

Rangahau te Korou o te Ora / Quality of Life Survey 2026

Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland summary report

November 2026

QUALITY OF LIFE

Ipsos

Foreword

Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland is a place of extraordinary diversity, creativity, and opportunity. It is home to people of many cultures, identities, and experiences, all contributing to the unique character and strength of our region. As Auckland continues to grow and evolve, it is important that we understand not only how our city is changing, but how Aucklanders are experiencing those changes in their everyday lives.

Since 2003, the Quality of Life survey has provided an important opportunity to listen to our communities. Through the experiences and perspectives shared by more than 2500 Aucklanders across the region, this report offers valuable insights into what contributes to wellbeing, the strengths of our communities, as well as the challenges that continue to affect people across the city.

The findings tell a nuanced story. Many Aucklanders report a positive quality of life and strong connections to the people and places around them. At the same time, the report highlights persistent pressures that influence wellbeing, including the cost of living, housing affordability, social isolation, and concerns about the future. These challenges are not experienced equally. The report underlines the persistent geographic disparities in wellbeing across Auckland, and that some groups – especially Māori, Pacific, ethnic communities, and young people – continue to face greater barriers to experiencing positive wellbeing than others.

For Auckland Council, these findings reinforce that a strong and successful Auckland is one in which all people and communities have the opportunity to thrive, prosper, and share the benefits of progress. Understanding where inequities exist, and how they are experienced, is essential to making better decisions and directing our efforts where they can have the greatest impact.

At its heart, this report is about the people of Auckland. It reflects the voices, experiences, aspirations, and ongoing needs and concerns of Aucklanders from many walks of life. Those voices provide an invaluable source of evidence to inform the decisions we make, the services we deliver, and the future we seek to build together.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who took part in the Quality of Life survey and shared their experiences. By listening carefully to our communities and learning from their perspectives, we can work towards a more inclusive, resilient, and equitable Auckland, where current and future generations can flourish.



Phil Wilson
Chief Executive
Auckland Council



Te Whakataki / Introduction

Rangahau te Korou o te Ora / The Quality of Life Project is a collaborative local government research project in Aotearoa New Zealand.[1] Auckland Council is one of seven current participating councils across the country.

The project was established over 20 years ago, in response to the impacts of urbanisation on the wellbeing of New Zealand residents and communities. The primary objective of the study is to measure urban residents' wellbeing and their perceptions of living in large urban areas, through a survey undertaken once every two years.

The survey provides data for councils across the country to use as part of their monitoring programmes, and to make important decisions that aim to improve life for residents and communities. It also contributes to public knowledge and research on wellbeing issues in New Zealand.

This report summarises the main findings from the full 2026 Auckland-specific report. This can be found on the Knowledge Auckland website.[2]

[1] https://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/
[2] Prakash, A., and Ipsos New Zealand (2026). Quality of Life survey 2026: Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland report. Auckland Council technical report, TR2026/13. https://www.knowledgeauckland.org.nz



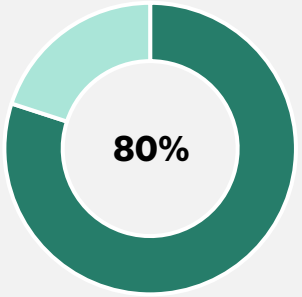
The Quality of Life Project is an important data source for Auckland Council. It is a strategic evidence base to understand how Aucklanders are experiencing life across the region and contributes to outcomes outlined in council strategies, like the Auckland Plan 2050, Ngā Hapori Momoho/Thriving Communities strategy, and Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan.

Specifically, the survey supports council to:

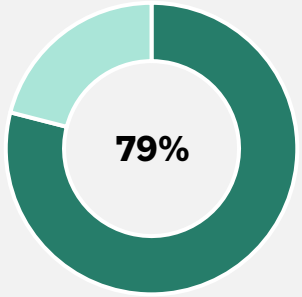
- **Inform long-term planning and policy development** by identifying the issues affecting Aucklanders' wellbeing
- **Monitor outcomes over time** and assess whether outcomes for Aucklanders are improving or declining
- **Identify the population groups and places experiencing poorer outcomes** to understand where inequities exist
- **Provide critical, timely, and actionable insights** for staff and elected members to support high-quality decision-making
- **Support inclusive and equitable policy responses** to help shape efforts to create a thriving and sustainable Auckland.

