


# PERCEPTIONS OF ASIA

New Zealanders'  
Perceptions of Asia  
and Asian Peoples  
**Released June 2025**





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## Comment from the Chief Executive

This year's *New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* report arrives at a significant moment for New Zealand-Asia relations. It marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of dialogue relations with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), 50 years of New Zealand-Viet Nam relations, and 60 years with Singapore. It's also the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Asia New Zealand Foundation Te Whītau Tūhono.

When the Foundation was established in 1994, many New Zealanders were only beginning to recognise the potential impact of Asia's rise. There were concerns that New Zealand's small size and geographic distance could leave it vulnerable or overlooked. Thirty years on, these concerns have largely given way to optimism. Today, our ties with Asia are broader, deeper and more mutually beneficial than ever.

Public understanding of Asia has grown significantly. Nearly 60 percent of New Zealanders now feel knowledgeable about Asia, up from 33 percent just over a decade ago. People are also more connected through family, friends, travel and professional ties. These personal and cultural connections are helping to shape a more confident and outward-looking New Zealand.

However, amid these encouraging trends, this year's survey also reflects unease about growing global instability. Many New Zealanders express concern over strategic competition between major powers, especially those with nuclear capabilities. Given our reliance on a stable international environment for trade and prosperity, these concerns are well-founded.

In addition to geopolitical tensions, New Zealanders are increasingly worried about the impact of misinformation, climate change, cyber-attacks and authoritarianism in the Asia region. These global challenges underscore the importance of international partnerships and informed engagement.

Encouragingly, more New Zealanders are recognising the strategic importance of Southeast Asia. Countries such as Singapore, Viet Nam, Malaysia, the Philippines, Indonesia and Thailand are viewed as trusted and friendly partners. Nations like Japan, South Korea and Singapore are also seen as key security and defence partners.



India is increasingly regarded as a rising power and a critical strategic partner for New Zealand's future.

Our economic strength, social cohesion and ability to respond to global challenges will increasingly depend on how well we understand and engage with Asia. The *Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey, now in its 28<sup>th</sup> year, remains a vital resource. It offers a rich, longitudinal view of public attitudes across demographics, regions and sectors, helping to inform both public dialogue and policymaking.

Most importantly, the survey invites all New Zealanders to consider our place in a changing world. As a diverse, outward-facing society, we can engage with Asia reactively, or we can do so proactively, with curiosity, confidence and cultural acumen.

As Chief Executive of the Asia New Zealand Foundation, I invite everyone to read this year's report. It is more than a snapshot of opinion; it is a window into New Zealand's evolving relationship with one of the most consequential regions of our time.

### Suzannah Jessep

Chief Executive  
Asia New Zealand Foundation  
Te Whītau Tūhono

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## Executive summary

### Asia's importance to New Zealand's future

The latest *New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey underscores the growing importance of Asia to New Zealand's future. Four in five New Zealanders consider it important for New Zealand to develop political, economic and social ties with Asia, compared with only two in three New Zealanders thinking this way in 2019.

While North Asia continues to be considered the most important sub-region of Asia to New Zealand, primarily because of strong trade and economic ties, Southeast Asia and South Asia are growing in importance.

China and Japan continue to be considered the most important Asian countries for New Zealand's future, followed by India, Singapore and South Korea.

### Building relationships with Asia

Most New Zealanders think it is important for New Zealand to invest energy and resources into building partnerships with Asian countries, and one in three think this is very important.

Japan is considered a top priority for relationship building, followed by China, India, South Korea and Singapore.

Trade and economic opportunity drive interest in building relationships with these countries. Their major power status also matters, along with the potential for innovation and technology transfers.

### Connections with Asia in daily life

Over half of New Zealanders feel connected to Asian culture in their daily lives, a result consistent with previous years.

Ninety-two percent of New Zealanders think that having confidence in dealing with people from Asian cultures is at least somewhat important for New Zealand's future workforce. While 76 percent of New Zealanders feel at least 'fairly confident' in dealing with people of Asian backgrounds, one in five New Zealanders lack confidence in their ability to relate.

Despite the high importance attached to engaging with people from Asia, the perceived importance of understanding Asian languages, cultures and societies for our future workforce has declined. This is a worrying development as these skills often underpin confidence.

### Friend or threat

Since 2018 we have asked whether countries are seen as friendly or threatening to New Zealand. This year's survey shows that Japan, Singapore, the Philippines and South Korea continue to be considered New Zealand's best friends in Asia, and all received higher ratings than in previous years. Significantly, all Southeast Asian countries also saw a considerable boost in perceived friendliness from previous survey results. North Korea continues to be seen as the region's main threat to New Zealand.

While New Zealanders' perceptions of China were increasingly positive in November 2024, by March 2025 – following China's naval exercises in the Tasman Sea and the signing of a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement with the Cook Islands – perceptions were once again net negative.



Similarly, New Zealanders' threat perceptions of the United States rose following the outcome of the US presidential election in November 2024. By March 2025, following the announcement of US tariffs on major trade partners and changes in US foreign policy towards Ukraine, threat perceptions were on par with friend perceptions, a first for the United States since this question was initially asked.

### Defence and security

Asian countries are seen as increasingly important defence and security partners for New Zealand. As in previous years, Japan, South Korea and Singapore continue to be considered New Zealand's most important defence and security partners in Asia, with the perceived importance of each growing alongside Southeast Asian countries across the board.

Two in three New Zealanders are concerned about the possibility of military conflict in Asia, but express mixed views about which conflict is most likely to occur in the next ten years.

When it comes to whether New Zealand should increase its own defence spending, New Zealanders are also divided. Thirty-seven percent believe the government spends the right amount on defence and 35 percent say it should spend more.<sup>1</sup>

New Zealanders' views of AUKUS – the security partnership between the United States, Australia and the United Kingdom – are also mixed, but tend more positive than negative. Thirty-five percent of New Zealanders think the arrangement will make the Asia region safer, while only seven percent think it will make the region less safe.

### Asia's impact on New Zealand

New Zealanders expect tourism from Asia to have a positive impact on New Zealand in the coming years. Technology and innovation, economic growth and inbound investment from Asia to New Zealand are also expected to impact New Zealand positively. Asia's potential environmental impact on New Zealand, however, remains an ongoing concern.

### Media

The survey shows that those who consume Asia-related media content have greater knowledge of Asia, feel more connected with Asia, and attach greater importance to New Zealand's relationships in the region.

Survey findings highlight declining media recall of Asia-related content, with recall halving between 2010 and 2024. This is due in part to a decline in the consumption of mainstream traditional media and increasing consumption of social media and websites.

At the same time the proportion of New Zealanders who think there is too little media coverage of Asia has risen significantly: for the first time more New Zealanders think there is too little Asia content than think there is sufficient coverage.

Finding media channels that reach a broad range of New Zealanders is likely to be an ongoing challenge.

1 Note this question was part of a March 2025 snap poll of 1,000 New Zealanders.

## Our approach

The *New Zealanders' Perceptions of Asia and Asian Peoples* survey is a flagship longitudinal survey documenting New Zealand's engagement with Asia.

Now in its 28<sup>th</sup> year, the survey provides New Zealand's research and international affairs community, media, government officials and the public with insights into New Zealanders' connections to and perceptions of Asia. The survey informs New Zealand public discourse on Asia and the Foundation's plan of work to equip New Zealanders to excel in Asia.

While maintaining the longitudinal nature of the survey, the questionnaire has evolved to gain insights into key relationships with Asian countries and other topical issues. The findings from these newer questions are relevant for a range of sectors in New Zealand and for New Zealand decision-makers who are shaping the future of New Zealand-Asia relations.

This report presents the results from a survey of 2,300 New Zealanders aged 15 years and over, conducted between 6 November and 4 December 2024. Survey results have been weighted using 2023 Census data so that they are representative of New Zealanders by age, gender, ethnicity and geography.

To gain further insight into the impact of foreign policy developments in China and the United States following US elections, a supplementary 'mini-poll' of 1,000 New Zealanders was conducted between 6 March and 10 March 2025. These results have also been weighted using 2023 Census data. Findings from this mini-poll have been identified as such in the report.

