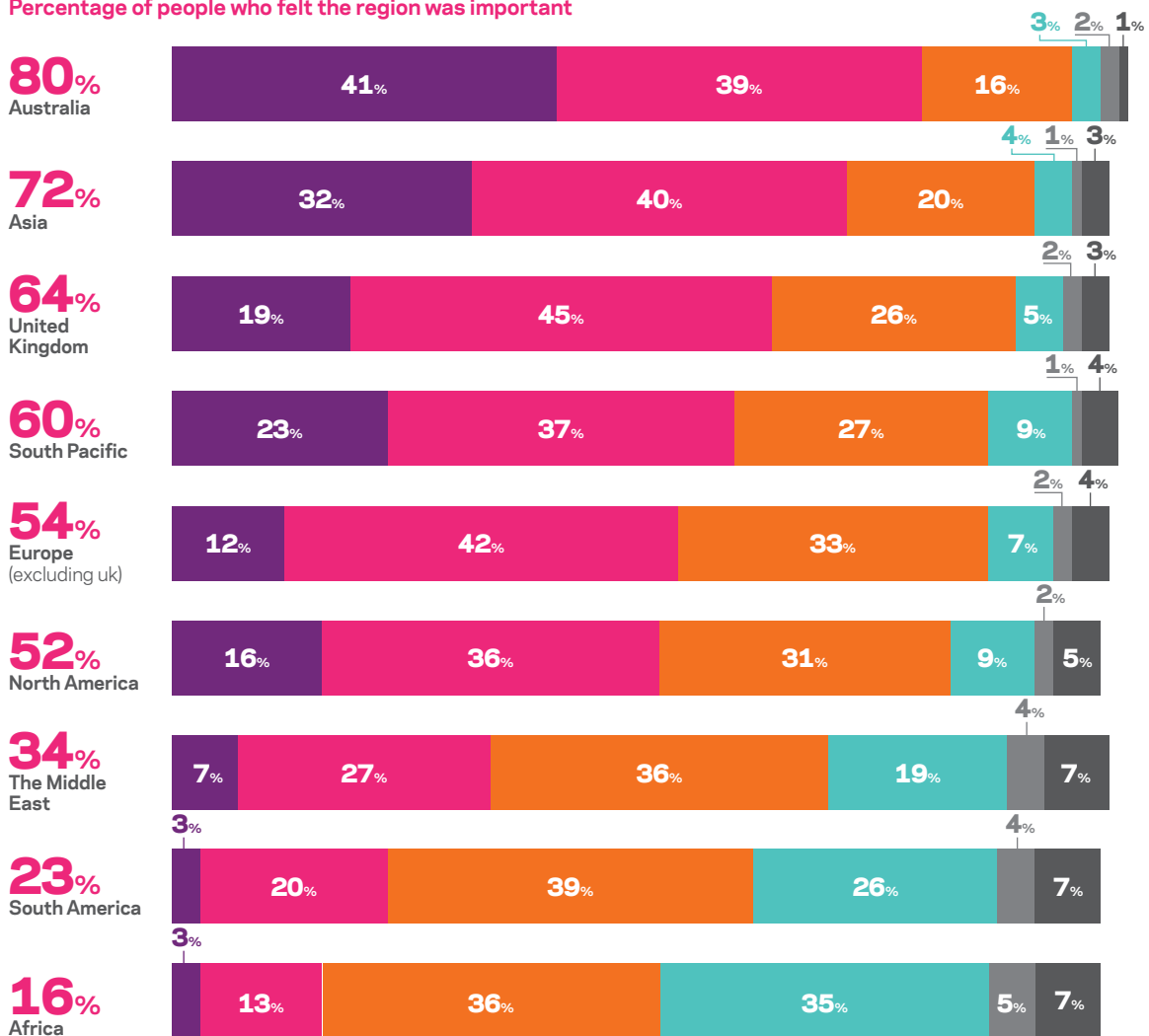
New Zealanders continue to rank Asia as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, second only to Australia. Figure 8 shows that 72 percent of New Zealanders believe Asia is important or very important to New Zealand's future, down from 79 percent five years ago.

COVID-19 poll:
The perceived importance of Asia increased following the outbreak of COVID-19, with 75 percent of New Zealanders rating Asia as important – up three percentage points (from 72 percent) since late 2019.

Figure 8

How important are the different regions of the world to New Zealand's future?

Percentage of people who felt the region was important



- Very important
- Important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important
- Don't know

Source: Q1a - How important do you think each of the following regions are to New Zealand's future? Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)



North Asia tops the list

North Asia is considered by most New Zealanders to be the most important Asian sub-region to New Zealand's future.

We look at three main sub-regions:

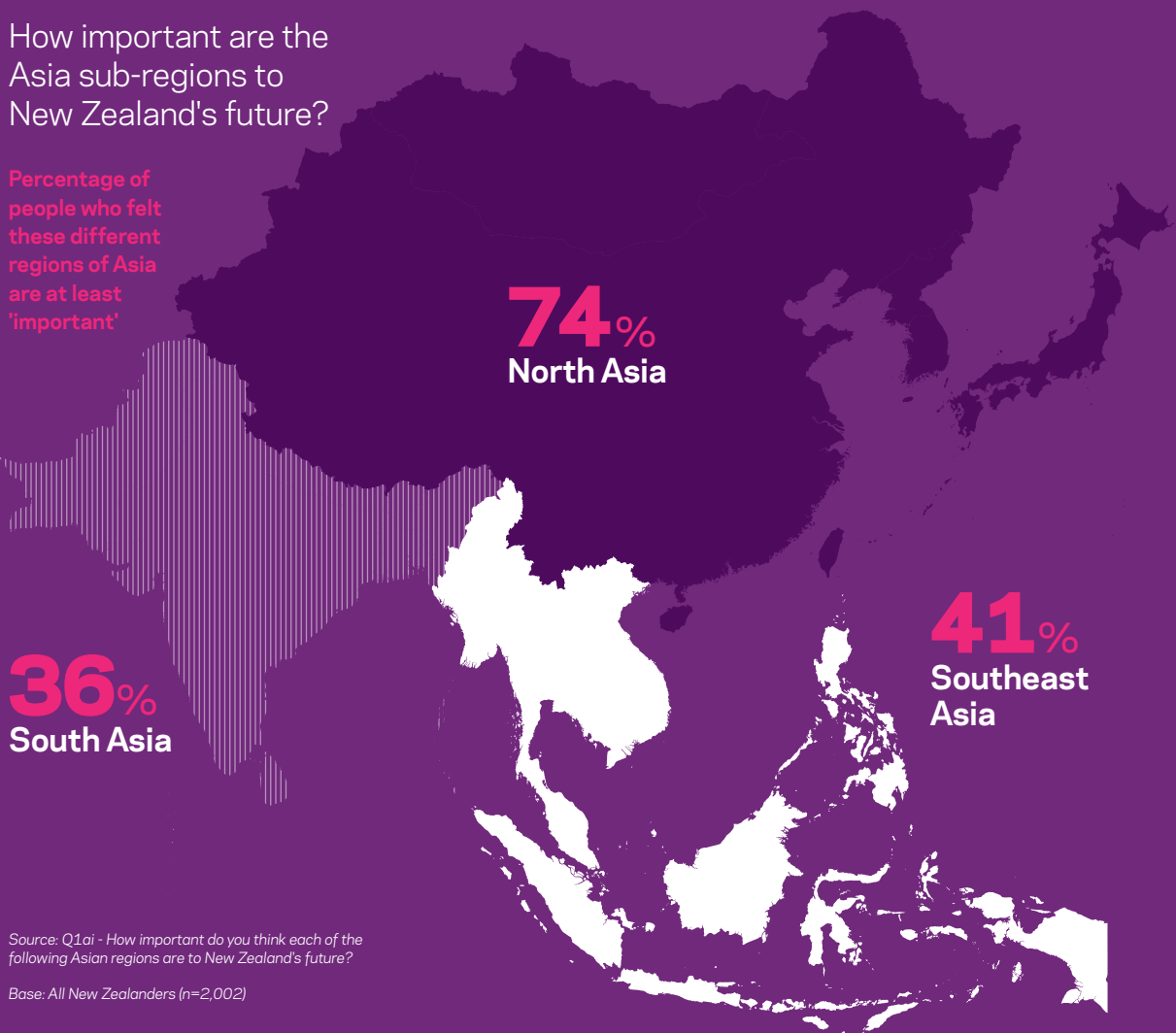
- North Asia (including countries such as China, Japan and South Korea);
- South Asia (including countries such as India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka); and
- Southeast Asia (including countries such as the Thailand, Singapore and Indonesia).

Of these, North Asia is rated the most 'important or very important' to New Zealand's future (74 percent). By comparison, 41 percent of New Zealanders say Southeast Asia is 'important or very important' and 36 percent say South Asia is 'important or very important' to New Zealand's future.

Figure 9

How important are the Asia sub-regions to New Zealand's future?

Percentage of people who felt these different regions of Asia are at least 'important'



Source: Q1ai - How important do you think each of the following Asian regions are to New Zealand's future?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

How will COVID-19 impact the Asia-New Zealand relationship?

The COVID-19 outbreak has impacted some New Zealanders' views of Asia, and there is also a feeling that it will impact our relations with the region.

Thirty-eight percent of New Zealanders say that the pandemic has negatively impacted their view of Asia, compared to 33 percent who don't agree it has.

The following groups are more likely than average to say that COVID-19 has negatively impacted their view of Asia:

- Those aged 15 to 17 (55 percent);
- Those without a tertiary qualification (45 percent).

Some groups are less likely than average to say that COVID-19 has negatively impacted their view of Asia:

- Those with a tertiary qualification (41 percent);
- Those born outside of New Zealand (31 percent).

Percentage of New Zealanders who think it will impact negatively

All New Zealanders

38%

15-17 year olds

55%

without a tertiary qualification

45%

with a tertiary qualification

41%

those born outside New Zealand

31%

Almost half (47 percent) of New Zealanders think the outbreak will have a long-lasting impact on our relations with Asia, while 23 percent feel that it won't.

Percentage of New Zealanders who think it will have a long-lasting impact

All New Zealanders

47%

*COVID-19 Minipoll Base: n=1,005



What do we know about Asia?

This section examines New Zealanders' self-assessed and general knowledge of Asia. We look at the link between knowledge of Asia and New Zealanders' assessment of the importance of Asia.



Key findings



When New Zealanders think of “Asia” the first thing that comes to mind is China.

Self-assessed knowledge of Asia increased in 2019. New Zealanders felt more confident in their knowledge of Asia and other regions in this survey. For the first time, more than half of all New Zealanders (51 percent) believe themselves to have ‘at least a fair amount’ of knowledge about Asia.

Self-assessed knowledge of Asia correlates well with general knowledge of Asia. We included a general knowledge test in the 2019 survey to understand the correlation between self-assessed knowledge of Asia and New Zealanders’ ability to correctly identify countries in Asia on a map. We found 65 percent of respondents answered the questions correctly, suggesting New Zealanders’ self-assessed knowledge (51 percent) correlates fairly well with general knowledge.

Those with greater Asia knowledge are more inclined to consider Asia important to New Zealand’s future.



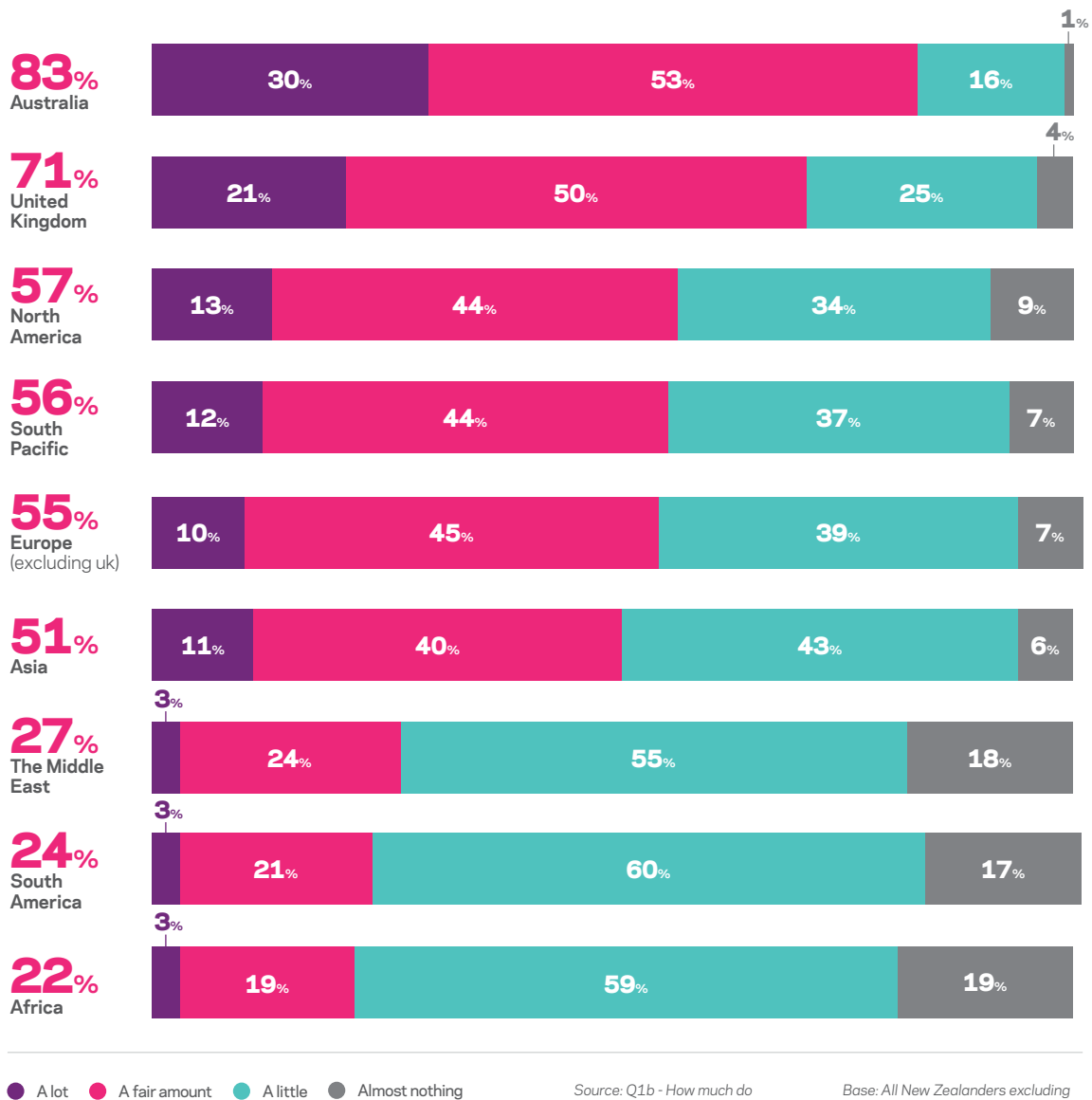
How New Zealanders rate their knowledge of Asia

Just over half of New Zealanders (51 percent) rate themselves as having 'at least a fair amount' of knowledge about Asia. While this is less than New Zealanders' self-assessed knowledge of Australia (83 percent), the United Kingdom (71 percent), North America (57 percent), the South Pacific (56 percent) and Europe (55 percent)¹, it is twice that of the Middle East, South America and Africa.

