



Asia New Zealand
Foundation

New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples - 2014 Annual Survey

Authors Asia New Zealand Foundation with text and analysis by Colmar Brunton

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Report



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New Zealanders' views about the importance of Asia

New Zealanders' views about the importance of Asia

This section of the report looks at New Zealanders' views on the importance of Asia to New Zealand's future, and the benefits to New Zealand of a relationship with Asia.

In 2014 Asia was seen as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, behind Australia. This view was widely held across locations and demographic groups.

More than eight in ten New Zealanders believed that it was quite or very important that New Zealand developed cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia.

KEY FINDINGS IN THIS SECTION:

- Eight in ten (80 percent) of New Zealanders believed that the Asian region was important to New Zealand's future. The importance of Asia remained unchanged between the 2013 and 2014 surveys.
- Asia was viewed as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, behind Australia (on 85 percent).
- The benefits of a relationship with Asia were viewed primarily in economic terms, with most New Zealanders viewing export market opportunities (91 percent) and Asian tourism (91 percent) as particularly beneficial to New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years.
- Eighty-four percent of New Zealanders believed that it was important for New Zealand to develop cultural and economic ties with Asia.

The perceived importance of Asia

"Our future lies within the Asian region."
Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Wairarapa

Asia was seen as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, behind Australia

New Zealanders' views on the importance of the Asian region remained unchanged in 2014.

Consistent with the previous year's research, in 2014 eight in ten (80 percent) of New Zealanders believed that the Asian region was important to New Zealand's future. Asia was seen as more important than Europe, North America, the South Pacific, South America and Africa; only Australia was rated as more important to New Zealand's future than the Asian region (Figure 1).

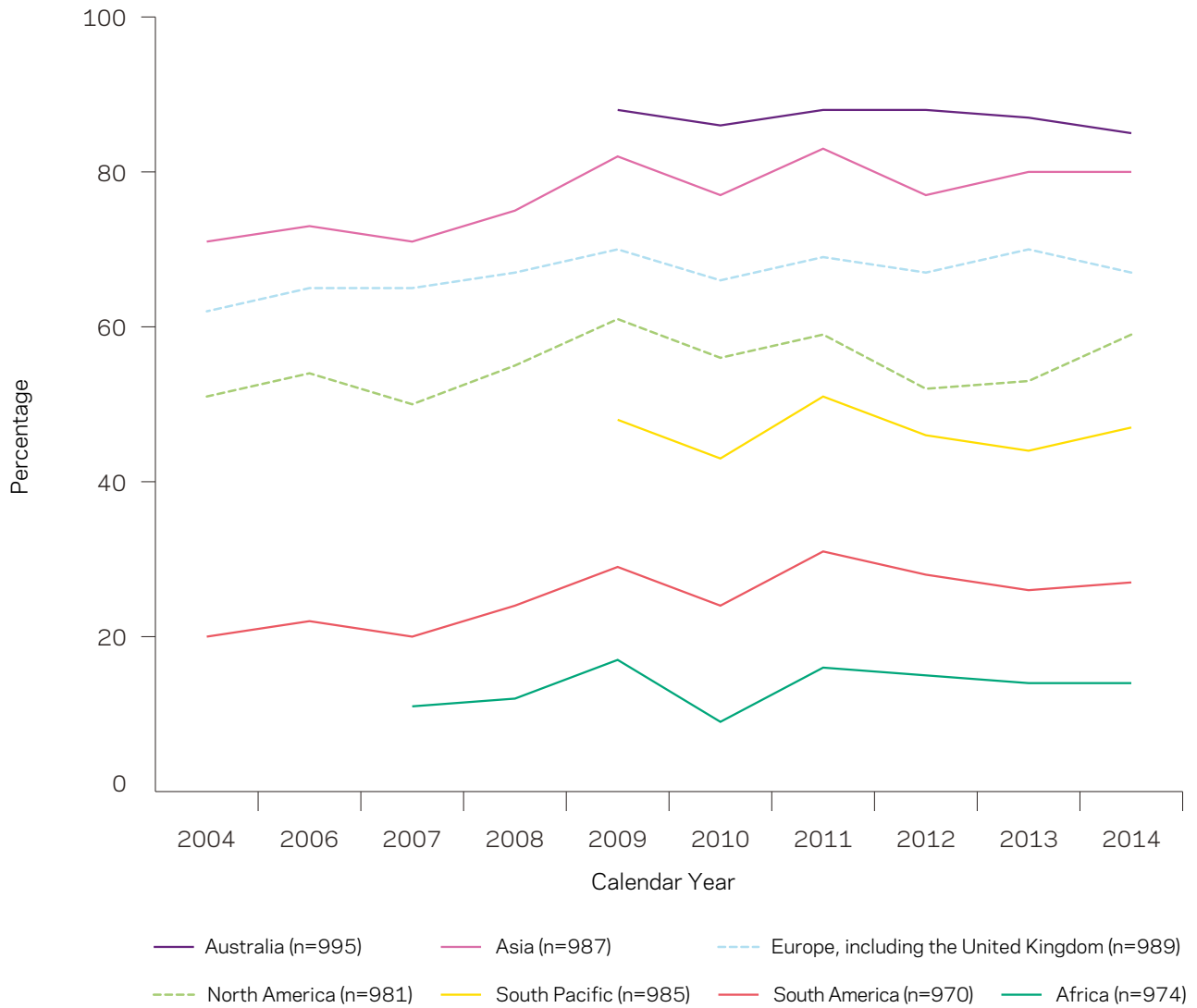
Views on the importance of Asia were fairly consistent across New Zealand, and were not isolated to any particular city or area (Figure 2).

The only change in these results between 2013 and 2014 was for North America, which New Zealanders viewed as more important in 2014. This increase may have related to coverage of improving political and military ties between New Zealand and the United States, and public discussions about free trade agreements.¹

¹ See, for example: 'Kiwis head home from Pearl Harbour [sic] military exercise' (2 August 2014), <http://bit.ly/18l6oEU>; 'John Key meets President Obama as ties strengthen' (20 June 2014), <http://bit.ly/16aZl5D>; and 'Trade Minister Tim Groser says TPP, trade deals with emerging economies are NZ's best insurance policy against export dependency on China' (2 June 2014), <http://bit.ly/1DxUTtc>.

Figure 1. Importance of other regions/countries to New Zealand's future

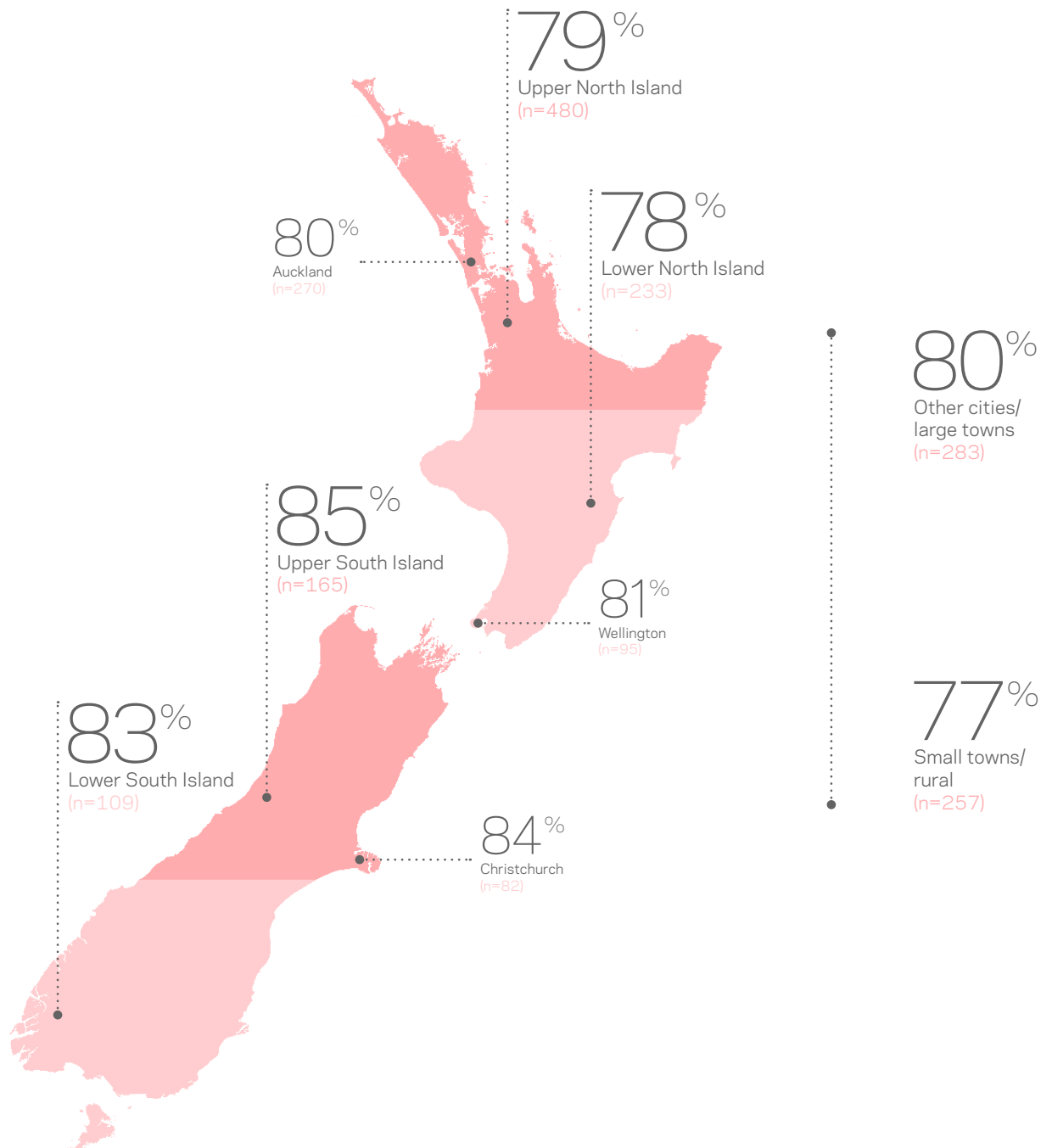
Percentage of New Zealanders who gave an importance rating of 4 or 5 (out of 5)



Source: Q2a Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said 'don't know'.

Figure 2. Importance of other regions/countries to New Zealand's future by region

Percentage in each location who gave an importance rating of 4 or 5 (out of 5)



Source: Q2a Base: Residents in each location, excluding those who said 'didn't know' (n=82 to 480).

Why Asia was seen to be important

Asia was seen to have economic benefits for New Zealand

We asked New Zealanders to think about the next 10 to 20 years, and to say what they thought would be the impacts of a range of activities on New Zealand's future.

As in previous years, exports to and tourism from Asia were seen as having the greatest positive impacts on our country's future. These were followed by the economic growth of the Asian region, free trade agreements between New Zealand and Asian countries, and Asia as a tourist destination, with more than three-quarters believing that these will have positive impacts in the next 10 to 20 years.

In a follow-up qualitative forum, contributors specifically commented that trade agreements with Asia had been in the media during the year, and that this had signalled enhanced economic benefits for New Zealand.

"Trade agreements are important with these countries."

Male, 70+, Pākehā, Dunedin

"There has been a lot more exposure in the media regarding... trade deals with China (and other Asian countries)."