Te Korou o te Ora / Quality of Life

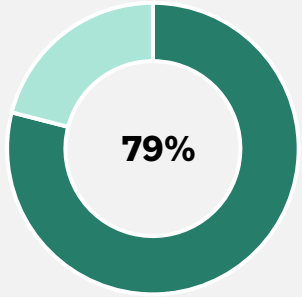
Three-quarters (74%) of Aucklanders rate their overall quality of life positively, but this varies depending on where they live, their age, and their ethnic group



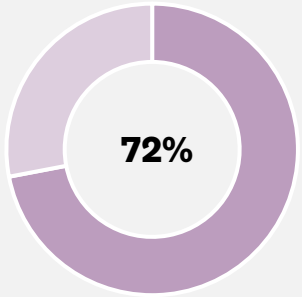
Rural North Auckland
Rodney, Aotea Great Barrier



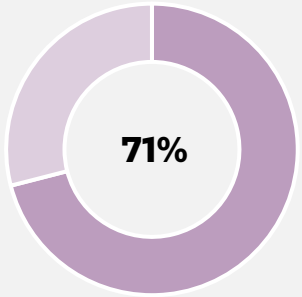
North Auckland
Hibiscus and Bays, Upper Harbour, Kaipātiki, Devonport-Takapuna



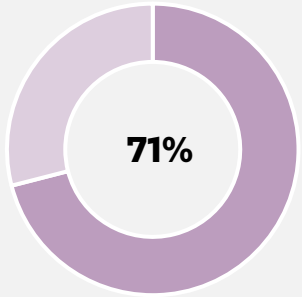
Central Auckland
Albert-Eden, Puketāpapa, Waitematā, Waiheke, Ōrākei, Maungakiekie-Tāmaki



