



Asia New Zealand
Foundation

New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples - 2013 Annual Survey

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Report



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New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia and perceptions of Asia's importance

New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia and perceptions of Asia's importance

This section of the report looks at New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia, and whether people believed that New Zealand was doing enough to ensure we are equipped to engage confidently with Asia in future.

While most New Zealanders felt they knew little or almost nothing about Asia themselves, there was widespread agreement that the Asian region is important to the country's future. Additionally, New Zealanders believed that more needed to be done to prepare young people to engage confidently with Asia, and to help New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions. Key findings in this section were as follows:

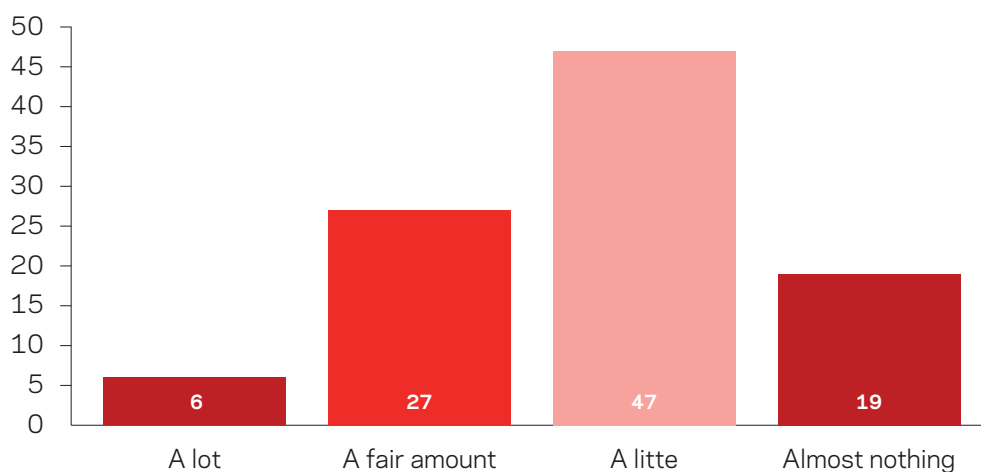
- Two-thirds of New Zealanders (66 percent) felt they knew little or almost nothing about Asia
- When people thought of Asia, the first things that came to mind were countries or geographic features of Asia (58 percent), Asian people themselves (29 percent), and Asian food (28 percent)
- Relative to 2012, the importance of Asia had increased in the eyes of New Zealanders (up from 77 percent to 80 percent in 2013)
- Asia was viewed as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, behind Australia (on 87 percent)
- The vast majority of New Zealanders (89 percent) believed it was important for New Zealand to develop ties with Asia
- Fifty-eight percent of New Zealanders believed this country should do more to prepare young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia
- Sixty-three percent of New Zealanders believed this country should do more to help New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions.

New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia

Most New Zealanders felt they knew little or almost nothing about Asia.

Two-thirds (66 percent) of New Zealanders said they knew a little or almost nothing about Asia. While one in three (34 percent) said they knew at least a fair amount, very few (6 percent) felt they knew a lot about Asia.

How much do you feel you know about Asia?



Base: All New Zealanders (n=1,000)

Who knew more or less about Asia?

The following groups were more likely than average (34 percent) to say that they knew *at least a fair amount* about Asia:

- Those aged 60 years or more (41 percent)
- Asian people (65 percent)
- Those born outside New Zealand, including Asian and non-Asian people (44 percent)
- Those living in high-income households, with annual incomes over \$100,000 (41 percent).

The following groups were more likely than average (66 percent) to say they knew *a little or almost nothing* about Asia:

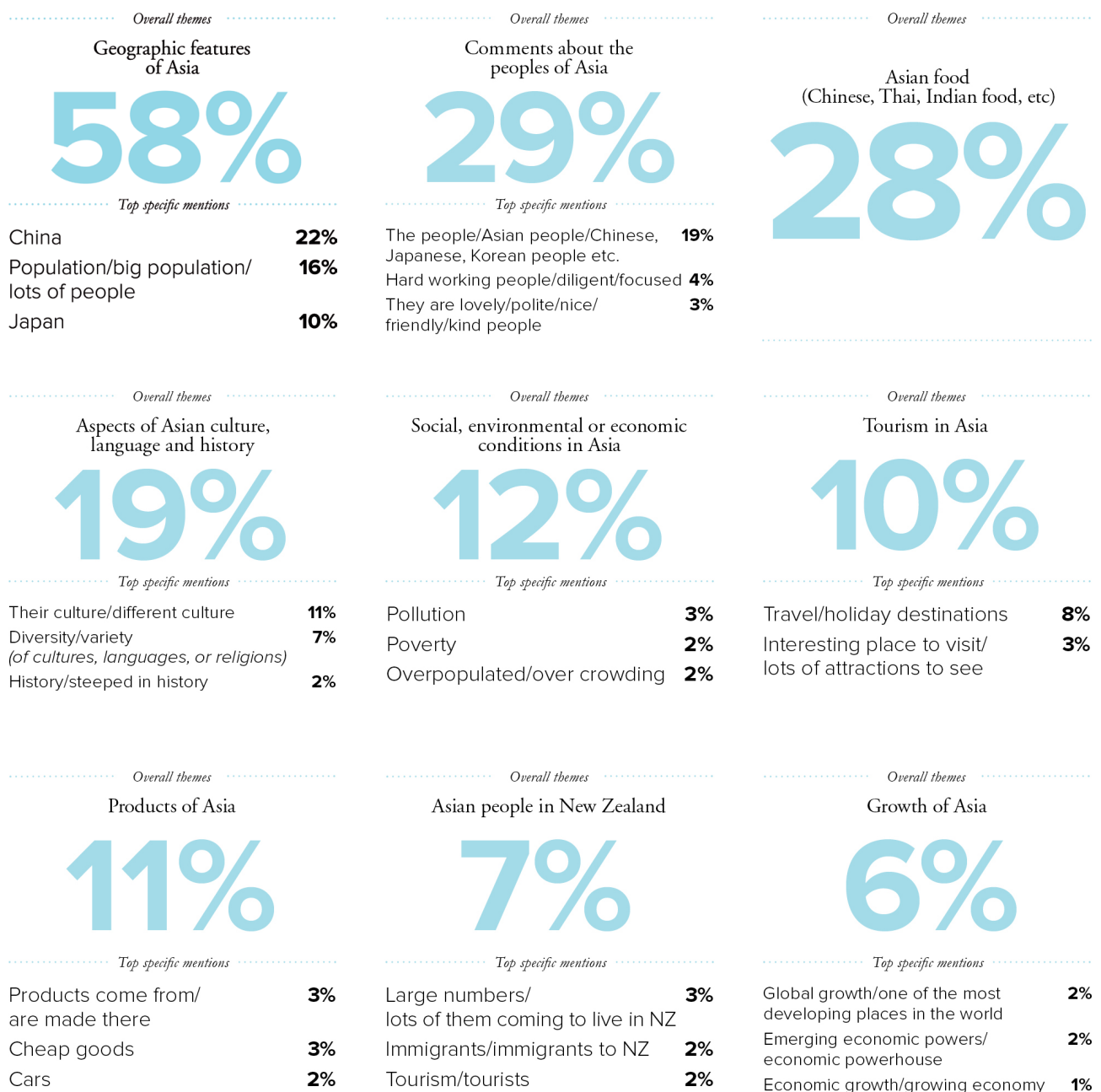
- Dunedin residents (83 percent)
- Those living in small towns and rural areas (72 percent, compared with 64 percent who lived in the urban cities).

When people thought of Asia, the first things that came to mind were geographic features of Asia, Asian people themselves, and Asian food

Without prompting with possible answers, we asked people to tell us what came to mind when they thought about Asia. Responses were wide ranging, so we have grouped them into themes. We also show some of the more specific mentions to better explain some themes.

What comes to mind when people think about Asia

Overall themes (unprompted)





When thinking about Asia, New Zealanders were most likely to think about a specific country or a geographic feature of Asia¹, including China, the size of the population of Asia, and Japan. The next most common things that came to mind related to Asian people themselves, including where they were from and what they were like, and Asian food.

¹ This theme encompasses both physical and human aspects of Asia's geography.

During the qualitative forum we explored New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia in further detail

Forum participants did not feel they had a deep knowledge of Asia and its peoples, and they wanted a better understanding of Asian cultures.

The qualitative phase of the research explored what people might want to know about Asia. While geography and food featured strongly as themes in the quantitative survey, cultural understanding was the strong theme to emerge from the qualitative phase. Participants recognised that they did not have an in-depth knowledge about Asia and its peoples. They did not always understand many aspects of how Asians behaved – for example:

- Why do they have such strong ties to each other and their families?
- Where does their work ethic come from?
- What are their customs and how do they compare with my own?

“I always find it weird when they look at houses to rent or buy and they come in with a compass.”

Male, 35 to 39 years old, non-New Zealand born

“Most Asians have an excellent work ethic and they are prepared to do the hard tasks that others may turn up their nose at. It would be good to discuss what motivates Asians.”

Female, 40 to 49 years old, non-New Zealand born

People expressed a lack of understanding about aspects of Asian cultures. Some people in the qualitative research would have liked a better understanding, particularly those who came into contact with Asians on a regular basis (at work, and in their neighbourhoods and churches). Some cultural aspects in which participants were interested related to understanding how immigrants to New Zealand might better ‘fit in’ without losing their own sense of identity. For example, they mentioned how Samoan and Tongan migrants have brought their own cultural traditions to New Zealand, but have also integrated into the New Zealand culture.

Participants would have liked to see Asians doing the same, because they believed that a lack of understanding (on both sides) could inhibit good community relationships and social integration. The following quotes provide insights into the topics of interest to forum participants and why they would like to know more about these aspects of Asian cultures.

This woman would have liked to include more Asians in school activities.

“I would like to know more about the cultural mores which might impact on how Asian individuals and families might relate to our customs when living in New Zealand. For example, at our school we notice that Asian families participate less in our school events than non-Asians. Perhaps we are organising events that somehow do not ‘fit’ with something about Asian culture and this is not desirable from a school community point of view.”

Female, 40 to 49 years old, New Zealand born

This man would have liked to know everything he could.

“Personally I’d like to gain a deeper understanding of the variety and types of ethnic celebrations and holidays, religious teachings (and adherence to same), local and regional cuisine and its preparation, political views, local and regional government and all schisms, dress and etiquette in formal and non-formal situations, health and elderly care, fiscal matters and the regional economy, attitudes to foreigners and ‘westernisation’ effects, how the typical Asian family interacts and goes about the activities of daily life, some aspects of Asian arts and music and its history.”

Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

This man would have liked to understand and connect better with new Asian migrants in his area.

“How our countries interact or what schemes there are that could enrich relations at a deeper level (than tourism and sister city junkets). In a small rural settlement where the Filipino farm workers are now a significant positive part of our community I only know about them through church connections.”

Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

This woman would have liked to know about etiquette and social protocols so she did the right thing when visiting Asia.

“The things I would like to know about Asian cultures, would be their beliefs such as religion, what they do on a daily basis to do with their beliefs, such as offering food to their gods. The other thing that I would like to know about is what is expected when you visit their homes, what would be the respectful things that would be done.”

Female, 18 to 19 years old, New Zealand born

Contact and interactions with Asian people can prompt New Zealanders to find out more about Asia

The people in the qualitative research were not proactively researching information about Asia unless something prompted them to do so. Examples of prompts were personal interactions, such as meeting a new Asian colleague, being invited to an Asian person's home, and meeting a new Asian church member. Other types of prompt included current events and media information about festivals such as Diwali, and news about disasters in Asian countries. These events could prompt people to want to understand more about particular aspects of Asian cultures. Some less positive prompts included seeing tourists and Asian migrants and feeling uncomfortable or lacking understanding about why they behaved the way they did.

- People sought out information from both personal sources and wider channels and mass media avenues.

People looked to a range of sources of information about particular topics or aspects of Asian cultures that interested them at the time. Examples of where people expected to find information about Asia included²:

- Googling a query, for example 'Chinese New Year'
- Wikipedia
- Websites such as the Office of Ethnic Affairs website
- Media and news websites³
- TV shows and documentaries (history and documentary channels)
- Local community newspapers and radio stations
- Radio New Zealand specialist programmes
- Libraries and books
- Pay TV access to Asian TV channels (CNBC Asia-Pacific News)
- Travel books and tourist websites (particularly for those intending to travel).

² Note these are not ranked in any way.

³ One person specifically mentioned the Asia New Zealand Foundation website.

People who knew Asian people well (such as friends and colleagues) regarded these people as very valuable direct sources of information about aspects of Asian lifestyles and cultures. People who did not know anyone from Asia, or who did not have regular contact with Asian people, felt that knowing someone Asian would be a good way to understand aspects of Asian culture. While people felt there were more Asians in New Zealand overall, they themselves might not always have had the opportunities to interact with them at the level where they felt they could ask questions about their cultures, and that promoted cross-cultural understanding. Visiting Asia was also seen as a valuable source of information about Asia. This could be either indirectly (hearing about travels from friends, family and colleagues who had visited Asian countries) or directly, by visiting personally. Some people in the qualitative research mentioned that living in, or visiting, Asian countries had strongly influenced their views and levels of understanding of Asia.

“I was fortunate in being able to live and work in several Asian countries for 27 years and very much reflects the value of that period of my life. I believe that the most effective way of building a relationship with Asia and Asian people is to forget such things as ‘which language should I learn?’ and ‘political correctness’. Most Asians are keen to learn or improve their knowledge of English which is now widely spoken in most Asian countries. Instead concentrate on geography, main cities and towns, populations and weather seasons. When meeting Asian people remember that they are at least our equal and don’t be too surprised to find that in some matters, such as infrastructure and productivity, they are way ahead of New Zealand.”