1. Europe and United Kingdom were separated in the survey responses this year with knowledge of the United Kingdom (71 percent) being significantly higher than Europe (55 percent). As a reference point, combined Europe including the United Kingdom (as asked in previous surveys) achieved 63 percent of New Zealanders knowing 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' in 2018.

Figure 11

New Zealanders self-assessed knowledge of Asia and the world



Self-assessed knowledge of Asia continues to improve

New Zealanders' self-assessed knowledge of Asia has improved 15 percentage points in the last five years, from 36 percent in 2014 to 51 percent in 2019. The rise in self-assessed knowledge has been even more marked for under 30-year-olds; up 23 percentage points since 2014. More Māori feel they know at least a fair amount about Asia too: their self-assessed knowledge has increased 19 percentage points.

Figure 12

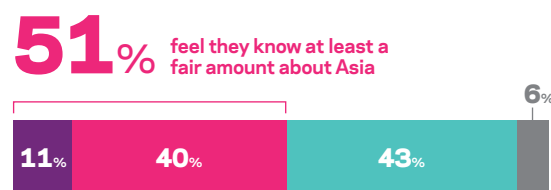
How much do New Zealanders feel they know about Asia?

2014

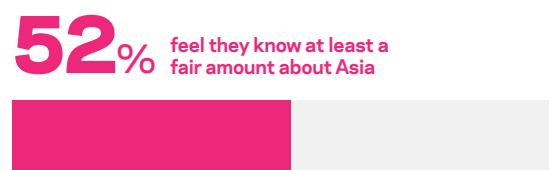
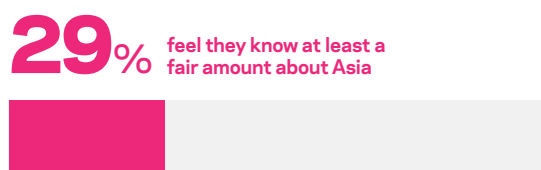
All New Zealanders



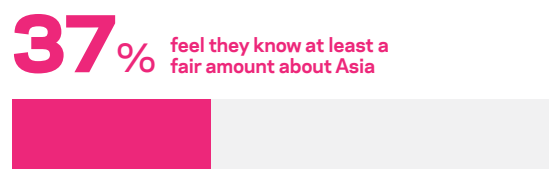
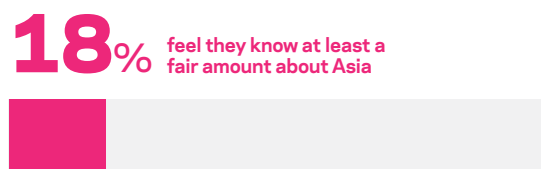
2019



Under 30-year-olds



Māori



● A lot ● A fair amount ● A little ● Almost nothing

Source: Q1b - How much do you feel you know about the following regions?

Base: All New Zealanders - 2014 (n=1,000) 2019 (n=2,002)

Under 30s: n=99 (2014), n=493 (2019);

Māori: n=99 (2014), n=311 (2019)



New Zealanders know the most about North Asia

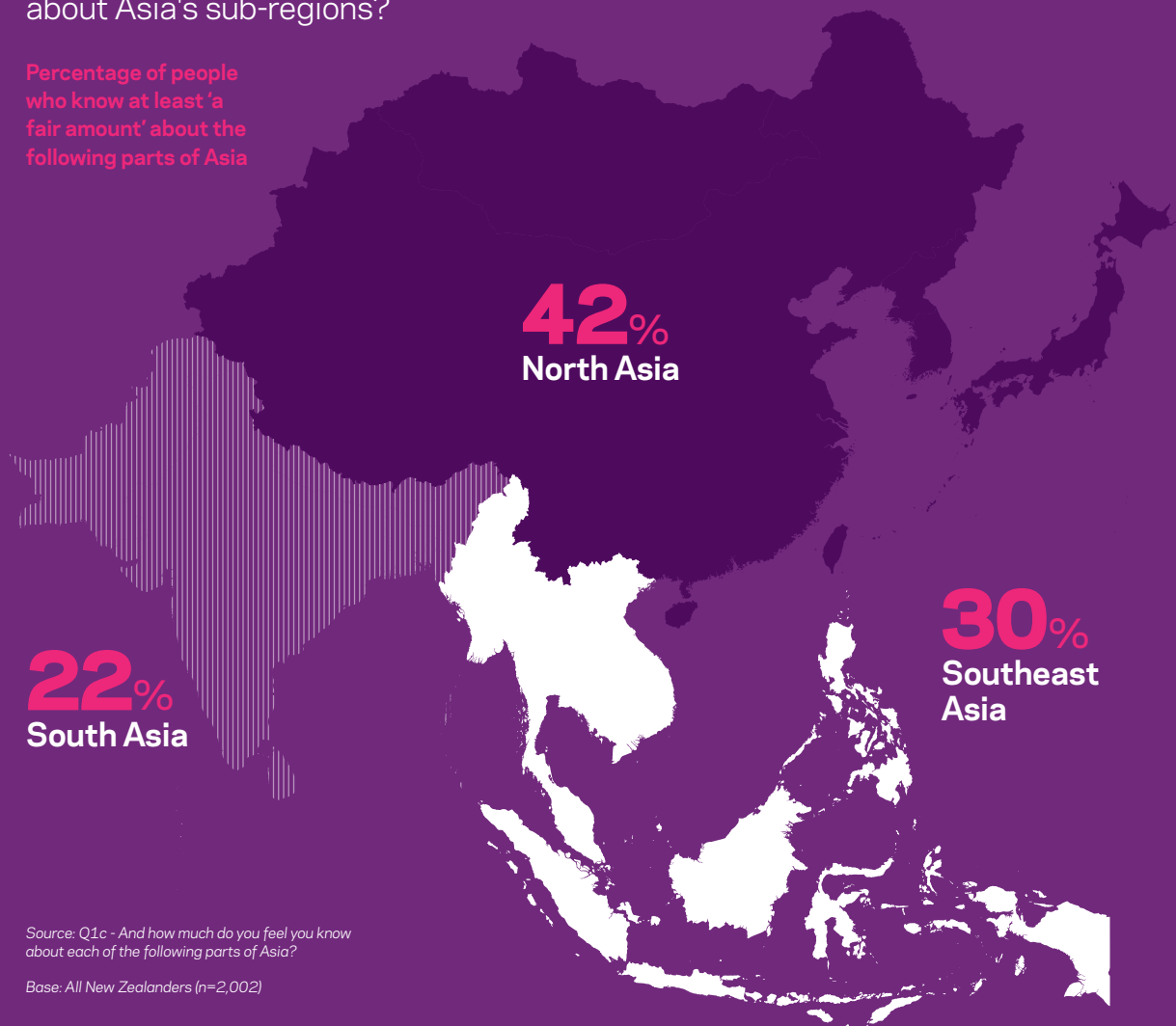
Forty-two percent of New Zealanders said they know 'at least a fair amount' about North Asia – up four percentage points from 2018. For Southeast Asia, 30 percent rate themselves as knowing 'at least a fair amount'. South Asia is the least well-known region in Asia, with only 22 percent assessing themselves as knowing 'at least a fair amount' – half that of North Asia.

These results show a correlation between self-assessed knowledge of regions in Asia and respondents' perceptions of the importance of each region (see Figure 9 on page 20). i.e. New Zealanders feel they know North Asia best, and also see it as important to New Zealand's future; while they see South Asia as the region they know the least and, as a consequence, rate it as comparatively less important.

Figure 13

How much do we know about Asia's sub-regions?

Percentage of people who know at least 'a fair amount' about the following parts of Asia



Source: Q1c - And how much do you feel you know about each of the following parts of Asia?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

Can New Zealanders locate countries in Asia?

We included a knowledge test in the 2019 survey to try to objectively gauge New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia. Respondents were shown a colour coded map of Asia with letters assigned to various countries and territories. We asked them to tell us where five key countries were located on a map (Figure 14).

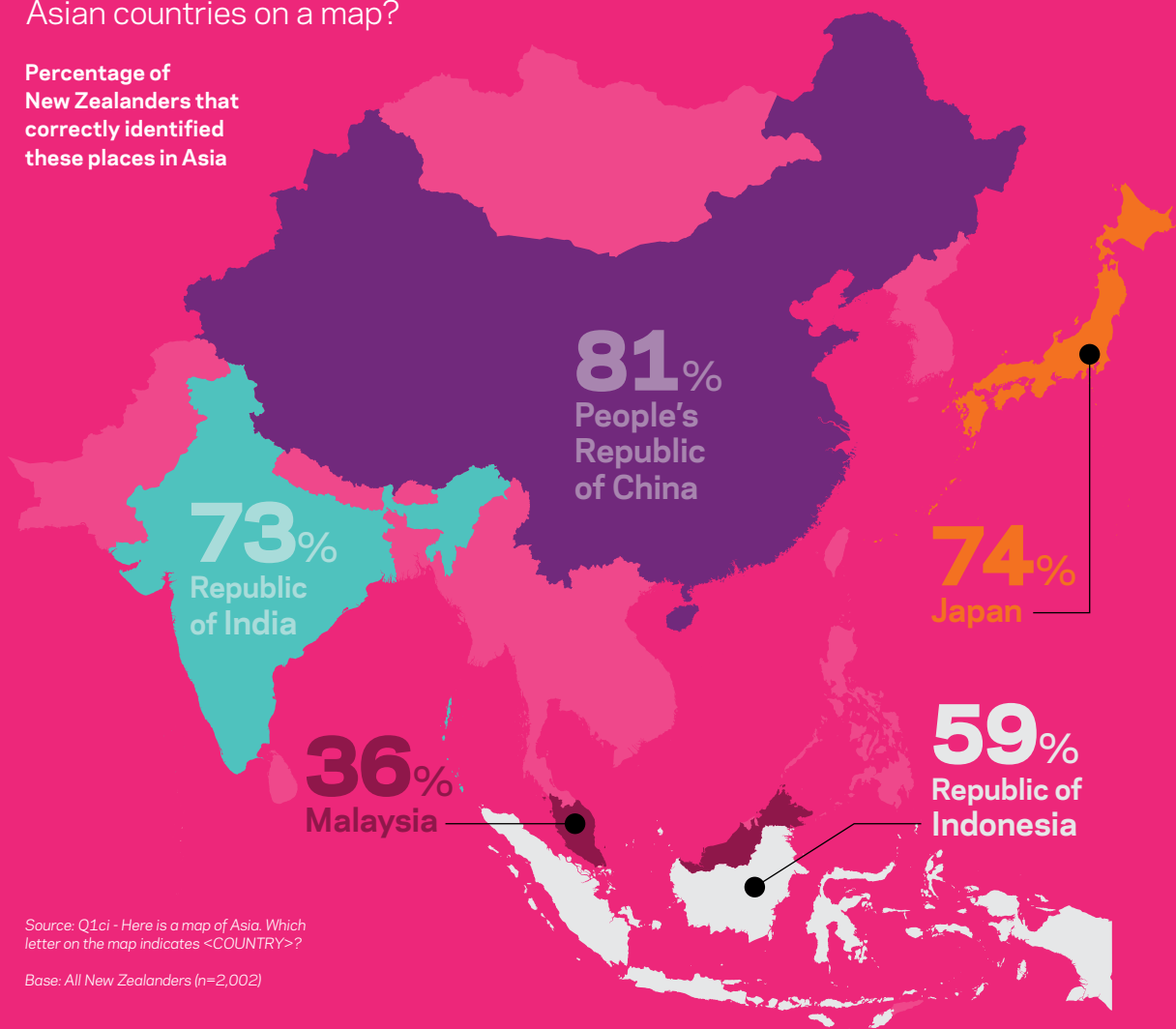
“When I think of Indonesia, I’m thinking of Mie Goreng noodles – honestly, I know how bad that is...”

Female, 23
New Zealand Māori/Tongan,
Auckland

Figure 14

Can New Zealanders identify Asian countries on a map?