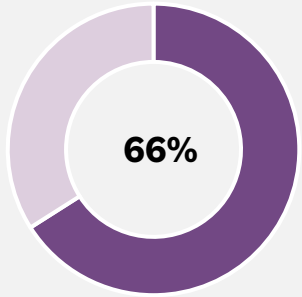
East Auckland
Howick



West Auckland
Henderson-Massey, Whau, Waitākere Ranges

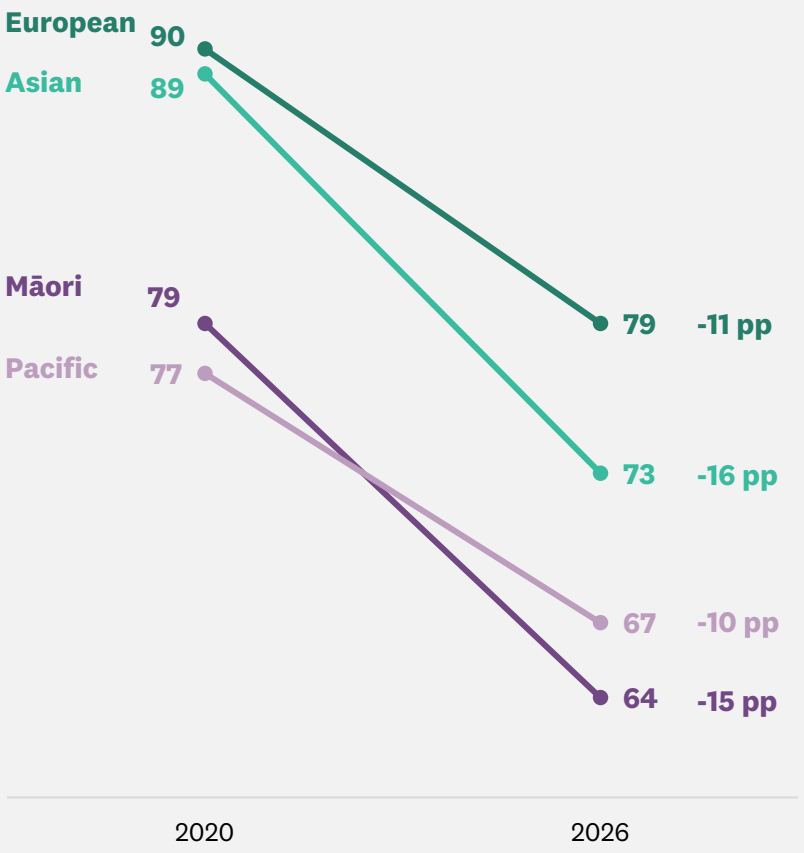


Rural South Auckland
Franklin

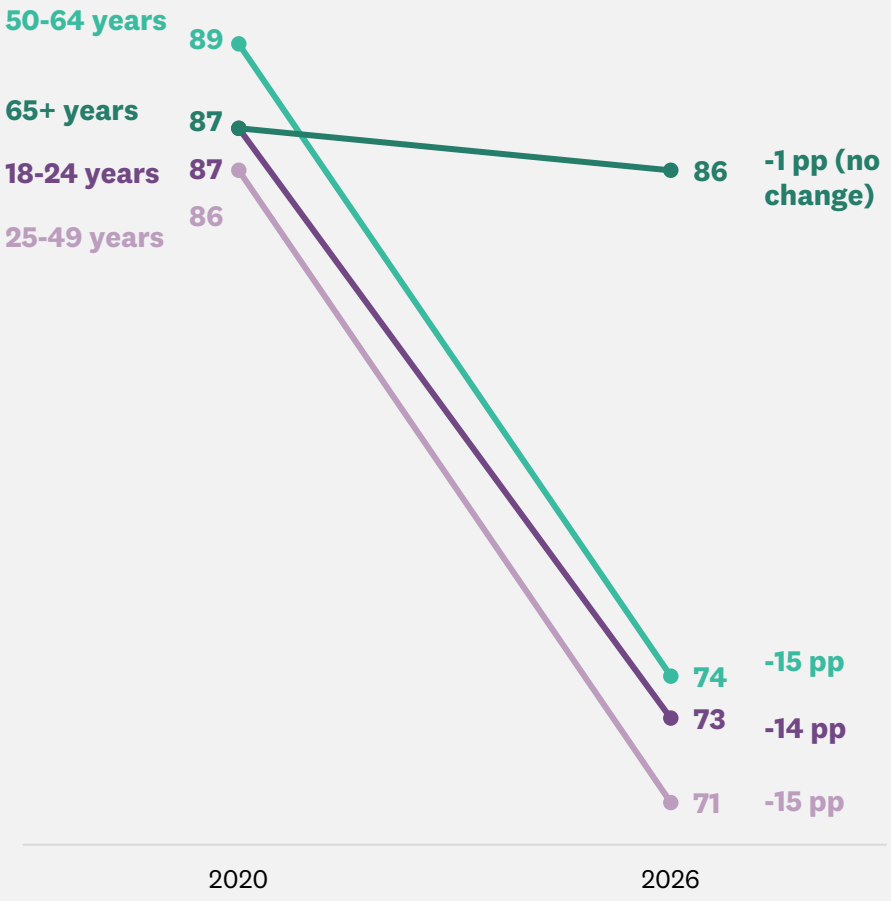


South Auckland
Māngere-Ōtāhuhu, Ōtara-Papatoetoe, Manurewa, Papakura

Fewer respondents rated their quality of life ‘good’ over time, especially Māori and Pacific peoples and people aged less than 65 years



Overall ‘good’ quality of life by ethnic group (2020 – 2026) and change in percentage points (pp)



Overall ‘good’ quality of life by age group (2020 – 2026) and change in percentage points (pp)

Te Whare Noho / Housing

Housing costs and security are ongoing concerns for Aucklanders



41% of Aucklanders disagreed their housing costs were affordable
Disagreement was significantly higher among people aged 35-49 years (47%)



Perceptions of housing affordability have declined over time
In 2026, 36% agreed their housing costs were affordable, down from 45% in 2020



Aucklanders faced affordability challenges in being able to heat and cool their homes properly
Need was significantly higher among Māori and Pacific respondents



73% said the home they lived in suited their household's needs
This was more common among older people (85%) and respondents living in North Auckland (78%)



Three-quarters (76%) agreed that the neighbourhood they lived in suited their household's needs
This was more common among North Aucklanders (83%)



Three in ten (31%) had worried about being forced to move from their home
This was more common among Māori respondents (39%) and people aged 25-34 years (37%)