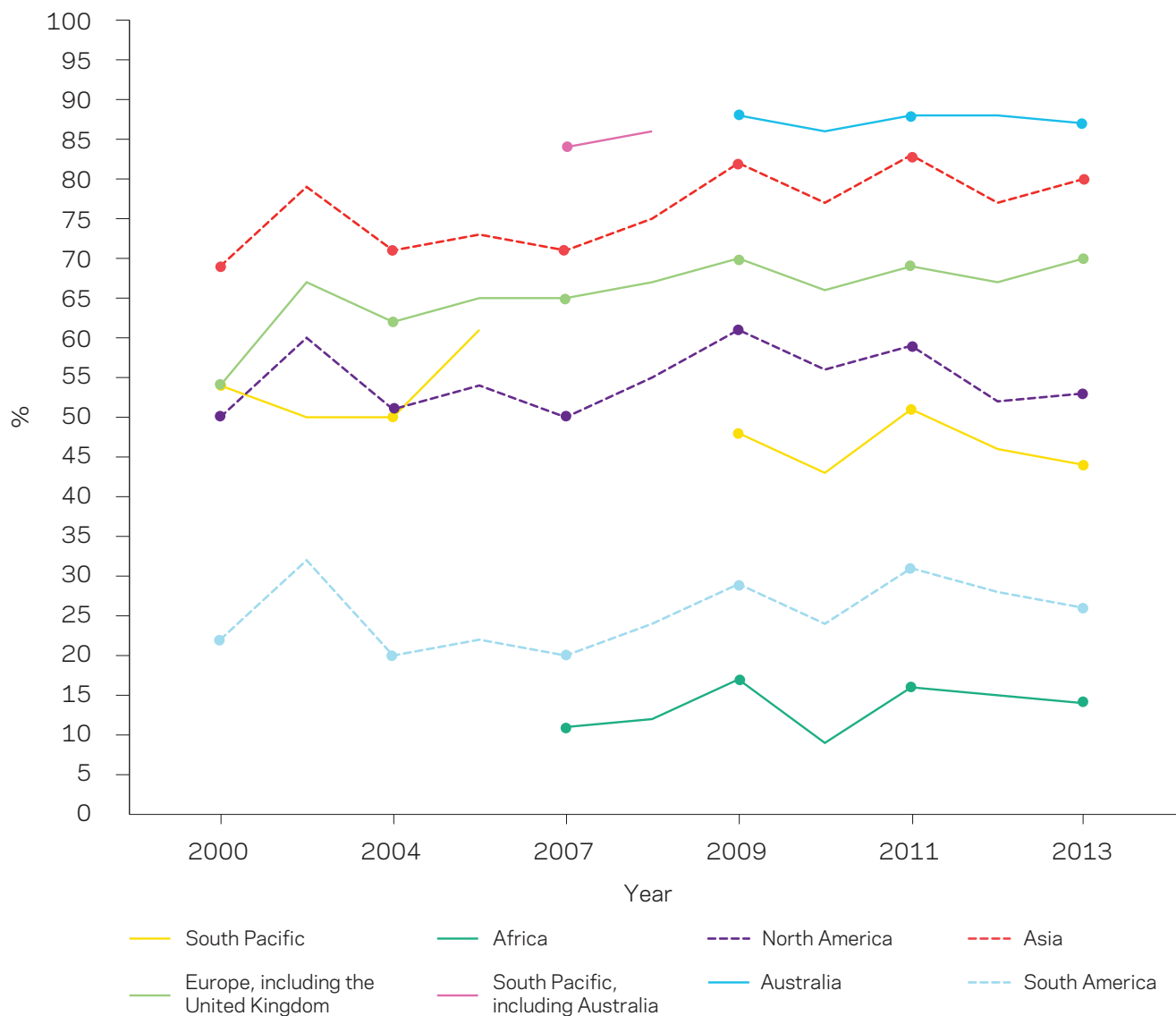
Male, 70+ years old, non-New Zealand born

The perceived importance of the Asian region

Although respondents did not generally have an in-depth knowledge of Asia, they saw Asia as very important to our country's future.

While there were gaps in New Zealanders' personal knowledge of Asia, it was clear that as a nation we appreciate the importance of the Asian region. Asia was viewed as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, behind Australia.

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)

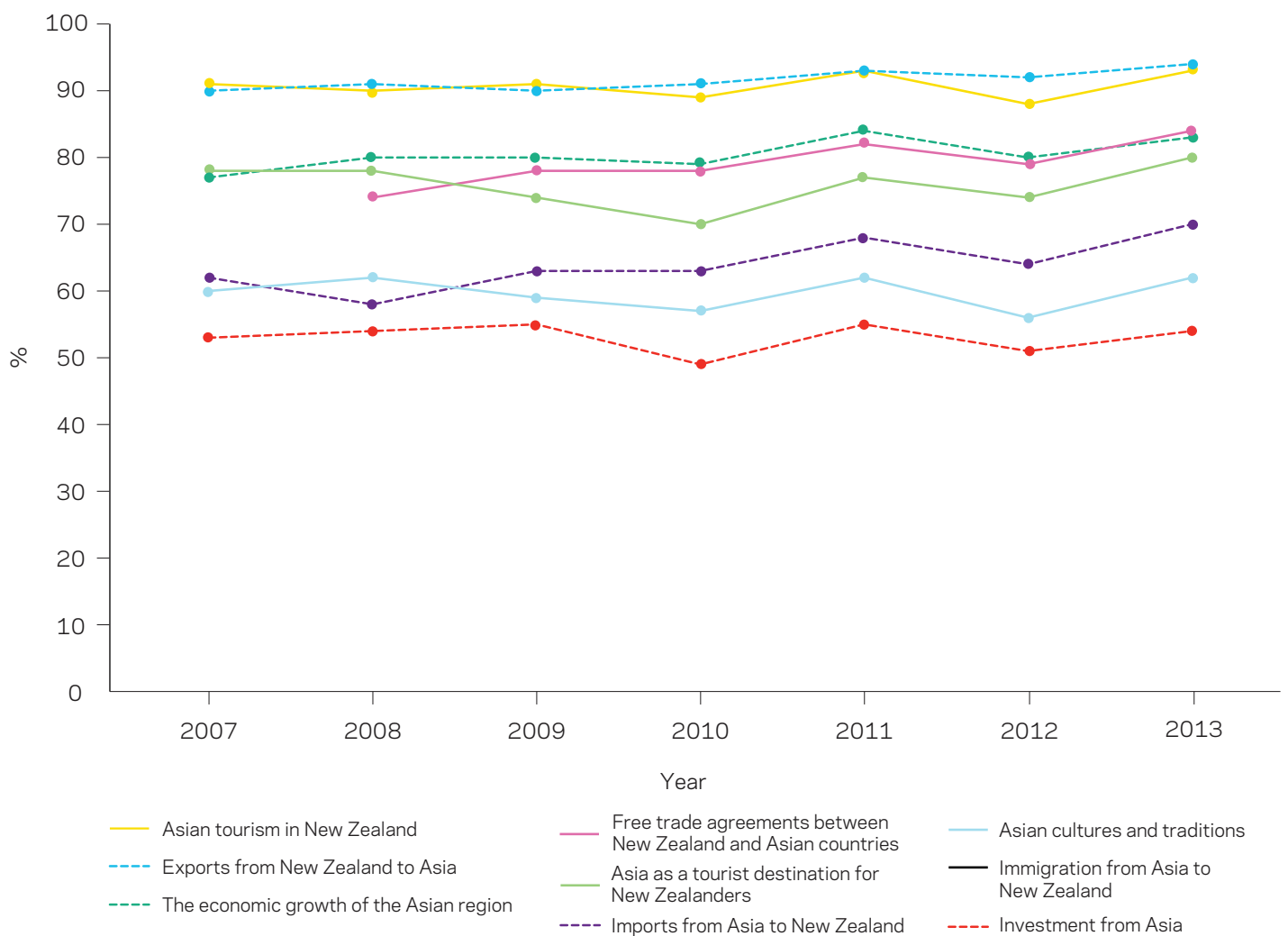


Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said 'don't know'

New Zealanders tended to see the benefits of a relationship with Asia in mainly economic terms

People were asked to think about New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years, and to rate 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.

Overall figure label - Percentage of New Zealanders who say each will have a positive impact in the next 10 to 20 years



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

Percentage of New Zealanders who say each will have a positive impact in the next 10 to 20 years – 2013



93%
ASIAN TOURISM
IN NEW
ZEALAND
(n=984)



84%
FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS
BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND
AND ASIAN COUNTRIES
(n=964)



83%
THE ECONOMIC GROWTH
OF THE ASIAN REGION
(n=962)



80%
ASIA AS A TOURIST
DESTINATION FOR
NEW ZEALAND
(n=974)



94%
EXPORTS FROM
NEW ZEALAND TO ASIA
(n=981)



74%
INVESTMENT
FROM ASIA
(n=966)



70%
IMPORTS FROM
ASIA TO NEW ZEALAND
(n=983)



62%
ASIAN CULTURES
AND TRADITIONS
(n=976)



54%
IMMIGRATION FROM
ASIA TO NEW ZEALAND
(n=988)

Relative to 2012, the importance of Asia had increased in the eyes of New Zealanders

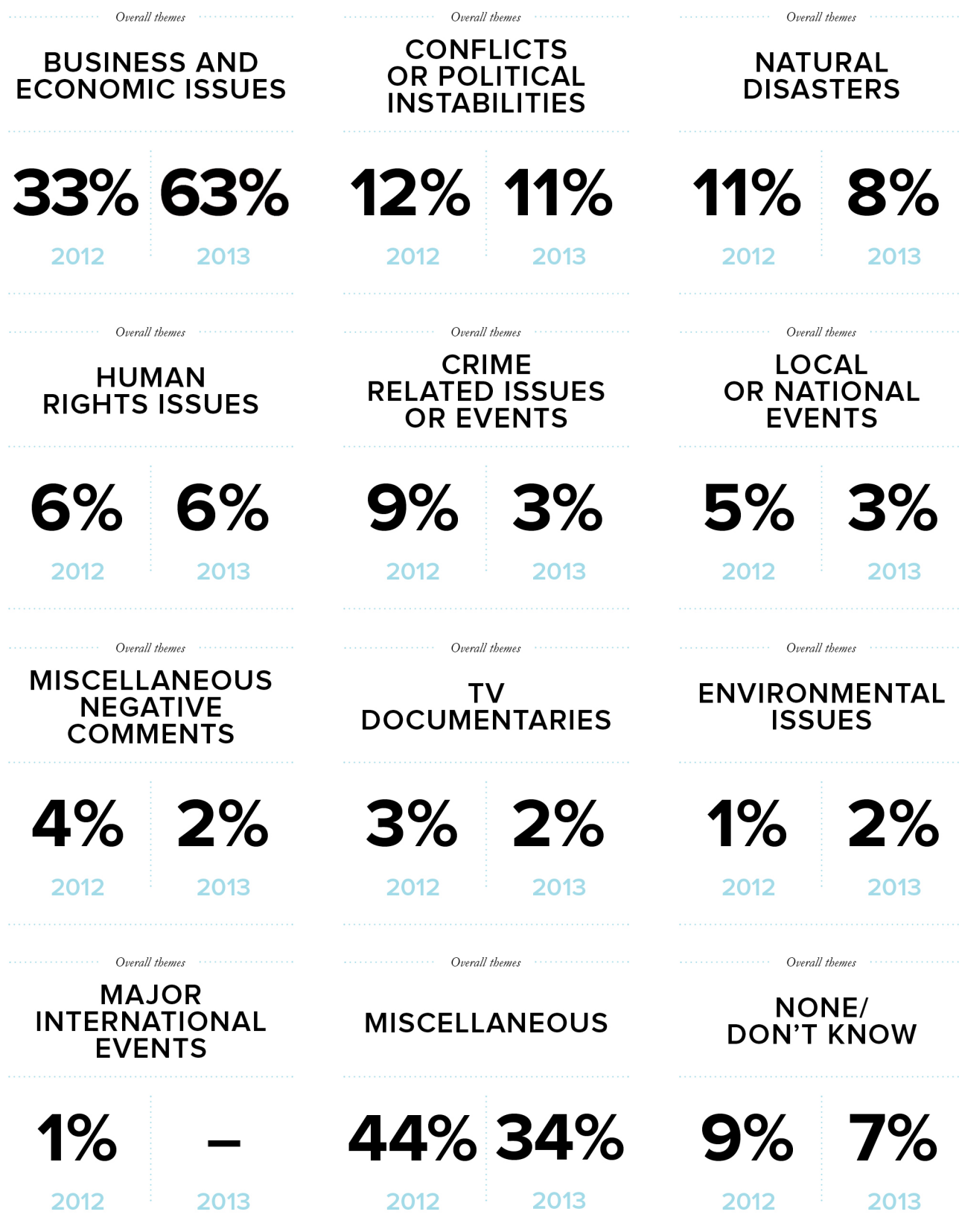
Since 2012 there has been an increase in New Zealanders' views on the importance of Asia to New Zealand's future⁴. There are probably a number of reasons for this increase. One of them is the Fonterra botulism scare in 2013, which likely increased awareness of Asia as a significant export market and contributor to New Zealand's economic growth.

The recall of media stories on Asia-related business and economic issues nearly doubled in 2013, due mainly to the Fonterra botulism scare. In 2012 one-third (33 percent) of those aware of media stories about Asia recalled stories focused on business and economic issues – this almost doubled to two-thirds (63 percent) in 2013.

⁴ This increase is significant at the 90 percent confidence level.

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



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 in 2013 (mentioned by 3% or more)

"2013 Fonterra issue – milk powder problem/ botulism scare"

41%

"Impact of 2013 Fonterra botulism issue – loss of trade/trust /confidence in New Zealand"

13%

"Housing shortage/prices issue-Asians buying houses/outbidding New Zealanders"

7%

"New Zealand free trade agreement/business relationship with China/India"

6%

"Meat debacle-meat stopped at border/ wharves"

6%

"Tourism/increase in tourism"

3%

"Labour's proposal to restrict house purchase by foreigners"

3%

As well as revealing an increase in perceptions of the general importance of Asia to New Zealand's future, the findings showed that in 2013 more New Zealanders saw the following specific activities as having positive impacts on New Zealand:

- Asian tourism in New Zealand (up 5 points since last year)
- Free trade agreements between New Zealand and Asia (up 5 points)
- Asia as a tourist destination for New Zealanders (up 5 points)
- Imports from Asia to New Zealand (up 6 points)
- Asian cultures and traditions (up 6 points).

Throughout the course of this research we saw that changes in New Zealanders' views about the importance and benefits of a relationship with Asia tended to coincide with changes in public economic optimism. The decrease in the importance of Asia in the 2012 survey coincided with a sustained period of low optimism in New Zealand. In contrast, optimism was high during the 2011 survey, at around the time of the Rugby World Cup.

Finally, when the 2013 survey was carried out, economic optimism was the highest observed in more than three years⁵. In addition, events during 2012 and 2013 may have played a role in some of the specific increases listed above. For example, an increased emphasis on free trade/business relationships with Asian countries following the start of negotiations on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership in late 2012, and the ongoing negotiations on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, may have played some part in the increased importance placed on free trade agreements with, and imports from, Asia. Coverage of the predicted increase in Chinese visitors to New Zealand during the Prime Minister's visit to China, in April 2013⁶, may have contributed to the rise in perceptions of the importance of Asian tourism and Asian cultures and traditions to New Zealand.

5 The ONE News Colmar Brunton poll illustrated a substantial decrease in public economic optimism between March and May 2012, down from 50 percent to 38 percent. Economic optimism generally remained low until fieldwork in October 2012. When fieldwork was carried out in September 2013, economic optimism was at 57 percent, the highest figure seen since May 2010. Refer to <http://www.colmarbrunton.co.nz/index.php/polls-and-surveys/political-polls/one-news-colmar-brunton-poll>.