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Dunedin

Around two-thirds of New Zealanders believed that imports from Asia, investment from Asia, and Asian cultures and traditions will have positive impacts.

Consistent with previous surveys, New Zealanders' views on immigration from Asia were more mixed. While the largest proportion (53 percent) was positive about the impacts of immigration on New Zealand, a quarter (25 percent) believed that immigration will have negative impacts, and a fifth (22 percent) thought that immigration will have neither positive nor negative impacts (Figure 3).

The importance of developing ties with Asia

The majority of New Zealanders believed that it was important for New Zealand to develop ties with Asia

A key objective for the Asia New Zealand Foundation is to develop more extensive and effective economic and cultural relationships in the Asian region by building and sustaining New Zealanders' knowledge and understanding of the countries, people, cultures and languages of Asia. The Foundation has put in place a variety of initiatives and programmes to achieve this objective.

It's clear from the results already shown in this section that in 2014 the majority of New Zealanders saw Asia as important to New Zealand's future, and appreciated that there are future economic benefits to a relationship with Asia. This sentiment was echoed further in the results displayed in Figure 4 - in 2014 84 percent of New Zealanders said that it was quite or very important that New Zealand developed cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia.

This view was not isolated to any particular demographic group, but was more prevalent among high-income households (95 percent with annual household incomes over \$120,000).

There was also very little variation by location, with the exception that Christchurch residents were more likely to say that it was important that New Zealand developed cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia (Figure 5).

Figure 3. Impact of a relationship with Asia

Percentage of New Zealanders who say each will have a positive impact on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years



91%

Exports from New Zealand to Asia



91%

Asian tourism in New Zealand



80%

The economic growth of the Asia region



79%

Free trade agreements between New Zealand and Asian countries



76%

Asia as a tourist destination for New Zealanders



66%

Imports from Asia to New Zealand



64%

Investment from Asia



62%

Asian cultures and traditions



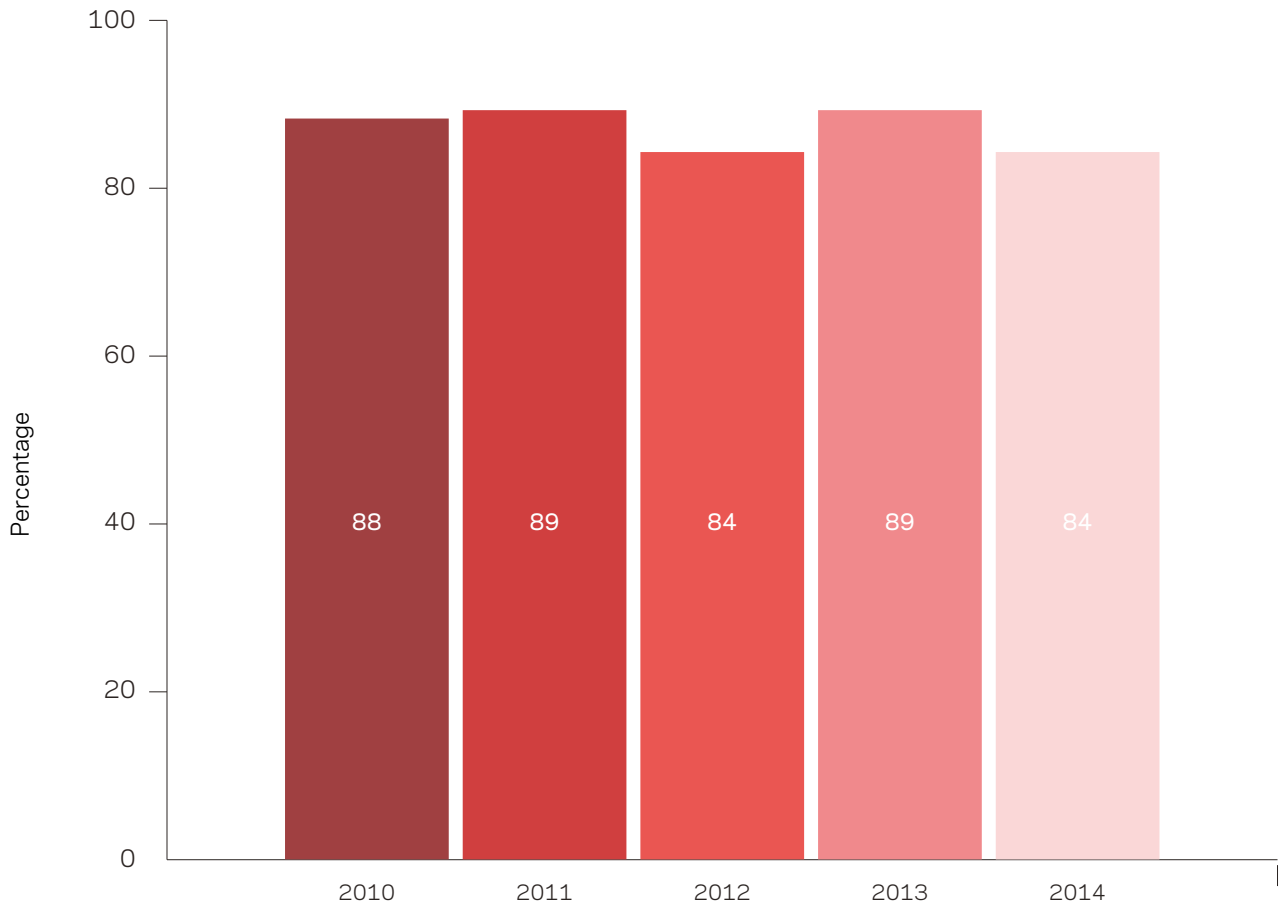
53%

Immigration from Asia to New Zealand

Source: Q2b Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said 'don't know' (n=956 to 996)

Figure 4. Importance of developing ties with Asia

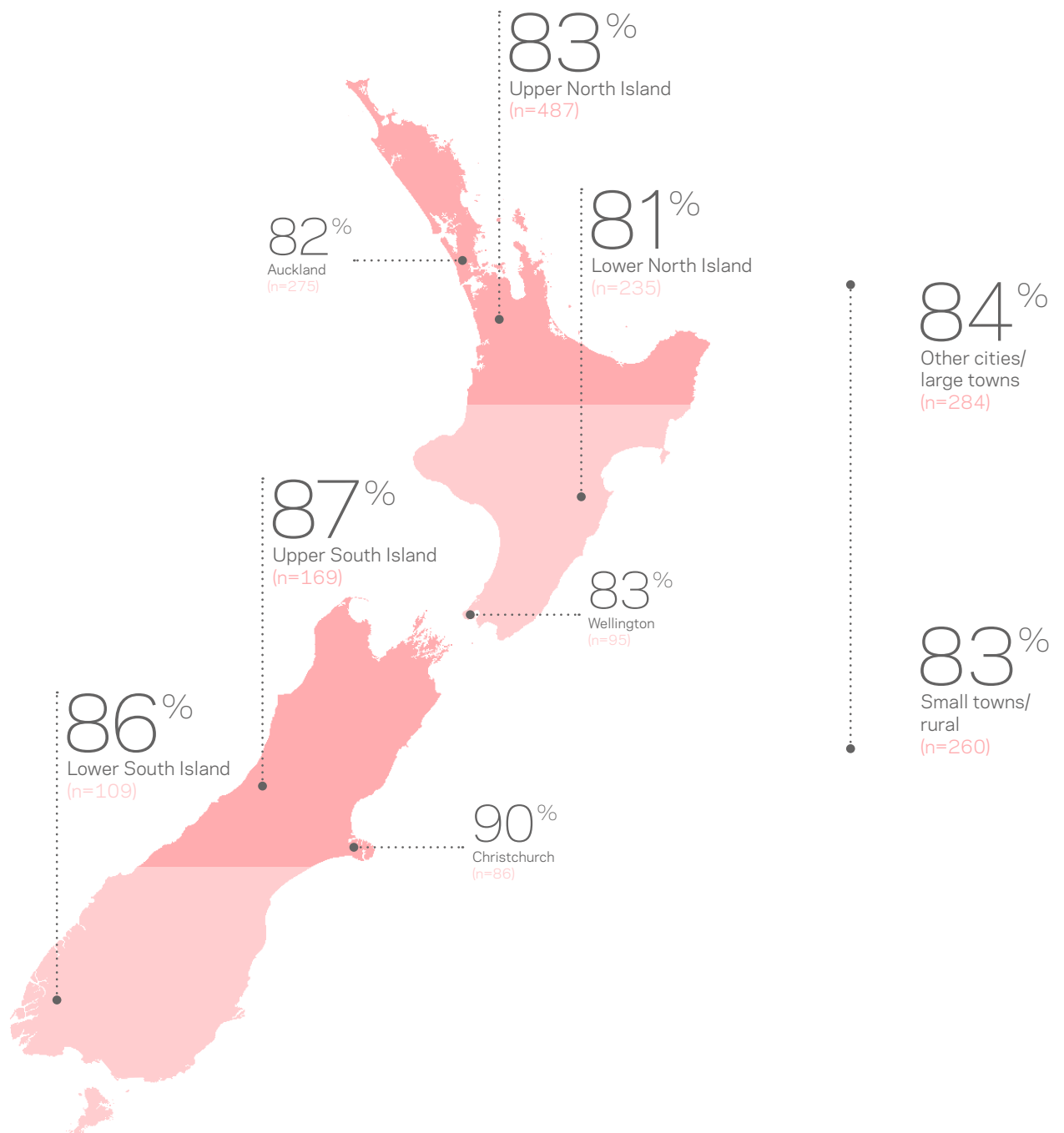
Percentage that think it is very or quite important for New Zealand to develop cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia



Source: Q2c Base: All New Zealanders (n 2010=1,000, n 2011=1,105, n 2012=1,000, n 2013=1,000, n 2014=1,000)

Figure 5. Importance of developing cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia by region

Percentage in each location that think it is very or quite important for New Zealand to develop cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia



Source: Q2c Base: Residents in each location (n=86 to 487).



Asia and the New Zealand economy

2

Asia and the New Zealand economy

This section of the report discusses New Zealanders' views on the importance of Asia to New Zealand's economy, and explores changes in New Zealanders' views since the 2013 survey.

While nearly every New Zealander recognised that a relationship with Asia offers economic benefits to New Zealand, they were less optimistic about these benefits in 2014, particularly when it came to the potential benefits of investment from Asia. Contributors' comments in our follow-up qualitative forum, and the survey results, suggest that these less positive views reflected concerns about Asian buyers driving increased house prices and Asian corporations investing in New Zealand assets.

KEY FINDINGS IN THIS SECTION:

- While the majority (91 percent) of New Zealanders agreed that exports from New Zealand to Asia will be beneficial to New Zealand in the future, this was slightly down on 2013 (from 94 percent).
- Small decreases were also evident among those agreeing on the potential benefits of free trade agreements between New Zealand and Asian countries (down from 84 to 79 percent), and imports from Asia to New Zealand (down from 70 to 66 percent).
- Fewer New Zealanders believed that investment from Asia will have positive impacts on New Zealand's economy (down from 74 to 64 percent).
- Fewer New Zealanders agreed that it was good for our economy that companies in Asia invested in New Zealand's businesses (down from 75 to 69 percent), and more agreed that New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia (up from 36 to 41 percent).
- Although still a minority, more New Zealanders agreed that Asian people were responsible for rising property prices (up from 33 to 39 percent). This was a view most likely to be held by Auckland residents (54 percent), although a greater number of Wellington residents shared this view than they did in 2013 (up from 16 to 30 percent).