He Oranga Whiwhi Mahi, He Oranga Ōhanga / Employment and Economic Wellbeing

Cost of living pressures remain prominent concerns



One in three (34%) Aucklanders said they had enough money to meet their everyday needs
European respondents (40%) were more likely to say they had enough money



One in four (24%) Aucklanders said they did not have enough money to meet their everyday needs
Māori (25%) and Pacific (22%) respondents were more likely to say they did not have enough money



One in three (35%) also said they had worried often about their own or their family's financial circumstances in the last three months
Worry was significantly higher among those aged 25-34 years (41%) and 35-49 years (42%)



Three in five (57%) said they would be able to pay an unexpected bill of $2000 within a week and without going into debt
This was more common among older people (76%), Europeans (63%), and respondents living in North Auckland (67%)



83% of respondents said in the last 12 months, they had to reduce or cut their household's spending in at least one area
One in three had to reduce spending on food (36%) and healthcare/dental visits (32%)



Two-thirds (63%) were in paid work
Of this group, 59% said they were satisfied with the balance between work and other aspects of their lives (e.g. family, community, leisure)

Te Taiao, Tairaru Āhuarangi / Natural Environment and Climate Change



Three in five (62%) Aucklanders said they had a good understanding of climate change and its possible impacts for Auckland

The level of self-reported knowledge was higher among older people (73%) and lower among those aged 25-34 years (53%)

One-third (33%) said they were worried about climate change impacts for Auckland

This has declined since 2020, when 50% of respondents said they were worried

82% said in the last 12 months, they had taken at least one type of environmental action

The most common environmental actions taken were managing waste (49% of respondents), changing purchasing habits (43%), and reducing energy consumption (34%)

39% of Aucklanders noted water pollution was a problem in their local area

Māori respondents (53%) were more likely to see this as a problem compared to others

Aucklanders were positive about green and open spaces in their local area

85% agreed it was easy for them to get to green and open spaces in their local area

82% agreed green and open spaces were important for supporting their health and wellbeing

72% agreed they were happy with the maintenance of green and open spaces in their local area

65% agreed they frequently spent time in green and open spaces in their local area



Te Taiwhanga Hanga / Built Environment

There were geographic disparities in perceptions of Aucklanders' local neighbourhoods

76% of Aucklanders say their local area is a great place to live
This was significantly higher among North Auckland respondents (88%) and lower among South Auckland respondents (64%)

Two-thirds (64%) were happy with the look and feel of their local area
This was again higher among North Auckland (72%) and lower among West (58%) and South Auckland (55%) respondents

Three in five (57%) said that rubbish or litter dumped in their local area was a problem
Māori (66%), Pacific (65%), and South Auckland (72%) respondents were particularly concerned about this issue

77% rated traffic congestion as a problem in their local area
This has consistently been a highly-rated problem over time



Ngā Take-ā-Rohe / Local Issues

Aucklanders' perceptions of crime and safety issues are stable and social issues remain notable



South, West, and Central Aucklanders were very concerned about the prominence of social issues in their local area
People begging and sleeping rough in public spaces were highly-rated as social issues



Half (53%) of all respondents said that anti-social behaviour had been an issue in their local area
This was more common among Māori (64%) and Pacific (68%) respondents, as well as South (67%), West (60%), and Central Auckland (58%) respondents

Rating of issues as a 'problem'

Theft and burglary



In 2026, 54% rated this as a problem (no change from 55% in 2020)

Dangerous driving



In 2026, 58% rated this as a problem (no change from 59% in 2020)

Vandalism



In 2026, 49% rated this as a problem (a slight increase from 43% in 2020)



Most (80%) Aucklanders said they felt safe in their city centre during the day
This was slightly lower among West Aucklanders (75%)



But 38% said they felt safe in their city centre after dark
This was slightly lower among European (33%) and West Auckland (30%) respondents



Two-thirds (68%) said they felt safe walking in their neighbourhood after dark
This was higher among North (77%) and East (75%) Auckland respondents

Te Tūnuku / Transport

The proportion of Aucklanders who used public transport in the 12 months prior to the survey increased from 55% in 2020 to 69% in 2026

In 2026, the proportion who agreed public transport is...