Percentage of New Zealanders that correctly identified these places in Asia



Source: Q1ci - Here is a map of Asia. Which letter on the map indicates <COUNTRY>?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)



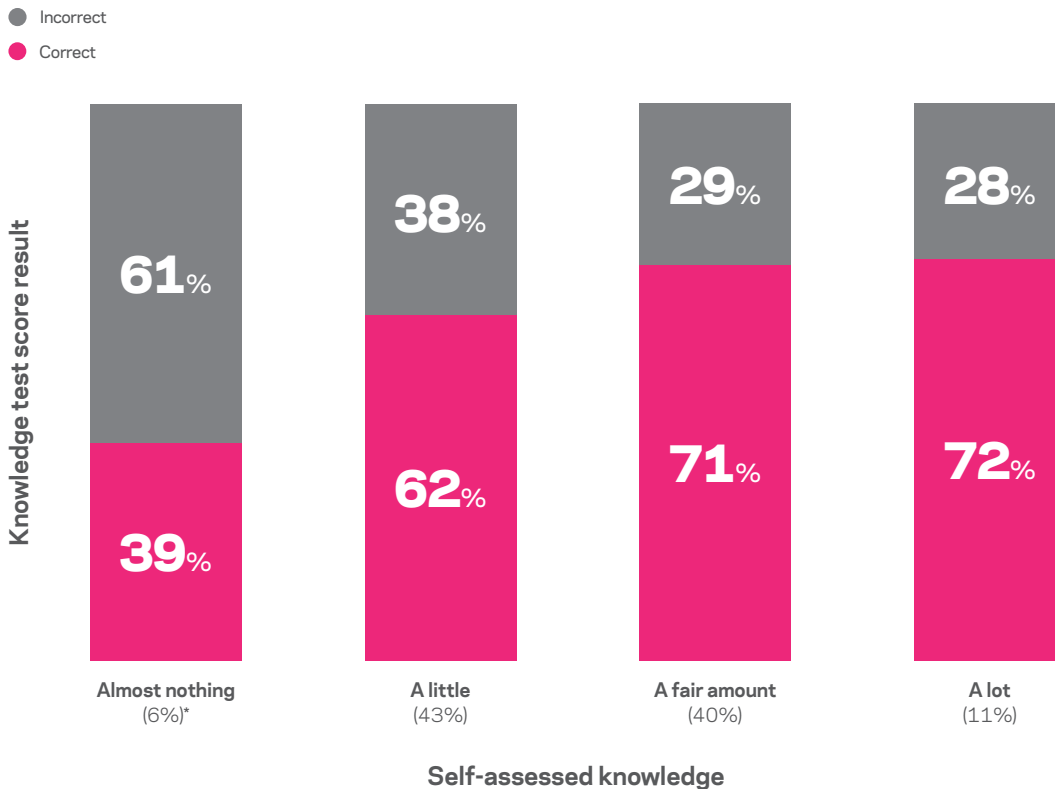
Self-assessed knowledge is a reasonable gauge for actual knowledge

When we examine “self-assessed” knowledge and the results of the knowledge test, there is a reasonably high level of correlation between New Zealanders’ self-assessed knowledge and geographic knowledge.

New Zealanders who said they know “a fair amount” or “a lot” about Asia correctly identified more than 70 percent of countries on the map. Those who said they knew “a little” scored 62 percent. Those who said they knew “almost nothing” scored 39 percent.

Figure 15

What is the relationship between self-assessed knowledge and results of the knowledge test?



Source: Q1ci - Here is a map of Asia. Which letter on the map indicates <COUNTRY>?

* % in brackets represents percentage of total sample who have this level of self-assessed knowledge.

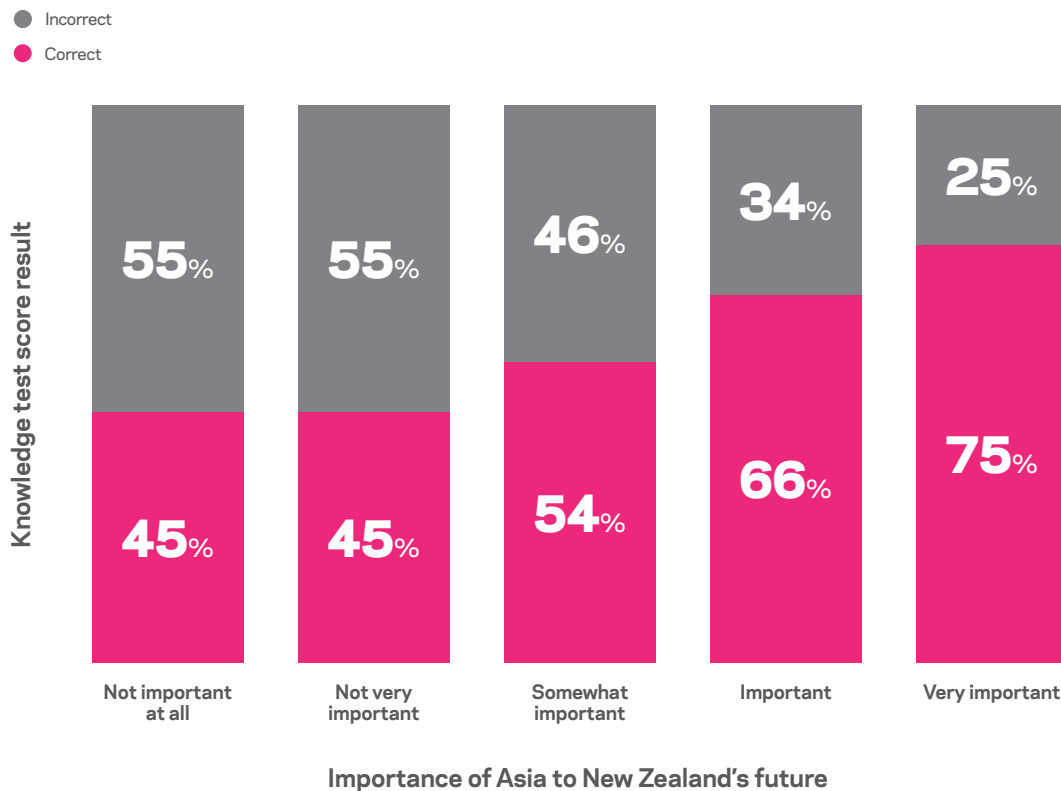
Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

The more knowledge, the more Asia is considered important

The more knowledgeable New Zealanders are about Asia, the more likely they are to consider Asia important to New Zealand's future. New Zealanders who felt Asia was "very important" to New Zealand's future scored 75 percent in the geography knowledge test. New Zealanders who said Asia was "not at all important" to New Zealand's future scored 45 percent.

Figure 16

What is the relationship between the knowledge test and how New Zealanders rate the importance of Asia?



Source: Q1ci - Here is a map of Asia. Which letter on the map indicates <COUNTRY>?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)



How do New Zealanders perceive the Asia region?

This section looks at how New Zealanders perceive Asian countries relative to others; how closely they follow international relations; and what they think about developments such as China's Belt and Road Initiative, New Zealand hosting APEC in 2021, the Indo-Pacific concept, and trade agreements such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).



Key findings



Most New Zealanders broadly follow international news, but far fewer follow international politics, relations and trade.

Most countries are viewed as friendly towards New Zealand with only North Korea being viewed as a significant threat. Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and Japan are considered our closest friends, while North Korea, Russia, China and Pakistan are viewed as our top threats.

New Zealanders believe extra effort could be put into building our relationship with China (for trade) and Australia (given our close relationship and shared values).

One in four New Zealanders have some basic knowledge of China's Belt and Road Initiative, but sentiment towards the initiative is polarised.

Forty-three percent of New Zealanders have heard of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade deal.

Forty-five percent of New Zealanders have heard the term "Indo-Pacific", but few know what it means.

Sixty-two percent of New Zealanders support New Zealand hosting APEC in 2021, but some worry about the cost to the taxpayer.



New Zealanders follow the news, but know little about trade

We asked New Zealanders how much they know about international news, politics, relations, trade and investment. While more than half (53 percent) say they have a fair amount of knowledge of international news, only 38 percent feel knowledgeable about international politics and relations and only 28 percent feel knowledgeable about international trade and investment.

Most countries are perceived to be friendly toward New Zealand

The countries that are seen to be the friendliest toward New Zealand are Australia (83 percent), Canada (79 percent), and the United Kingdom (79 percent). Most other countries are perceived to have a friendly to neutral relationship with New Zealand. Japan, South Korea, Thailand and India were rated our top friendly countries in Asia.

“New Zealand doesn’t have enemies; it tries to be friends with everyone.”

Female, 25
Chinese,
Auckland

Figure 17

Which countries are viewed as friends to New Zealand?

Percentage of New Zealanders who identify these countries as friendly towards New Zealand

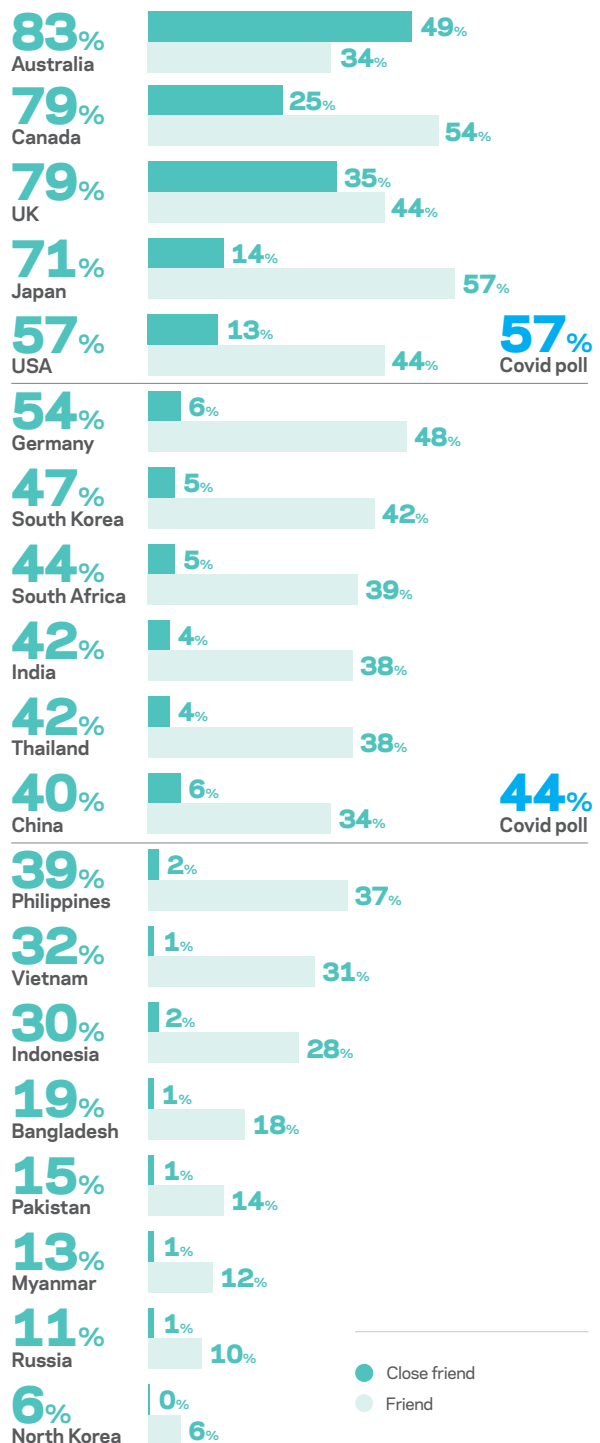


Figure 18

Which countries are viewed as threats to New Zealand?

Percentage of New Zealanders who identify these countries as posing a threat to New Zealand



Threat perception: North Korea tops the list

Fifty-nine percent of New Zealanders viewed North Korea as either a threat or a major threat. Other countries rated as posing some kind of threat to New Zealand (but significantly behind North Korea) were Russia (34 percent), China (22 percent) and Pakistan (22 percent).

Perceived threat levels are often affected by a person's age and ethnicity. Sixty-five percent of New Zealand Europeans and those aged 35 years and older rate North Korea and Russia as a threat, compared to 44 percent of non-European New Zealanders and 51 percent of those aged 30 years and under.

COVID-19 poll:
New Zealanders' perceptions of China are now slightly more polarised. In March 2020, following the COVID-19 outbreak, 44 percent of New Zealanders said they saw China as a friend (up from 40 percent in late 2019) and 25 percent said they saw China as a threat (up from 22 percent in 2019).

Source: Q3e - A friendly country is one you view as safe and trustworthy. A threatening country is one you view with caution or suspicion. For each country below, do you view them as a friend or a threat to New Zealand?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)



Japan - our closest friend in the Asia region

New Zealanders consistently rate Japan as our closest friend in Asia in the *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey. This sentiment is echoed in focus groups, which had a very positive attitude to Japan and its relationship with New Zealand.

Japan is seen to have worked hard to establish mutually beneficial and respectful relationships with many countries. Underpinning this is a high degree of trust between Japanese and New Zealanders:

"[Japan is] the only country in the world that has rejected the right to wage war, it's in their constitution. It shows they have learned their lesson."

Female, 50
New Zealand European,
Dunedin

"From a business point of view, I find the Japanese trustworthy. They will stand behind their product. I always found them straight up."

Male, 37
New Zealand European,
Hawke's Bay

New Zealanders' positive impression of Japan is further reinforced by tourism, education connections (such as language schools) and other shared experiences and values.

"There's a lot of tourism both ways. A lot of New Zealanders will go to Japan for a holiday, and there's a lot of Japanese coming to New Zealand to learn English."

Female, 25,
Chinese,
Auckland

"[Japan is] an amazing country... how they recover from multiple natural disasters - tsunami, earthquake, nuclear fallout. We could learn from them."

Male, 39,
Bangladeshi,
Auckland

"Any city in New Zealand, they've all got a Japanese garden with a park from a different city in Japan, like a sister city or some cultural exchange. It develops partnership and you learn more about them."

Female, 31,
New Zealand European,
Auckland

"They have similar values - like heritage, customs and traditions - which is very similar to Māori and Pacific Island cultures."

Male, 37,
New Zealand European,
Hawke's Bay



A conflicted view on New Zealand's relationship with China

While participants in the focus groups recognised the importance of New Zealand's relationship with China, they often felt conflicted by it. On one hand, New Zealanders recognised the importance of the trade relationship to New Zealand's economy, as well as the cultural connections between Māori and Chinese. They also recognised the importance of distinguishing the Chinese people from the Chinese Communist Party.

"We need to divide the government and their economy, which is huge, massive and scary, [from] the people who are nice. Their food's awesome [and] everyone knows Chinese New Zealanders - we all work with them. We've got to be careful not to mix the two [government and people] together you know."

Male, 31,
New Zealand Māori,
Auckland

"They're also a big trading partner, so it would be a huge loss to the economy if we were to cut them out. It's \$30 billion or something."