## Questionnaire additions in 2024

The 2024 survey questionnaire contained some new questions to offer insight into perceptions of the following:

- Military conflicts most likely to occur in Asia in the next ten years.
- The impact of AUKUS on the Asia region.
- The three Asian countries New Zealand could put extra effort into developing relationships with, and reasons why.
- Whether New Zealand's economic interests or democratic values are more important at times of tension in relationships with Asia.
- What New Zealand should prioritise in its relationship with India.
- Confidence in dealing with people from Asian cultures.
- The Asian language New Zealanders would most like to learn, and the most helpful way of learning and/or retaining that language.
- Asia-related topics recalled in the media in recent months.
- The most important regions for New Zealand media to have foreign correspondents.

There were minor changes to survey questions and response options, and removal of some questions to make way for the new.



Look out for this marker to see new questions added in this survey.

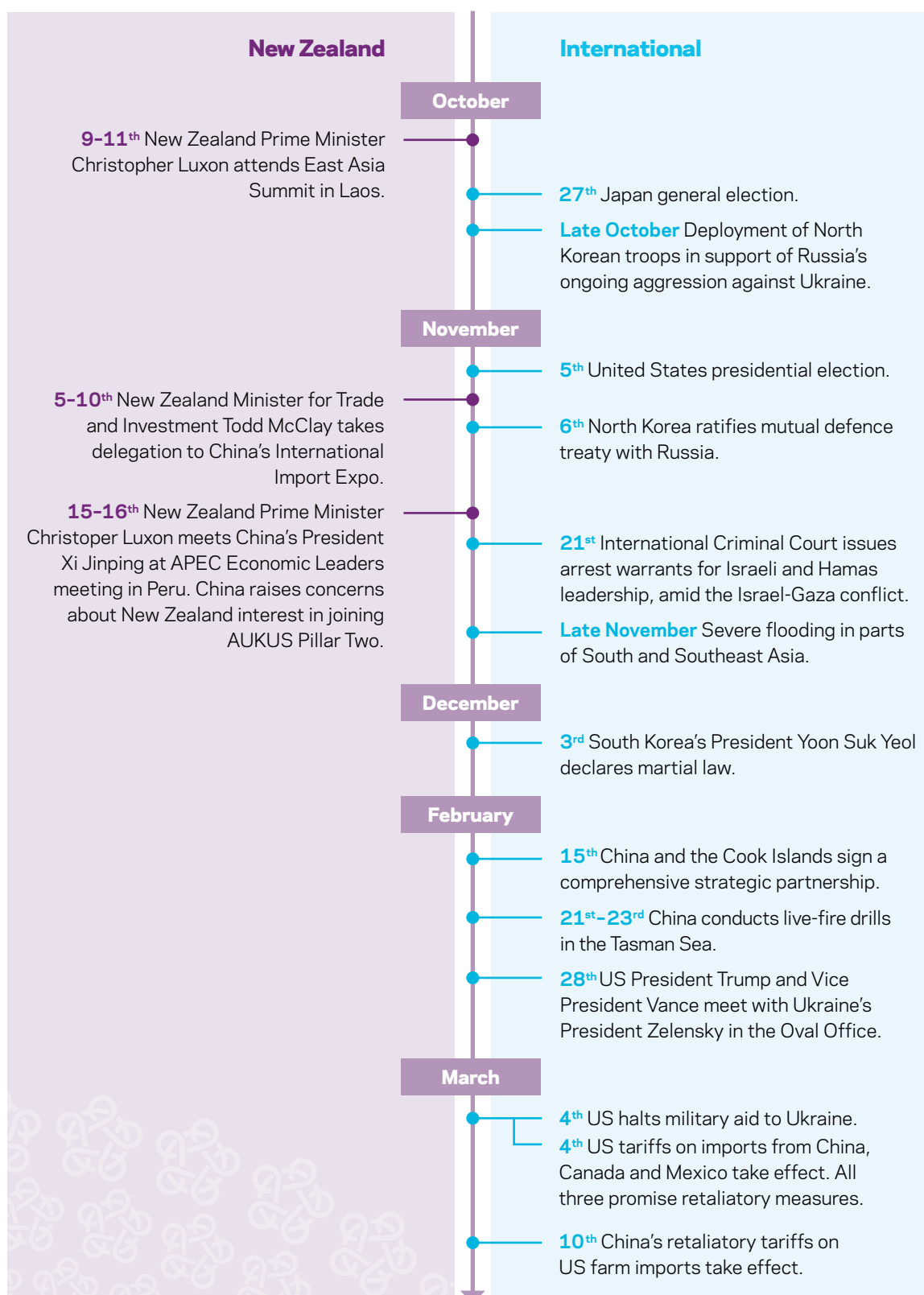
## Context for the survey

Events happening during the year and at the time of fieldwork inevitably influence survey responses. The following events, issues and media reports occurred over the survey periods and may have impacted New Zealanders' perceptions and responses.



**FIG. 1: EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD IN LATE 2024-2025**

Survey fieldwork 6 November–4 December 2024 and 6 March–10 March 2025









# PART 1: SETTING THE SCENE

This section looks at New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia knowledge levels and capability, as well as New Zealanders' sense of connectedness with the region. It also includes a spotlight on the New Zealand-ASEAN relationship at 50 years.







# Importance of Asia to New Zealand's future

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**"South Korea** is a stable country  
with aligned values, safe to visit and  
immigration/tourism is welcomed."

Female, 25-29 years, New Zealand European,  
Bay of Plenty



# Key findings

The importance of developing **political, economic** and **social ties** with Asia has grown significantly over the last five years.

**China** and **Japan** continue to be seen as the most important Asian countries to New Zealand's future, followed by **India**.

**North Asia** is considered the critical sub-region for New Zealand's future. The importance of **Southeast Asia** is also increasing, while **South Asia** holds steady.



## The importance of growing ties with Asia has increased over the last five years

Four in five New Zealanders (81 percent) believe that developing political, economic and social ties with the peoples and countries of Asia is important, with nearly four in ten (38 percent) rating it as very important. Fewer than one in ten (nine percent) consider developing ties with Asia unimportant.

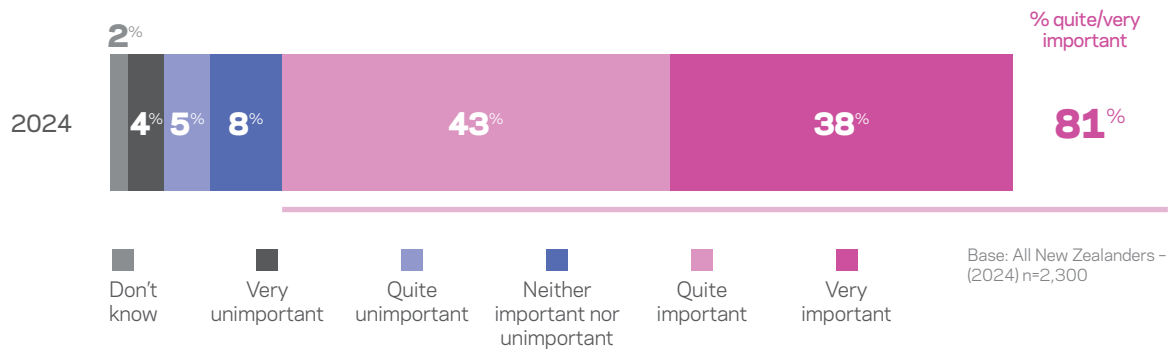
The perceived importance of developing ties with Asia has increased significantly over the past five years. In 2019, when this question was first asked, 67 percent rated developing ties as important. This has increased to 81 percent today.

New Zealanders of Asian heritage attach greater importance to developing ties than those of other backgrounds (85 percent and 80 percent respectively), as do older generations (89 percent important for those over 60 compared with 74 percent among the under 30s).

The perceived importance of developing ties with Asia is also higher among those with knowledge of Asia and/or with stronger Asia connections.

### FIG. 2: IMPORTANCE OF NEW ZEALAND DEVELOPING TIES WITH ASIA

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





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## Asia's perceived importance to New Zealand's future continues to grow

New Zealanders consider Asia to be the second most important region to New Zealand's future, after Australia. This has consistently been the case since Australia was introduced as an option in 2009.

In this year's survey, 79 percent consider Asia to be important, up four percent from the year prior. The number of New Zealanders seeing the region as very important has increased by the same amount.

Those of Asian heritage are most likely to think that Asia is important to New Zealand's future, with 89 percent saying so. Asia's perceived importance increases with age: 70 percent of under 30s consider Asia to be important to

New Zealand's future, compared with 88 percent of those aged 60 years and over. Men rate the importance of Asia more highly than women (86 percent compared with 73 percent).