60% Easy to get to (no change from 64% in 2020)

54% Frequent (no change from 55% in 2020)

42% Reliable (slightly down from 49% in 2020)

40% Affordable (no change from 43% in 2020)

31% Safe (down from 73% in 2020)

Perceptions of public transport were more positive among Central Auckland respondents and less positive among East Auckland respondents





Te Hauora me te Oranga / Health and Wellbeing

Aucklanders rate their health positively but there are barriers to accessing timely and effective healthcare

Two-thirds of Aucklanders rated their physical (65%), mental (66%), and spiritual (69%) health positively
More (78%) rated their family/relationship health positively

Around one-quarter (27%) said they had experienced negative and serious stress often in the last 12 months
This was significantly higher among Māori respondents (37%) and people aged 18-34 years (39%)

Three in five (63%) said they had experienced barriers to accessing health-related treatment or advice in the last 12 months
The top barriers to accessing treatment or advice included financial cost (35%), long appointment wait times (34%), and lack of suitable appointment times (22%)

Whatunga Hapori, Whatunga Pāpori / Community and Social Wellbeing

Aucklanders experience challenges in their community connection and trust in others



58% of Aucklanders felt it was important to have a sense of community with others in their neighbourhood
However, fewer (45%) actually felt a sense of community with others



The importance of having a sense of community has declined over time
In 2026, 58% agreed having a sense of community with others was important, down from 70% in 2020



Older people (65+ years) (55%) were more likely to say they experienced a sense of community with others
However, this was significantly lower among people aged 18-24 years (39%) and 25-34 years (40%)



Half (56%) said they trusted other people in their local area
This was higher among Europeans (64%), older people (73%) and respondents living in northern parts of Auckland (67%)



Feelings of frequent loneliness and isolation affected 17% of Aucklanders
However, this was significantly higher among young people aged 18-24 years (24%) and among Māori (26%) and Pacific (22%) respondents



Aucklanders experienced varying levels of trust in New Zealand institutions
North Aucklanders expressed higher levels of trust, while South Aucklanders expressed lower levels of trust

Whatunga Ahurea / Culture and Identity

Many Aucklanders felt accepted by others

70% of respondents said they felt accepted and valued by other Aucklanders
However, feelings of acceptance were lower among Māori (59%) and Pacific peoples (65%)

Although there were high levels of feelings of acceptance among Aucklanders, 42% felt that racism and discrimination had been a problem in their local area in the last 12 months
Perceptions of racism and discrimination among Aucklanders have remained stable since 2020 (43%)

In addition, one in seven (15%) Aucklanders said they had experienced ethnicity-based discrimination in the last six months
This was significantly higher among Māori (26%) and Asian (23%) peoples, as well as South Aucklanders (21%) and people aged 25-34 years (20%)



Tukanga Kaunihera / Council Processes

Perceptions of the public's ability to influence council has increased over time



39% of Aucklanders were confident that Auckland Council makes decisions in the best interest of the city
This was significantly higher among young people aged 18-24 years (46%) and Asian respondents (44%)

42% felt that the public had 'some' or a 'large' influence on the decisions that Auckland Council makes
This has increased from 30% since 2020

Whakairo Mutunga / Final Thoughts

The 2026 findings present a mixed picture of experiences of quality of life in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland. Most Aucklanders continue to rate their quality of life positively and value their neighbourhoods and local green and open spaces.

However, the longer-term decline in Aucklanders' rating of their quality of life – alongside ongoing pressures relating to housing, living costs, healthcare access, and community connection – indicates that many Aucklanders are experiencing persistent challenges. These challenges are not evenly distributed. Māori and Pacific Aucklanders, younger Aucklanders, and people living in the southern and western parts of the region report poorer outcomes across a range of measures.

The findings provide an important evidence base for shaping Auckland's future. They highlight the need to consider not only average outcomes across the region, but also how experiences vary between population groups and places. Continued monitoring will be important for assessing progress, identifying where inequities persist, and understanding how Aucklanders' needs are changing over time.

Addressing the identified issues will require sustained and coordinated action across Auckland Council, central government, mana whenua, communities, and other partners. By responding to these challenges while building on the strengths that Aucklanders value, Tāmaki Makaurau can move towards a more equitable, connected, and resilient future, where all Aucklanders have the opportunity to experience a good quality of life.



Find out more:
research@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or visit knowledgeauckland.org.nz and aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

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Summary of Auckland Council technical report, TR2026/13

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