Male, 30,
New Zealand European,
Auckland

"Their values are quite like indigenous [Māori] people. They [Chinese migrants] have very strong and good relationships with iwi...They have been going backwards and forwards and hosting them, building a relationship around sharing opportunities and it seems to be benefiting both sides."

Female, 43,
New Zealand Māori,
Hawke's Bay

On the other hand, respondents raised concerns about China's perceived approach and actions in several areas, including:

- The control China seeks to exert over its citizens;
- Human rights violations in Xinjiang;
- China's role in the Hong Kong protests;
- China potentially restricting rights and freedoms in Taiwan;
- Intellectual property theft and counterfeit products;
- Pollution, emissions and environmental damages;
- 5G and concerns about spying and control of information;
- Chinese interference in New Zealand universities.



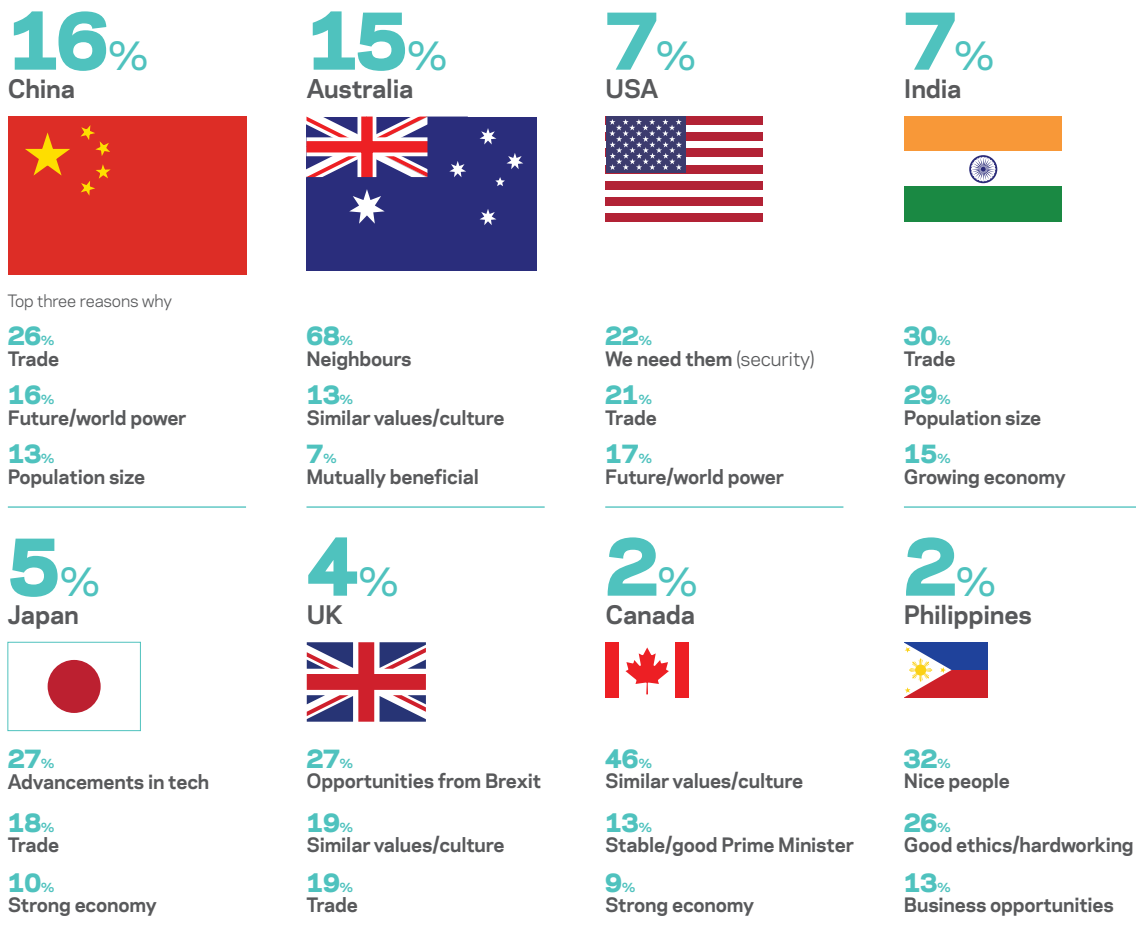


New Zealanders want to build key relationships

New Zealanders feel there is an opportunity to further develop our relationship with countries such as China, Australia, the United States and India. Participants were asked which countries they felt New Zealand should put extra effort into developing a stronger relationship with and why. The top countries mentioned were China (16 percent) and Australia (15 percent), followed by the United States of America, India, Japan, the UK, Canada and the Philippines. The reasons for choosing these countries are listed in Figure 19.

Figure 19

Which country should New Zealand do more with and why?



Source: Q3f - If New Zealand were to put in extra effort to develop its relationship with one country in the world, what country should it be and why?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

Knowledge of Belt and Road Initiative stable

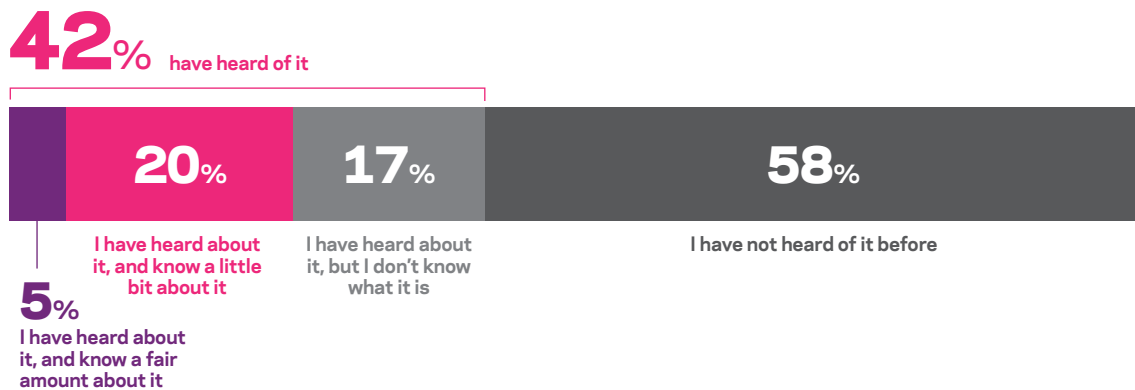
One in four New Zealanders have some basic knowledge of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). New Zealanders' awareness of the BRI remains largely stable at 42 percent in 2019, compared to 44 percent in 2018. Under 30-year-olds are becoming more aware of the BRI, with 26 percent recalling some basic knowledge (up from 18 percent in 2018).

Figure 20

How do New Zealanders view the Belt and Road Initiative?

Knowledge of Belt and Road Initiative

All New Zealanders



Under 30-year-olds

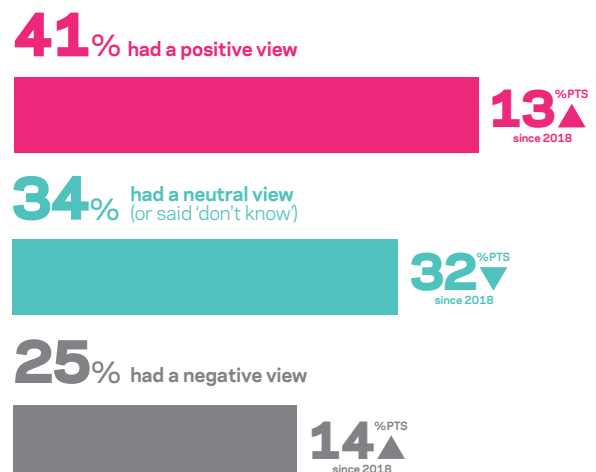
26% feel they know at least a little bit about the Belt and Road Initiative



Sentiment toward BRI more polarised

In 2019, 41 percent of New Zealanders had a positive opinion of the BRI, up from 28 percent in 2018. Negative sentiment towards the initiative has also increased, up 14 points to 25 percent in 2019. One third of New Zealanders (34 percent) expressed a neutral opinion about the BRI, down from 66 percent last year. More than half of Asian New Zealanders (54 percent) have positive feelings towards the BRI, compared with 38 percent of non-Asian New Zealanders.

Sentiment towards Belt and Road Initiative



Source: Q5aa - Which of these best describes your knowledge of the Belt and Road Initiative, also known as the One Belt One Road Initiative or the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road? / Q5ab - Do you hold a positive, neutral or negative view of the Belt and Road Initiative?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002) | Sentiment is those who have heard of Belt and Road and know at least a little bit (n=522)



More New Zealanders know about APEC

Similar to 2018, 84 percent of New Zealanders have heard of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)*, while 51 percent say they know a little bit about it and nine percent say they know a fair amount about it. Fifty-nine percent of under 30-year-olds are aware of APEC.

Almost half of New Zealanders (48 percent) are aware that New Zealand is hosting APEC in 2021, a 20-point increase from last year.

Sixty-two percent of New Zealanders support New Zealand's hosting of APEC, an increase from 55 percent last year. Aucklanders are more likely to support APEC (68 percent) compared to the national average (62 percent).

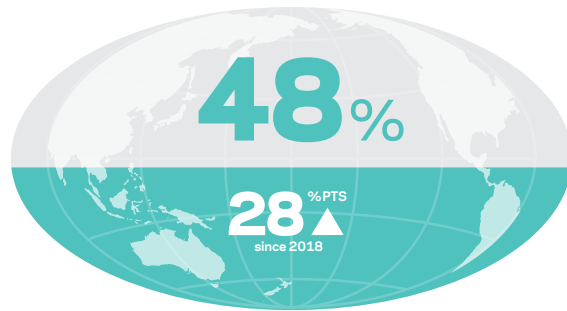
Of the 62 percent who support New Zealand hosting APEC, the main reason given for their support is that it raises New Zealand's profile in the Asia-Pacific. Half (51 percent) of those who support it believe hosting APEC supports our exporters and helps our economy. For those who don't support New Zealand hosting APEC, the most common reason given is the high cost to the taxpayer (50 percent).

* The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is a regional economic forum established in 1989 to leverage the growing interdependence of the Asia-Pacific and to promote growth and connectivity.

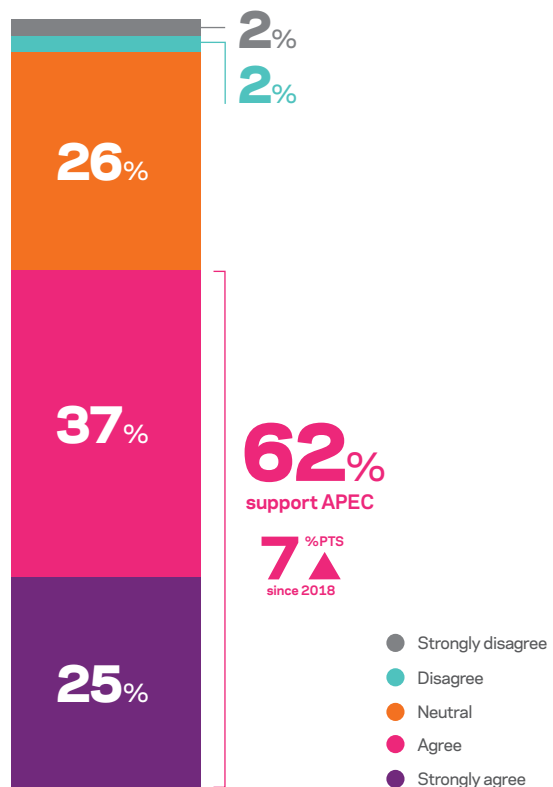
Figure 21

Perceptions of New Zealand hosting APEC in 2021

Percentage of New Zealanders aware that New Zealand is hosting APEC in 2021



Percentage of New Zealanders who support New Zealand hosting APEC in 2021

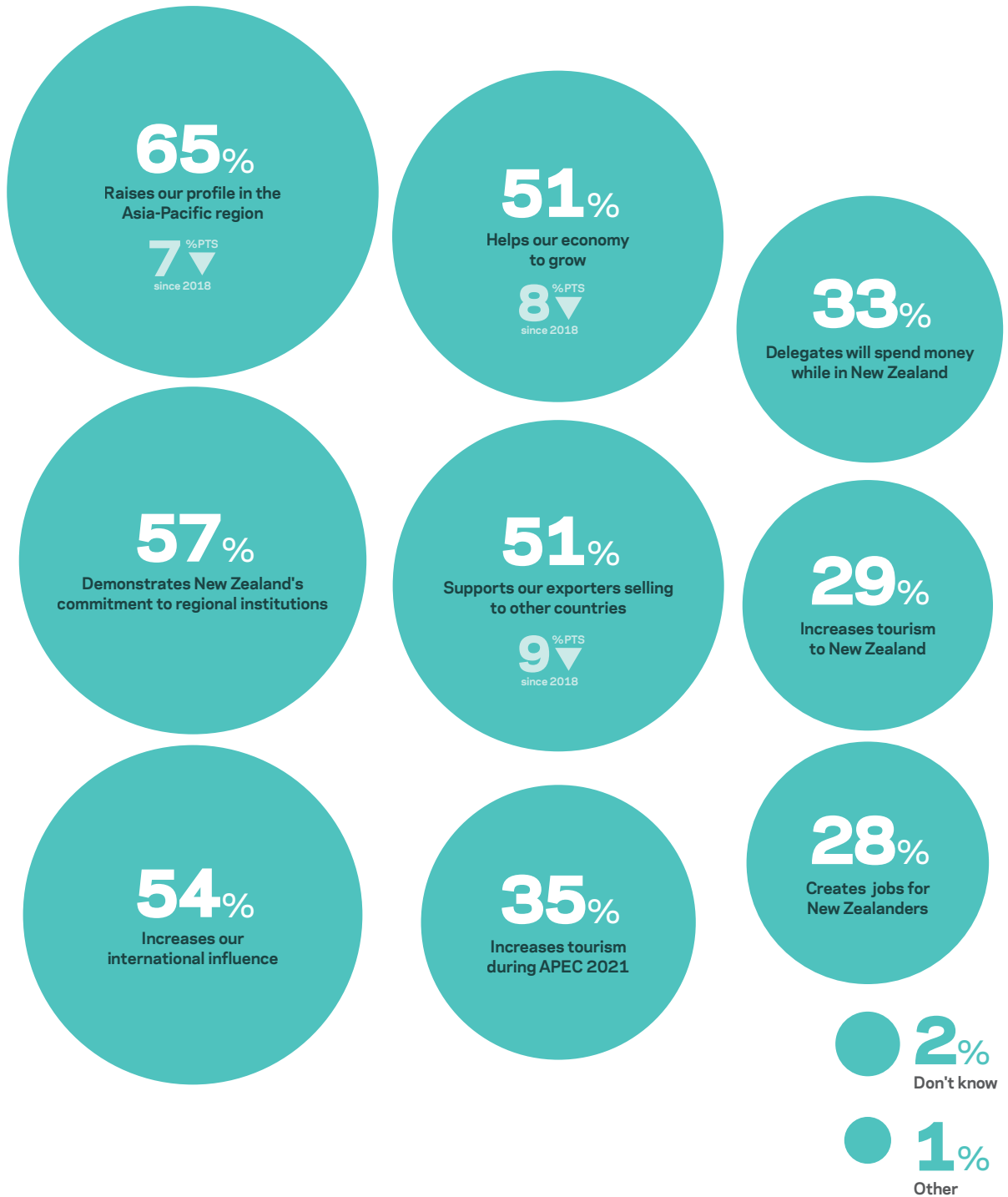


Source: Q23c - Did you know New Zealand is hosting APEC in 2021? / Q23d - How much do you agree or disagree with the statement: I support New Zealand hosting APEC?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002) / All excluding don't know (n=1,835)

Figure 22

Why New Zealanders support hosting APEC in 2021



Source: Q23e - Why do you support New Zealand hosting APEC?