New Zealanders who have exposure to Asia attach greater importance to the region than others. Ninety percent of those who have seen media content about Asia in the last three months consider Asia important to New Zealand's future, compared with 70 percent of those who have not seen any media.

There are also differences between urban and rural areas. Eighty-two percent of New Zealanders living in larger cities consider Asia to be important to New Zealand's future, compared with 73 percent of rural New Zealanders.

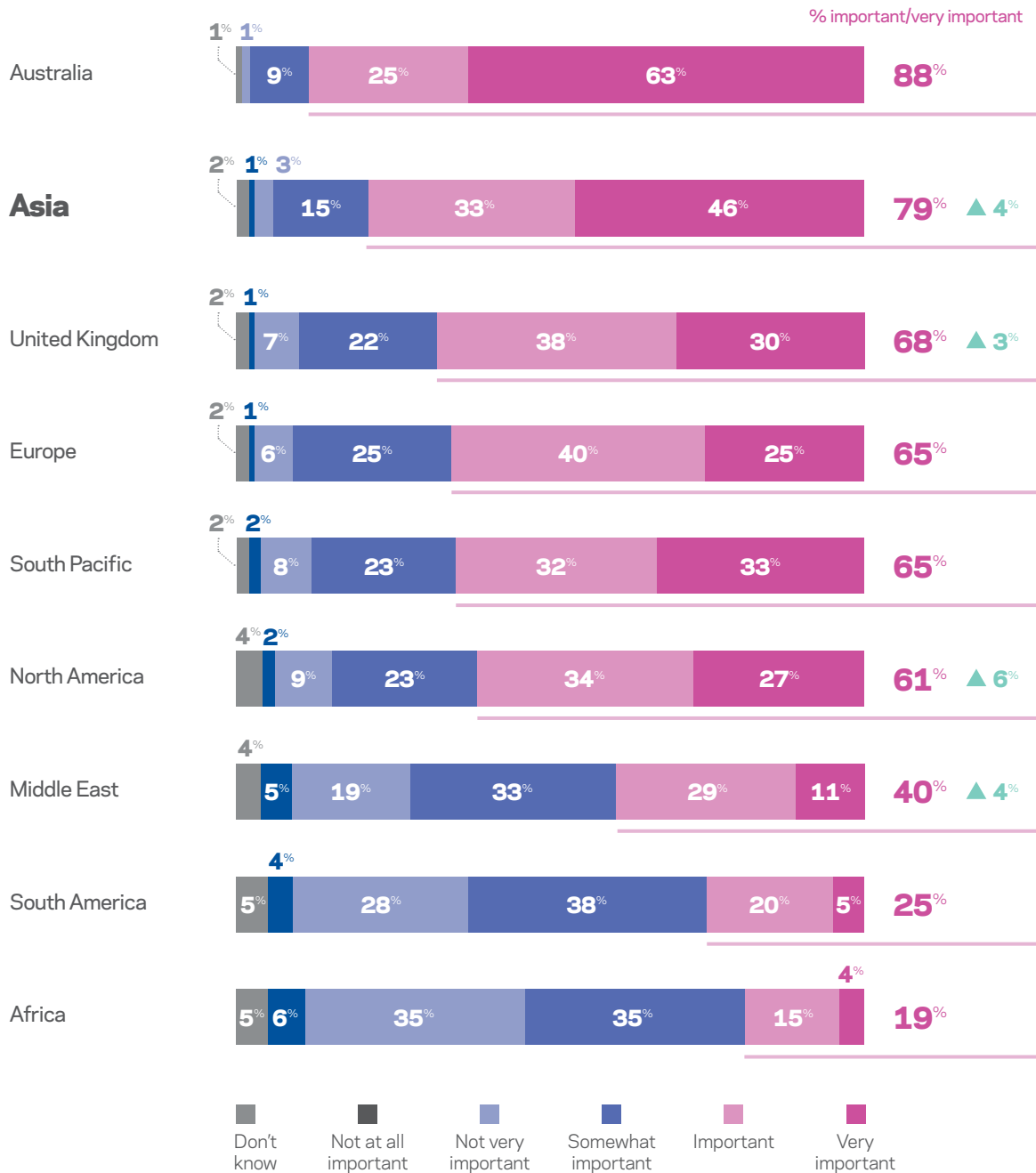
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**"We have strong economic relations with Singapore and they help our international trade. We have broadly aligned interests as two small trading nations in a similar geographic area."**

Female, 30-34 years, Chinese, Auckland

**FIG. 3: IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT WORLD REGIONS TO NEW ZEALAND'S FUTURE**

How important do you think each of the following regions are to New Zealand's future?



Base: All New Zealanders –  
(2024) n=2,300, (2023) n=2,300

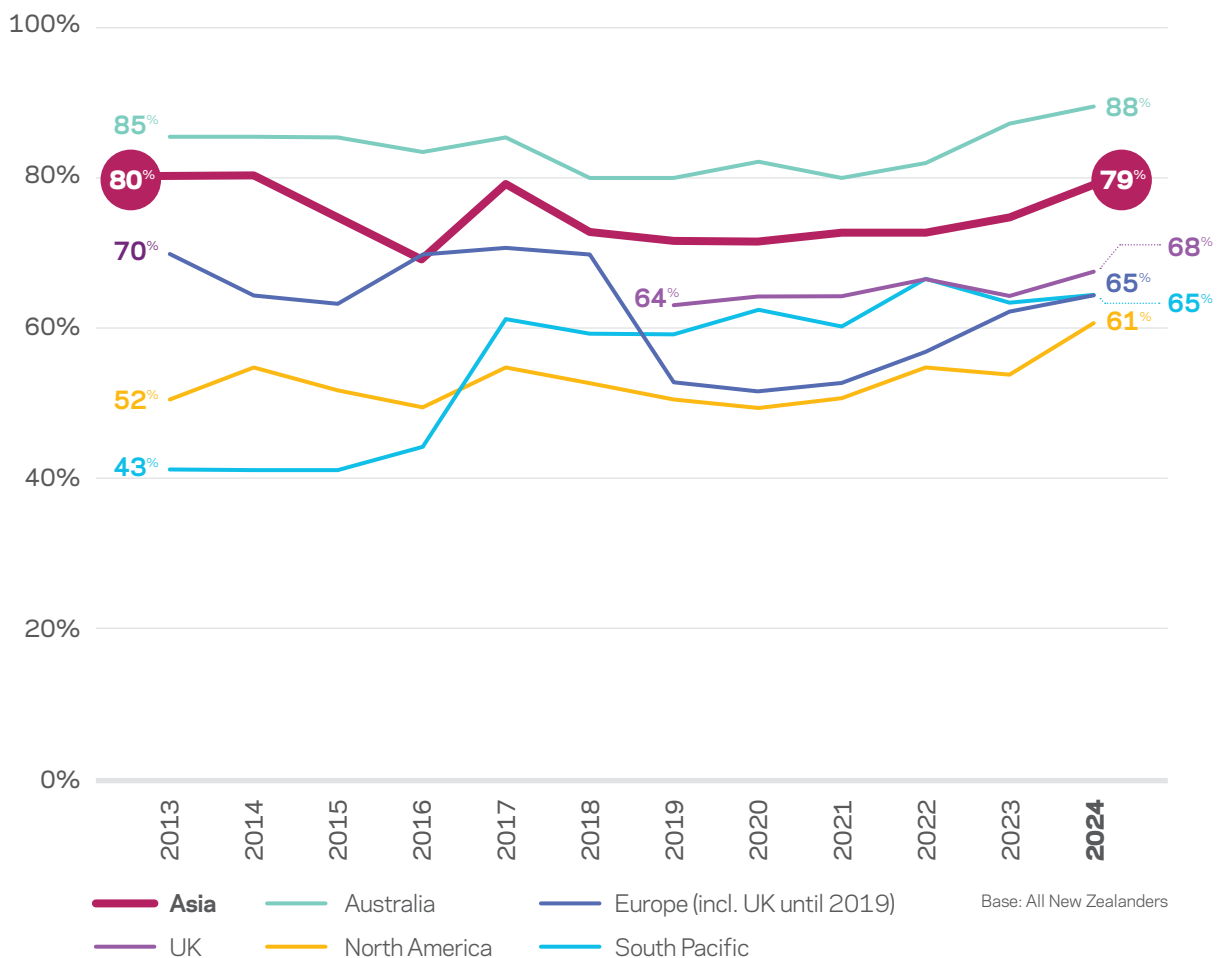
## The importance of Asia to New Zealand's future has fluctuated over time

Asia is consistently ranked as the second most important region to New Zealand's future, but its perceived importance has fluctuated over the past decade.