Views on the economic benefits of a relationship with Asia

In 2014 New Zealanders appeared more cautious about the economic benefits of a relationship with Asia

The previous section showed that the overall importance of the Asian region to New Zealand remained unchanged between the 2013 and 2014 surveys, with eight in ten New Zealanders believing the region is important to New Zealand's future (Figure 1).

The findings in 2014, consistent with previous years, showed that the benefits of a relationship with Asia were viewed primarily in economic terms, with most New Zealanders viewing export market opportunities and Asian tourism as particularly beneficial to New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years.

Having said this, the findings from the survey showed that New Zealanders were *less* optimistic in 2014 than in 2013 about the economic benefits of a relationship with Asia. For example, although the vast majority (91 percent) agreed that *exports from New Zealand to Asia* will be beneficial to New Zealand, this was down slightly on 2013 (from 94 percent). As can be seen in the chart below, there were also small (but statistically significant) decreases in New Zealanders agreeing that *free trade agreements between New Zealand and Asian countries*, and *imports from Asia to New Zealand*, will be beneficial (although a majority still agreed that each will be beneficial) (Figure 6).

In addition, while most New Zealanders were positive in 2014 about the benefits of investment from Asia, they were less so than in 2013. Fewer believed that investment from Asia will have positive impacts on New Zealand's economy, and more believed that New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia (Figure 7). A subsequent detailed sub-group analysis revealed that this less positive view of the benefits of investment from Asia was fairly widespread, and not isolated to any particular location or population sub-group (Figure 8).

Why were New Zealanders less positive about the economic benefits of a relationship with Asia in 2014?

We explored views on the economy and investment from Asia in the qualitative forum. The contributors felt that a number of aspects about investment from Asia might have driven less optimistic views in 2014, with the two main areas of concern being:

1. Asian people buying houses in New Zealand
2. Asian companies investing in New Zealand assets.

Asian people buying houses in New Zealand

The qualitative forum contributors felt that the less optimistic views of investment from Asia could have stemmed from perceptions that Asian buyers were driving up house prices in areas such as Auckland. They were concerned that this made home ownership unaffordable for New Zealanders (particularly first home buyers), and felt this was unfair.

"When you look around and see how many Asian (particularly Chinese) people are buying houses when those who are here cannot, it is natural to feel bad that they are the ones who make the median prices go higher than before. What's worse, there is no strict policy for those who are making investments even if they are not in New Zealand. This leaves too many people renting forever because we cannot afford the investment that rich Asians are able to."

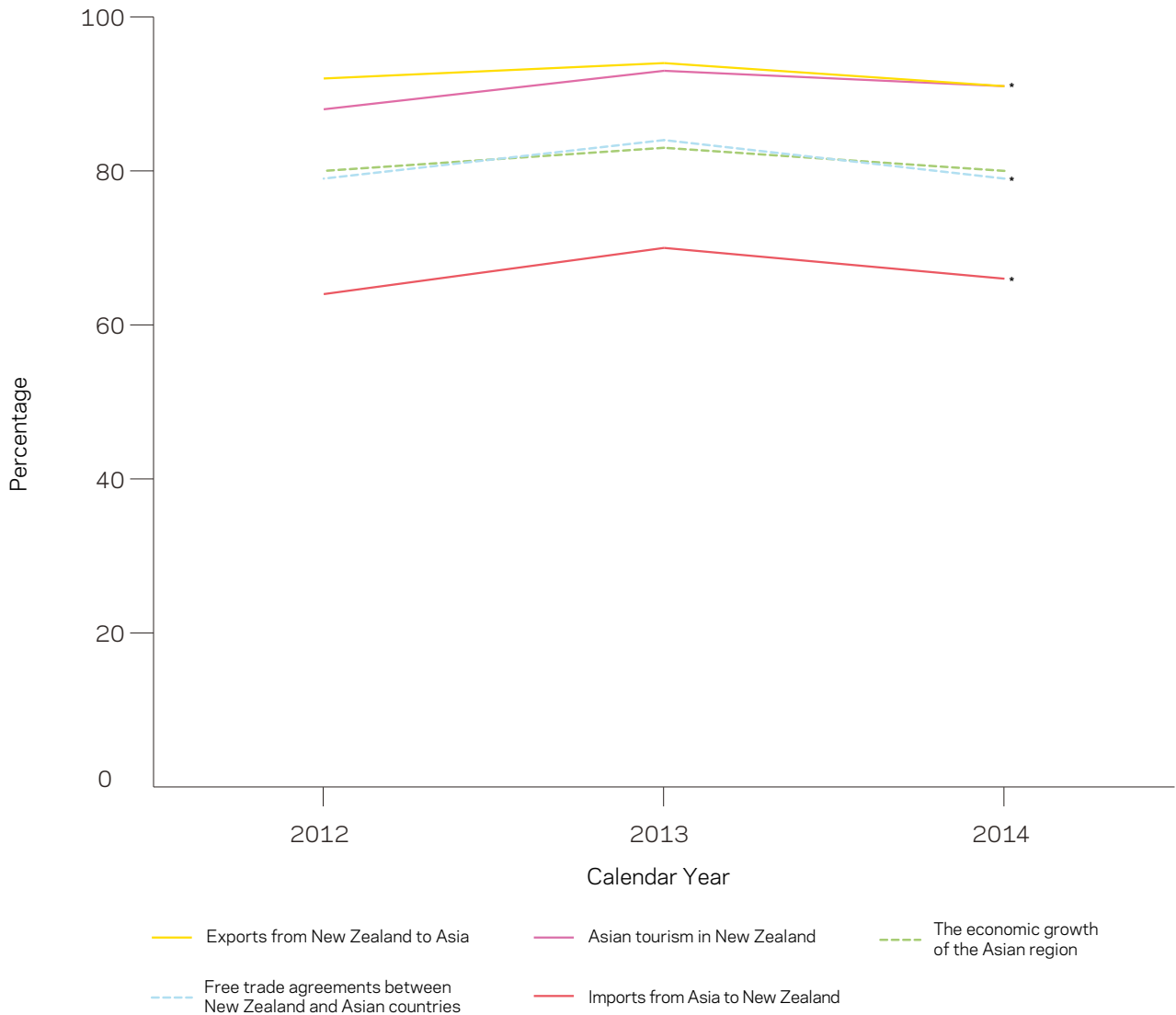
Female, 35 to 39, Pākehā, Auckland

"I think people worry or have a perception about Asian people having an excess amount of money to buy property and people who are doing all they can to put together a deposit end up losing auctions when the price is driven too high by Asian buyers."

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

Figure 6. Benefits of a relationship with Asia

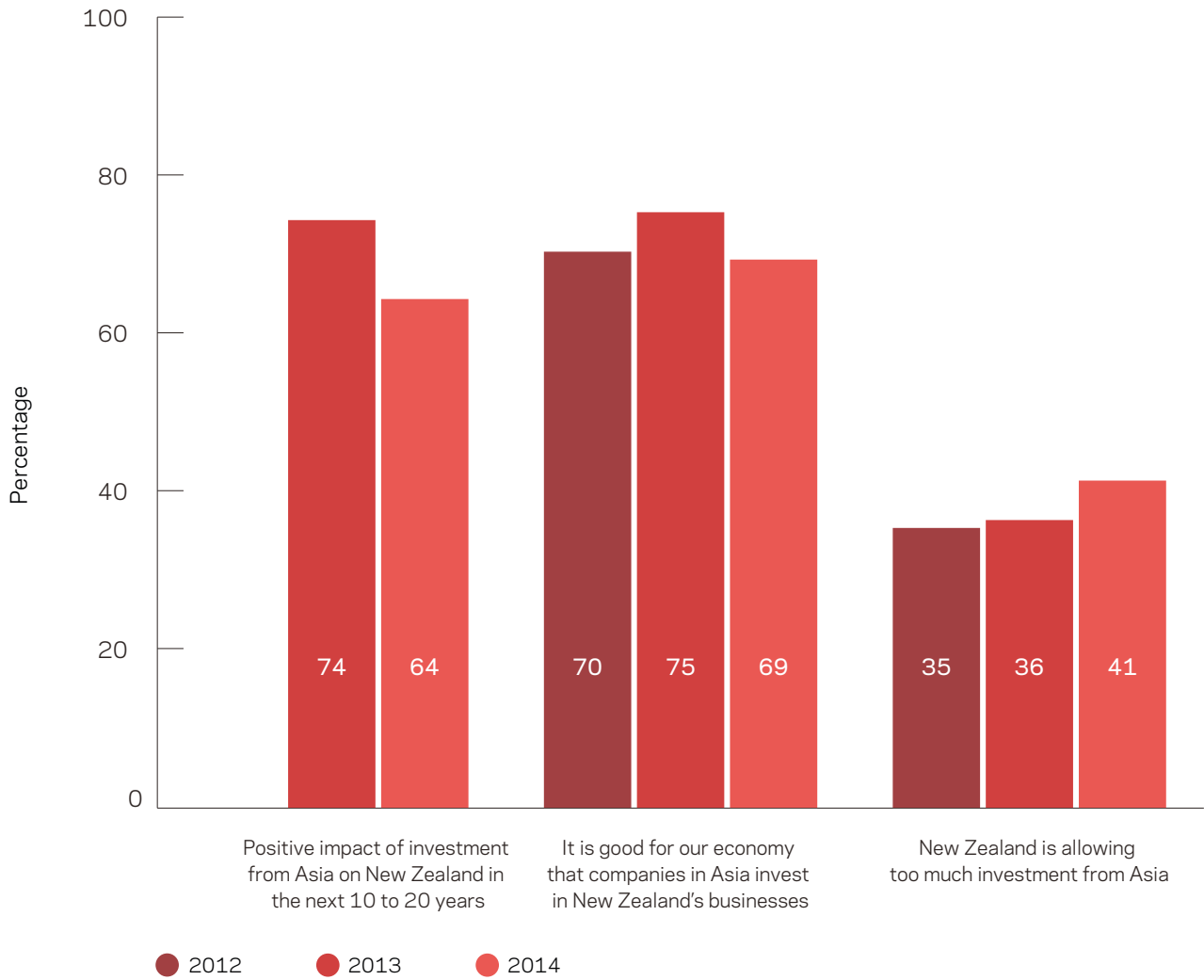
Percentage of New Zealanders who say each will have a positive impact on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years



Source: Q2b Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said 'don't know' (n=956 to 996)

Note: * There is less than 5 percent probability these differences are due to chance.