Base: All who support (n=1,238)



Four in 10 New Zealanders have heard of 'RCEP'

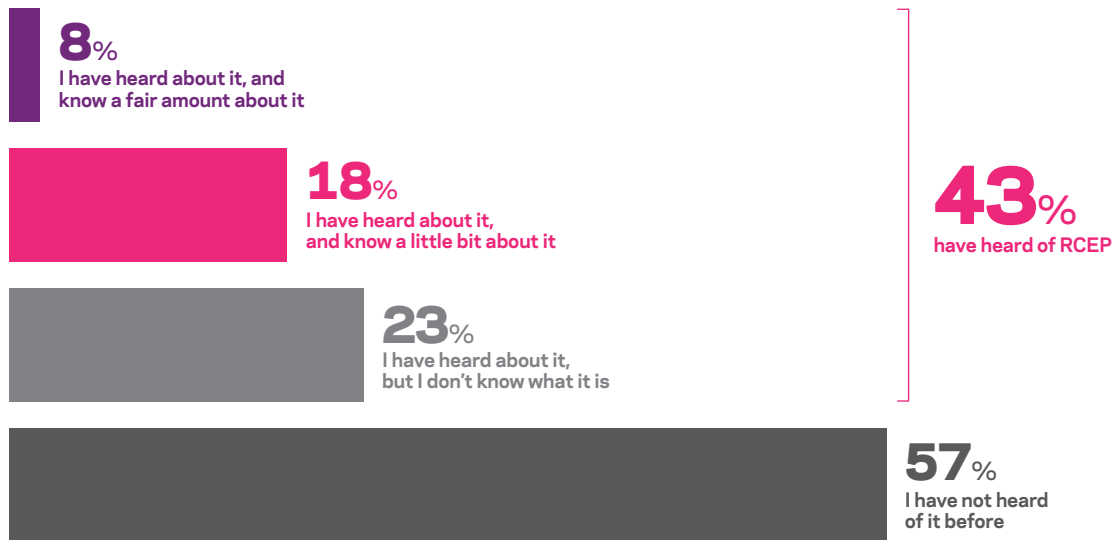
Forty-three percent of New Zealanders have heard of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) free trade agreement.* Of these, 18 percent know 'a little bit' about it and two percent say they know 'a lot.'

People with higher awareness of RCEP include over 50-year-olds (50 percent compared to 38 percent of under 50-year-olds) and New Zealanders of Asian ethnicity (51 percent compared to 41 percent of non-Asian New Zealanders).

* RCEP is a proposed free trade agreement in the Asia-Pacific region between the 10 member states of the Association of Southeast Asian nations (ASEAN) and five of ASEAN's trade partners - Australia, China, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea.

Figure 23

What do New Zealanders know about RCEP?



Source: Q23g - New Zealand is part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership free trade agreement (RCEP). Have you heard about RCEP and are you supportive of it?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

New Zealanders and the “Indo-Pacific”

Forty-five percent of New Zealanders have heard the term “Indo-Pacific”^{*} while one third (33 percent) have not. More than half (55 percent) of people who have travelled to or lived in Asia are also aware of the term. However, there is still a lot of uncertainty around what exactly the term “Indo-Pacific” means, with 30 percent of those who have heard the term unable to describe what it means.

^{*} The Indo-Pacific is a geographic region spanning the Indian and Pacific Oceans but it is also a geopolitical concept linking countries with shared political, security and development interests across the region.

Figure 24

Do New Zealanders understand the Indo-Pacific concept?

Have you heard of the Indo-Pacific?



What does the term Indo-Pacific mean to you?



Source: Q23h - Have you heard of the term Indo-Pacific? /23hi - What does the term Indo-Pacific mean to you?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002) / All who said they have heard of it (n=892)



How does media influence New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia?

This section looks at the media sources shaping New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia, the sentiment of the reporting and the role social media is playing in building awareness of Asia.



Key findings



In 2019, New Zealanders were able to recall fewer Asia-related news items or events (49 percent) compared to five years ago (61 percent). Of the stories New Zealanders recalled, 24 percent said the coverage was mainly positive, 25 percent said it was mainly negative and 49 percent said the reporting was mixed.

In our COVID-19 poll, taken in March 2020, three-quarters of New Zealanders had seen, heard or read about Asia-related events in the previous three months - a 25 percentage point increase.

Most New Zealanders (77 percent) said they rely on traditional media (TV, newspapers and radio) for their Asia-related news. Younger New Zealanders use social media significantly more (62 percent, compared to 35 percent for all New Zealanders).

New Zealanders are sharing less Asia-related material on social media. In November 2019, at the time of the survey, social media sharing of Asia-related material had declined to eight percentage points, down from 18 percent in 2018.



Less Asia news, but balance maintained

In 2014, 61 percent of New Zealanders had seen, heard or read about Asia-related events in the previous three months. Twenty-three percent said they considered it negative and 21 percent said it was positive. Fifty-five percent of people said the stories were a mix of both negative and positive coverage.

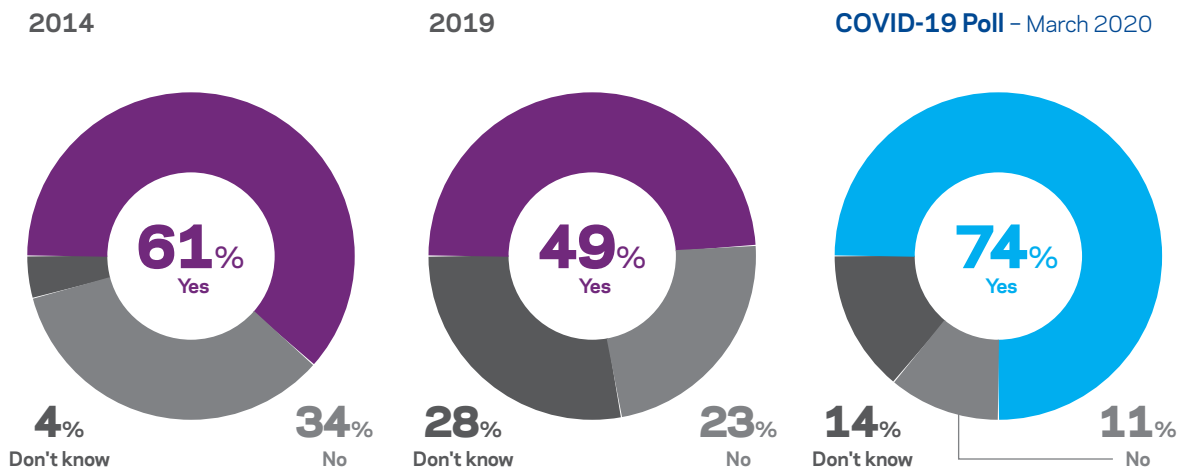
By 2019, only 49 percent of New Zealanders could recall having seen, heard or read about Asia-related events over the previous three months. The perceived sentiment of the stories remains largely unchanged - with an equal mix of positive (24 percent) and negative (25 percent) press.



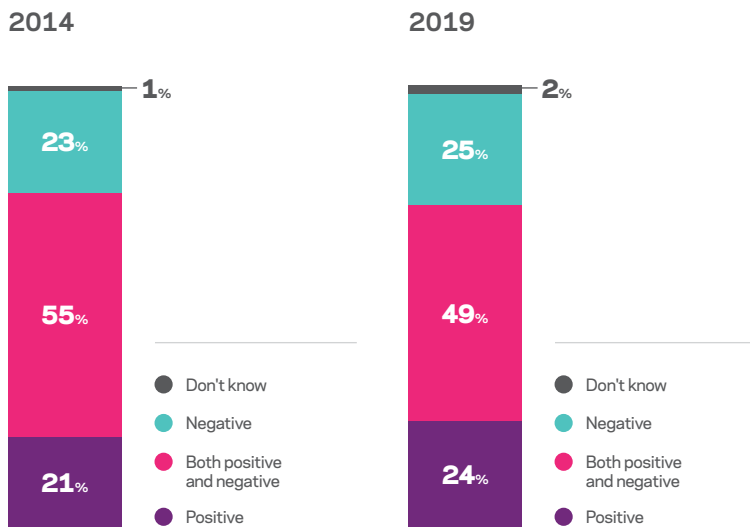
Figure 25

What Asia-related news and media are New Zealanders receiving?

Have you seen, heard or read anything about Asia-related events, issues or people in the last three months?



Was this information mostly positive, mostly negative or both positive and negative?



COVID-19 poll: In March 2020, three-quarters (74 percent) of New Zealanders reported seeing, hearing, or reading something about Asia-related events, issues, or people in the last three months – a 25 percentage point increase from November 2019.

Base: New Zealanders who have seen/heard Asia-related information in the past 3 months (n=723)

Base: New Zealanders who have seen/heard Asia-related information in the past 3 months (n=976)

Source: Q26a - Do you recall having seen, heard, or read anything in the news or media about Asia-related events, issues or people in the last three months? / Q26c - Would you say this news or media information in the last three months was mostly positive, mostly negative, or both positive and negative? Note: Q26c not asked in COVID Poll.

Base: All New Zealanders - 2014 (n=1,000) 2019 (n=2,002), COVID (n=1,005)



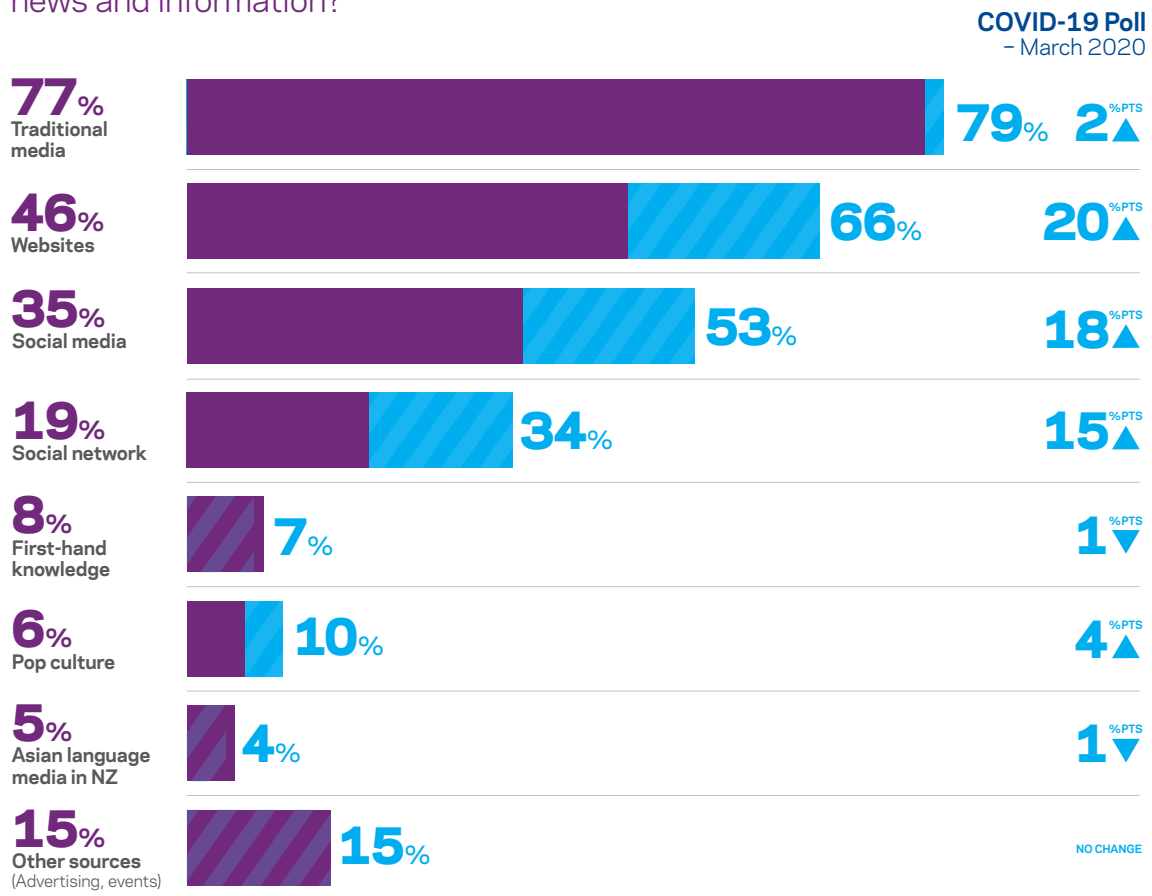
Traditional media still top source

Traditional media remains the most common way for New Zealanders to get Asia-related news.