Asia's perceived importance declined during the years of the COVID-19 pandemic, a pattern that also applied to other regions. In this year's survey, we see Asia's perceived importance return to the high levels observed in 2013 and 2014.

**FIG. 4: TIME TREND: IMPORTANCE OF WORLD REGIONS SINCE 2013**

How important do you think each of the following regions are to New Zealand's future?





## North Asia and Southeast Asia continue to grow in importance

North Asia continues to be considered the most important sub-region for New Zealand's future, with 80 percent regarding it as important (an increase from 76 percent in the previous survey). Nearly half of all New Zealanders consider North Asia to be very important.

In line with previous results, Southeast Asia is considered the second most important sub-region. Fifty-one percent rate it as at least 'important', with 15 percent considering it very important.

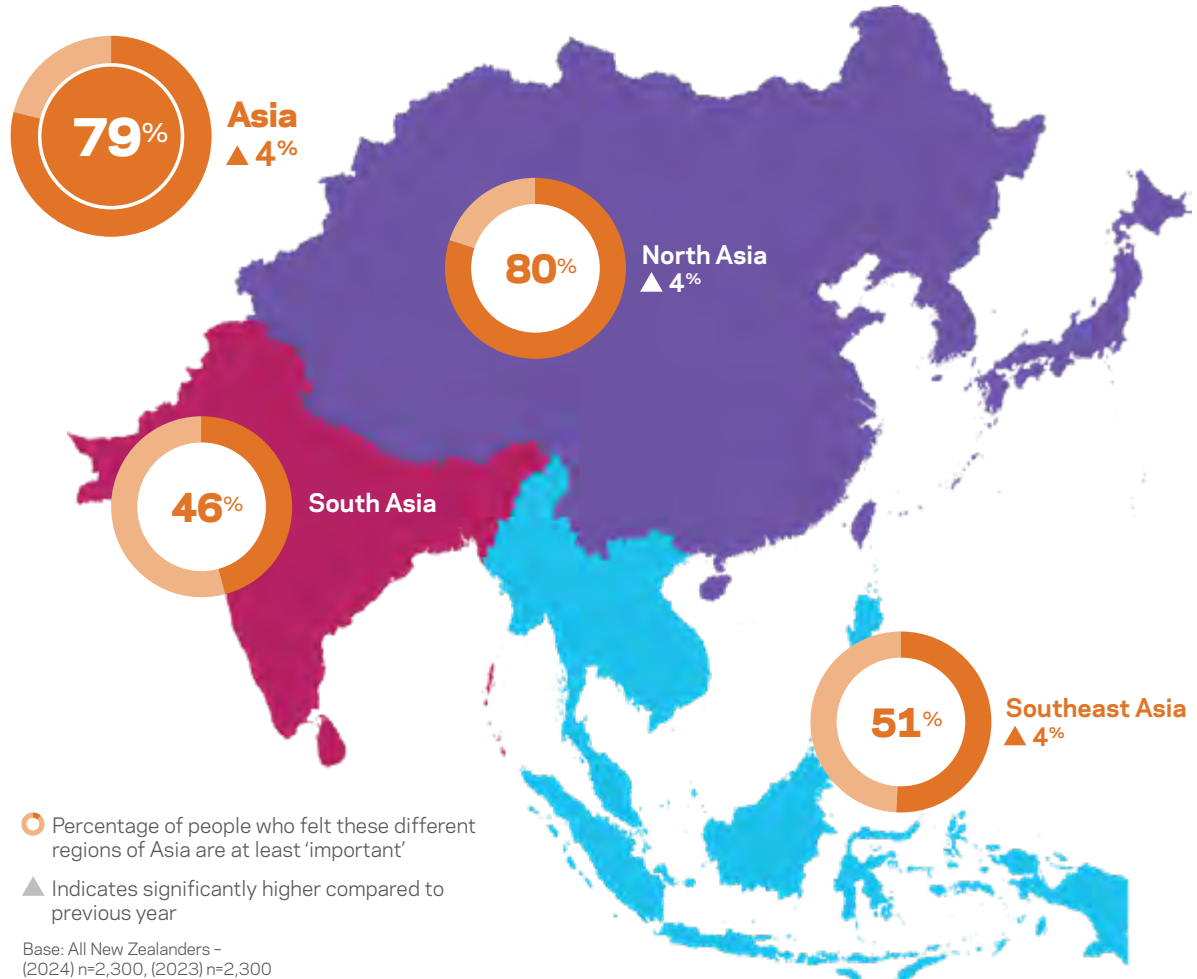
The importance of South Asia holds steady at 46 percent after experiencing a significant increase between 2022 and 2023.

Sub-regions were defined as follows:

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

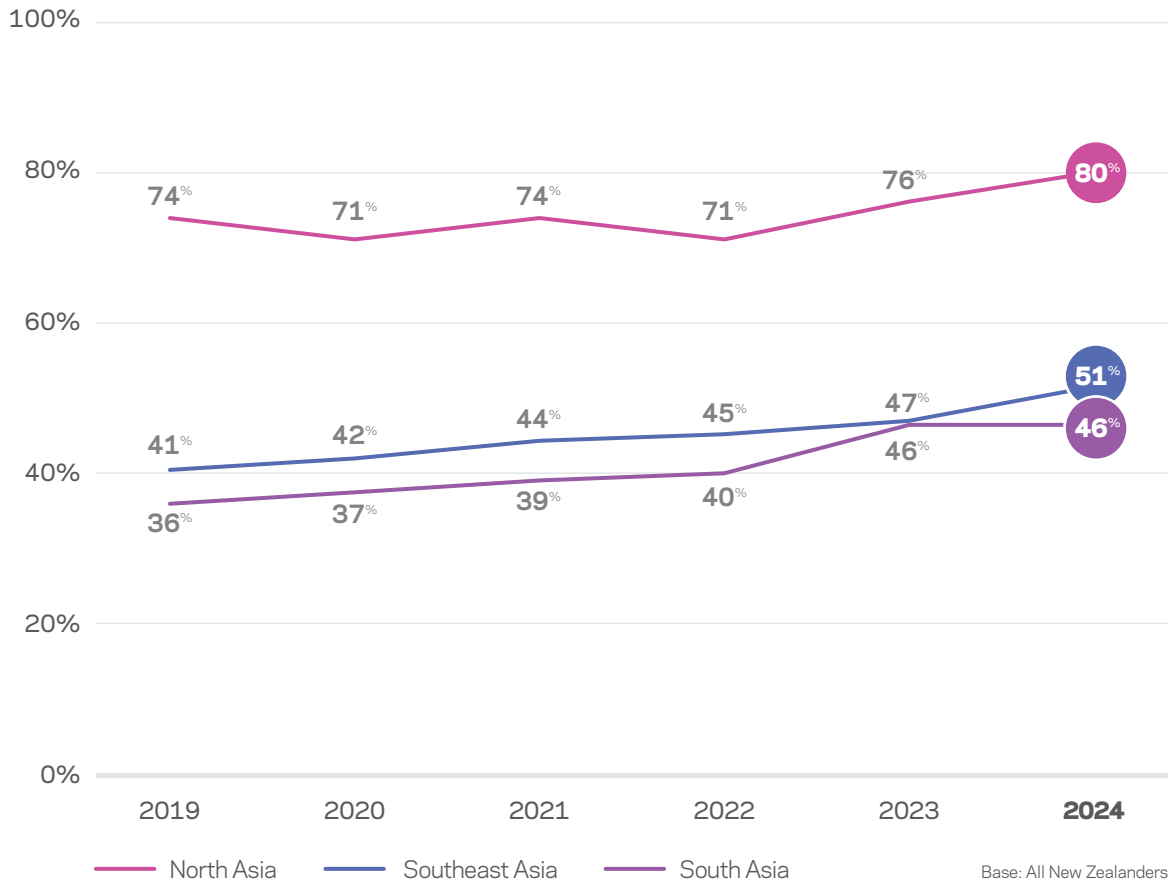
**FIG. 5: IMPORTANCE OF ASIAN SUB-REGIONS TO NEW ZEALAND'S FUTURE**

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



**FIG. 6: TIME TREND: IMPORTANCE OF ASIAN SUB-REGIONS SINCE 2019**

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



**"Indonesia seems to be a pretty cool country who are big on tradition and being respectful. I would think that these are pretty good values, plus there are quite a lot of Indonesian people in New Zealand."**

Male, 18-19 years, European/Southeast Asian/Indian, Auckland

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## **China and Japan are considered the most important countries in Asia to New Zealand's future, followed by India, Singapore and South Korea**

Five countries in Asia are considered the most important to New Zealand's future, with at least half of all New Zealanders considering each one to be important. These rankings are consistent with previous results.