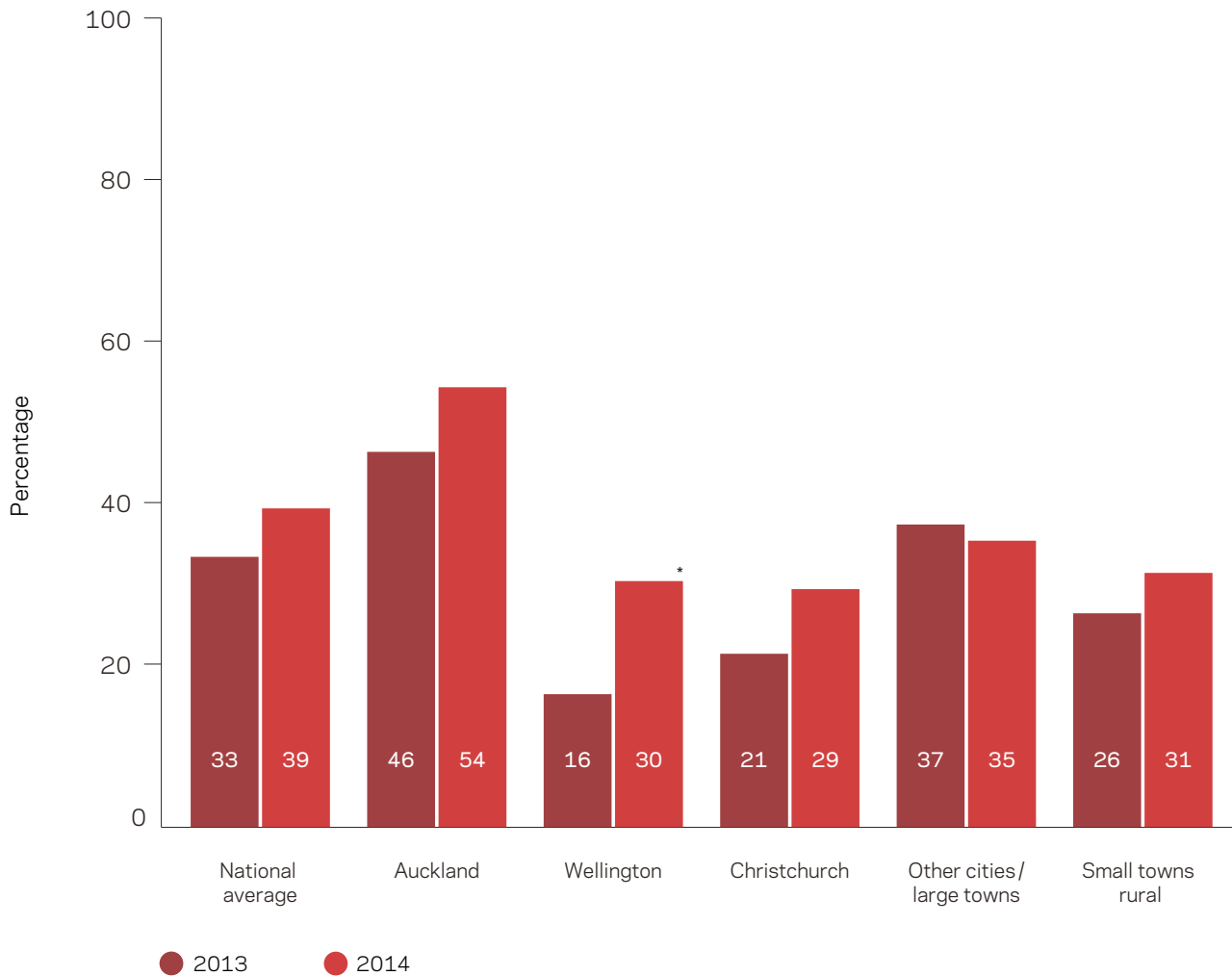
Figure 7. Views on investment from Asia



Source: Q2b, Q5a, Q5b Base: All New Zealanders Note: All differences between 2013 and 2014 are statistically significant

Figure 8. Are Asian people responsible for rising property prices

Percentage agreeing Asian people are responsible for rising property prices



Source: Q5b Base: All New Zealanders (n 2013=1,000, n 2014=1,000)

Note: *There is less than 5 percent probability these differences are due to chance

Contributors felt that it was particularly unfair when Asian people bought houses in New Zealand as investments, and remained overseas. One contributor commented that Asian people bought houses in New Zealand and left them empty, denying New Zealanders places to call home:

"I believe that Asian investment in housing has not helped house prices. Where I live there are a few homes that have been bought by Asians that just sit empty. They have someone do the upkeep of the home such as lawns and gardening [but] there is nothing inside the homes. I definitely think this is a way of keeping money out of their country by investing abroad."

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

The survey findings supported suggestions made by contributors that there was greater concern in 2014 that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices. In 2013 this view was most likely to be held by Auckland residents. While this was still true in 2014, results suggested that a greater number of Wellington residents shared this view (Figure 8). Public debate leading up to the 2014 General Election about foreign house buyers, including the possibility of a 'foreign buyers' register', may have contributed to the view that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices.²

In addition to revealing differences in views by location, the findings showed that those more likely than average (39 percent) to believe that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices:

- were aged 50 years or older (46 percent)
- identified with Asian ethnic groups (55 percent)
- had lived in New Zealand for less than six years (61 percent) or less than 11 years (58 percent)
- had annual household incomes of between \$30,000 and \$50,000 (51 percent).

Asian companies investing in New Zealand assets

Contributors to the qualitative forum felt that Asian companies investing in New Zealand and/or purchasing land had the potential to reduce New Zealanders' access to the economic benefits associated with asset ownership.

This concern related to funds going offshore and New Zealanders' sense of control over assets and land in New Zealand. Contributors felt that continued investment by foreign buyers might fuel greater concerns about Asian investment.

"I believe [that media reports] make people generally worry that more and more Asians are migrating and the thought of them buying assets and investing a lot in our country gives people the feeling they are taking over New Zealand and that we are losing control!"

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

"It's a matter of degree and maintaining a balance. The idea that businesses and property might remain predominantly New Zealand-owned is probably long gone. But, in general, people like to keep some sense of sovereignty. There is a perception that Asian (and other off-shore) investors take their profits off-shore and don't put them back into the New Zealand economy or community."

Female, 60 to 69, Pākehā, non-main centre north of Auckland

"When it comes to Asian companies investing, I believe New Zealanders want these companies to be Kiwi-owned so we still have control over what these companies do in New Zealand."

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

"The down side is they are pushing up house and farm prices. We can't buy land in China so there is no way they should be buying land in New Zealand."

Male, 50 to 59, Pākehā, non-main centre closest to Dunedin

² For example, see: 'Strong support for idea of foreign home buyer register - poll' (26 May 2014), <http://tvnz.co.nz/politics-news/strong-support-idea-foreign-home-buyer-register-poll-5982166>; 'Labour plans to restrict foreign buyers in housing market' (28 July 2014), http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10904503; and 'Nats looked at banning overseas buyers' (12 April 2014), <http://www.3news.co.nz/politics/nats-looked-at-banning-overseas-buyers-2014041216>.

In addition to commenting on a sense of loss of ownership, some contributors perceived that companies from Asia had specific negative qualities. These were:

- employing only Asian people, thus denying New Zealanders employment
- having unknown or questionable business practices
- having values that did not align with those of New Zealanders (for example, environmental concerns)
- links to Chinese or Asian government bureaucratic and political leanings.

One contributor felt that New Zealanders were less optimistic about Asian companies investing in New Zealand because Asian people employed other Asian people, and this created competition with non-Asian New Zealanders for employment:

"I think that they are less positive about Asian companies investing in New Zealand because of the tendency of Asians to hire fellow Asians as well. In effect, the jobs that could have been for the locals go to Asians. Chinese shops are also able to give lower prices since they are importing the products for a very low price, that's why the New Zealand companies who can't keep up with the low price offer will naturally feel ill towards the competition."

Female, 35 to 39, Pākehā, Auckland

Another contributor commented on the cultural differences between New Zealanders' values and those of companies from Asia:

"I think the worry about Asian companies is worries about the culture of the parent company not gelling with New Zealand values. It's similar to the worries about all multi-nationals, that they will minimise tax paid in New Zealand, that they will strip the assets of the company, that they will close local production, that they will dominate local competitors through their size, that they will not respect New Zealand's environmental issues."

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Wellington

A third contributor commented on concerns about political connections between Asian governments and Asian companies:

"Also, I wonder if it is because some New Zealanders have the impression that Asian companies are really all owned by their Governments, which can have communist leaders or leanings – if you know what I mean."

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Kāpiti

The impact of the Fonterra botulism scare in 2013, and what that meant for the 2014 findings

Finally, in addition to increased concerns about rising house prices and investment from Asia, it's possible that the economic benefits of a relationship with Asia were more visible to the public in 2013, due to extensive media coverage of the Fonterra botulism scare.

In 2013, New Zealanders' recall of Asia-related business and economic issues nearly doubled that in the previous year's survey, with the Fonterra botulism scare dwarfing any other issue at the time. This coverage likely heightened New Zealanders' awareness of Asia as a significant export market and major contributor to New Zealand's economic growth.

In 2014, while New Zealanders' recall of Asia-related business and economic issues still featured strongly, the focus appeared to shift more internally to housing issues, including reports of Asian land and property purchases, and increasing house prices (Figure 9).³

In essence, the decrease in the perceived economic benefits of a relationship with Asia in 2014 may have been exaggerated by the increase observed from 2012 to 2013.

³ In addition, in 2014 there was an increase in New Zealanders' recall of media coverage about conflicts and instabilities in Asia, and national and local Asia-related events. Comments about conflicts and political instabilities focused mainly on pro-democracy protests in Hong Kong, and political and military issues relating to North Korea. New Zealanders' recall of coverage of local and national Asia-related events focused mainly on cultural events and festivals (eg, Diwali and the Lantern Festival). These are discussed in a later section of the report.

Figure 9. Recall of media in the previous three months

What people have seen, heard or read about Asia-related events, issues or people in the previous three months

Overall themes

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

33% **63%** **26%**
2012 2013 2014

CRIME RELATED ISSUES OR EVENTS

9% **3%** **6%**
2012 2013 2014

LOCAL OR NATIONAL EVENTS

5% **3%** **14%**
2012 2013 2014

CONFLICTS OR POLITICAL INSTABILITIES

12% **11%** **26%**
2012 2013 2014

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

6% **6%** **10%**
2012 2013 2014

NATURAL DISASTERS

11% **8%** **5%**
2012 2013 2014

Source: Q3c

Base: Those who recall seeing, hearing, or reading something about Asia in the previous three months (n 2012=669, n 2013=723, n 2014=631)

Figure 9 cont. Recall of media in the previous three months

What people have seen, heard or read about Asia-related events, issues or people in the previous three months

Overall themes

**MISCELLANEOUS
NEGATIVE
COMMENTS**

4% **2%** **4%**
2012 2013 2014

**MAJOR
INTERNATIONAL
EVENTS**

1% **—** **—**
2012 2013 2014

**ENVIRONMENTAL
ISSUES**

1% **2%** **1%**
2012 2013 2014

**TV
DOCUMENTARIES**

3% **2%** **2%**
2012 2013 2014

MISCELLANEOUS

44% **34%** **39%**
2012 2013 2014

**NONE/
DON'T KNOW**

9% **7%** **6%**
2012 2013 2014

Source: Q3c

Base: Those who recall seeing, hearing, or reading something about Asia in the previous three months (n 2012=669, n 2013=723, n 2014=631)

Figure 9 cont. Recall of media in the previous three months

What people have seen, heard or read about Asia-related events, issues or people in the previous three months

Business and economic issues
(mentioned by 2% or more)

**HOUSING SHORTAGE,
ASIANS BUYING
HOUSES/INCREASING
HOUSE PRICES**

– **7%** **7%**
2012 2013 2014

**ASIANS WANTING
TO BUY UP
NEW ZEALAND LAND**

2% **2%** **5%**
2012 2013 2014

**FREE TRADE AGREEMENT/
BUSINESS RELATIONSHIP
WITH CHINA/INDIA**

11% **6%** **5%**
2012 2013 2014

**FINANCIAL MARKET/
ECONOMIC ISSUES/
CURRENCIES**

6% **2%** **5%**
2012 2013 2014

Source: Q3c

Base: Those who recall seeing, hearing, or reading something about Asia in the previous three months (n 2012=669, n 2013=723, n 2014=631)

Figure 9 cont. Recall of media in the previous three months

What people have seen, heard or read about Asia-related events, issues or people in the previous three months

Business and economic issues
(mentioned by 2% or more)

**2013 FONTERRA ISSUE –
MILK POWDER PROBLEM/
BOTULISM SCARE**

**FOREIGN INVESTMENT/
OWNERSHIP IN
NEW ZEALAND**

– **41%** **2%**
2012 2013 2014

– – **2%**
2012 2013 2014

**MISCELLANEOUS
FONTERRA
ISSUES**

– – **2%**
2012 2013 2014

Source: Q3c

Base: Those who recall seeing, hearing, or reading something about Asia in the previous three months (n 2012=669, n 2013=723, n 2014=631)



New Zealanders' views of people from Asia

New Zealanders' views of people from Asia

This section of the report looks at New Zealanders' perceptions of people from Asia.