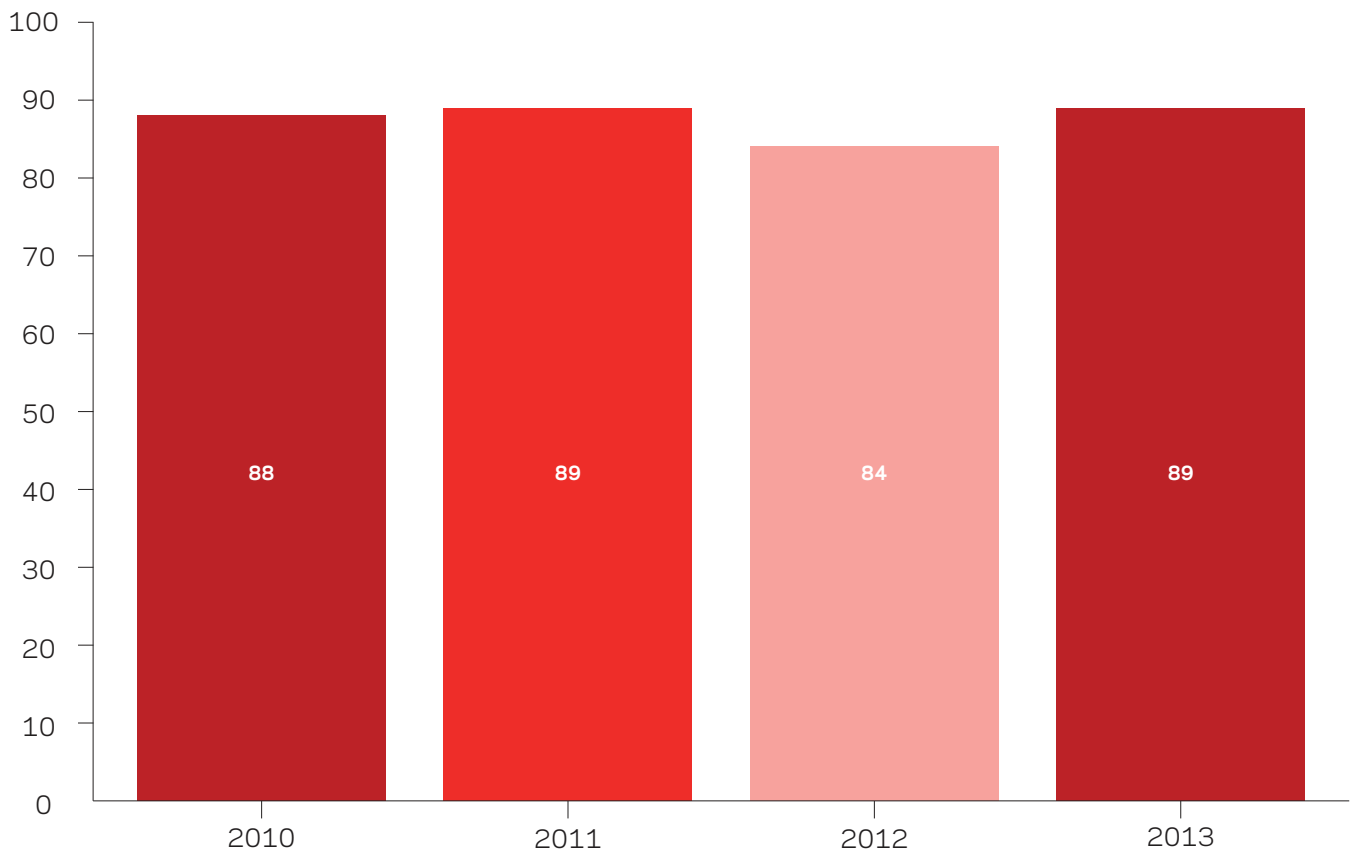
6 See <http://www.3news.co.nz/Influx-of-Chinese-tourists-expected/tabid/421/articleID/293845/Default.aspx>.

The importance of developing ties with Asia

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

Nine out of every 10 New Zealanders (89 percent) believed it was important for the country to develop cultural and economic ties with the peoples and countries of Asia.

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



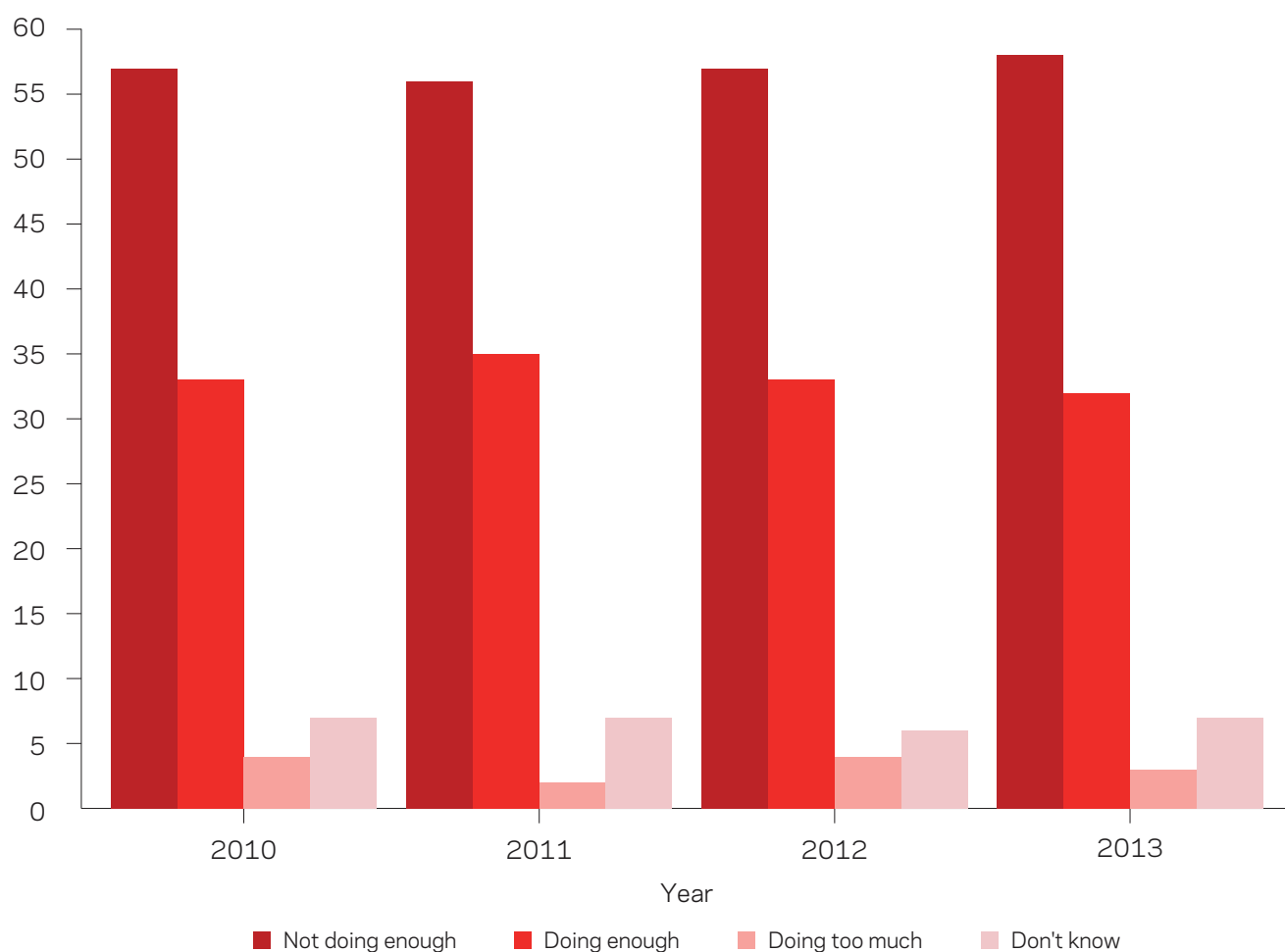
Base: All New Zealanders (n 2010=1,000, n 2011=1,105, n 2012=1,000, n 2013=1,000)

In 2013 New Zealanders saw developing cultural and economic ties with Asia as more important than they did in 2012. Looking further back it appears that 2012 was an unusual year for this measure, with the 2013 score being consistent with those of every year except 2012.

New Zealanders felt we needed to do more to develop ties with Asia

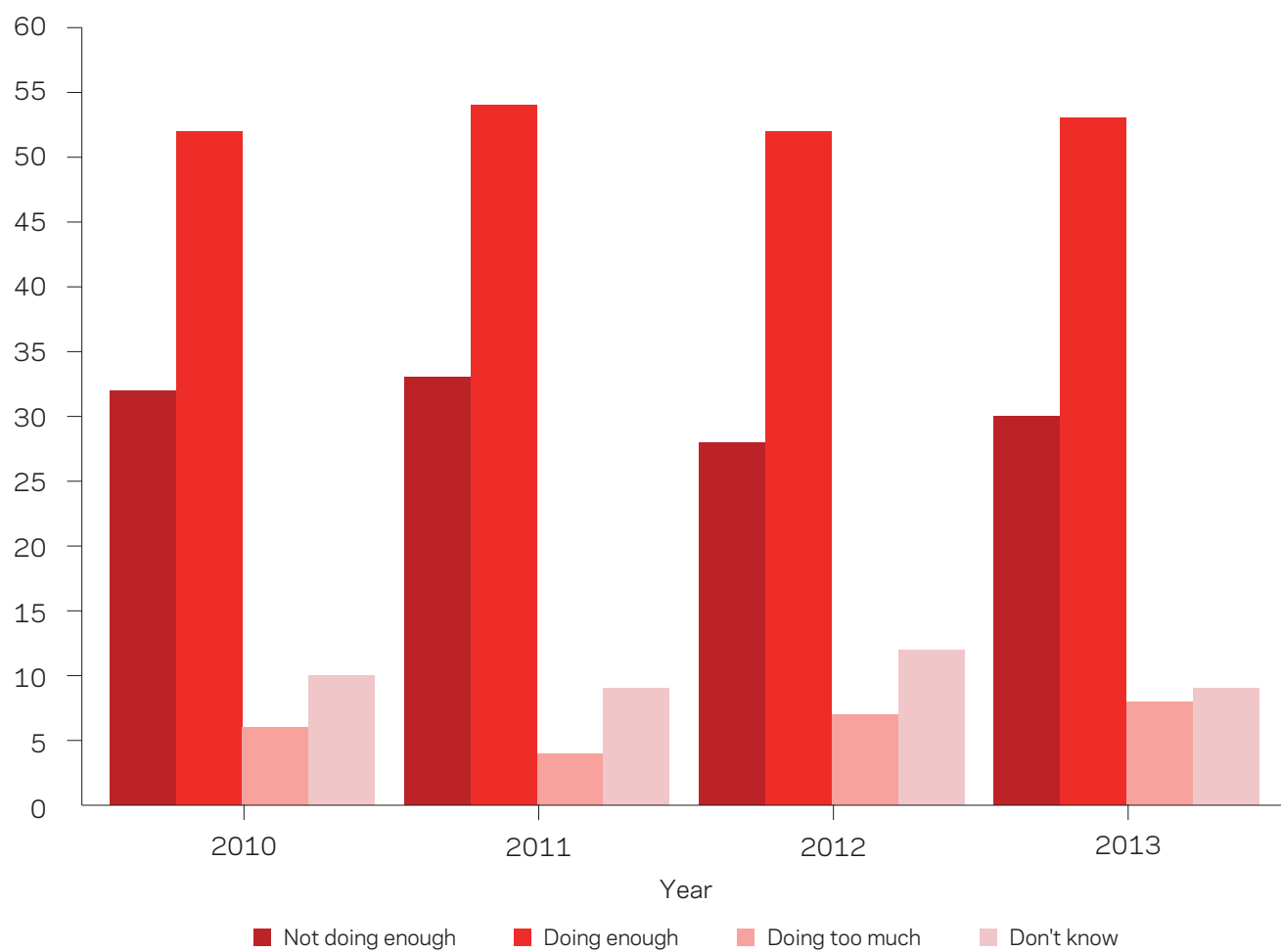
While the overwhelming majority of New Zealanders believed that it was important for the country to develop cultural and economic ties with Asia, most thought that as a country we needed to do more to create these links. Around six in 10 New Zealanders thought we needed to do more to help New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions (63 percent), and to prepare young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia (58 percent). Relatively fewer New Zealanders felt we should do more to develop business links with Asia. Over half (53 percent) thought that enough was being done in this area, and close to one-third (30 percent) believed we could be doing more.

Preparing young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia



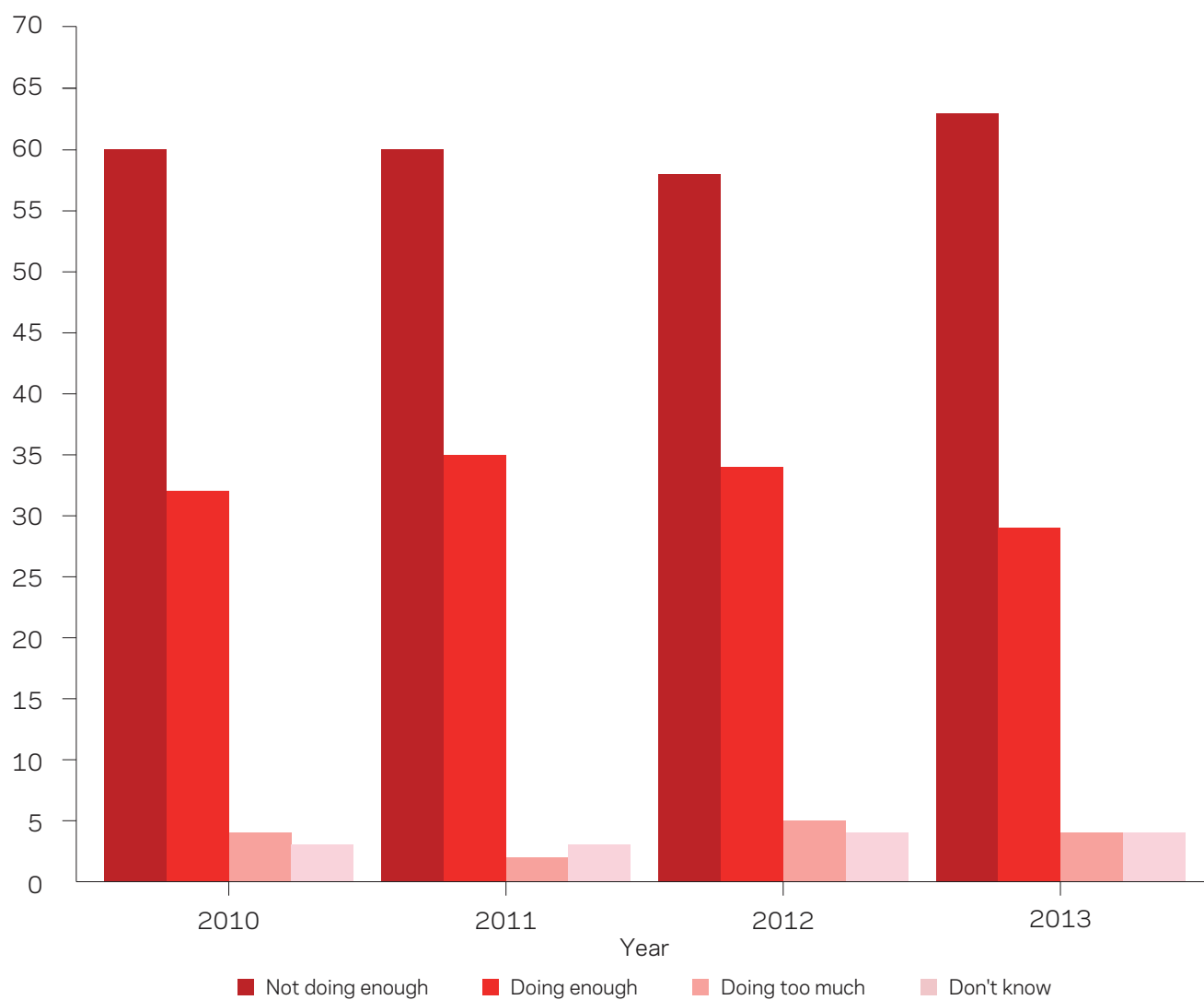
Base: All New Zealanders (n 2010=1,000, n 2011=1,105, n 2012=1,000, n 2013=1,000)

Developing links between businesses in New Zealand and Asia



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

Helping New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions



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

Demographic differences

The impacts of each of the activities shown above on New Zealand's future were seen differently by different groups of New Zealanders. These differences are outlined below.