China is clearly seen as most important to New Zealand's future (83 percent), followed by Japan at 73 percent. Both are rated as more important than in previous years, with 'very important' ratings increasing (46 percent to 52 percent very important for China, and 31 percent to 33 percent for Japan).

India is a clear third, with 59 percent saying it is important to New Zealand's future. Singapore ranks fourth at 56 percent, while South Korea is a close fifth, at 52 percent. There has been a steady increase in the perceived importance of all three countries since this question was first asked in 2022.

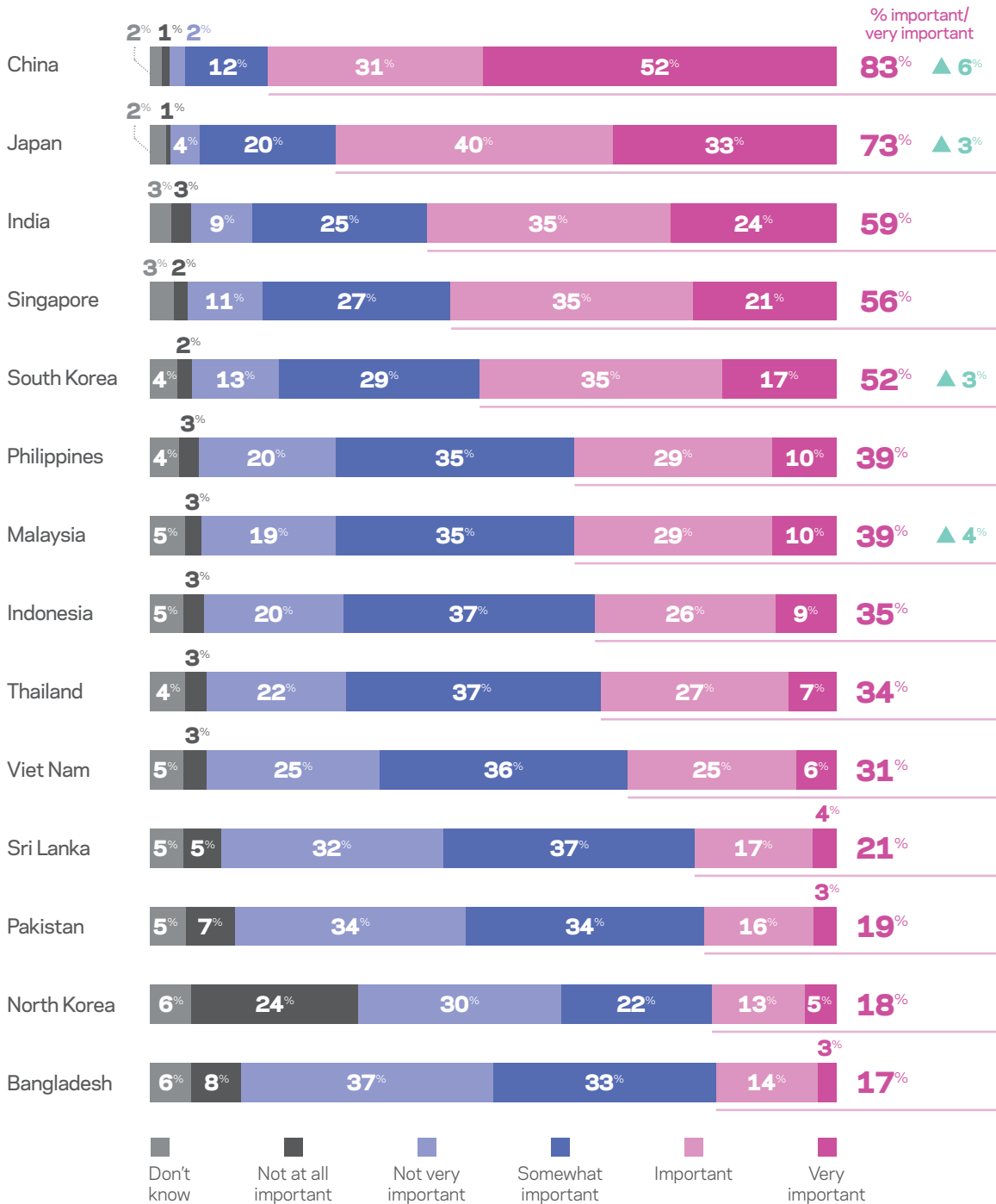
There has been little change in the importance of the remaining nine countries assessed, with the exception of Malaysia (up by four percentage points this year), and no change in their relative positions.





### FIG. 7: IMPORTANCE OF ASIAN COUNTRIES TO NEW ZEALAND'S FUTURE

How important do you think each of the following Asian countries are to New Zealand's future?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300, (2023) n=2,300

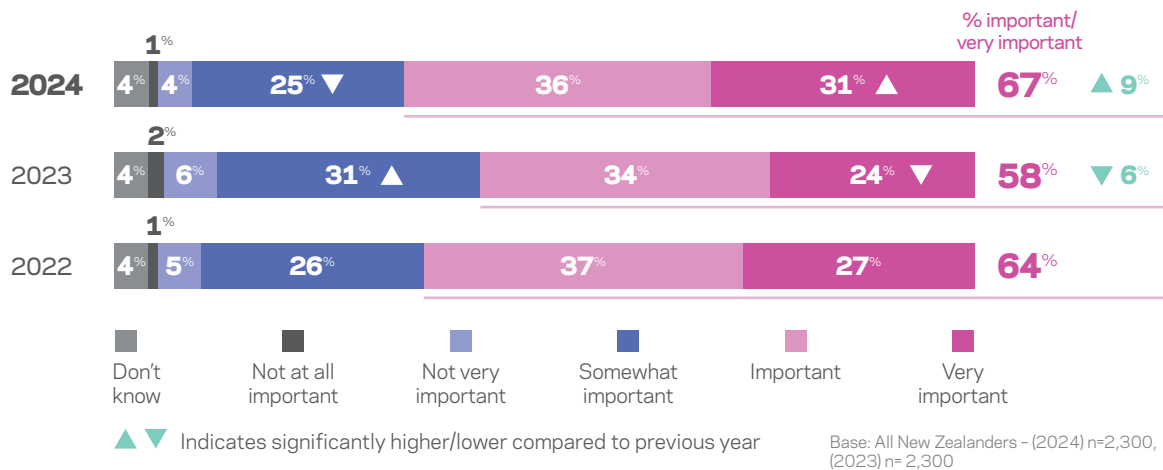
## Most New Zealanders think investing energy and resources into building partnerships with Asian countries is important

Two in three New Zealanders think that it is important or very important for New Zealand to invest energy and resources into building partnerships in Asia. The strength of importance expressed is higher this year than in the previous two surveys. Only a small minority (five percent) think it is not important.

Men are more likely than women to consider it important for New Zealand to invest in building partnerships (74 percent compared with 59 percent among women). Perceived importance also increases with age: 59 percent of the under 30 age group consider it important compared with 76 percent of the over 60s. New Zealanders of Asian heritage are more likely than those of non-Asian backgrounds to think that investing in partnerships is important (78 percent saying it is at least important and 40 percent saying it is very important).

### FIG. 8: IMPORTANCE OF INVESTING IN PARTNERSHIPS WITH COUNTRIES IN ASIA

Overall, how important is it for New Zealand to invest energy and resources into building partnerships with Asian countries?





## Spotlight: Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

ASEAN (the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) is a political and economic union of ten states in Southeast Asia that represent some 600 million people. It aims to accelerate economic growth, social progress and cultural development in the region and to promote regional peace and stability. This year marks 50 years of New Zealand's formal ties with ASEAN.