Despite deepening concerns about investment from Asia and the influence of Asian buyers on the housing market, a number of the 2014 survey findings suggested that New Zealanders felt more positive towards or connected with people from Asia than in previous surveys. These findings included an increased sense of involvement with Asian people and cultures in 2014, an increased sense of integration between Asian and non-Asian New Zealanders, and small increases in warmth felt towards people from some Asian countries.

Contributors in our follow-up qualitative forum attributed these more positive feelings to a greater integration of migrants with New Zealand community life, an increased visibility of Asian cultural events and celebrations, and media stories generating public sympathy, including the Malaysia Airlines tragedies and crimes committed against Asian people in New Zealand.

KEY FINDINGS IN THIS SECTION:

- For the first time in five years, the survey showed a significant increase in New Zealanders saying they had 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' to do with Asian peoples and cultures (up from 44 to 50 percent).
- Fewer New Zealanders agreed that Asian people did not mix well with New Zealanders (down from 34 to 28 percent).
- Between 2011 and 2013 New Zealanders' attitudes cooled towards people from Asia. This 'cooling off' appeared to cease in 2014, with small increases in warmth evident, particularly towards people from India and South Korea.

- Among those who recalled media coverage relating to Asia, 13 percent mentioned coverage of cultural events and festivals, such as Diwali, the Lantern Festival and Chinese New Year. This was a substantial increase on 2013, when just 3 percent mentioned media coverage of cultural events and festivals.

More positivity towards Asian people in 2014

In 2014 New Zealanders appeared to feel more positive towards and connected with people from Asia

Despite deepening concerns about investment from Asia and the influence of Asian buyers on the housing market, a number of the 2014 survey findings suggested that New Zealanders felt more positive towards or connected with people from Asia. Three key findings supported this:

1. An increased sense of involvement with Asian people and cultures in 2014

For more than 15 years the Foundation has measured New Zealanders' perceptions of their involvement with Asian peoples and cultures.⁴

- In the six years from 1998 to 2009 we observed a steady increase in perceived involvement with Asian people and cultures. This increase was attributed to the increased number of Asian people living in New Zealand.⁵
- Since 2009, however, findings have suggested a growing sense of 'disconnectedness' with Asian people in New Zealand, with small year-on-year decreases in perceived involvement. Comments from respondents have implied that this has been due at least partly to concerns about Asian migration, New Zealand's level of unemployment,

4 In the views of the researchers who conduct this survey, this question is an attitudinal measure of how involved people feel they are with Asian people and cultures. It is not designed as a measure of frequency of contact with people from Asia.

5 Between 1996 and 2006, the estimated proportion of New Zealand residents identifying with an Asian ethnic group doubled, in both Auckland and New Zealand as a whole. See Statistics New Zealand dataset: *Estimated resident population (ERP), subnational population by ethnic group, age, and sex, at 30 June 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2013*, <http://nzdotstat.stats.govt.nz/wbos/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=TABLECODE7512>.

and competition for jobs following New Zealand's economic recession.

- In 2014, for the first time in five years, the survey showed a significant *increase* in New Zealanders saying they had 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' to do with Asian peoples and cultures. Further analysis shows that this increase was particularly evident in Auckland (up from 53 percent in 2013 to 61 percent in 2014) and in New Zealand's small towns and rural areas (up from 29 percent to 41 percent)(Figure 10).⁶

2. An increased sense of integration between Asian and non-Asian New Zealanders in 2014

- For the past six years the Foundation has measured agreement and disagreement with the statement: *Asian people do not mix well with New Zealanders*. The 2014 findings showed a significant decrease in New Zealanders agreeing with this statement.⁷ Half of New Zealanders disagreed in 2014 (Figure 11).

3. Small increases in warmth felt towards people from some Asian countries

- Each year we ask New Zealanders about their feelings towards people from China, India, Japan, South Korea and, starting in 2013, South East Asia. New Zealanders are asked to rate their feelings towards people from each country, using a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 meaning they feel very warm and favourable, and 0 meaning they feel very cold and unfavourable (Figure 12).
- Between 2011 and 2013 New Zealanders cooled towards people from Asia. Respondents' reasons for this included negative representations of Asia and Asian people by the media, and economic concerns, including about competition in the housing and job markets. This 'cooling off' appeared to cease in 2014, with small increases in warmth evident, particularly towards people from India and South Korea⁸ (Figure 12).

- Increases in warmth towards Asia also showed in a 2014 Australian survey – the 10th annual Lowy Institute Poll, in which Australian sentiments warmed by six points towards China, two points towards India and two points towards Japan.⁹ A comparison of both surveys showed that New Zealanders felt warmer than Australians towards people from Asia in 2014, which is consistent with the results from previous years' surveys (Figure 13).

Why did New Zealanders feel more positive towards Asian people in 2014?

During the qualitative forum we gauged New Zealanders' views on the survey results. We also explored the reasons for New Zealanders feeling *more positive* towards Asian people, when at the same time they were *less positive* towards investment from Asia and had concerns about Asian buyers' influence on the housing market.

Contributors to the qualitative forum felt that three factors had helped to produce more positive feelings towards and connections with people from Asia in 2014:

1. Greater integration of migrants into New Zealand community life
2. Increased visibility of Asian cultural events and celebrations
3. The influence of media stories.

Greater integration of migrants into New Zealand community life

The contributors commented that in the previous year (and earlier) Asian people had become more visible in their own lives. They had Asian neighbours, colleagues and health care professionals. These personal connections had become more common and every-day, so they felt that Asians were 'one of them' in the community.

6 These significant increases were present both before and after we excluded Asian New Zealanders from the 2013 and 2014 samples.

7 This change was present both before and after we excluded Asian New Zealanders from the 2013 and 2014 samples.

8 Increases in warmth towards people from these two countries were statistically significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

9 This was a nationally representative survey of 1,150 Australian adults conducted by mobile and fixed-line telephone between 12 and 27 February 2014; <http://www.lowyinstitute.org/publications/lowy-institute-poll-2014>.

"My best friend and bridesmaid is Asian, my children and I do not treat her or her children any differently than we would any other people. We go to the Lantern Festival with them, we enjoy going to their house to eat yummy Chinese food. Just as we share our way of life with them they share theirs with us!"

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

"I think there has been more contact by New Zealanders with the Asian community and also the Asian people are out in the community more and putting themselves forward for roles in their local councils and joining in sports clubs."

Female, 60 to 69, Pākehā, Auckland

"I think we are impressed with how hard working Asian people are and mostly they are very honest. Now that we are more exposed to Asians in our community we no longer see them as the threat that they may have been once perceived as. Usually they are more polite than the average Kiwi, which is a characteristic that is appreciated. They tend not to complain about the situation they find themselves in. They show very strong family ties which is admired. They value education much more than the average Kiwi."

Male, 60 to 69, Pākehā, Wellington

Increased visibility of Asian cultural events and celebrations

In addition to commenting on personal connections with Asian people, contributors to the forum mentioned attending the Diwali and Lantern Festivals, and Chinese New Year, which are held in a number of locations. These celebrations are positive and joyful experiences for the Asian cultures concerned and New Zealanders felt that celebrating them with Asian people was a way of understanding and engaging with these cultures.

"Asian celebrations have become a part of the Auckland social calendar, such as Diwali and Chinese Lantern Festivals, they also play a very important role in the Auckland Santa Parade. Over the past year these celebrations have had more media coverage and have been advertised more, so a lot of people go along to have a look and join in the celebrations and from there I believe they get an appreciation of Asian people and their culture!"

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

The survey results supported comments during the qualitative forum that cultural events and festivals may have influenced people's perceptions in 2014.

Among those who recalled media coverage relating to Asia, 13 percent mentioned coverage of cultural events and festivals, such as Diwali, the Lantern Festival and Chinese New Year. This was a substantial increase since 2013, when just 3 percent mentioned media coverage of cultural events and festivals (Figure 9).

This increase was particularly strong in:

- Auckland (up from 6 percent to 18 percent of those who recalled media coverage)
- provincial cities and large towns (up from 2 percent to 12 percent of those who recalled media coverage)
- small towns and rural areas (up from 1 percent to 11 percent of those who recalled media coverage).

The influence of media stories

Contributors also believed that media coverage had influenced feelings of connectedness with Asian people. The topics themselves had not always been positive, with examples given including incidences of crime against Asian people in New Zealand, and the Malaysia Airlines tragedies. However, the stories' sympathetic angles appear to have elicited sympathy for Asian peoples. One respondent commented that tragedies could help people to see past ethnic and cultural differences.

"The joint tragedies of MH370 and MH17 were both felt in New Zealand and Asia and elsewhere, and I'd suggest that events like this make us realise that differences of nationalities are insignificant in some situations, and perhaps they increased sympathy or understanding among New Zealanders."

Male, 35 to 39, other ethnic group, Auckland

"There have been some terrible crimes committed against Asian people lately as well and I think that most New Zealanders loathe that sort of behaviour."

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Kāpiti

Contributors to the forum also considered that negative depictions of other (non-Asian) cultures and religious groups in the media may have contributed to New Zealanders' increase in warmth towards Asian people. One suggested that Asian people were perceived as being 'less extreme' or an unlikely source of terrorism

threats to New Zealand. That is, negative media coverage of non-Asian ethnic groups may have produced favourable comparisons with Asian people.

“There has been a lot more negative press centred around Muslim or Arab countries/cultures with the activities happening there which would leave more positive feelings toward seemingly more ‘peaceful’ cultures. Unfortunately people can’t always separate Muslim beliefs/practices from the terrorist activities and atrocities overseas in their minds.”

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Dunedin

In support of comments made about media coverage during the qualitative forum, the survey results showed that Asia-related media were, on balance, seen to be fairly neutral leading up to the 2014 survey (Figure 14). This contrasted with the 2013 survey, when they had a more negative tone.