Preparing young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia

Those who lived in urban centres were more likely than those in small towns/rural areas to feel that New Zealand was not doing enough to prepare young New Zealanders to engage confidently with Asia (61 percent vs. 54 percent).

Developing links between businesses in New Zealand and Asia

Men were more likely than women to believe that New Zealand needed to do more to develop business links with Asia (36 percent vs. 24 percent).

Urban dwellers were more likely than those in provincial/rural areas to think that more needed to be done to develop links between New Zealand and Asian businesses (35 percent vs. 23 percent). In particular, those in provincial areas were *less likely* to think that New Zealand was not doing enough in this area (21 percent).

Helping New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions

People in their 30s were more likely than average to think that more needed to be done to help New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions (75 percent). Older New Zealanders, over the age of 70, were *less likely* than average to think this (50 percent).



New Zealanders' perceptions of people from Asia

New Zealanders' perceptions of people from Asia

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

Although more New Zealanders believed that Asia was important to New Zealand's future in 2013, more also believed that New Zealanders' feelings towards Asian people had cooled somewhat since 2012. Media representations of Asian people appeared to play some part in this, especially reports about Asian people buying property and driving up house prices, which were in the media around the time of survey fieldwork.

While most New Zealanders felt they knew little or almost nothing about Asia themselves, there was widespread agreement that the Asian region is important to the country's future. Additionally, New Zealanders believed that more needed to be done to prepare young people to engage confidentially with Asia, and to help New Zealanders understand Asian cultures and traditions.

Key findings in this section were as follows:

- In 2013 there was an increase in the number of those who thought New Zealanders' feelings towards Asian people had cooled in the previous 12 months (up from 23 to 27 percent), although most people still thought that feelings towards Asian people either hadn't changed (53 percent) or had warmed (14 percent)

- A comparison of this survey and an Australian survey⁷ showed that the feelings of Australians towards Asians have also cooled, and that New Zealanders feel warmer than Australians towards people from Asia
- Reasons given by respondents for New Zealanders feeling less warm in 2013 than in 2012 included:
- Concern about the increasing number of Asian people in New Zealand
- Negative comments in the media about Asia and Asian people, including those relating to Asian people buying property
- Economic concerns and comparisons made with Asian people.

Warmth towards people from Asia in 2013

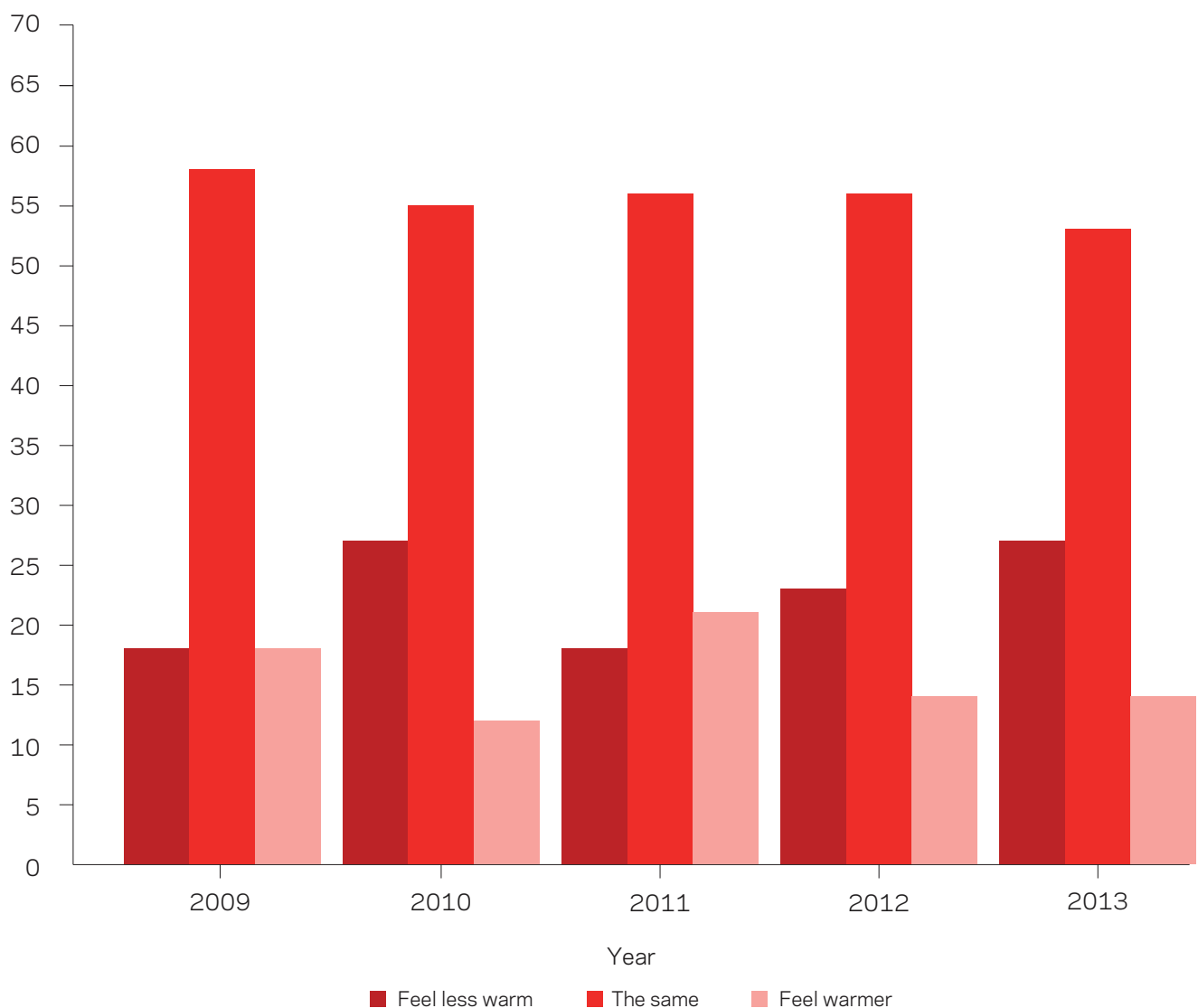
The survey measured New Zealanders' feelings towards Asian people both directly, by asking respondents how they *personally* felt, and indirectly, by asking whether they thought *New Zealanders in general* felt warmer or cooler towards Asian people compared with 12 months earlier. Responses to both measures suggested that New Zealanders' feelings towards Asian people had cooled during 2013.

⁷ See <http://lowyinstitute.org/publications/lowy-institute-poll-2013>.

In 2013 there was an increase in those who thought New Zealanders' feelings towards Asian people had cooled in the previous 12 months

Despite the results showing an increase in perceptions of the *importance of Asia* in 2013, there This was the second year in a row that there had been an increase in the sense that feelings towards Asian people were cooling.

Views about how New Zealanders feel about people from Asia - Compared to 12 months ago, do you think New Zealanders generally feel warmer towards people from Asia, or do they feel less warm, or about the same?



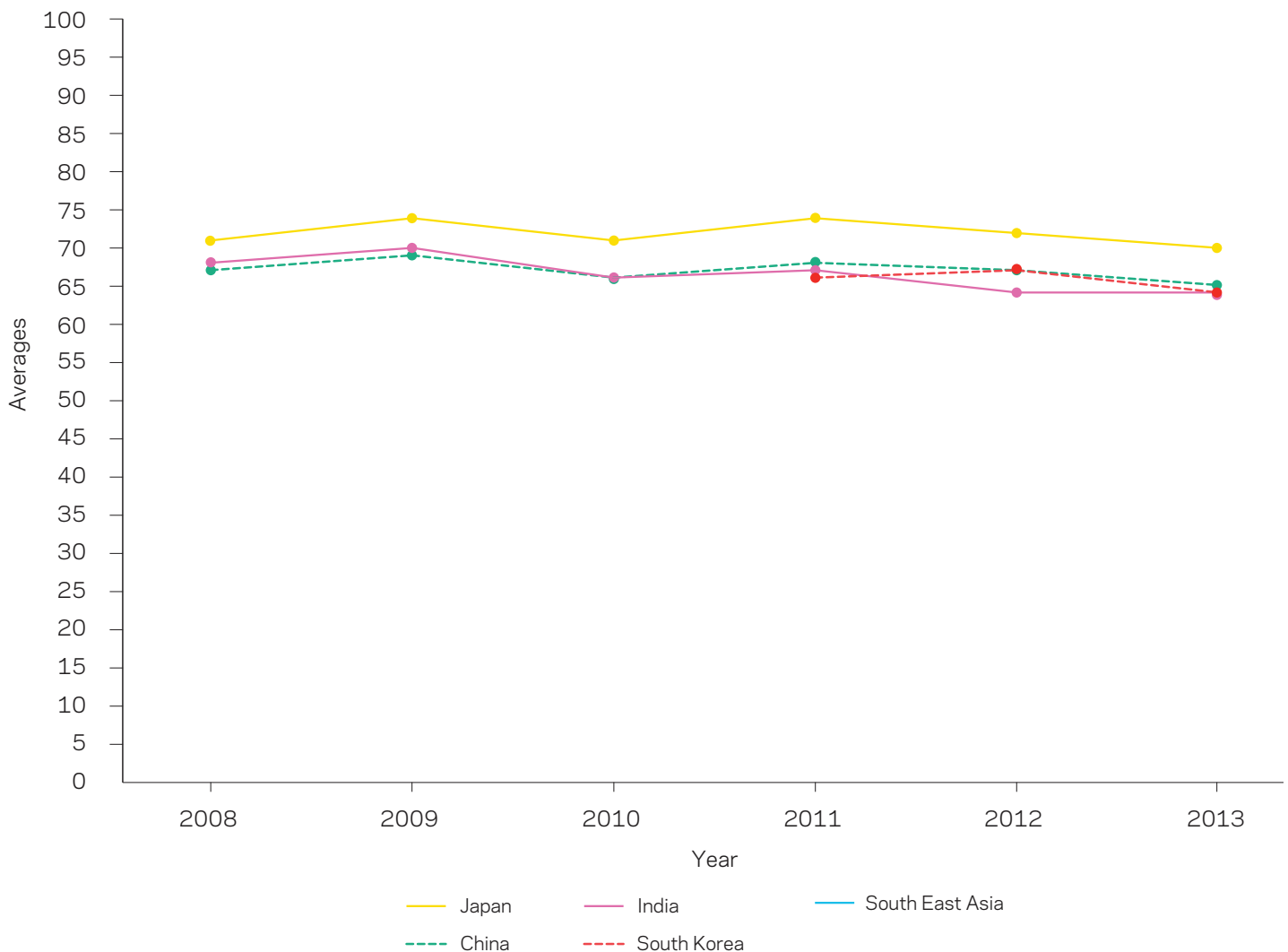
Base: All New Zealanders (n 2009=1,000, n 2010=1,000, n 2011=1,105, n 2012=1,000, n2013=1,000)

Note: Don't know (DK) responses are not shown in the above chart
(DK 2009=5%, DK 2010=6%, DK 2011=4%, DK 2012=7%, DK 2013=6%)

When asked about their personal feelings of warmth towards people from Asia, New Zealanders said there had been falls in warmth towards people from Japan, China, and South Korea

As well as asking survey respondents about New Zealanders in general, we asked them how warm they *personally* felt towards people from a range of Asian countries. For the second year in a row, warmth towards people from Japan and China declined. There was also a drop, from 2012, in warmth towards people from South Korea.