## How well known is Southeast Asia?

Southeast Asia is the second most well-known region of Asia, behind North Asia.

Over four in five New Zealanders (87 percent) know at least a little about Southeast Asia, while four in ten (40 percent) say they know at least a fair amount.

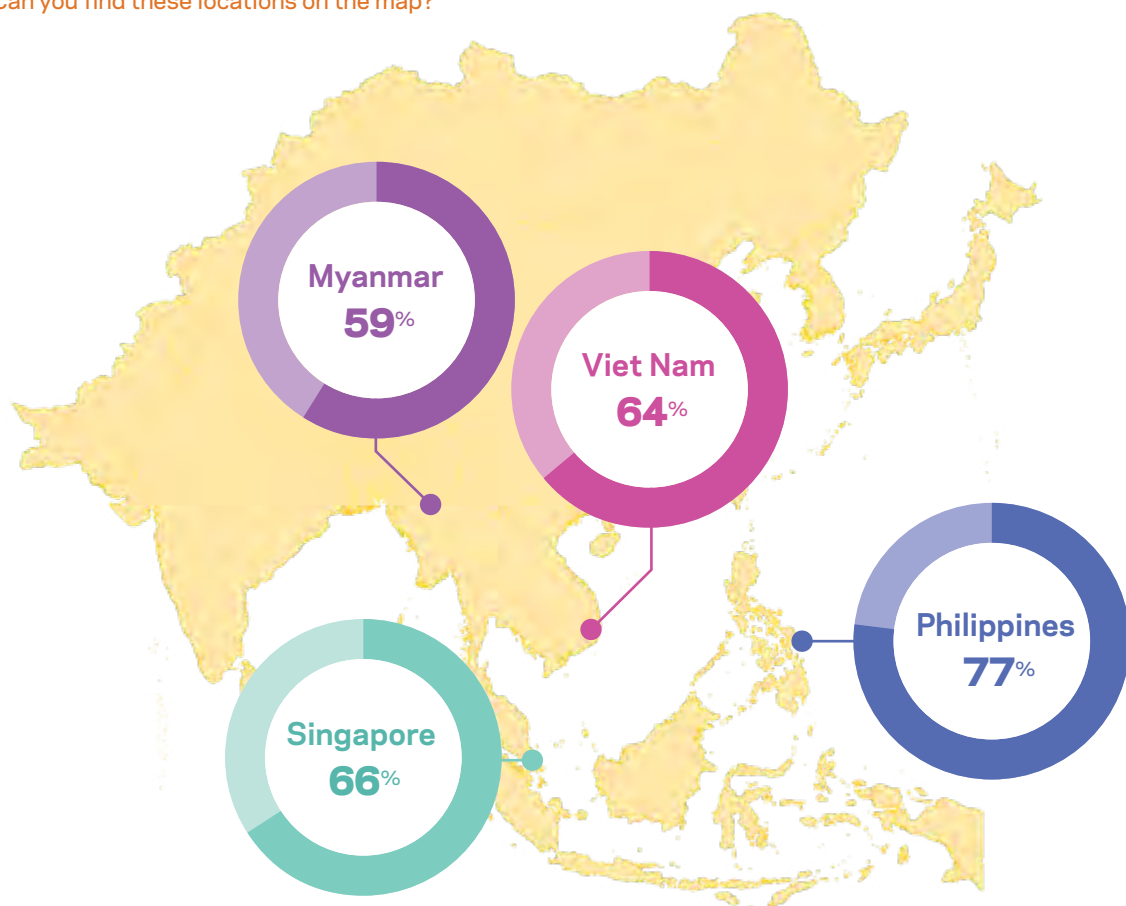
New Zealanders were asked to identify four countries on a map of Southeast Asia. They are most likely to know the location of the Philippines (77 percent correct), and least likely to know the location of Myanmar (59 percent correct).

Around two in three identify the locations of Singapore (66 percent) and/or Viet Nam (64 percent) correctly.

Those who recall seeing Asia-related news have a stronger connection to Asia, and assess their knowledge of Asia as greater are all more likely to correctly identify each location. Correct knowledge of each location also increases with age.



**FIG. 9: PROPORTION CORRECTLY IDENTIFYING FOUR COUNTRIES IN SOUTHEAST ASIA**  
Can you find these locations on the map?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300



## Ninety percent of New Zealanders can identify Manila as the capital city of the Philippines

We also asked New Zealanders to identify the countries associated with four capital cities.

New Zealanders are most likely to identify Manila as the capital city of the Philippines (90 percent able to do so).

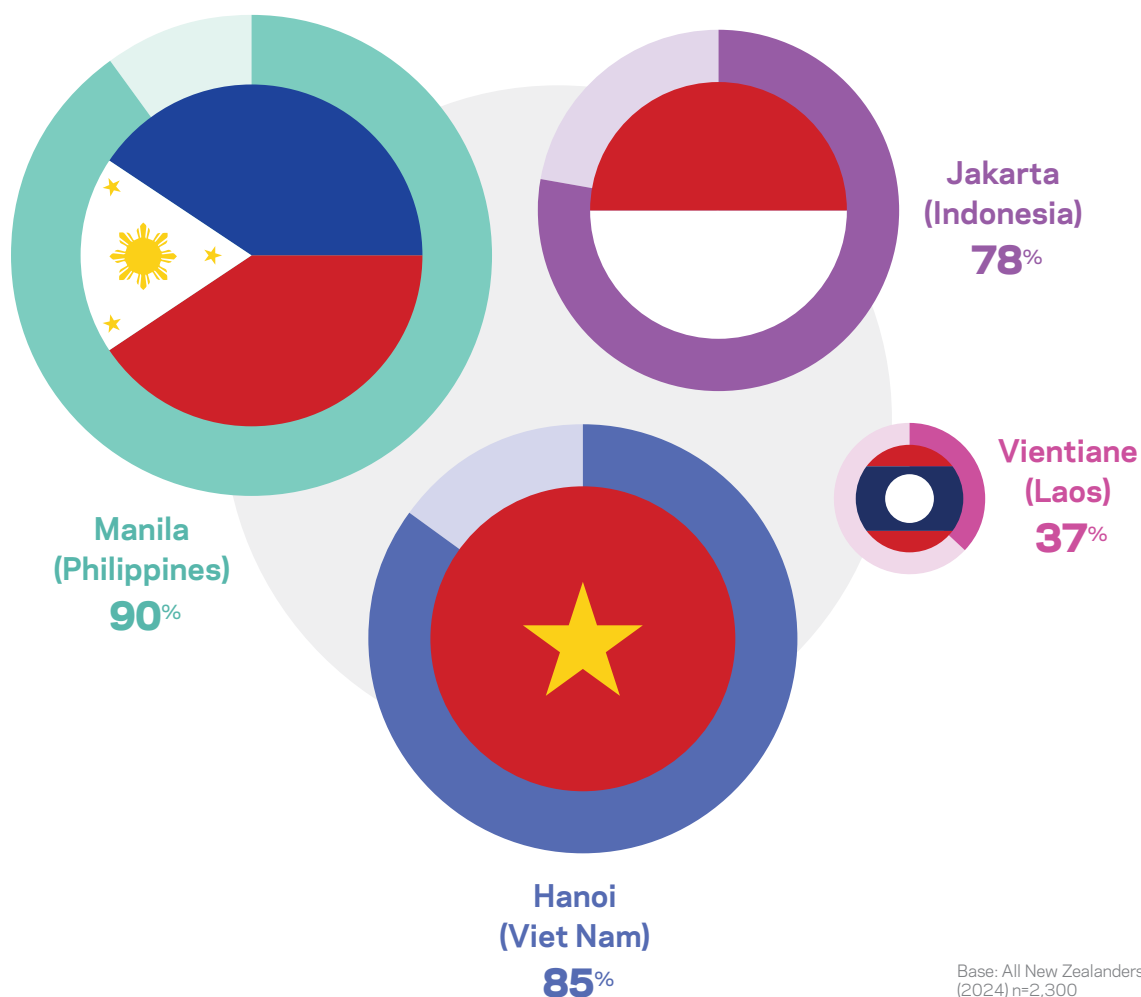
New Zealanders are least likely to identify Vientiane as the capital of Laos (37 percent).