Contrasting changes in views towards Asian investment and Asian people

Although New Zealanders appeared more positive towards and connected with *people* from Asia in 2014, the findings from the survey indicated that people felt less optimistic about the benefits to New Zealand of an *economic relationship* with Asia (although the majority remained positive). We asked people in the qualitative forum to consider why this might be so.

This was a complex question for contributors, and the discussion generally reiterated the themes already expressed about investment from Asia and positivity towards Asian people.

It appears that the contrasting changes in views about Asian investment and Asian people stemmed partly from New Zealanders’ greater sense of connection with Asian people (discussed directly above), but also an existing sense of concern for perceived Asian economic values. That is, contributors expressed that while they could relate to *individual* Asian people, they could also be wary of Asian companies’ *values and motives* for investing in New Zealand (as discussed in the previous section).

One contributor’s comment captured this sentiment:

“I think as people get to know local Asian people they feel more warmth... I think the worry about Asian companies is worries about the culture of the parent

company not gelling with New Zealand values.”

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Wellington

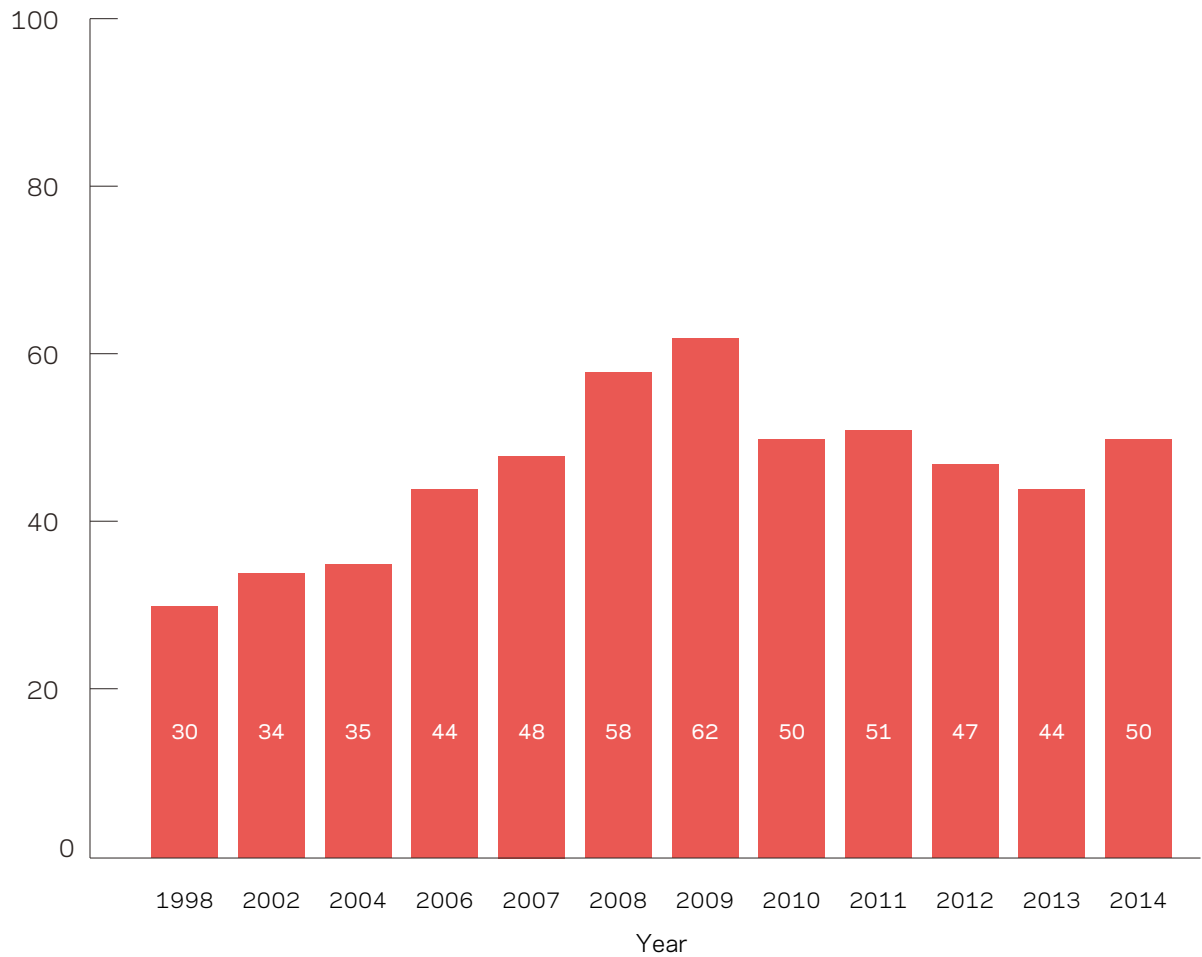
Another contributor felt that New Zealanders liked to support ‘the individual’, and that large corporations (from any country) could be considered ‘faceless’. So while New Zealanders could be supportive of people and small businesses, they were generally more suspicious of large corporations.

“I think it is because New Zealanders are very much supporters of individuals and we like to be friendly to people, but we are naturally suspicious of large overseas companies. We like to support individuals and small companies, but when there are large companies, wherever they are from, we just see faceless corporations taking advantage of our country.”

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Wellington

Figure 10. Involvement with Asian peoples or cultures

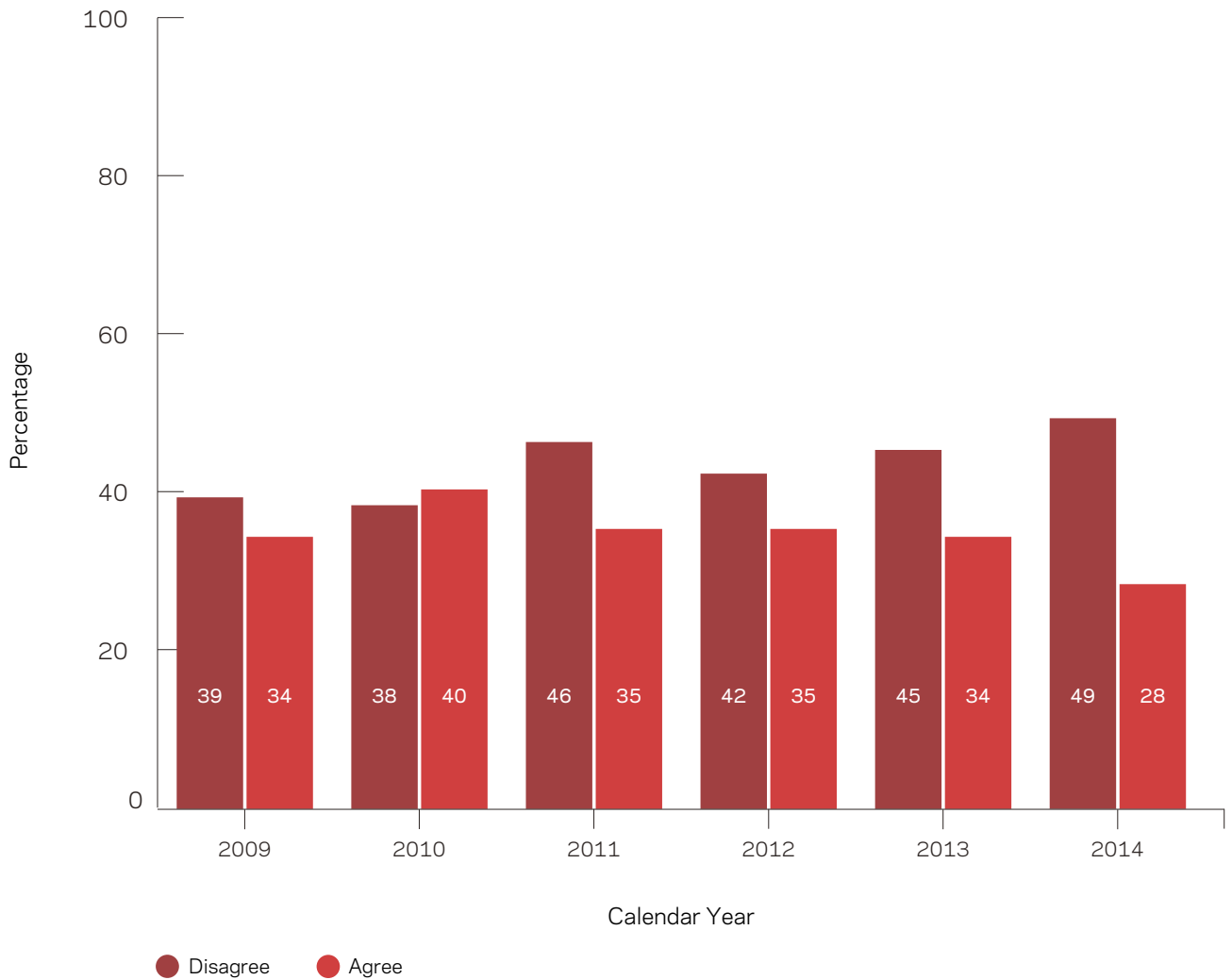
Percentage who have 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' to do with Asian peoples or cultures



Source: Q4a Base: All New Zealanders (n= approx. 1,000 per year)

Figure 11. Perceived cultural integration

Percentage who agree and disagree that Asian people do not mix well with New Zealanders