**Personal feelings of warmth toward people from Asia -
Average warmth felt by New Zealanders**



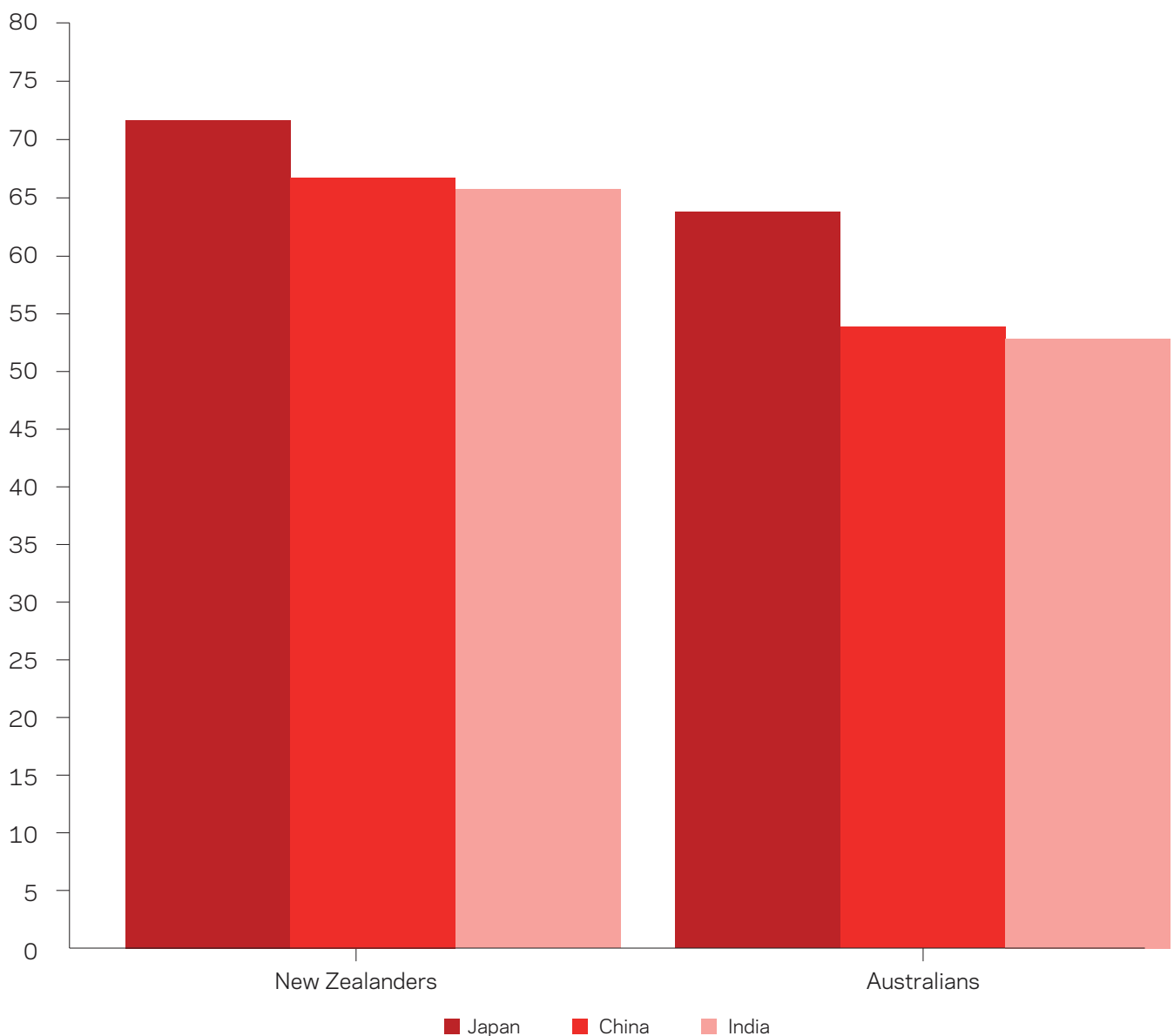
Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said don't know or refused

Note: South East Asia was added after the first few days of fieldwork.
Bases shown are for the current survey.

A decrease in warmth towards people from China was also shown in an Australian survey in 2013. In the ninth annual Lowy Institute Poll⁸, Australian sentiments towards China were shown to have cooled by 5 points, to 54 percent⁹ in 2013. A comparison of both surveys also showed that New Zealanders felt warmer than Australians towards people from Asia in 2013.

This was consistent with results in previous years' surveys.

**Personal feelings of warmth toward people from Asia
- Average warmth felt by New Zealanders and Australians in 2013**



Base: All respondents, excluding those who said don't know or refused

⁸ A nationally representative survey of 1,002 Australian adults conducted by mobile and fixed-line telephone between 4 and 20 March 2013.

⁹ See <http://lowyinstitute.org/publications/lowy-institute-poll-2013>.

Why did New Zealanders feel less warm in 2013?

In the survey we asked respondents directly why they thought New Zealanders' feelings towards Asian people had cooled. We asked this question without prompting people with possible answers. Results are shown below.

Reasons for New Zealanders feeling less warm toward people from Asia

Main reasons for feeling less warm



*"Too many Asians
purchasing land/
New Zealand land"*

8%

*"They stick to their own/
don't integrate/don't
adopt New Zealand
way of life"*

6%

*"Dislike that they choose
not to speak English/
lack of English"*

6%

*"They are quite
arrogant people"*

6%

As in previous surveys, common themes to emerge were that there were 'too many' Asians in Asia from people and in the media (22 percent), and competition for jobs (17 percent). A new theme to emerge this year, which likely contributed to the 2013 decrease in warmth shown above, centred on comments in the media and in wider society about Asians buying property. Detailed discussions in the qualitative forum tended to reflect the overall themes that emerged through the survey.

1. Concern about the increasing number of Asian migrants in New Zealand

Discussions in the qualitative forum suggested that, although New Zealanders were exposed to higher numbers of Asian people in New Zealand, they might not always have been connecting with them in a way that promoted mutual understanding and warmer feelings. Some people in the forum were aware that Asian migration had increased¹⁰, and felt this may have contributed to some people feeling that Asians were 'taking over'. There was also a sense, among some, that growing Asian population groups were 'keeping to themselves'. While this may seem negative, it did highlight how important personal interactions and connections with Asians are in engendering warmth of feelings towards Asia overall.

“Why do we think New Zealanders are cooler towards Asians? My thought would be that with the influx of Asians to New Zealand and the fact that they are inclined to segregate themselves from us is one reason. Another, from observation, is the lack [of] consideration, in some areas, for their neighbours, putting up huge reception dishes on the roof blocking their neighbour's view and sun, by running commercial businesses from home, containers parked in the street and constant comings and goings, mostly of Asians.”

Female, 70+ years old, New Zealand born

“The influx of immigrants from these countries. New Zealanders may seem less warm towards Asians, just for the fact that they are so different to us, this includes their mannerisms, the way they do things and what they think is acceptable.”

Female, 25 to 29 years old, New Zealand born

“Asia is an important trading area for New Zealand but people are less enthusiastic toward them because of the sheer numbers of immigrant Asians that are here now. None of us were prepared for just how many would come. Immigrants are given every known support to help them integrate, while Kiwis are given none at all. Integration has to work both ways and for now it seems it [doesn't]. And perhaps while we Kiwis are too territorial, Asians aren't very inclusive.”

Female, 60 to 69 years old, New Zealand born

“Maybe Auckland and other cities are becoming more Asian through the influx of Asian people. But then again Australia is experiencing the same.”

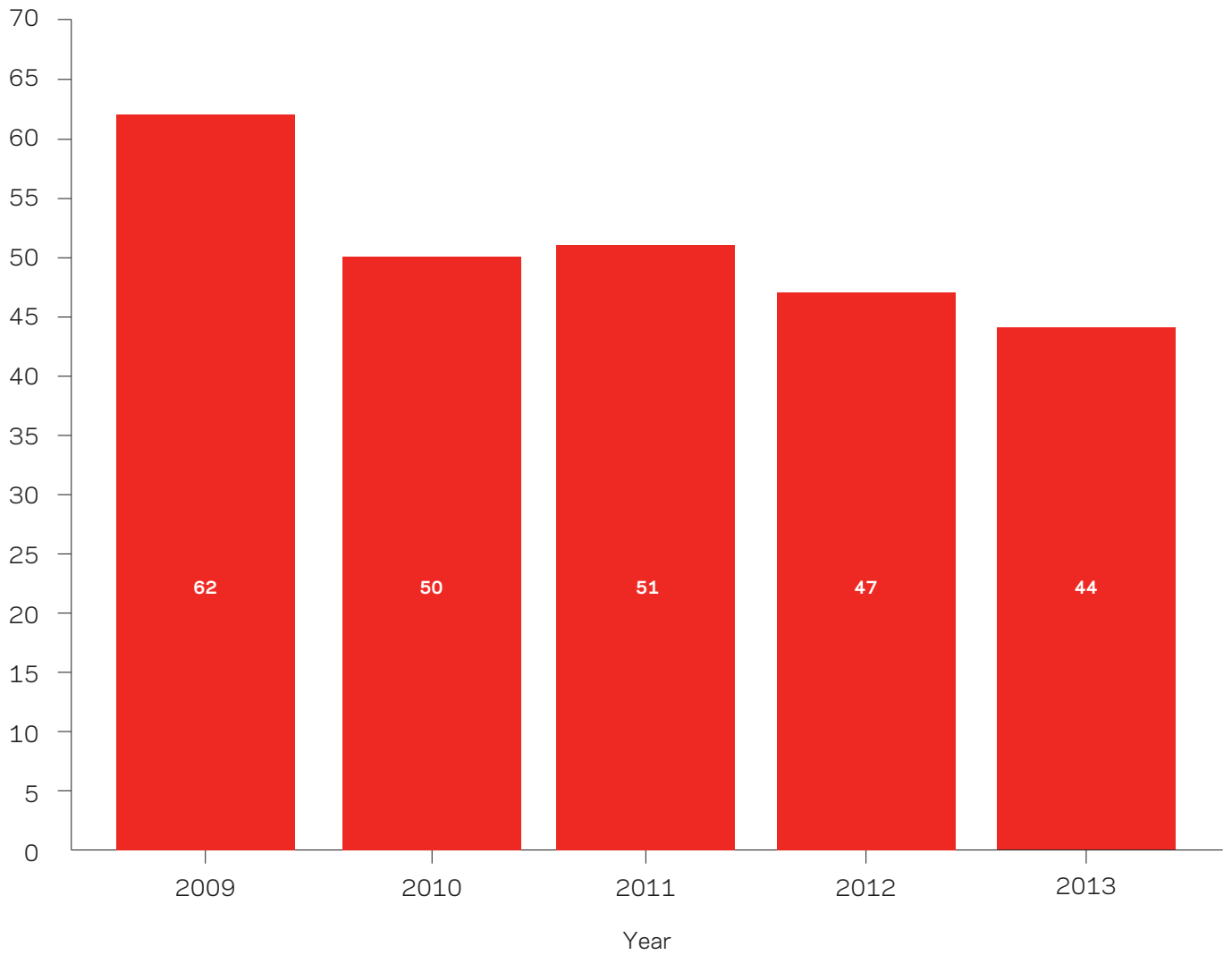
Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

Interestingly, the survey results in the past four years do tend to support the notion that there is an increasing sense of 'disconnectedness' with Asian people in New Zealand. Although the number of Asian people in New Zealand has been growing during this time, resulting in more opportunities for contact with people from Asia, for the past few years there has been a gradual **decline** in the proportion of New Zealanders who say they have 'a lot' or 'a fair amount' to do with Asian peoples or cultures¹¹.

10 In the past three years the number of permanent long-term arrivals from Asia has increased, from 27,042 in 2011 to 27,170 in 2012, and 28,070 in 2013. See Statistics New Zealand International Travel and Migration: September 2013

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

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



2. Negative representations of Asia and Asian people by the media

Findings from the online forum and the survey suggested that negative media stories about Asia and Asian people had contributed to cooling feelings towards people from Asia. Some people in the qualitative research felt that the media tended to portray Asian people in a negative light, and this was not balanced with positive news stories about Asians. They speculated that negative media coverage unfairly influenced New Zealanders to feel cooler towards Asia and Asian people living here.

“I think the media has to take some responsibility here. Also in times of hardship/recession my experience is that populations can become resentful.”

Female, 50 to 59 years old, non-New Zealand born

“I think the media has a lot to answer for in that New Zealanders are not particularly warm towards Asians, [because] they are generally portrayed in a less than positive way.”

Female, 25 to 29 years old, New Zealand born

“Media coverage in the last year hasn't been particularly positive, and has probably built more barriers between our cultures. Education does lead to better understanding and tolerance, but some people will never be willing to learn.”

Female, 40 to 49 years old, non-New Zealand born

People who took part in the qualitative phase felt that more balanced media coverage, for example including news of Asian ‘success stories’, would help to balance our views and assist in warming our feelings towards people from Asia. They gave some examples: how Asian investment had helped Canterbury agriculture, New Zealand students studying in Asia, and young Asians studying here, as well as export success stories showcasing New Zealand companies expanding into Asia.

“I believe any ‘cooling’ in attitude is from mass media coverage and news items. From the North Korean missile crisis, to Japan leaking radioactive water into the Pacific Ocean, to China and Japan at loggerheads over tiny islands – through to housing affordability, and the mass media’s continuing misattribution of the cause being Asian buyers – we’ve not exactly had a good year for positive Asian news items. We need more positive influences highlighted in mass media. Stories of people’s successes in Asian countries, as well as stories of Asian successes and positive influences here in New Zealand. And an occasional reminder of our shared histories that Asian immigrants have been here contributing, as long as European immigrants.”

Male, 40 to 49 years old, New Zealand born

In support of comments made during the qualitative forum, the survey results also showed an increase in the recall of negative media in 2013. Each year we ask survey respondents if they have seen, heard, or read anything about Asia-related events, issues, or people in the previous three months. There was a substantial increase in the recall of negative media coverage this year – 60 percent of New Zealanders recalled something negative in the media in 2013, compared with just 51 percent in 2012.

The Fonterra botulism scare, which took place at around the time of fieldwork, contributed greatly to the *increase in recall of negative media*. However, findings from both the telephone survey and the online forum suggested that other issues, unrelated to the botulism scare, influenced feelings of warmth towards Asian people in 2013. In particular, the results shown above suggested that comments in the media and in wider society about Asians buying property had had negative impacts on New Zealanders’ feelings towards Asian people. If all survey comments about Asian property purchases are grouped together to form a single theme, this puts the impact of Asian buyers on property prices in joint first place (26 percent) as a reason for believing that New Zealanders are less warm towards Asian people now. For the most part comments focused on Asian property buyers in general, not on purchases of homes for investment versus residential purposes. We discuss New Zealanders’ views of the impacts of Asian property buyers on house prices in the section *Perceived impacts of Asian house buyers on property prices*.

3. Economic concerns and comparisons made with Asian people

Although economic optimism had been climbing throughout 2013¹², some people who took part in the qualitative phase felt that many New Zealanders were still struggling financially, or had been struggling in recent times. They speculated that New Zealanders could have been feeling less warm towards Asians as a result of their own circumstances. They could have seen highly skilled Asians doing well financially, and somehow resented the comparison.

They could have (whether this is true or false) considered Asians to be doing better, making more money, and generally being less affected by adverse economic circumstances.

“This is only made worse by many New Zealanders falling on hard times, and maybe finding it harder to find jobs and/or acceptable housing.”

Female, 25 to 29 years old, New Zealand born

“The ‘feeling cooler’ is because we are now seeing way more ‘Asians’ in our society and the affluent ones are able to come over here in DROVES and bring all the family, whether it be for work, schooling or just buying up houses, it puts the local populace in a tight spot.”

Female, 60 to 69 years old, New Zealand born

“I think the reason people are feeling ‘cooler’ towards Asian people is jealousy in a way. We all see them driving round in their fancy cars, buying houses at ridiculous prices, making it near impossible for Kiwis to buy, and yet we hardly see any of them go to work. While this helps our economy it doesn’t help the people.”

Male, 30 to 34 years old, non-New Zealand born

“I think there is also some hostility towards Asians due to feelings of inferiority we may have in regards to schooling achievements etc. Asians are perceived to be very high achievers, whereas the average Kiwi is not, and perhaps we feel a bit defensive and threatened by this.”