Around four in five can correctly identify Hanoi as the capital city of Viet Nam (85 percent correct), while 78 percent correctly identify Jakarta as the capital of Indonesia.

New question

### FIG. 10: PROPORTION CORRECTLY IDENTIFYING THE COUNTRIES FOR FOUR ASIAN CAPITAL CITIES

Of which countries are these the capital cities?



## Do you know the main languages spoken in Thailand and Indonesia?

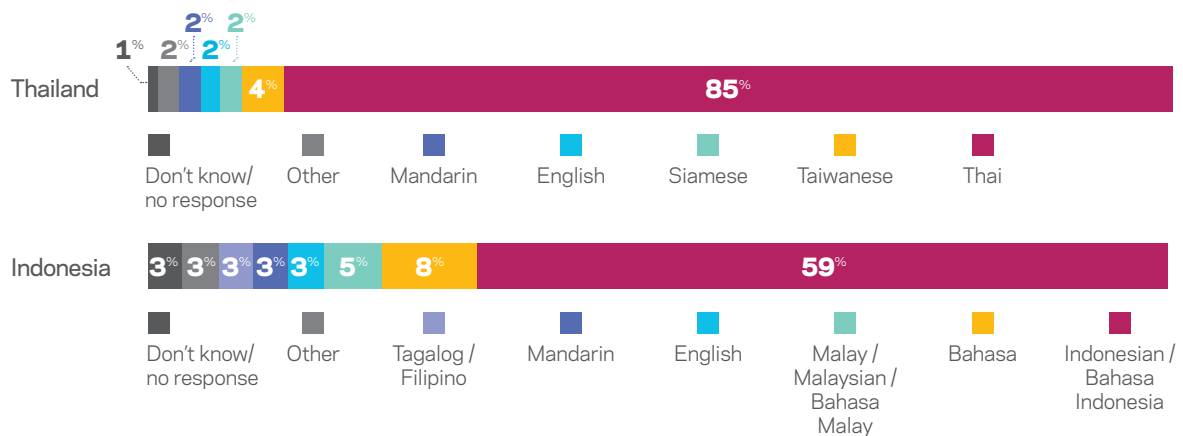
While over four in five New Zealanders (85 percent) correctly identified Thai as the main language spoken in Thailand, only six in ten (59 percent)

correctly identified Indonesian or Bahasa Indonesia as the main language spoken in Indonesia.

New  
question

### FIG. 11: PROPORTION CORRECTLY IDENTIFYING THE MAIN LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN THAILAND AND INDONESIA

Can you name the main languages spoken in these countries?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300

### THAILAND

**"Positive people with happy demeanor and good trading relationship with them."**

Female, 18-19 years, other ethnicity, Auckland

### INDONESIA

**"Indonesia and New Zealand are close geographically and will face some of the same challenges when environmental issues arise."**

Female, 18-19 years, Samoan, Auckland



# What do New Zealanders know **about Asia?**

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**"Viet Nam** is growing economically. They have developed a lot over the last few years and are open to tourism... and to developing relationships with countries like New Zealand."

Female, 40-49 years, New Zealand European and Samoan, Auckland





# Key findings

**China** and **food** continue to dominate top-of-mind associations with Asia.

New Zealanders' **knowledge of Asia** continues to be at an all-time high and has held steady, while knowledge of many other world regions has dropped.

**Self-rated knowledge** among those under 30 years is the highest it has ever been.

New Zealanders are increasingly knowledgeable about **North Asia** in particular, a trend driven by younger New Zealanders.

New Zealanders who recall seeing **recent Asia news** have higher knowledge of the region.



## China and food continue to dominate New Zealanders' top-of-mind associations with Asia

China/Chinese is the most common association with Asia for the sixth year in a row. Japan, India and Thailand also receive significant top-of-mind mentions.

Food and cuisine are the second top-of-mind associations overall. A diverse array of Asian foods feature, including tropical fruits, spicy foods, curries, sushi, dim sum, noodles and fried rice.

Asia's geography and huge landmass also receive significant mention. New Zealanders talk about Asia's physical size, the range of countries, and its islands. Large populations (and for some, over-population) are also mentioned.

Holidays and travel are top-of-mind for six percent of New Zealanders, who mention Asia's beaches, natural beauty and interesting destinations and cultures.

Asia's huge economic size and technological advancement also feature. Others think of Asia's mass production of consumer goods, with mentions of online companies like Temu.

Associations are less positive for some New Zealanders, with mention of overcrowding, lower-quality consumer products, plastics and pollution.

**FIG. 12: TOP-OF-MIND ASSOCIATIONS WITH "ASIA"**

When you see or hear the word "Asia", what is the first word that pops into your mind?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300

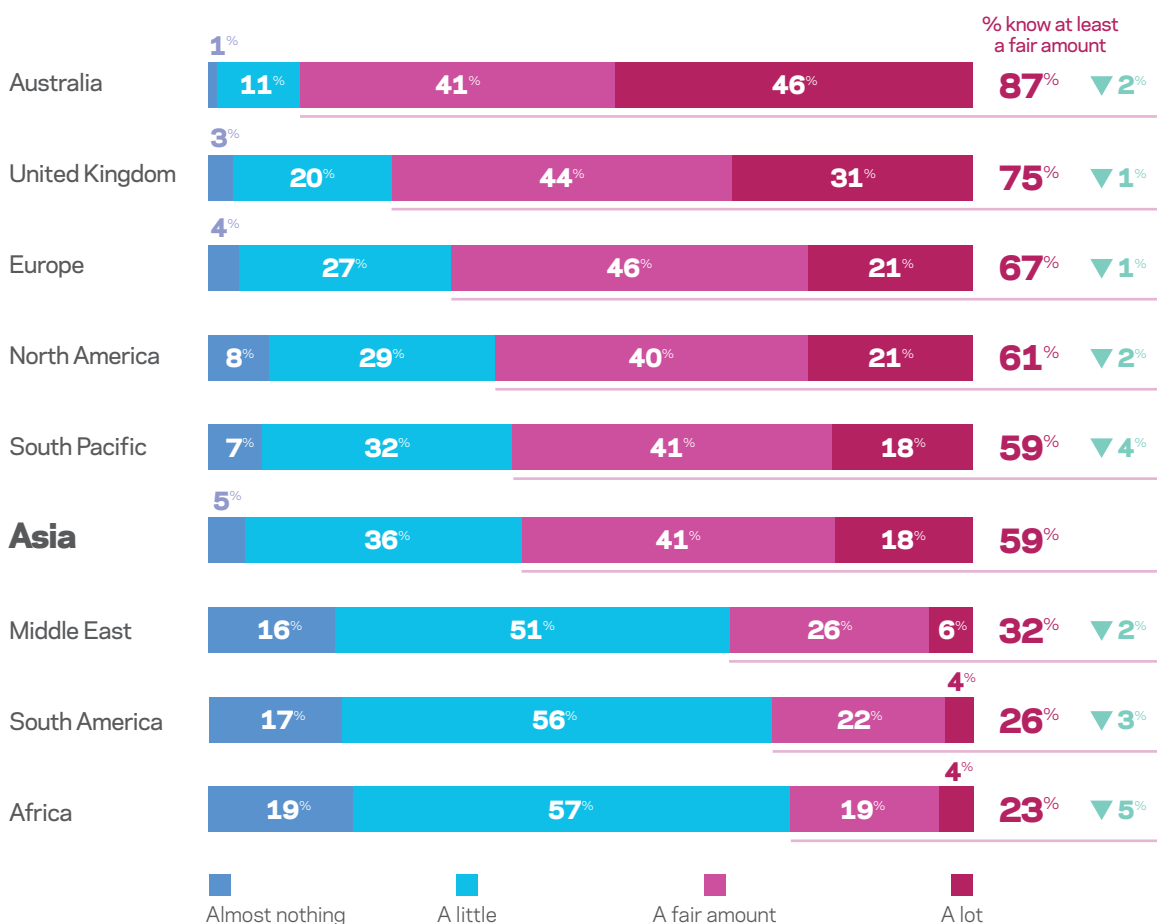
## Self-assessed knowledge of Asia remains at an all-time high

New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia continues to be at an all-time high and is unchanged from the last survey.

In fact, Asia is the only region not to see a decline in New Zealanders' self-assessed knowledge levels this year. Africa saw the biggest decline in perceived knowledge, dropping five percentage points and returning to 2022 levels.