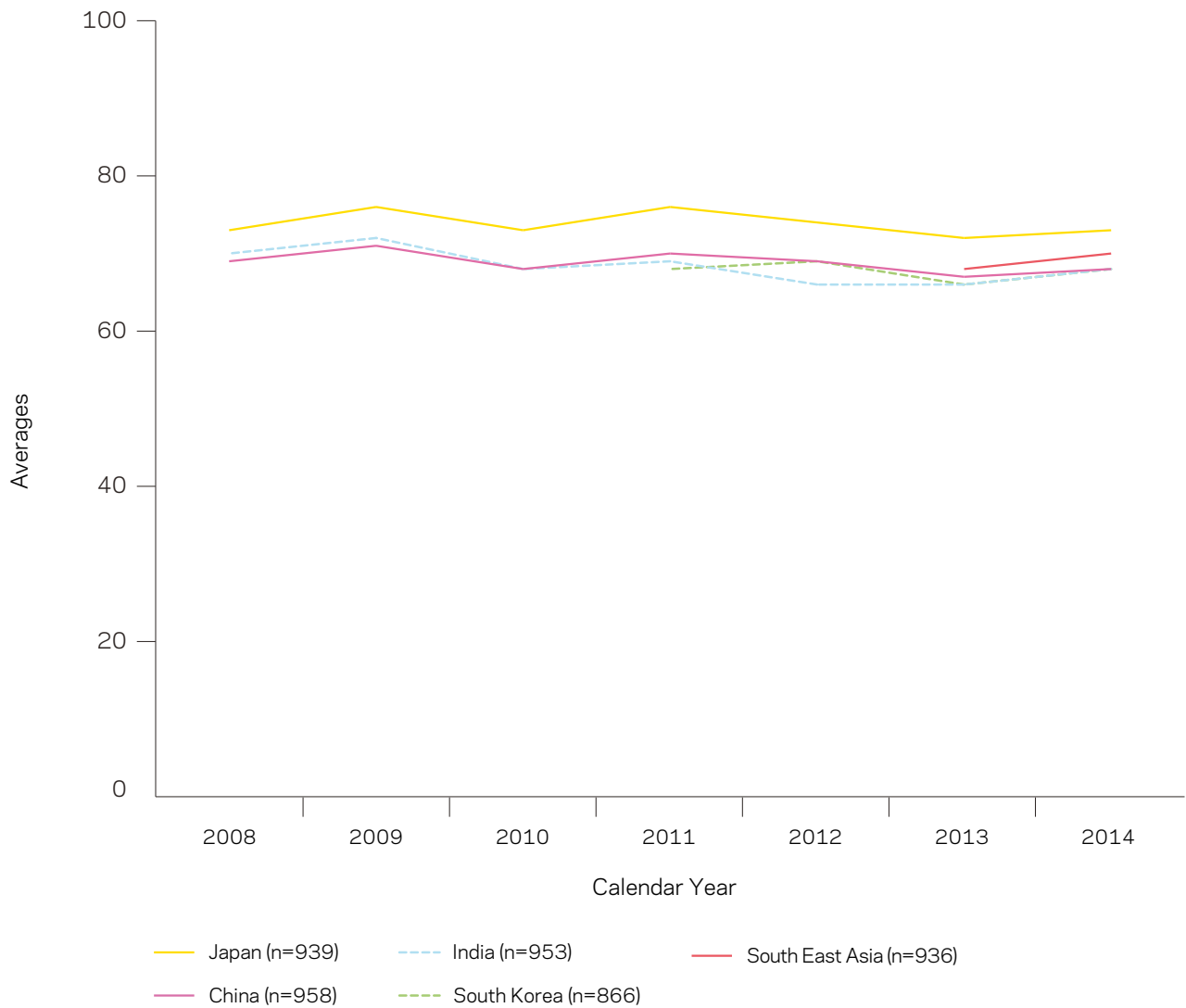


Source: Q5b Base: All New Zealanders (n= approx. 1,000 per year)

Note: *Don't know and neutral responses are included in the base, but not shown on the chart.

Figure 12. Personal feelings of warmth toward people from Asia

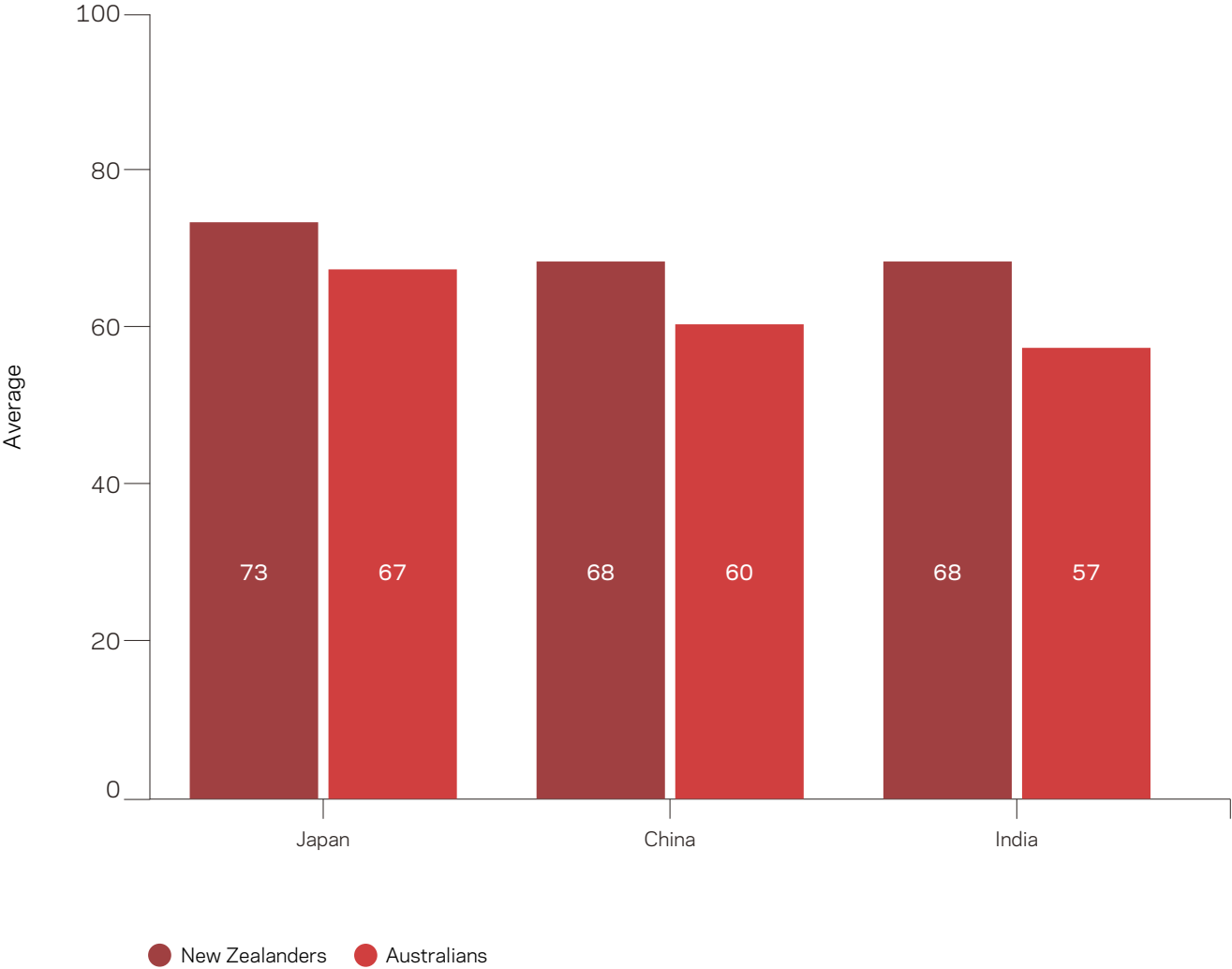
Average warmth felt by New Zealanders



Source: Q1b Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said 'don't know' or refused.

Figure 13. New Zealanders' and Australians' personal feelings of warmth toward people from Asia

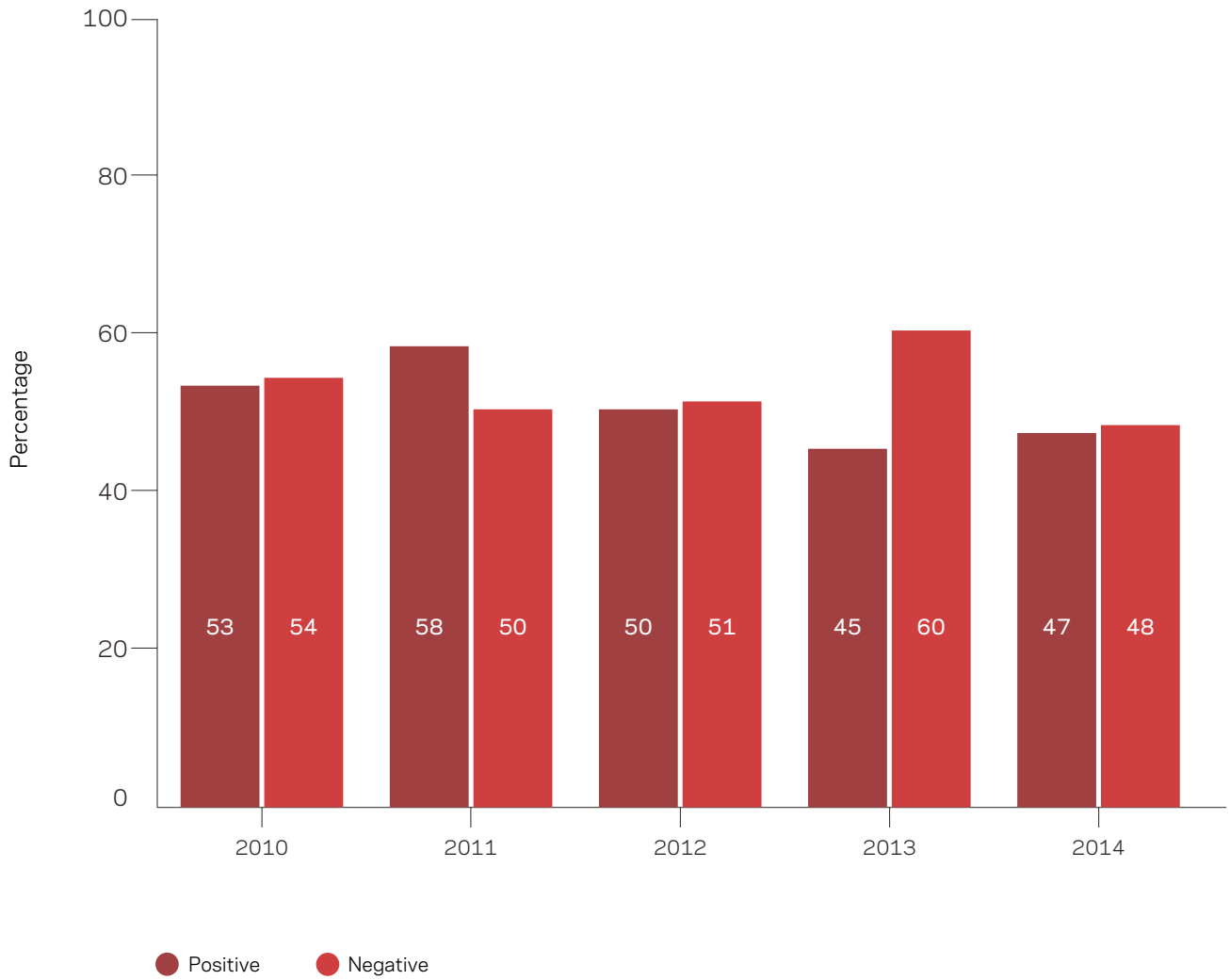
Average warmth felt by New Zealanders and Australians in 2014



Source: Q1b (NZ results) and Lowy Institute Poll (Australian results)
Base: All respondents, excluding those who said don't know or refused.

Figure 14. Asia in the media

Percentage seen, heard, or read anything positive or negative about Asia-related events, issues or people in the last three months



Source: Q3a and Q3b Base: All New Zealanders (n 2010=1000, n 2011=1,105, n 2012=1,000, n 2013=1,000, n 2014=1,000)



New Zealanders' views on school children learning a non-English language

New Zealanders' views on school children learning a non-English language

This section of the report summarises the findings relating to language learning.

Eight in ten New Zealanders thought that school children in this country should learn a language other than English. Chinese was widely regarded as the language children should learn, followed by Māori. There was a considerable gap between the survey results and the foreign languages most commonly taught in New Zealand secondary schools.

KEY FINDINGS IN THIS SECTION:

- Eight in ten New Zealanders (83 percent) thought that school children should learn a language other than English.
- There was a considerable gap between the languages that were seen as the most valuable to learn and those that are widely taught in New Zealand schools. Chinese was most commonly named as the foreign language that school children should learn, but nearly five times as many secondary school students learn French than Chinese.
- Contributors to the qualitative forum believed that learning Chinese could strength cultural and economic ties with Asia. This was typically discussed in relation to Asia's size and economic growth.

Should New Zealand school children learn a language other than English?

Eight in ten New Zealanders thought that school children should learn a language other than English

In 2014 eight in ten New Zealanders (83 percent) thought that school children in this country should learn a language other than English.

Among those who thought that learning a non-English language was worthwhile, Chinese was most commonly named as the language school children should learn. This was followed by Māori, with Japanese, French, Spanish and German some way behind (Figure 15).