Female, 30 to 34 years old, New Zealand born

“New Zealand is a small island country and most of us are very patriotic and love our country. The mass of Asian activity feels threatening, a bit like a ‘takeover bid’ i.e. we are losing control of our land and possible future. This, perhaps unfairly, influences how you feel about the individual [Asian] people. New Zealand needs investment in industry to survive and thrive but it has to be handled so that we still retain control of our future. Asians excel through hard work and determination, New Zealanders don’t seem to have the same drive so need to change to compete in the changing industry and workplace. All of this causes resentments, especially if we see ourselves losing out. While welcoming Asia we need to keep control otherwise resentment will continue to grow. The only way to feel warm about any culture is by getting to know them and this involves efforts by everyone. It takes a big effort... people these days hardly know their neighbours, we are all so mobile and busy in our daily lives.”

Female, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

People in the qualitative forum had few solutions to or suggestions for countering perceptions based on increased migration/visibility and comparing financial situations. However, they felt that overall better integration with, understanding of, and interactions with Asians would help to counter some of the resentment and cooler feelings towards Asians living in New Zealand. Some felt that negative media coverage strongly encouraged negative perceptions around increased migration and financial disparities.

12 The ONE News Colmar Brunton poll illustrated that when fieldwork was carried out in September 2013, economic optimism was at 57 percent, the highest figure seen since May 2010. Refer to <http://www.colmarbrunton.co.nz/index.php/polls-and-surveys/political-polls/one-news-colmar-brunton-poll>

Who thought New Zealanders felt warmer or cooler towards people from Asia?

The following groups were more likely than average (14 percent) to say that New Zealanders felt *warmer* towards people from Asia compared with 12 months earlier:

- Younger people, aged 15 to 19 years (26 percent)
- Those born outside New Zealand, including Asian and non-Asian people (19 percent)
- Those living in low-income households, with annual incomes up to \$30,000 (19 percent).

The following group was more likely than average (27 percent) to say that New Zealanders felt less warm towards people from Asia compared with 12 months earlier:

- Māori (44 percent).



New Zealanders' views on the importance of learning a language

New Zealanders' views on the importance of learning a language

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

The vast majority of New Zealanders thought it was valuable to learn another language. Chinese was widely regarded as the most valuable language for New Zealanders to learn, contrasting with the focus on teaching French in New Zealand secondary schools.

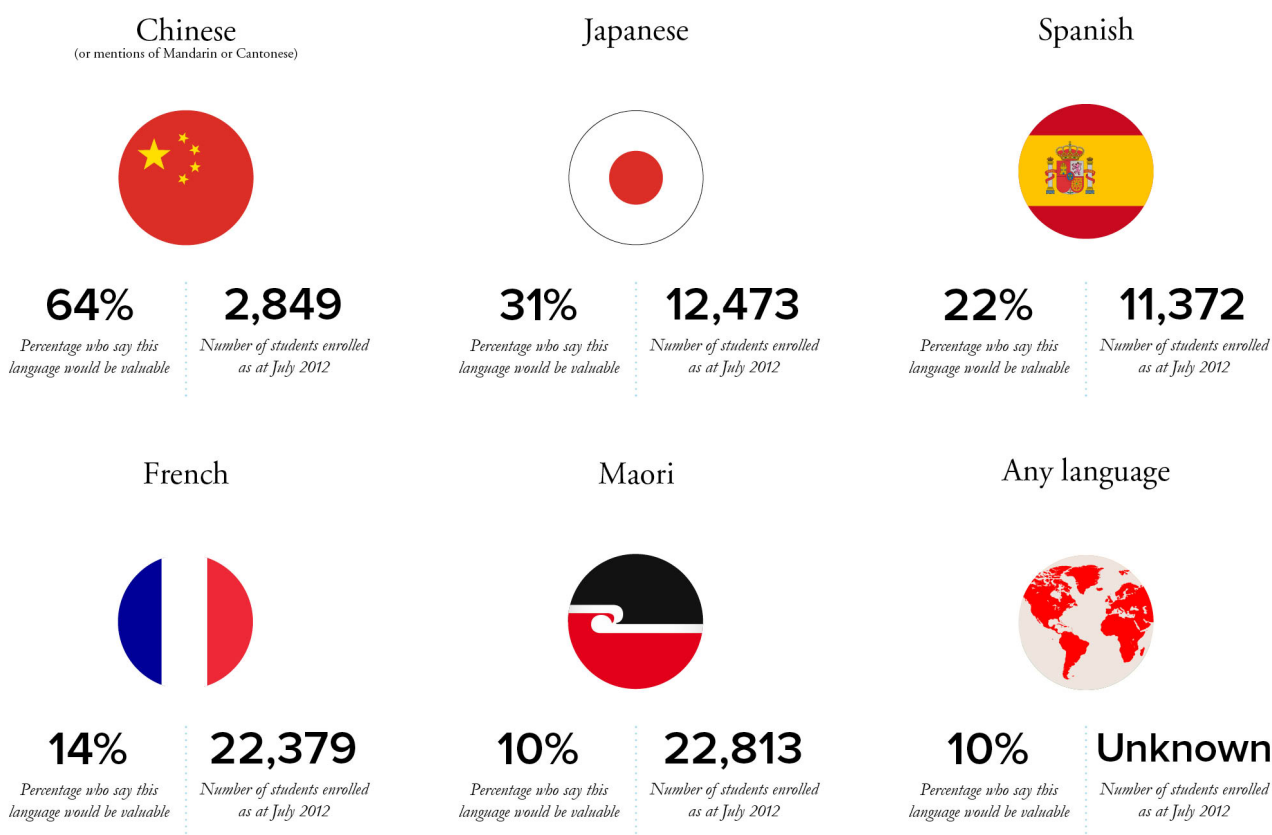
Key findings in this section were as follows:

- Almost all New Zealanders (93 percent) thought that it was valuable for people to learn another language
- 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 seen by survey respondents as being the most valuable language to learn, but it is in fifth place when it comes to the number of New Zealand secondary school students learning languages
- Those who took part in the qualitative forum believed that language learning had benefits both for our country and for people individually.

Is language learning important?

There was near universal agreement that learning another language was valuable.

In 2013 almost all New Zealanders (93 percent) thought it was valuable for people to learn another language. Of those who thought that learning another language was worthwhile, Chinese was seen as the most important language to learn.



English



7%

Percentage who say this language would be valuable

246,450

Number of students enrolled as at July 2012

German



7%

Percentage who say this language would be valuable

4,663

Number of students enrolled as at July 2012

Asian languages

(non-specific)



7%

Percentage who say this language would be valuable

N/A

Number of students enrolled as at July 2012

Indian languages



6%

Percentage who say this language would be valuable

Unknown

Number of students enrolled as at July 2012

These results showed that 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 secondary schools. The latest statistics published by the Ministry of Education¹³ show that French is the most commonly learnt language in New Zealand secondary schools, with 22,379 students enrolled. Of all the languages taught, Chinese is in fifth place, with just 2,849 enrolments (more than seven and a half times the number of secondary students learned French).

¹³ Please see Secondary School Subjects 2000-2012, available at http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/statistics/schooling/july_school_roll_returns/6052.

In the quantitative survey, improving trading links was the main reason for Chinese being valuable

In the telephone survey, those who thought it was valuable to learn Chinese were asked why they thought this language was worthwhile. The main reasons given were:

- The importance of a knowledge of Chinese to our trade links (27 percent)
- That Chinese is a widely spoken language (21 percent)
- That learning Chinese would enable New Zealanders to communicate with/understand Chinese people more easily (21 percent).

In the quantitative survey, learning French was seen to be beneficial mainly for travel purposes

In contrast, French was less likely to be seen as important for trading purposes, with 13 percent of those who thought that learning French was important mentioning trading links. Instead French was seen as valuable for travel purposes, with 29 percent citing this as a reason.

Those who took part in the qualitative forum believed that language learning had benefits both for our country and for people individually

We explored the topic of language learning further in our online forum, and found that people considered that learning a language benefited New Zealand as a whole (and individual New Zealanders) in a number of ways:

- Helping people to identify with another culture
- Connecting people and promoting understanding
- Assisting to make trade and employment connections between our country and others.

Asia (particularly China) was seen as important to our economy – as trade between the two countries increases, and due to the number of Chinese tourists coming to New Zealand. Because of this participants felt that Asian languages were useful for people living in New Zealand and interacting with Asians here, not just for people who intended to travel or work in other (Asian) countries.

“I think Chinese is, or will soon become, the most important second language for New Zealand kids to learn. Chinese is the most widely spoken language in the world, with almost a billion speakers worldwide (not just in China) and many large international business houses (e.g. Intel, Coca-Cola, Apple) employ and favour staff trained in Chinese. New Zealand is entering an era of increased trade with China and Asia in general, and it is appropriate and polite that we be able to communicate one-on-one with Asian business people. Engendering a respect for the language and culture of the region, and the ability to communicate effectively and efficiently can only help our economic prosperity and be mutually beneficial to all parties.”

Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

The online forum found that language learning was seen as valuable due to the economic opportunities that languages provide. For example, people felt that speaking a language (such as Chinese/Cantonese) could enhance employment opportunities for an individual, but also provided economic benefits to New Zealand as a whole (for example, by opening up business opportunities).

“Exposure to another language at a young age is vital, the earlier the better. I believe that Chinese should be compulsory as this would enable the next generation of Kiwis to communicate with what will be our largest trading/population group in the future – or at least have the basis of another vastly different language to English.”

Male, 40 to 49 years old, non-New Zealand born

In contrast, some people argued that English was the international language of business, and that it was therefore not necessary for English-speaking people to learn another language in order to interact with others on a business level. Nevertheless, they said, an understanding of cultural and business protocols would be important.

“I would want to know more in relation to Asian business values/culture and their methodology of how they conduct business in comparison to how business is conducted in New Zealand.”

Male, 40 to 49 years old, non-New Zealand born

Qualitative participants were divided over whether language learning should be compulsory

People in the qualitative forum mentioned that a basic understanding of te reo (particularly the pronunciation of place names and some regularly used words) was a good foundation for learning other languages. They were split on whether learning a language should be compulsory:

- Some felt it should be compulsory to ensure that people had a good understanding of ‘other cultures’ including Māori.

“I believe that learning another language should be compulsory from an early age and carried on right through their education. Chinese, in my mind, would be the most important language to be skilled in because China will be our biggest trading partner and will become our biggest resource for future tourism into New Zealand.”

Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

“I think learning another language is very important. I think the younger you start learning the better, so I think that it would be good to start in primary school, perhaps with Māori. I feel this is important because it is the language of the indigenous people. However, I feel that once a student gets to secondary level they should be able to pick the language themselves because learning is more effective if it’s something you want to learn. Having learnt a language in primary school, the foundations for learning a language should already be in place.”

Female, 25 to 29 years old, New Zealand born

- Others felt that people should be free to decide which language they chose to learn (and at what level), and that compulsion was unnecessary.

“I don’t think learning another language should be compulsory at the earlier school level. Maybe in intermediate onwards a language could become an option but the choice of language should be discussed [between] parents and the child. It is an advantage to learn any of the commonly used languages in the world. ”

Female, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

“I don’t think learning a language should be compulsory – we already know English, which is probably the most useful language to know, in that English is the language spoken in the highest number of countries (not by the most people). Most countries make an effort to learn English so I don’t feel there is a need for us to learn another one.”

Female, 30 to 34 years old, New Zealand born

There was no clear agreement on when was the best time to introduce language learning

The forum also explored the level at which people thought language learning should begin. People considered that learning a language was easier for people when they were younger, so some suggested that primary school was the ideal time to introduce languages (and the cultural aspects of Asian cultures, such as food and social customs) to students. However, others felt that it was only at secondary school level that people were old enough to make choices about what languages they would like to learn.

Those who believed that languages should be introduced at secondary level felt that students would have a better idea of their career and educational paths by that time, and could make considered choices about which languages would benefit them most.

“Language takes you into culture in a much different way. Start when you are young then learning is easier. Make it compulsory, starting at primary [level] but keep it going through the system.”

Male, 60 to 69 years old, New Zealand born

“Secondary school is a great place to learn another language, as by then a student has some idea of their possible career, and can choose for themselves if another language would be beneficial to their career.”

Male, 60 to 69 years old, New Zealand born

Regardless of when languages were introduced, people felt that learning about the culture, beliefs, and other aspects of a country or ethnicity were also important aspects of understanding. So, while language learning was important, knowing how to speak a language was not the only element that promoted better connections between cultures.

“To me learning another language should be an option but breaking out some cultural richness and interest at an earlier stage would perhaps be more balanced i.e. cultural experiences and interaction at a primary age.”

Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

Demographic differences in views about language learning

While learning another language was seen as valuable across all demographic groups, those in urban centres were more likely to think this was a valuable activity (94 percent, compared with 91 percent of those in provincial/rural areas). Older people were *less likely* to think that learning another language was valuable, although the vast majority still saw it as valuable (88 percent aged 60 years and over, compared with 94 percent aged under 60 years). Chinese was more likely to be mentioned as a valuable language to learn by the following groups:

- Men (70 percent, compared with 59 percent of women)
- People born outside New Zealand, including both Asian and non-Asian people (70 percent, compared with 62 percent of those born here)
- Those in urban centres (69 percent, compared with 58 percent of people in small towns/rural areas).



New Zealanders' views on investment from Asia

New Zealanders' views on investment from Asia

This section of the report looks at New Zealanders' views of investment from Asia.

Overall, the majority of New Zealanders thought that investments from Asia in New Zealand businesses were a boon for our economy. However, some believed that New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia – while they appreciated the benefits, they were keen for New Zealand to maintain ownership and control of assets and organisations.