For New Zealanders who had seen, heard or read about Asia-related events over the past three months, traditional media was ranked as the most common source at 77 percent. Websites and social media were second and third, at 46 percent and 35 percent respectively.

Figure 26

Where have New Zealanders received most of their Asia-related news and information?



Source: Q26b - From what news or media sources have you received most of your information about Asia-related events, issues or people in the last three months?

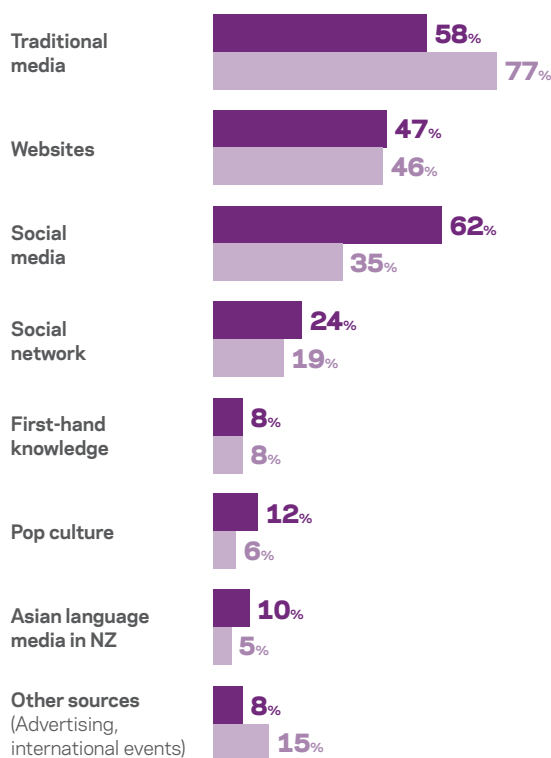
Base: New Zealanders seen/heard Asia-related information past 3 months (n=976)

Young people are learning about Asia through social media

While the majority of New Zealanders are accessing Asia-related news through traditional media sources, under 30-year-olds are more reliant on social media (62 percent) and pop culture (18 percent) as sources.

Figure 27

Where do under-30s get their Asia news and information?



- Under 30-year olds
- All New Zealanders

Source: Q26b - From what news or media sources have you received most of your information about Asia-related events, issues or people in the last three months?

Base: New Zealanders seen/heard Asia-related information past 3 months (n=976)

Growing awareness of fake news

New Zealanders in the focus groups expressed a growing awareness of the need to follow a range of media sources and wariness about the potential for fake news. Media sources that were considered trustworthy were Al Jazeera, Radio New Zealand, BBC, CNN and podcasts because – as one respondent said – of the “in-depth analysis and detailed citations on the websites.”

“It depends on who’s producing the news or the message and their slant on it, I think everyone needs to be careful when you read anything.”

Male, 55
New Zealand European,
Dunedin

Fewer New Zealanders are sharing Asia news

Eight percent of New Zealanders had shared news or stories about Asia on social media in the three months preceding the survey (August to October 2019) – less than half the amount that had shared in 2018 (18 percent). This decline is consistent with global trends, driven by privacy concerns, the change in ‘like’ settings, and the availability of alternative encrypted channels and restricted groups. The group that had done the most sharing by social media of Asia-related information was New Zealanders of Asian ethnicity at 25 percent. By age, 30 to 39-year-olds had shared the most via social media (16 percent).



What skills do we need to be Asia-savvy?

This section examines the ways New Zealanders are connecting with Asia, and the impact that these connections are having on New Zealanders' knowledge and understanding of Asia.



Key findings



New Zealand's connectivity with Asia is high. Almost half (47 percent) of New Zealanders aged 15 years or older have visited or lived in Asia. One in 10 (11 percent) New Zealanders have lived in Asia for six months or more.

Food and travel are the key areas of interest connecting New Zealanders to Asia, with trade, history and culture also rated highly.

One in six New Zealanders speak an Asian language, with Chinese and Japanese the most widely spoken.

More than half of New Zealanders believe that confidence in engaging with people from Asian cultures is an important skill for our future workforce.

Understanding Asian protocols and etiquette (49 percent), Asian societies (41 percent) and Asian languages (41 percent) are also viewed as key areas of learning for the future.

Sports and arts events are recognised as helpful ways to connect with otherwise unfamiliar Asian countries and cultures.



Nearly half of all New Zealanders have travelled to or lived in Asia

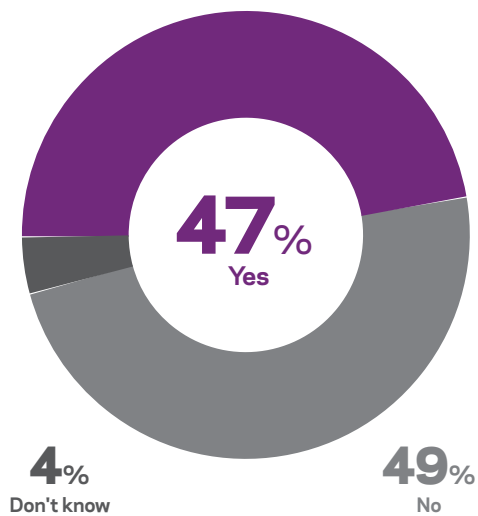
Nearly half (47 percent) of New Zealanders over the age of 15 have travelled to or lived in Asia. For the majority of New Zealanders, these visits are primarily for holidays, but for 11 percent, it was to live in Asia for six months or more.

The number of New Zealanders to have travelled to or lived in Asia increases with age. Fifteen to 17-year-olds are the least likely to have visited Asia (33 percent), while those over 70 years are the most likely to have visited (64 percent).

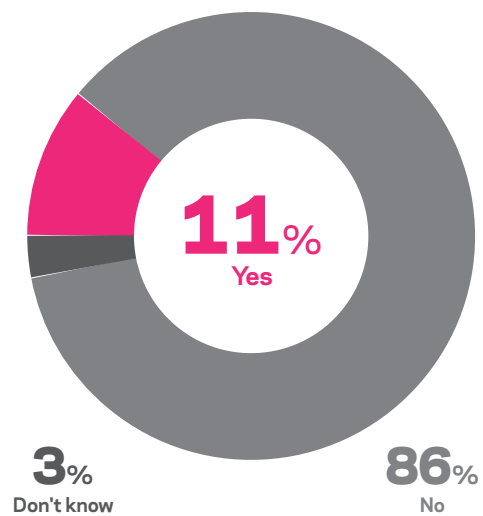
Figure 28

Percentage of New Zealanders who have visited or lived in Asia before

Have you ever **visited** North, South, or Southeast Asia on holiday before?



Have you ever **lived in** North, South, or Southeast Asia for six months or more?



Source: Q1.8ai - Have you ever visited North, South or Southeast Asia on holiday before? You must have left the airport terminal. Q1.8aii - Have you ever lived in North, South or Southeast Asia for six months or more?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

Singapore the most visited by New Zealanders

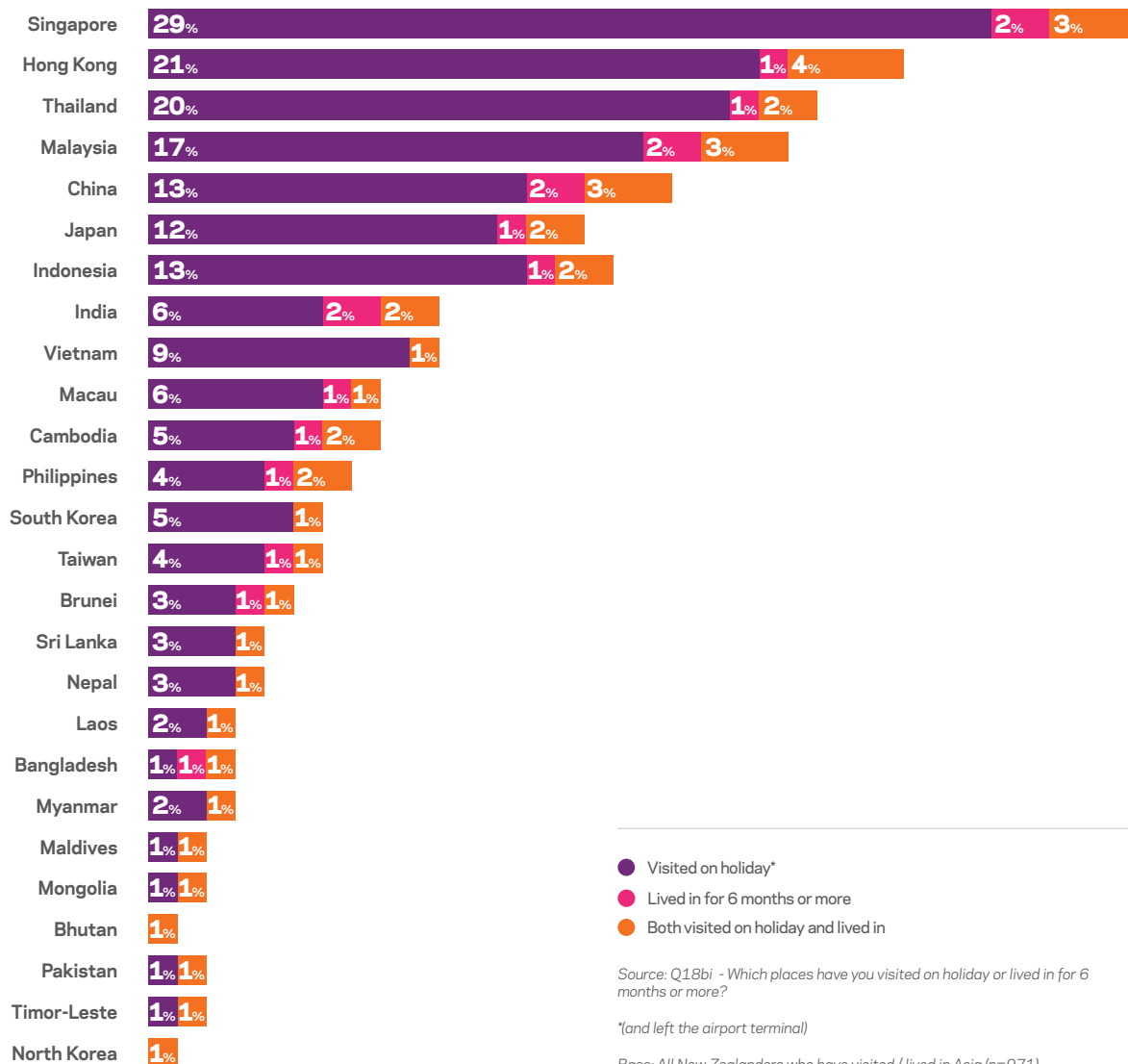
The most commonly visited destinations in Asia were Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia and China. The most commonly lived-in destinations in Asia were Hong Kong and Singapore, followed by China, Malaysia, India and Thailand.

“There’s more to do in the Singapore airport than the whole of Auckland, there’s movie theatres, there’s massage, there’s a pool, there’s a butterfly garden, like the mall’s bigger than Sylvia Park, literally inside of the airport.”

Female, 25
Chinese,
Auckland

Figure 29

Which places in Asia have New Zealanders travelled to or lived in?





Travelling or working in Asia cultivates deeper knowledge

Sixty-four percent of New Zealanders who have lived in or travelled to Asia rate themselves as being knowledgeable about Asia. Conversely, only 37 percent of those who have not lived in or travelled to Asia rate themselves as having a high level of Asia knowledge. With nearly half of New Zealanders having lived or travelled to Asia in their lifetime, travel is recognised as one of the most important enablers for deepening Asia knowledge.

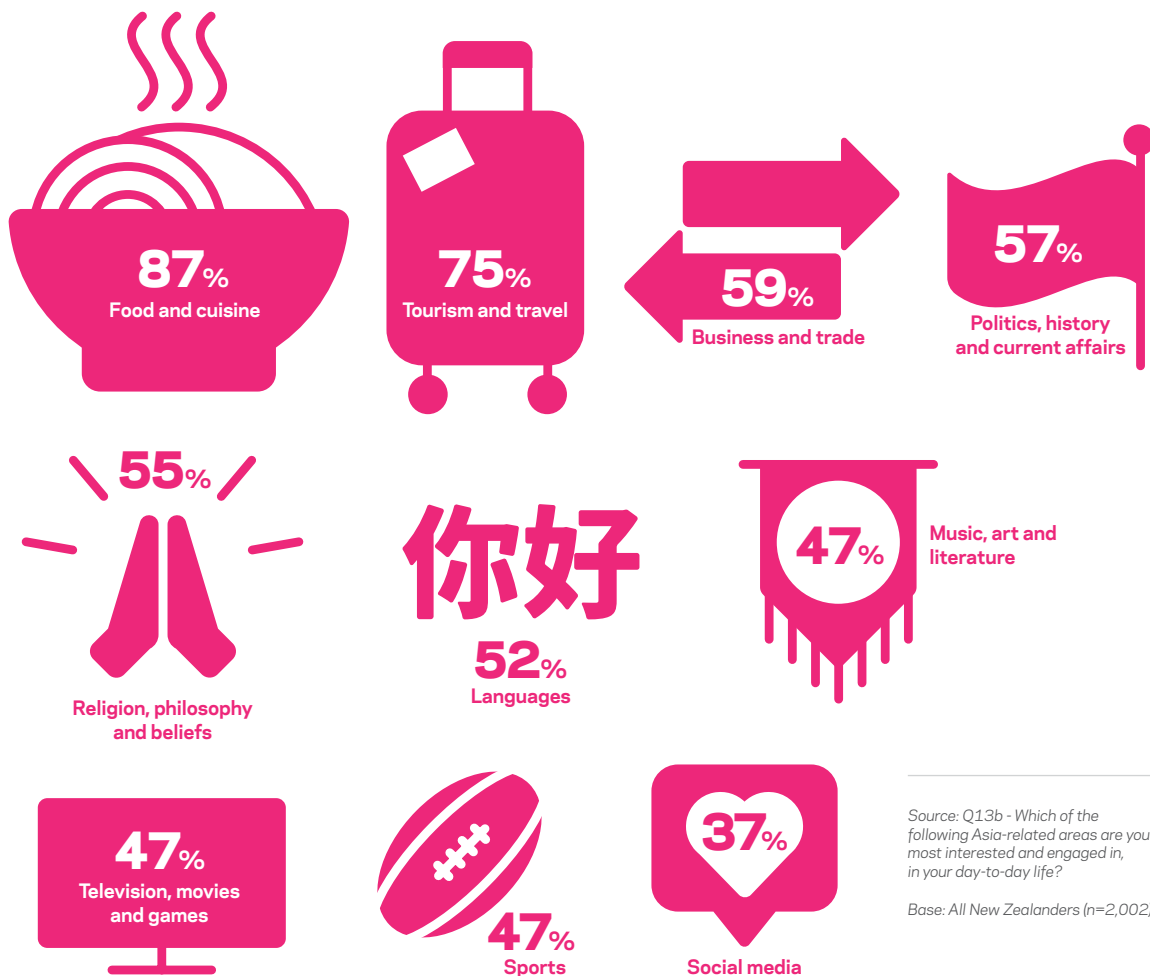
Food and travel are the top Asia-related interests

As seen in Figure 30, food and cuisine, and tourism and travel are the top Asia-related interests for New Zealanders (at 87 percent and 75 percent respectively). Business and trade with Asia is the next highest Asia-related interest at 59 percent.