There was a considerable gap between the survey results and the languages most commonly taught in New Zealand secondary schools. The latest statistics published by the Ministry of Education¹⁰ show that French is still the most commonly taught foreign language in New Zealand secondary schools, with 22,478 students enrolled. Although the number of secondary students learning Chinese has increased by close to 150 percent in the past two years, Chinese is still the fourth most common language taught, with just 4,218 enrolments (nearly five times as many secondary students learn French).

Contributors to the qualitative forum were asked to comment on why it might be important for New Zealand school children to learn either the Māori or Chinese language.

¹⁰ Please see Secondary Subjects by Student Gender & Year Level 1996-2014, available at http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/_data/assets/excel_doc/0007/144187/Secondary-Subjects-1996-2014.xls.

Māori strengthens New Zealand's cultural identity

The main reasons given for learning Māori related to how important the Māori culture is to New Zealand as a nation. Contributors who believed that New Zealand school children should learn Māori felt that the language was a strong and unique expression of our culture that should be preserved.

"Māori is very important for us in New Zealand to try to ensure the culture that is unique to this country does not become extinct. Te reo and the traditions and knowledge are of as much importance, in my opinion, in the world today as any endangered species."

Female, 60 to 69, Pākehā, Dunedin

"I believe that language is an essential part of our culture, therefore as long as Māori language is present, the deep roots of New Zealand culture remain."

Female, 30 to 34, other ethnic group, Auckland

One Māori contributor felt that learning Māori offered more benefits than learning Chinese. Chinese was seen as beneficial mainly for business interactions, whereas te reo Māori was seen as beneficial on cultural and spiritual levels:

"I don't agree that Chinese is a good language for children to learn... Te reo Māori is a rich language. By learning Māori kids are also learning tikanga and te ao Māori concepts which are, when followed, good guides in life. Learning this language offers more than the ability to communicate verbally. It offers a way of life, a perspective on life that is positive and spiritual. The benefits of learning te reo Māori are holistic. Maybe Chinese language has this richness too? However I would say the only benefit of kids learning Chinese is so that we can do better business."

Female, 40 to 49, Māori, Dunedin

Chinese helps New Zealand to form connections with Asia

The main reasons given for learning Chinese related to strengthening economic and cultural connections to Asia.

Economic ties

Contributors said that learning Chinese offered economic benefits in two main areas: Asian tourism in New Zealand, and business interactions and/or career opportunities for New Zealanders. They tended to discuss the economic benefits within the context of Asia's increasing importance to New Zealand as a trading partner.

"With Chinese people being the largest population on the Earth, learning their language will be a big advantage to anyone because it gives a person the ability to interact with a great number of people, in New Zealand or somewhere else. Business-wise, Chinese people are more at ease discussing in their language so it helps if you can speak with them in their native tongue."

Female, 30 to 34, other ethnic group, Auckland

"Chinese would be a good language for children to learn as it may benefit them in the future as far as employment goes, as Asia is becoming one of our major trading partners."

Female, 60 to 69, Pākehā, Auckland

"China is a big potential market, as well as a source of tourists. It would be good if we could converse with these people."

Male, 60 to 69, Pākehā, Dunedin

"I think Chinese is a good language to learn because I think that our biggest trading partner of the future will be China. If my child is able to learn a language that will improve their future prospects then it is worth doing. It means that they may be able to work here in New Zealand with companies who invest here or it could be that they work in China with New Zealand companies that have set up their businesses over in China."

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, non-urban centre, lower North Island

Cultural connections

Contributors felt that learning Chinese strengthened an understanding of Asian cultures and promoted mutual co-operation. They tended to discuss the benefits of cultural connections within the context of Asia's size and economic influence globally.

"I think it is because Asia has such a large influence on New Zealand and also globally now. More Asian people are coming to live in New Zealand and it is advantageous to at least have more knowledge of Chinese (whether it is Mandarin or Cantonese) as more and more Asian influences are seen in New Zealand."

Female, 40 to 49, Pākehā, Wellington

“Our world is a multicultural place and due to there being a huge population of Asians I think we need to know their languages as they need to know ours (English) so we will have effective ways of communicating. It will enable us all to be able to live in harmony with each other as there will be ways of communicating. At this time people become frustrated with not being able to converse with many Asians.”

Female, 30 to 34, Pākehā, Auckland

Those more likely to mention that Māori was a language that school children should learn were:

- Māori (74 percent, compared with 32 percent of non-Māori)
- women (43 percent, compared with 31 percent of men)
- under 60 years of age (40 percent, compared with 28 percent who were older).

Reasons for not learning Chinese

A small number of contributors in the qualitative forum were resistant to New Zealand school children learning Chinese. This stemmed from their belief that Chinese migrants to New Zealand should learn English, rather than New Zealanders learn their language. These contributors tended not to discuss, or minimised, the potential benefits to New Zealand students of learning Chinese.

“I don't think that learning the Chinese language is important for New Zealand children to learn - it might be helpful to have in some sectors of learning and future employment, but there are far more important life matters to be educated on. If speaking Chinese is a barrier to communication, it is up to migrants to learn New Zealand's first language.”

Male, 60 to 69, Pākehā, Auckland

Demographic differences in views about language learning

The view that school children should learn a non-English language was held by a diverse range of population groups and locations, but was even *more prevalent* among Māori (92 percent) and in high-income households (92 percent with annual household incomes over \$120,000).

Those who were more likely to mention that Chinese was a language that school children should learn were:

- aged 60 years or more (56 percent, compared with 47 percent of those aged 18 to 59 years)
- living in high-income households, with annual incomes over \$120,000 (58 percent, compared with 49 percent of those in lower-income households).

Figure 15. Top 10 non-English languages New Zealanders think school children should learn

Which non-English languages should New Zealand school children learn?



Chinese

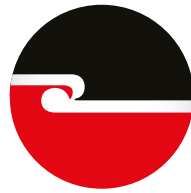
(or mentions of Mandarin or Cantonese)

49%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

4,218

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



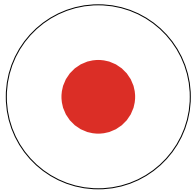
Māori

37%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

22,729

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



Japanese

19%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

11,888

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



Spanish

18%

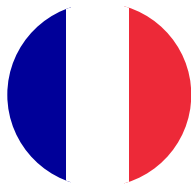
Percentage who say school children should learn this language

11,573

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014

Source: Q2d(ii) and Education Counts data

Base: Those who think New Zealand school children should learn a non-English language (n=787) and secondary school students



French

18%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

20,478

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



German

8%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

4,185

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



Any Language

8%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

Unknown

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



Asian Languages

(non-specific)

8%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

NA

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014

Source: Q2d(ii) and Education Counts data

Base: Those who think New Zealand school children should learn a non-English language (n=787) and secondary school students



European Languages

(non-specific)

3%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

NA

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014



Indian Languages

3%

Percentage who say school children should learn this language

Unknown

Number of students enrolled as at July 2014

Source: Q2d(ii) and Education Counts data

Base: Those who think New Zealand school children should learn a non-English language (n=787) and secondary school students



Background, methodology and survey sample profiles

Background, methodology and survey sample profiles

Background to the research

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 the people and countries of Asia. This research is the only research focused on understanding New Zealanders' views of both the barriers to and benefits of relationships with Asia. The research serves as a backdrop to the Foundation's policy direction, and identifies priorities for building stronger relationships with Asia and for better preparing New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia.

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

- the perceived importance of Asia to New Zealand
- views about the benefits to New Zealand of relationships with Asia
- perceived involvement with Asian people and cultures
- perceptions of Asian people and cultures
- views about investment from Asia
- views about whether Asian people are responsible for rising house prices
- recall of Asia-related events, issues and people in the media.

Methodology

One thousand telephone interviews were carried out among a random sample of New Zealanders aged 15 years and over from 6 October to 9 November 2014. A random survey of 1,000 people has a maximum margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

Sampling and weighting

The survey used Random Digit Dialling (RDD). A RDD sample frame includes all households with landline telephones, including those with unlisted numbers. Telephone numbers were randomly drawn from known number ranges within New Zealand's regions, and each interviewer asked to speak with the person in the household aged 15 years or over who had the next birthday. A disproportionate sample scheme was employed to enable an analysis of the results by each of New Zealand's main cities, including Dunedin. This disproportionate sample was corrected at the weighting stage, so the overall findings are representative of New Zealand's cities and regions.

A sampling scheme that selects only one person per household is subject to a household size bias, where people from large households have less chance of being included than people from small households. To correct for this, data were weighted by household size (defined as the number of eligible respondents who live in the household).

As this was a random sample of the population, small variations exist between the sample and the New Zealand population. Percentages have therefore been post-weighted by age and gender to ensure that overall results represent the population on these key variables. The weighted and unweighted sample profiles can be found in Appendix A.

Other notes

- Within the body of this report sub-group 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 explore further some of the results of the quantitative survey. The qualitative research was carried out among a sample of those who took part in the survey. 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 process

The qualitative phase of this research was conducted via an online discussion, called an e-Qual. This was conducted after the survey was completed. Respondents in the survey were asked if they would like to take part in further research. An email informing these respondents about the date and time of the forum was sent to people who had agreed to be re-contacted (while ensuring that a range of age, gender, warmth ratings and other criteria were included). Of this subset, 30 people agreed to take part in the forum and were provided access via a logon and username.

Once they had logged in and given themselves usernames, which allowed them to comment without revealing their real names, respondents were shown a number of pre-loaded questions (some of which included visual images of the findings from the survey to prompt discussion). The questions for the qualitative phase were formulated in conjunction with the Foundation to understand in more depth some of the topics and responses in the survey. A Colmar Brunton moderator probed and sought clarification from respondents if they felt that more depth was required. Foundation staff also viewed the forum during the period it was live and observed comments as they were posted.

The forum was conducted over two days (4 and 5 December 2014). Each day two questions were loaded. The structure was as follows:

Day 1

- Asian people – comment on findings about increased warmth.
- Asian investment – comment on findings about decreased optimism/positivity.

Day 2

- Exploring the contrast in findings between Asian people and Asian investment.
- Views on the importance of learning the Māori or Chinese language.

After two days, the forum was closed and respondents could not go back into the questions.

Comments from the forum were used throughout the report to illustrate key findings. These are attributed by gender, age, ethnicity and location.

Appendix A

Survey sample profiles

Gender and age		
Gender	Unweighted Percent (n=1,000)	Weighted Percent (n=1,000)
Male	45%	48%
Female	55%	52%
Age	Percent (n=1,000)	Percent (n=1,000)
Under 30 years	10%	25%
30-39 years	13%	14%
40-49 years	18%	20%
50-59 years	20%	17%
60-69 years	20%	13%
70 years or more	19%	11%
Ethnic identification		
	Unweighted Percent (n=1,000)	Weighted Percent (n=1,000)
New Zealand European	80%	75%
NZ Māori	10%	12%
Pacific	3%	4%
Asian	7%	10%
Non New Zealand European	7%	7%
Other	2%	2%
Location		
	Unweighted Percent (n=1,000)	Weighted Percent (n=1,000)
Auckland	28%	31%
Wellington	10%	9%
Christchurch	9%	8%
Hamilton	4%	5%
Dunedin	5%	3%
Provincial city	19%	18%
Town/rural	26%	25%