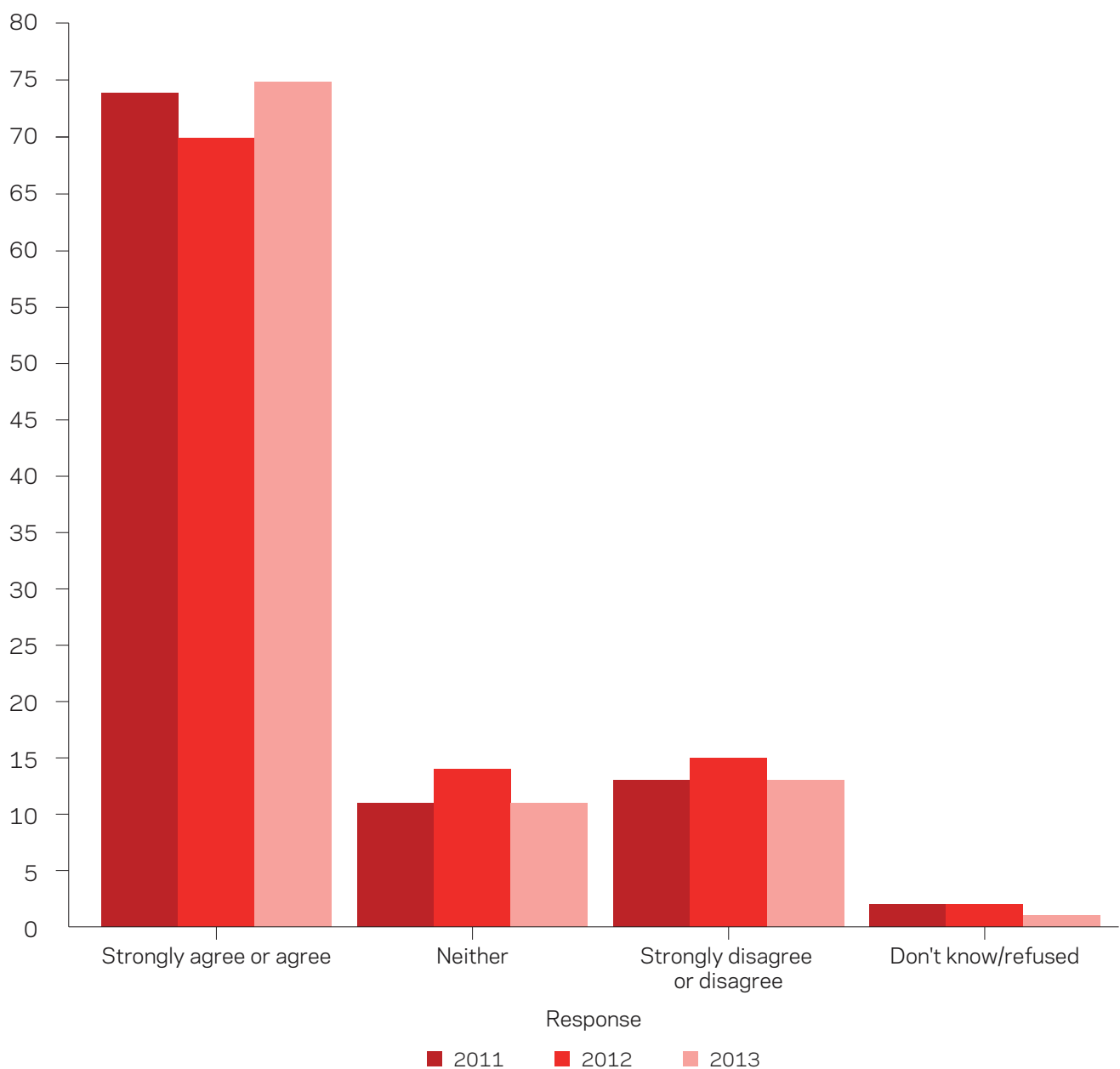
Key findings in this section were as follows:

- Most New Zealanders (75 percent) agreed that investments in businesses here by companies in Asia were good for our economy
- Most New Zealanders (74 percent) agreed that investment from Asia would have positive impacts on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years
- There was a sense among some New Zealanders that investment from Asia may have been going 'too far'. Roughly equal proportions agreed (36 percent) and disagreed (39 percent) that investment from Asia had gone too far
- Those who took part in the qualitative forum believed that overseas investment had helped our economy to grow and that it had benefited all New Zealanders. However, there was a sense among some that ownership and control of assets and organisations should remain in New Zealand.

Investment from Asia

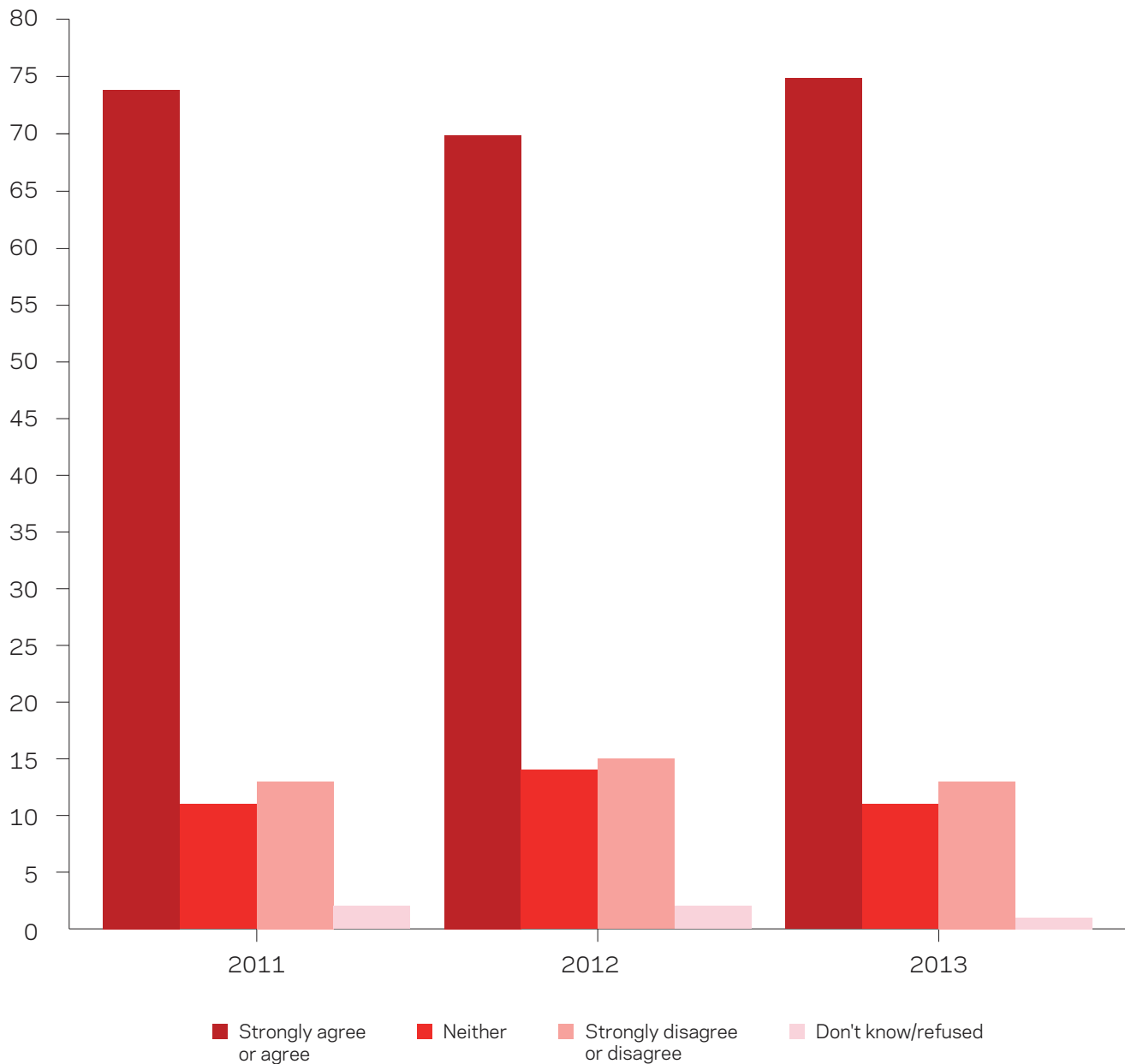
- Most New Zealanders agreed that investment in businesses here by companies in Asia was good for our economy.
- Three-quarters (75 percent) of New Zealanders agreed that it was good for our economy that companies in Asia invested in New Zealand businesses; a significant increase of 5 percentage points since the previous year.

It is good for our economy that companies in Asia invest in New Zealand's businesses



Base: All New Zealanders (n=1,000)

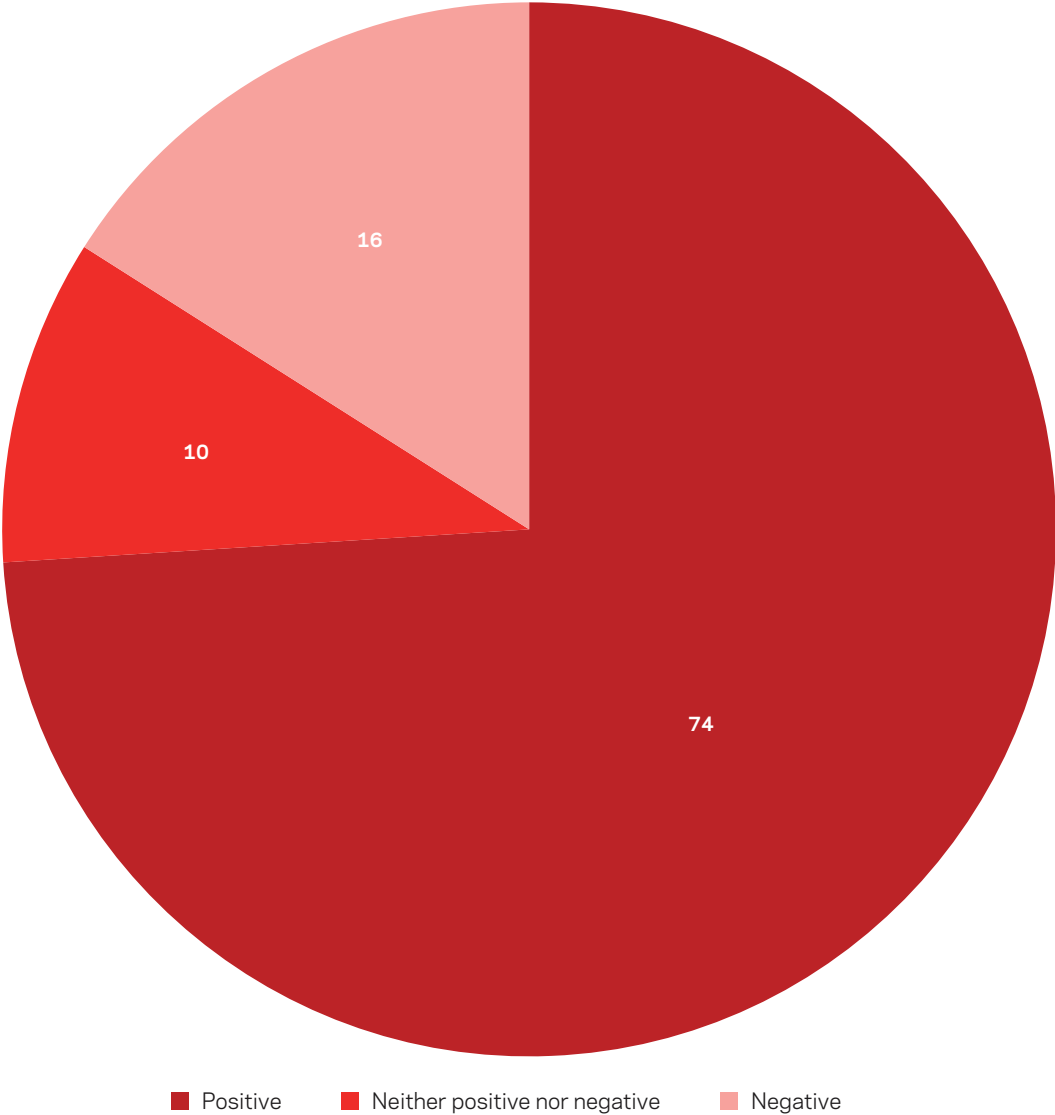
It is good for our economy that companies in Asia invest in New Zealand's businesses



Base: All New Zealanders (n=1,000)

Similarly, three-quarters (74 percent) of New Zealanders agreed that investment from Asia would have positive impacts on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years, and just 16 percent disagreed.

**Impact of investment from Asia on
New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years**



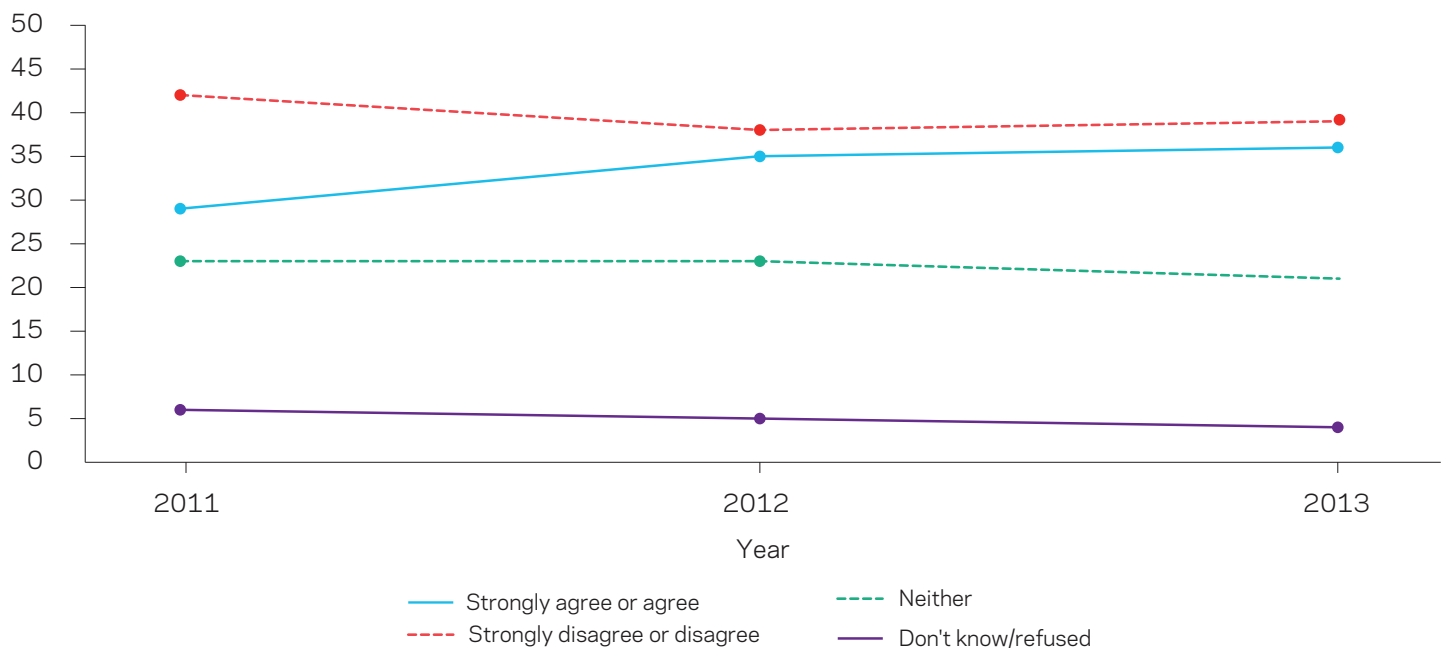
Base: All New Zealanders, excluding those who said 'don't know' (n=966)

Note: Question was asked for the first time in this year's survey

New Zealanders appeared more positive than Australians about investment from Asia; however, there was a sense among some New Zealanders that investment from Asia may have been going 'too far'.

New Zealanders appeared more positive than Australians about investment from Asia. The 2013 Lowy Institute Poll¹⁴ found that the majority of Australians (57 percent) considered that 'the Australian government is allowing too much investment from China', an attitude largely unchanged since 2010¹⁵. In New Zealand, roughly equal proportions agreed (36 percent) and disagreed (39 percent) that investment from Asia had gone too far.