Figure 30

What Asia-related interests do New Zealanders have?

Percentage of people who are at least 'somewhat interested' in these Asia related areas



Source: Q1.3b - Which of the following Asia-related areas are you most interested and engaged in, in your day-to-day life?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

One in six New Zealanders can speak an Asian language

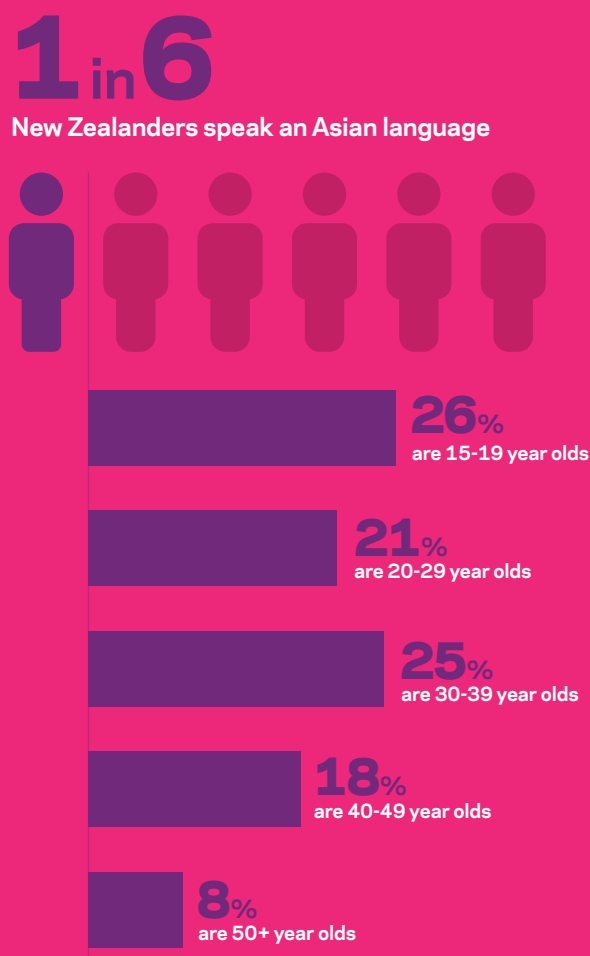
Sixteen percent of New Zealanders can hold a conversation in one or more Asian language. Thirty to 39-year-olds are the most linguistically accomplished, with one quarter speaking at least one Asian language. This age group is also one of the most likely groups to have lived in Asia (14 percent). The most commonly spoken languages are Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Japanese, and dialects from India, followed by Korean and Filipino.

Learning languages is considered a gateway to Asia

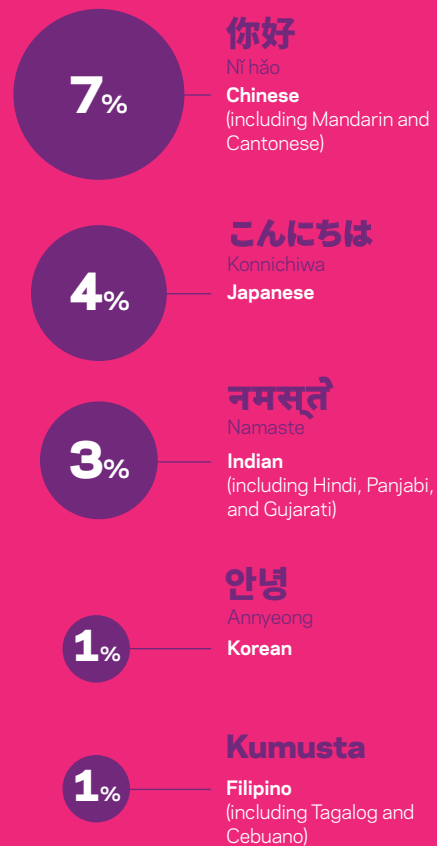
Speaking an Asian language, like travel, provides an important entry point for young New Zealanders to learn about Asia. Speaking an Asian language continues to have a marked impact on New Zealanders' self-assessed knowledge of Asia, which in turn builds their confidence to seek new opportunities in Asia.

Figure 31

How many New Zealanders speak an Asian language?



Top languages spoken



Source: Q22h - In which Asian languages could you hold a conversation in (i.e. a basic level of fluency through to full fluency)?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)



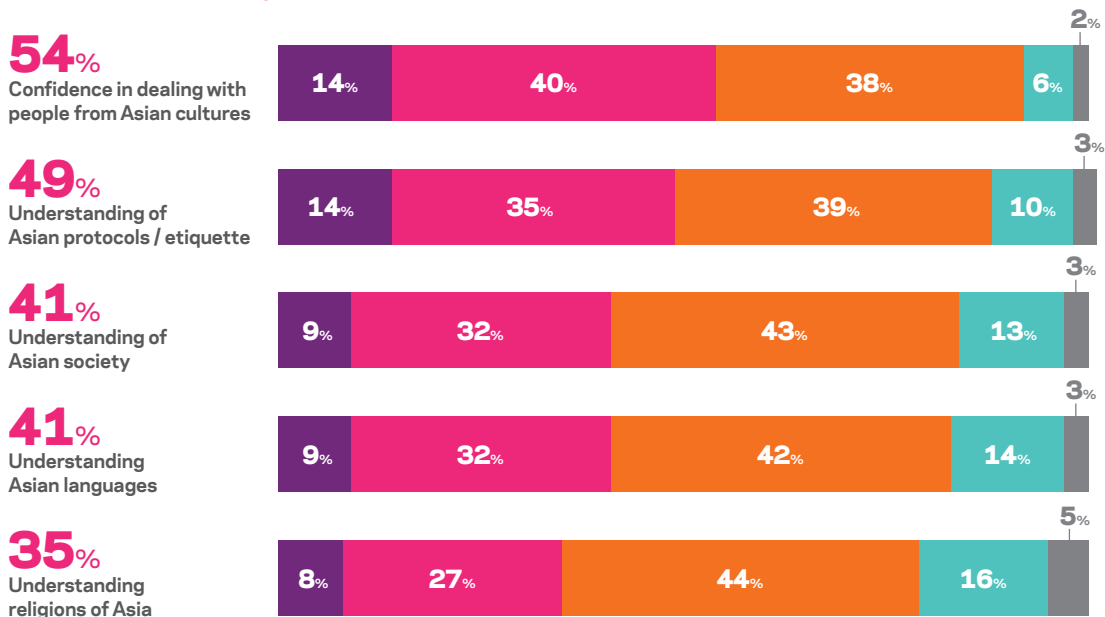
Being Asia-savvy is considered an important skill for New Zealand's future workforce

Confidence in and understanding of Asian cultures, people and protocols continue to be rated as important skills for New Zealand's future workforce. Interpersonal skills are rated as the most important Asia-related skill for New Zealand's future workforce (54 percent rate it as important or very important).

Figure 32

How important is Asian cultural competency to New Zealand's future workforce?

Percentage of people who felt the Asia-related skills are important



- Very important
- Important
- Somewhat important

- Not very important
- Not at all important

Source: Q13 - How important are Asia-related skills (languages, understanding of Asian society, history, economies) for our future workforce and the career path of New Zealanders?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002)

The impact of major sports events on attitudes to Asia

Half of New Zealanders say they are open to learning more about Japan as a result of Japan hosting major sporting events such as the Rugby World Cup in 2019 and Summer Olympics, now scheduled for 2021. When asked whether the Rugby World Cup changed their view of Japan, more than one third (36 percent) of New Zealanders said it had positively impacted their view.

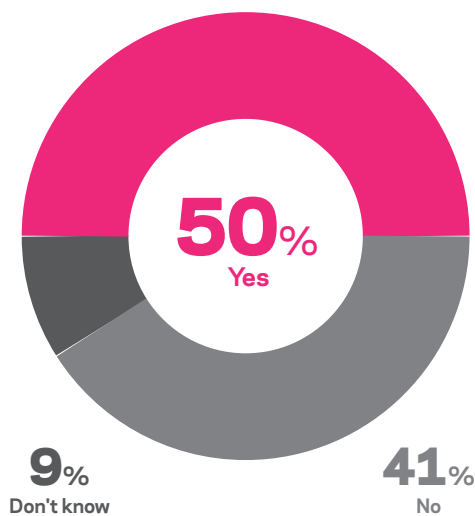
Respect and shared values important

Many of the positive comments shared by New Zealanders acknowledged the Japanese people's respect and enthusiasm during the Rugby World Cup, despite rugby not being their main sport. New Zealanders with little exposure to Japan said they felt more connected to Japan after learning about Japan's culture and traditions as part of the tournament.

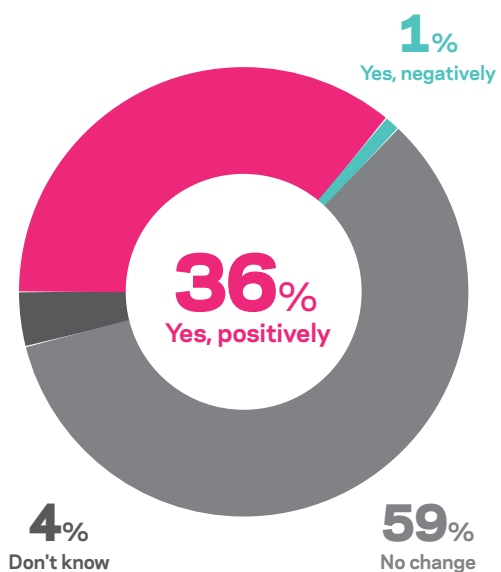
Figure 33

Has Japan's hosting of sporting events changed perceptions of Japan?

Are you interested to learn more about Japan as a result of it hosting the RWC and Olympics?



Has the Rugby World Cup changed your view of Japan?



Source: Q24d - Japan has hosted the 2019 Rugby World Cup and will be hosting the 2020 Summer Olympic Games. Are you interested to learn about Japan as a result of Japan hosting these events? / Q24e - Has the Rugby World Cup changed how you view Japan?

Base: All New Zealanders (n=2,002) / Those whose views changed (n=761)



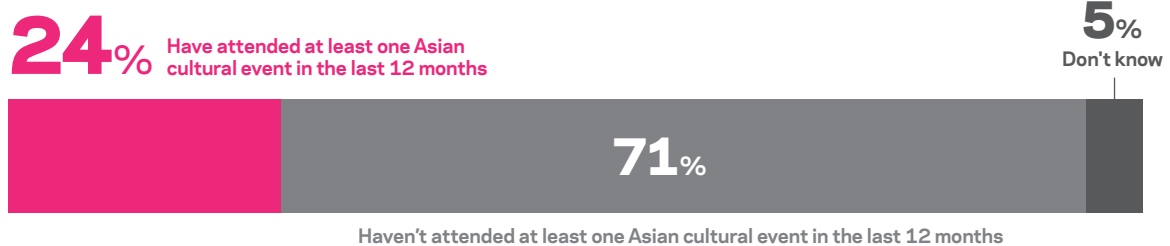
One in four New Zealanders attend Asian arts and cultural events

Nearly a quarter (24 percent) of New Zealanders attended at least one Asian arts or cultural event in the year before the survey. New Zealanders of Asian and Pacific ethnicity as well as younger New Zealanders were more likely to have attended an Asian arts or cultural event compared to the national average.

Figure 34

Have you attended an Asian arts/cultural event in the past 12 months?

All New Zealanders



Under 30-year-olds

31%

Over 30 year olds

26%

Asian New Zealanders

47%

Pacific New Zealanders

32%

New Zealand European

20%

Māori

19%

Source: Q19a - Have you attended at least one Asian arts/cultural event in New Zealand in the past 12 months?