**Whether investment from Asia is going to far -
How strongly do you agree or disagree that New Zealand
is allowing too much investment from Asia**



Base: All New Zealanders (n=1,000 per year)

Although the New Zealand question did not ask specifically about investment from China, we know from previous years' surveys that when New Zealanders think about Asia, China is one of the countries that first comes to mind¹⁶.

14 A nationally representative opinion survey of 1,002 Australian adults conducted between 4 and 20 March 2013.

15 See <http://lowyinstitute.org/publications/lowy-institute-poll-2013>.

16 See New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples in 2012 (released March 2013) - http://asianz.org.nz/sites/asianz.org.nz/files/Perceptions_of_Asia_report_2013.pdf.

At what point does investment from Asia go ‘too far’?

During the qualitative forum we explored these survey responses further, to try to uncover the point at which New Zealanders felt that investment from Asia might have been going ‘too far’. Below is a summary of the views of participants in the qualitative forum.

Overseas investment allows our economy to grow and benefits all New Zealanders

In the qualitative phase, people had mostly positive views of foreign investment (not just from Asian investors but also from other regions). People perceived that overseas investment was necessary for our small nation’s economy to grow and thrive. Many regarded Asian investment in our technological, agricultural, and other sectors as very important because it had allowed our economy to grow, benefiting all of New Zealand.

“I think Asian investment is important because we cannot, a country our size and population, be ‘self- sufficient’. The wealth is not here so we need to get some overseas investors. I believe the Greens and Labour instil unnecessary fear in some people about ‘overseas investors’ which is ridiculous. We live in a global economy and we’d be in a very sorry state if we isolated ourselves by denying foreign investment.”

Female, 40 to 49 years old, New Zealand born

However, investment should not mean that ownership and control are lost

However, the main reservation that people had was around control of New Zealand assets and organisations – that control and ownership should remain New Zealand based.¹⁷ That is, the level of investment should not allow complete or majority foreign ownership and control. In addition, people wanted to see employment opportunities for New Zealanders retained.

“I don’t feel there is a difference between any country investing in New Zealand. I would feel the same about US or China investing here, but I think we do need to protect our assets and keep them New Zealand owned.”

Female, 30 to 34 years old, New Zealand born

This is because New Zealanders wanted our assets and organisations to retain their essential ‘New Zealand-ness’ and qualities, while still benefiting from overseas investment. Foreign investment was seen as a delicate balance between the positive impacts on our economic growth and any negative effects on New Zealanders (loss of control, employment, and assets). Some people in the qualitative phase were happy with the idea of joint ownership and control, and mentioned some examples from other countries where ownership had been carefully regulated to avoid foreign control.

“I believe that investment is important in any economy; however, I do believe that due to the size of the New Zealand economy there do need to be checks and balances in place... that any international investment needs to be tempered with protective measures. A good idea in my opinion would be similar to the UAE investment model, where the international investor has to partner with a citizen in the equity holding of the investment. This would ensure that we do not, as New Zealanders, end up just being employees in our own country. So in answer to the question, I believe that more than 50 percent ownership in a New Zealand investment is a step too far.”

Male, 40 to 49 years old, non-New Zealand born

New Zealanders felt strongly that New Zealand’s assets should be retained for the benefit of New Zealanders. They felt that once assets were sold to foreign owners, there would be little ability to regain control of these assets again. They felt that it was important to pre-empt foreign ownership and control by regulating and monitoring the level of foreign investment by Asian (and other overseas) investors.

“We do need to have checks and balances in place so New Zealanders aren’t displaced in their own country.”

Female, 60 to 69 years old, New Zealand born

¹⁷ This discussion focused on foreign investment in general, not on the partial sale of state assets (Air New Zealand, Mighty River Power, Meridian Energy, and Contact Energy).

“It’s important for investments from Asia and other countries, I think people think differently about which countries invest because they see Asia as growing and guaranteed to keep us out of recession, but then also feel there is the possibility that they are going to take something away from us, like the Mighty River Power asset sale.”

Male, 30 to 34 years old, New Zealand born

Recent media attention on Asian residential property investors had raised concerns among some New Zealanders

While the discussion above related to selling New Zealand’s assets to overseas investors, people also associated ‘foreign ownership’ with residential housing sales to Asians. People felt that both asset sales and residential housing purchases by Asians could go ‘too far’. Qualitative participants felt that owning a home was part of the New Zealand way of life. New Zealanders felt strongly about any barriers to owning their own homes. Media attention on non-residents (particularly Asians) buying New Zealand residential housing (either as investments or to live in themselves) led some New Zealanders in the forum specifically to mention excluding non-residents from purchasing residential housing. Many people in the forum felt that this type of investment was ‘a step too far’ for them.

“House purchases should be limited, I think you should own a house here if you work here and pay taxes.”

Female, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

“To me investment is okay up to the point that it starts to put negative pressures on the environment, employment and housing.”

Male, 50 to 59 years old, New Zealand born

The impacts of Asian investment on New Zealand property is discussed further in the section Perceived impacts of Asian house buyers on property prices.

Who was more or less positive about investment from Asia?

Asian investment in New Zealand’s businesses.
The following groups were more likely than average (75 percent) to agree that it was good for our economy that companies in Asia invested in New Zealand’s businesses:

- Asian people (91 percent)
- Those born outside New Zealand, including Asian and non-Asian people (87 percent)
- Those living in high-income households, with annual incomes over \$100,000 (83 percent).

The following groups were more likely than average (13 percent) to *disagree* that it was good for our economy that companies in Asia invested in New Zealand’s businesses:

- Those aged 60 years or more (19 percent)
- Those living in small towns and rural areas (21 percent).

Whether investment from Asia would have positive impacts on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years.

The following groups were more likely than average (71 percent) to say that investments from Asia would have positive impacts on New Zealand in the next 10 to 20 years:

- Those born outside New Zealand, including Asian and non-Asian people (79 percent)
- Wellington residents (86 percent)
- Those living in high-income households, with annual incomes over \$100,000 (82 percent).

Whether New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia. The following groups were more likely than average (36 percent) to agree that New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia:

- Māori (52 percent)
- Those living in small towns and rural areas (42 percent, compared with 33 percent living in the main cities).

The following groups were more likely than average (39 percent) to *disagree* that New Zealand was allowing too much investment from Asia:

- Wellington residents (52 percent)
- Those living in households with annual incomes over \$70,000 (47 percent).



Perceived impacts of Asian house buyers on property prices

Perceived impacts of Asian house buyers on property prices

This section of the report looks at attitudes towards the impacts of Asian house buyers on rising house prices.

During fieldwork there was considerable media coverage of a new Labour Party policy to restrict foreigners buying investment property in New Zealand. There were also suggestions made in the media that Asian buyers, in particular, were responsible for rising house prices. In the survey we included a question to gauge New Zealanders' views about Asian house buyers in general (both investors and those buying houses in which to live). Interestingly, while one in three New Zealanders believed that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices, a much larger proportion *disagreed* that property prices were rising because Asian people were buying properties here. The reverse was true in Auckland, however, where property prices had risen at a higher rate relative to the New Zealand average.

Key findings in this section were as follows:

- New Zealanders were more likely to disagree than agree that rising house prices were due to Asian people buying properties (33 percent agreed vs. 43 percent disagreed)
- The opposite was true in Auckland – Aucklanders were more likely to agree than disagree that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices (46 percent agreed vs. 31 percent disagreed)
- Less than a third of those living outside Auckland (28 percent) agreed that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices (48 percent disagreed).

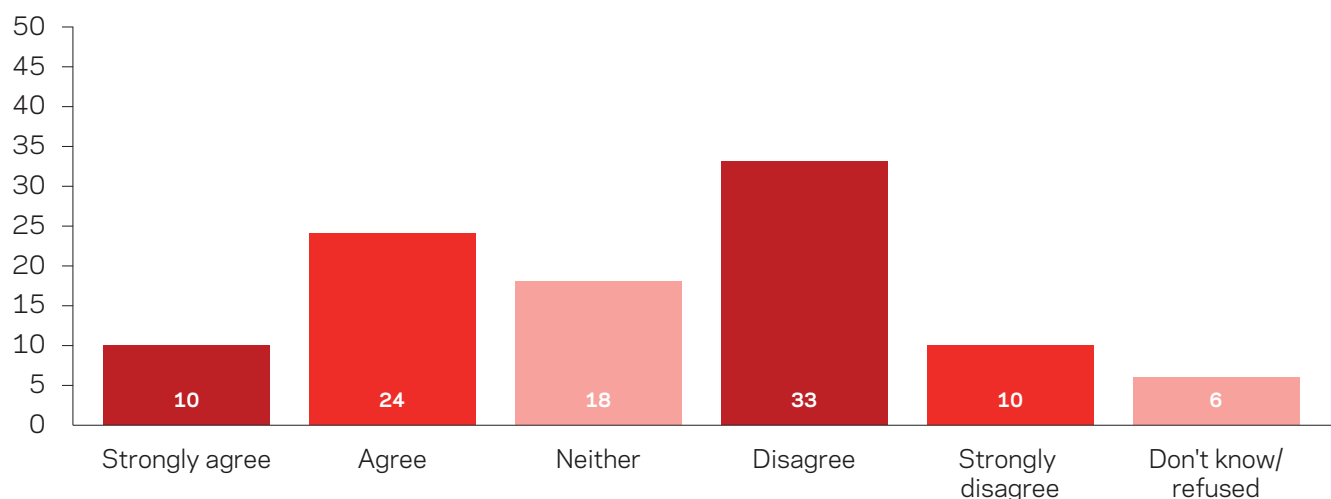
Perceived impacts of Asian house buyers on property prices

Overall, New Zealanders were more likely to disagree than agree that Asian people were responsible for driving up house prices.

House prices were a consistent feature of news headlines in 2013, with property prices reportedly rising an average of 8.1 percent over the previous year¹⁸. The role that Asian buyers were seen to play in the cost of housing attracted considerable media attention¹⁹, as did the announcement in late July of a new Labour Party policy that would prevent buyers from other countries buying existing homes in New Zealand²⁰. Property issues were dwarfed by the Fonterra botulism scare in people's recall of recent media stories about Asia. Close to six times as many people recalled the botulism story as stories about the impacts of Asian buyers on property prices.

However, the impacts of property issues on overall feelings of warmth towards Asian people still came through quite strongly in the survey findings, with 26 percent of those who believed that New Zealanders felt less warm towards people from Asia mentioning property issues as a likely cause. This was one of the top reasons given for a decrease in warmth towards Asian people, along with the belief that there were 'too many' Asians in New Zealand (also mentioned by 26 percent of those who felt we were less warm towards Asian people in 2013). Despite the relatively high profile of property prices and the strong emotions it elicited among some, New Zealanders were actually more likely to disagree than agree that rising house prices were due to Asian people buying properties (43 percent disagreed vs. 33 percent agreed).

Impact of Asian buyers on house prices – How strongly do you agree or disagree that Asian people are responsible for rising house prices?



Base: All New Zealanders (n=1,000)

18 <http://tvnz.co.nz/business-news/auckland-house-prices-crazy-says-shearer-5529316>.

19 Examples of the coverage this issue has received in mainstream media can be found at http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10895526, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10907423.

20 <http://tvnz.co.nz/national-news/labour-s-radical-plan-block-foreigners-buying-houses-5520597>.

Concern about Asian property buyers was concentrated in Auckland. In August 2013, Quotable Value Ltd data showed that house prices had risen at a higher rate in Auckland than elsewhere in New Zealand (12.8 percent in Auckland, compared with 8.1 percent across New Zealand as a whole).

These higher-than-average price increases may have contributed to a greater concern among Aucklanders about Asian people buying property.

- Aucklanders were much more likely than others to agree that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices (46 percent agreed vs. 31 percent disagreed).
- Those in Wellington (16 percent), Christchurch (21 percent), and rural parts of New Zealand (26 percent) were *less likely* to believe that Asian buyers were responsible for increasing house prices.
- Less than a third of all those living outside Auckland (28 percent) agreed that Asian people were responsible for rising house prices.



Background, methodology, and survey sample profiles

Background, methodology, and survey 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 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 a relationship 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 this year focused on the following questions, each of which is covered in a separate section of this report:

- **Knowledge and importance:**
 - How much knowledge do New Zealanders have of Asia?
 - What do people think about when they think of Asia?
 - Is Asia seen as important to New Zealand's future?
 - In what ways will a relationship with Asia benefit New Zealand?
 - Do New Zealanders believe it is important to develop ties with Asia?
 - Is New Zealand doing enough to engage with Asia?
- **Warmth towards Asia and Asian people:**
 - How do New Zealanders feel about people from Asia?
 - How much involvement do New Zealanders have with Asian people?
- **Language learning:**
 - Do New Zealanders think it is valuable to learn another language? Why?
- **Investment:**
 - What are New Zealanders' attitudes towards Asian investment in New Zealand?
- **Property prices:**
 - Do New Zealanders think Asian buyers are responsible for rising house prices?

Methodology

One thousand telephone interviews were carried out among a random sample of New Zealanders aged 15 years and over from 1 August to 5 September 2013. 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). An 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 a different 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 will 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 the Sample Profiles.

Other notes

- Within the body of this report sub-group analyses are included to add clarity to the results. Sub-group 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 among a sample of those who had taken 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 report 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 a randomly selected subset of people to take part in the discussion (while ensuring that a range of age, gender, warmth ratings, and other criteria were included). Of this subset, 50 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. 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. Colmar Brunton moderators probed and sought clarification from respondents if they felt 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 (3 and 4 October 2013). Each day two questions were loaded. The structure was as follows:

Day 1

- Understanding Asia and where people get information
- Views on learning a language

Day 2

- Views on the importance of Asian investment in New Zealand
- Views on when this might go 'too far.'

After two days, the forum was closed and respondents could not go back into the questions. Comments from the forum have been used throughout the report to illustrate key findings. These are attributed by gender, age, and whether people were born in New Zealand or not.

SAMPLE PROFILES

GENDER AND AGE		
Gender	Unweighted Percent (n=1,000)	Weighted Percent (n=1,000)
Male	47%	48%
Female	53%	52%
Age	Percent (n=1,000)	Percent (n=1,000)
Under 30 years	12%	26%
30–39 years	13%	15%
40–49 years	19%	23%
50–59 years	21%	16%
60–69 years	20%	13%
70 years or more	15%	7%
Ethnicity	Unweighted Percent (n=1,000)	Weighted Percent (n=1,000)
New Zealand European	79%	72%
New Zealand Māori	9%	10%
Pacific	2%	5%
Asian	4%	7%
Non New Zealand European	8%	8%
Other	4%	5%
70 years or more	15%	7%
Ethnicity	Unweighted Percent (n=1,000)	Weighted Percent (n=1,000)
Auckland	27%	29%
Wellington	8%	9%
Christchurch	9%	9%
Hamilton	4%	4%
Dunedin	6%	3%
Provincial city	19%	19%
Town/rural	27%	26%