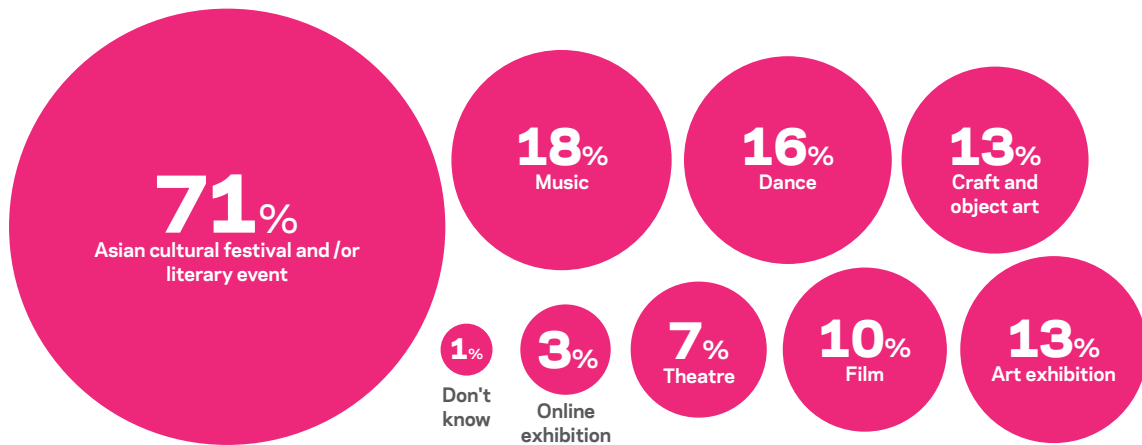
Base: All New Zealanders
(n=2,002)

Asian cultural festivals and literary events most popular

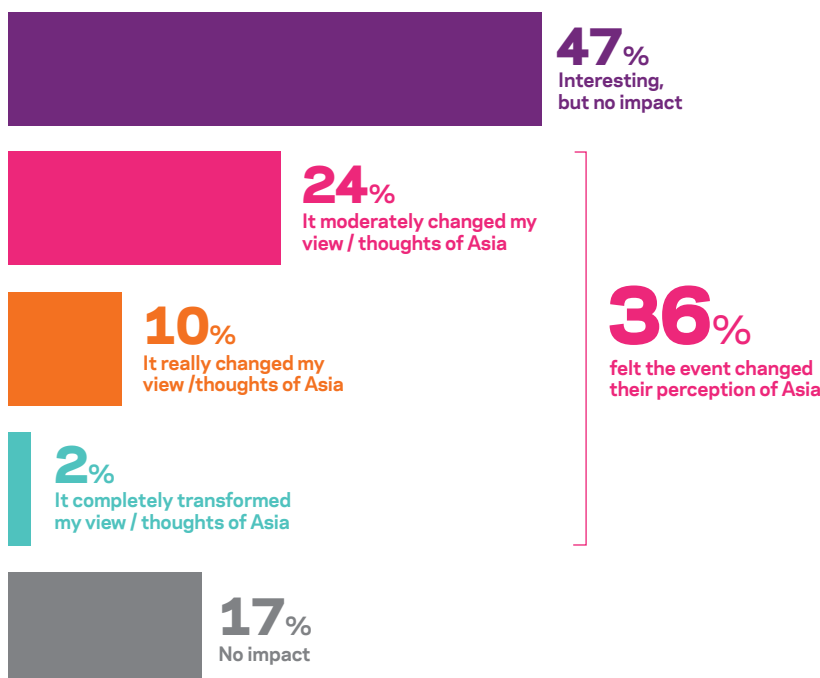
Seventy-one percent of those who attended an arts event attended an Asian cultural festival or literary event. Eighteen percent attended a music festival or show, and 16 percent attended a dance event. One third (36 percent) of attendees felt that the event had changed their view of Asia, including two percent who believed it had completely transformed their perception of Asia.

Figure 35

What arts and cultural events are New Zealanders attending?



Did this event change your perception of Asia?



Source: Q19b - Please select which of the following you attended? / Q19c - Did your attendance at the Asian art or cultural event change your perception of Asia?

Base: All who said they attended an event (n=501) / All who knew what type of event they attended (n=493)



Christchurch terror attack: did it impact our perceptions of Asia?

In June 2019, the Asia New Zealand Foundation commissioned a survey² on the way New Zealanders perceived Asia and people of Asian ethnicity following the 15 March mosque attacks in Christchurch.

As most of the world's Muslim population lives in Asia, we wanted to assess whether there had been a marked shift in perceptions of Asia and Muslim communities in New Zealand.

² The online quantitative survey was conducted by Research NZ. The sample size was n=1000 New Zealanders, 18 years and older. All interviewing was carried out between 12th and 24th June 2019.



Key findings

52%

Just over half (52 percent) of respondents believed that New Zealanders were accepting of cultural and religious diversity.

Sixteen percent felt that New Zealanders were not, and 28 percent gave a neutral response. Women were less likely to believe New Zealanders were accepting.

69%

Like the Perceptions of Asia survey, most respondents (69 percent) considered it important for New Zealand to develop cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia. Ten percent felt it wasn't important, while respondents aged 25-34 considered it to be more important than other age groups.

Opinions about whether New Zealand is doing enough to understand the religions, cultures and traditions of Asia were split.

A little over one-third of respondents agreed that New Zealand was doing enough to understand the religions, cultures and traditions of Asia (35 percent). By contrast, 28 percent disagreed, and 35 percent gave a neutral response. Respondents living in the lower North Island were less likely to agree that New Zealand was doing enough.

1/3

One-third of respondents (33 percent) agreed that New Zealand was doing enough to prepare young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia. By comparison, 25 percent disagreed, and 38 percent were indifferent. Respondents living in the South Island were less likely to agree that New Zealand was doing enough.



43%

Almost half (43 percent) of all respondents said that, in the last five years, they had felt connected with Asian cultures, places and people who identify as Asian in their daily life. Twenty-nine percent felt disconnected and 25 percent gave a neutral response. Respondents living in the upper North Island were much more likely to say they felt connected to Asia compared to those living in areas such as Canterbury.

40%

Forty percent of respondents said that, as a result of the terror attack, they felt a greater empathy and positive disposition towards people of Asian ethnicity. Just four percent felt more negative, but 52 percent gave a neutral response. Female respondents and those aged 25-34 were more likely than other age groups to state they were now more positive towards people of Asian ethnicity.

34%

Following the terror attack, which disproportionately impacted people of Asian origin, 34 percent of respondents (the majority in the North Island) said they aimed to now have more contact with people of Asian ethnicity. By contrast, just four percent disagreed, and 60 percent gave a neutral response.

52%

Social media as well as traditional media were considered to have influenced respondents' opinions of Asia following the shootings. Fifty-two percent of respondents stated that traditional media coverage had influenced their perceptions of Asia following the attack. Forty-four percent stated that social media coverage had influenced their perceptions. By contrast, 36 percent stated social media had no influence or a minor influence (15 percent).

Respondents were asked what they were most concerned about following the terror attacks.

- 31 percent were concerned by the presence of violent extremism in New Zealand;
- 21 percent were concerned about immigration and the integration of foreign nationals in New Zealand;
- 20 percent were concerned about social isolation and the lack of connection and understanding between New Zealanders of different ethnicities and religions.

1/3

One-third of respondents (34 percent) expected that there would be another act of violent extremism in New Zealand within the next five years, targeting ethnic or religious minorities.

While 25 percent did not believe this would be the case, 41 percent were uncertain or would rather not say. Respondents living in Canterbury were less likely to state that they expected another act of extremism in the next five years.





Background, methodology, and sample profiles

The Asia New Zealand Foundation was established in 1994 with the objective of increasing New Zealanders' understanding of, and strengthening their relationships with, the people and countries of Asia.

Since 1997 the Foundation has undertaken regular research to measure New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia. This is the only research undertaken by the Foundation that is focused on understanding New Zealanders' views of both the barriers to and benefits of relationships with Asia.

The *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* research helps inform the Foundation's policy direction, including identifying priorities for how the Foundation might work to foster stronger relationships with Asia and for better preparing New Zealanders to engage confidently in Asia.

The research has evolved over time, and includes questions covering:

- The perceived importance of Asia over time;
- Views about the benefits to New Zealand of a relationship with Asia;
- Perceptions of Asian peoples and cultures;
- Perceived knowledge of Asia;
- Perceptions of friendliness and threat;
- Media perceptions and consumption;
- Asia-related interests, including travel and attending relevant events;
- Specific events of note in the region (e.g. APEC, Olympics).

Where possible, we have endeavoured to keep the questions largely unchanged year-on-year, to allow for comparisons between years to be made. We acknowledge that at times this has meant some questions sound dated in a contemporary context.

Results are rounded to the nearest 1 percent, meaning some totals (in each of the graphs) are just above or just below 100 percent.

Quantitative methodology: *Perceptions of Asia survey*

Online were completed by 2002 New Zealanders aged 15 years and over from 13 - 29 November 2019. A survey of 2002 people has a maximum margin of error of +/- 2.2 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

Data collection method

As with 2018, respondents completed a 15-minute online self-completion survey. Before 2017, surveys were completed via telephone interviewing. The online survey approach allows for a slightly longer questionnaire and an expansion of the overall sample size. A larger sample enables more detailed demographic analysis, including the identification of patterns by, amongst other variables, age groups and ethnicity.



Sampling and weighting

Respondents were drawn from Colmar Brunton's online research panel – which contains more than 100,000 New Zealanders, recruited from both offline and online sources (including through their random telephone surveys, social media, advertising and the Fly Buys loyalty programme). Their panel meets or exceeds all of the 28 global best practice standards outlined by ESOMAR for panel development and management.

From the panel Colmar Brunton drew a sample which was representative by age, gender, location and household size. Final survey weighting ensured overall results represent the adult population on age, gender, and ethnicity. The weighted and unweighted sample profiles can be found in Appendix A.

Other notes

- Within the body of this report, subgroups analyses are included to add clarity to the results. Sub-analyses include cross-tabulations with demographic variables, such as gender, age, ethnicity and region. Reported differences are statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level, unless otherwise specified.
- The project also included follow-up qualitative research to further explore some of the results of the quantitative survey. The qualitative research was carried out through four focus groups. Details of the qualitative research are outlined below.
- Throughout this report 'New Zealanders' refers to all those living in permanent private residences in New Zealand, including those who were born in New Zealand and those who were born elsewhere.

Qualitative methodology

The qualitative phase of this project was conducted via four focus groups with a total of 28 participants which explored perceptions of Asia countries and New Zealand's place in the world. Illustrative quotes from the focus groups are described throughout the report and provide the 'human context' behind the survey statistics. In the 2019 survey, the focus was specifically on issues of geopolitics, so people were recruited who had some interest in issues around geopolitics and international relations.

Participants with a range of ages, genders, ethnicities, and household incomes were identified from the quantitative survey and recruited via telephone.

The focus groups were conducted in:

- Auckland with 18 to 45-year old recent arrivals (last five years) to New Zealand from Asian countries;
- Auckland with 18 to 35-year old singles/ couples with no kids;
- Hawke's Bay with 30 to 45-year-olds with kids at home (families);
- Dunedin with 45 to 60-year-olds with no kids at home.

Segmenting the groups in this manner allowed Colmar Brunton to draw upon a wide spectrum of viewpoints and perspectives to understand perceptions of the Asia region and countries. This provides rich context about the various influences upon perceptions, but the quoted views of participants are not necessarily representative of all New Zealanders.

Focus groups were conducted face-to-face between 20 and 27 November 2019, and each session lasted for two and a half hours.

Christchurch and COVID-19 Mini Polls

The Christchurch mini-poll was carried out between 12th and 24th June 2019 via an online quantitative survey. The research was carried out by Research NZ. The sample size was 1000 New Zealanders, aged 18 years and older.

The COVID-19 mini-poll was conducted by Colmar Brunton in March 2020 via an online quantitative survey. The sample size was 1005 New Zealanders, aged 15 years and older.

Appendix A: Survey sample profiles

Gender and age

Gender	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Male	49	49
Female	51	51
Gender diverse	<1	<1

Age	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Under 30 years	25	25
30-39 years	16	16
40-49 years	16	16
50-59 years	16	16
60-69 years	13	13
70+	13	13

Ethnic identification

	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
New Zealand European	68	65
New Zealand Māori	16	13
Pacific People	8	5
Asian New Zealander	18	14
- Chinese	8	6
- Indian	7	5
- Filipino	2	1
- Other Asian ethnicity	1	2
Other	5	4

Born in New Zealand

	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Yes	74	72
No	24	26
- Arrived past 0-9 years	4	5
- Arrived past 10-19 years	8	8
- Arrived past 20-29 years	5	5
- Arrived past 30-49 years	4	5
- Arrived past 0-9 years	2	2
Prefer not to answer	2	2

Region

	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Northland	4	3
Auckland	33	33
Waikato	9	9
Bay of Plenty	6	6
Gisborne	1	1
Hawke's Bay	3	3
Taranaki	2	2
Manawatu-Wanganui	5	5
Wellington	11	11
Tasman	1	1
Nelson	1	1
Marlborough	1	1
West Coast	1	1
Canterbury	13	13
Otago	5	5
Southland	2	2



Appendix B: Qualitative forum profile

Location

	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Big city	49	50
Provincial city or large town	27	27
Small town	14	14
Rural area or farm	9	9

Household composition ie. Live with ...

	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Myself	14	14
Husband, wife or partner	56	57
Mother and/or father	13	13
Son(s) and/or daughter(s)	17	17
- Preschooler (0-4 years)	7	7
- School (5-13 years)	9	8
- High school (13-18 years)	5	5
- Other (18 years and over)	4	4
Brother(s) and/or sister(s)	5	5
Flatmates	8	8
Someone else	3	2
Prefer not to answer	4	4

Highest education level

	Unweighted percent (n=2,002)	Weighted percent (n=2,002)
Primary/Intermediate school	1	1
Secondary school	29	29
Vocational or trade qualification	23	24
University degree	33	33
Postgraduate degree	10	10
Prefer not to answer	4	3

Gender

Female	16
Male	12

Age

18-29 years	6
30-39 years	13
40-60 years	9

Ethnic identification

New Zealand European	10
New Zealand Māori	4
Asian	8
Other	6

About the Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono

The Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono is New Zealand's leading non-partisan, non-profit authority on Asia.

We were set up in 1994 to build New Zealanders' knowledge and understanding of Asia. We rely on a mix of public, philanthropic and corporate funding.

The Foundation works in partnership with influential individuals and organisations in New Zealand and Asia to provide high-level forums, cultural events, international collaborations, school programmes and professional development opportunities.

Our activities cover more than 20 countries in Asia and are delivered through programmes with a focus on arts, leadership, entrepreneurship, sports, business, media, education, research and informal diplomacy (Track II). We have three offices: in Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch.

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