Australia (87 percent), the United Kingdom (75 percent) and Europe (67 percent) continue to be the top three regions New Zealanders feel they know best.

**FIG. 13: HOW MUCH DO NEW ZEALANDERS KNOW ABOUT DIFFERENT WORLD REGIONS AND COUNTRIES?**



Base: All New Zealanders excluding 'Unsure' - (2024)  
 Australia n=2,281; United Kingdom n=2,277; Europe n=2,276;  
 North America n=2,264; South Pacific n=2,277; Asia n=2,278;  
 Middle East n=2,271; South America n=2,272; Africa n=2,272

## Self-assessed knowledge of Asia has increased significantly since 2013

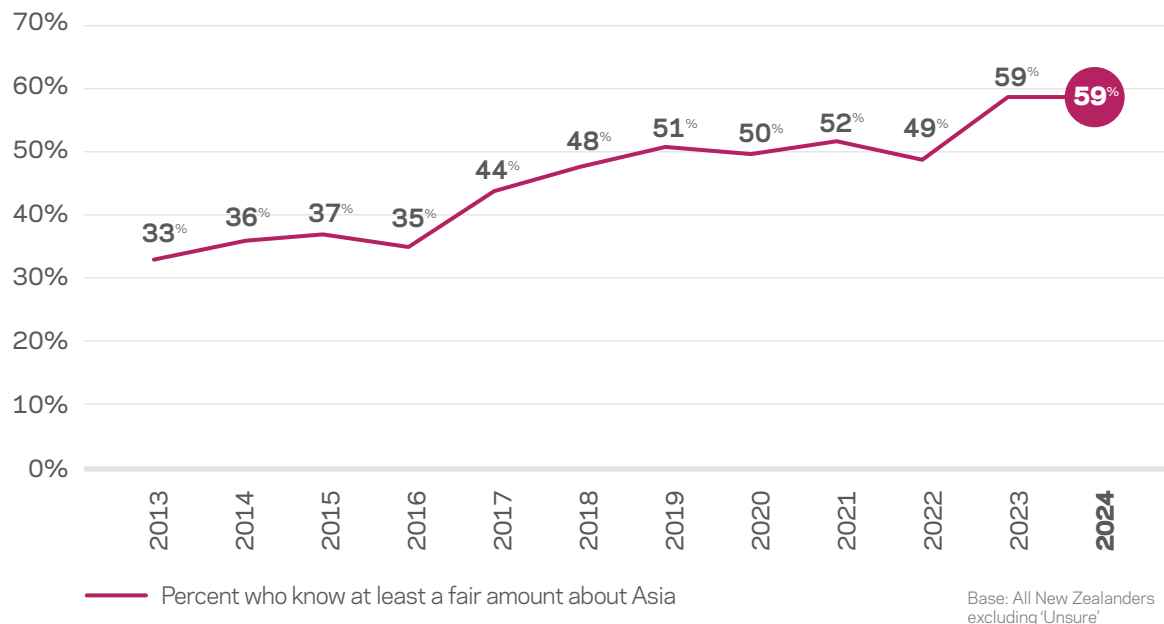
Perceived knowledge of Asia is at its highest and has nearly doubled since 2013. Thirty-three percent said they knew at least a fair amount about Asia in 2013, compared with 59 percent today.

Self-rated knowledge among those under 30 years has increased steadily since 2013 and is the highest it has ever been: 62 percent of under 30-year-olds say they know at least a fair amount about Asia, up from 30 percent in 2013.

Knowledge of Asia is higher among those who have a university degree. Sixty-seven percent of New Zealanders holding a bachelor's degree know at least a fair amount, followed by those with a vocational or trade qualification (52 percent), and those with a secondary school qualification (47 percent). Knowledge levels are greatest among New Zealanders living in big cities (64 percent knowing at least a fair amount) and significantly lower among those living in provincial towns (57 percent), small towns (47 percent) or rurally (45 percent).

**FIG. 14: TIME TREND: NEW ZEALANDERS' KNOWLEDGE OF ASIA SINCE 2013**

How much do you feel you know about the following regions – Asia?





## Knowledge of North Asia has increased in the last year

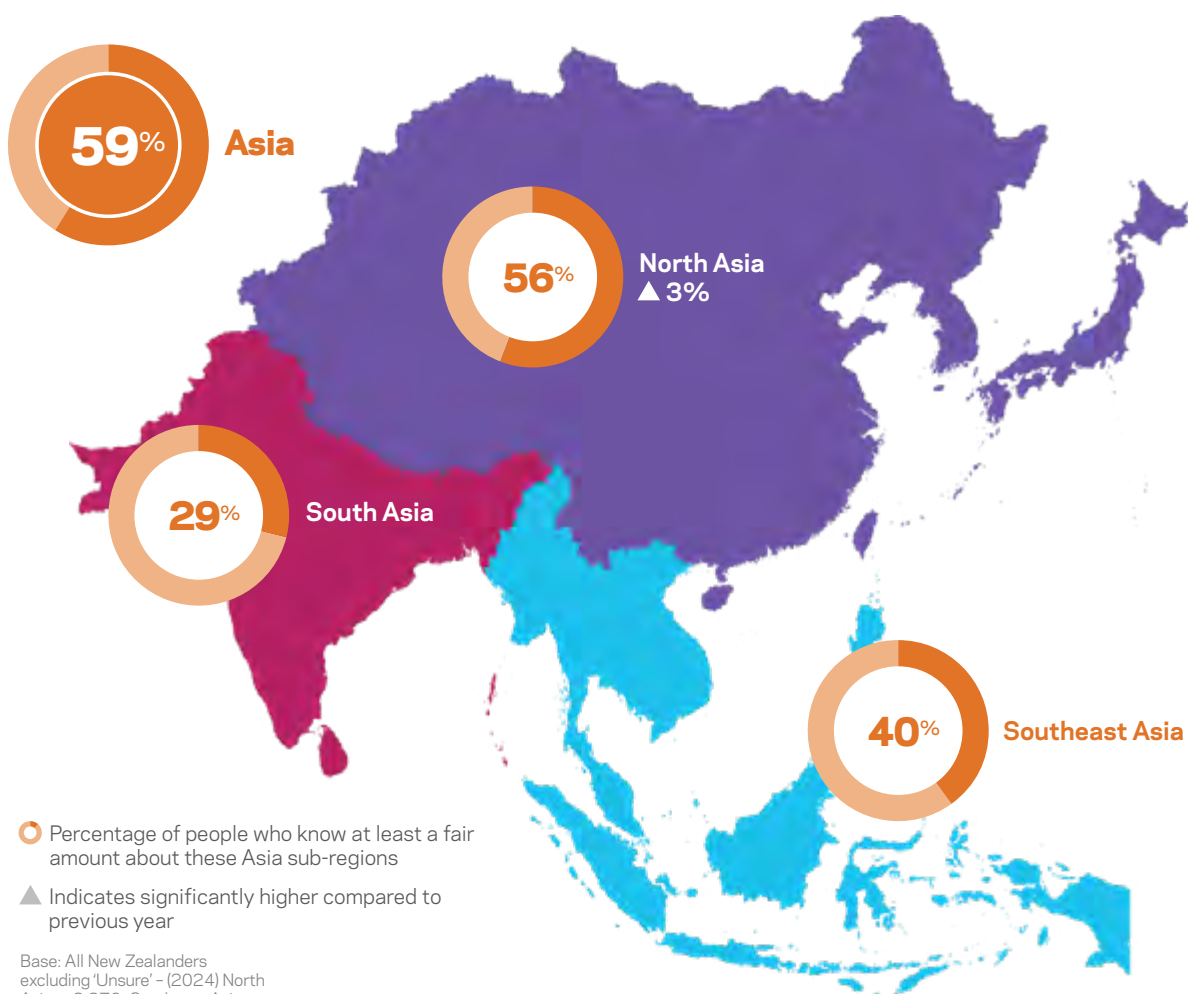
Fifty-six percent of New Zealanders say they know at least a fair amount about North Asia.

New Zealanders' knowledge of South and Southeast Asia is largely unchanged from the previous year.

While self-rated knowledge is reasonably consistent across the age groups, those under 30 years rate their knowledge of North Asia significantly higher than older generations.

**FIG. 15: NEW ZEALANDERS' KNOWLEDGE OF ASIA'S SUB-REGIONS**

How much do you feel you know about the following (Asian) regions?



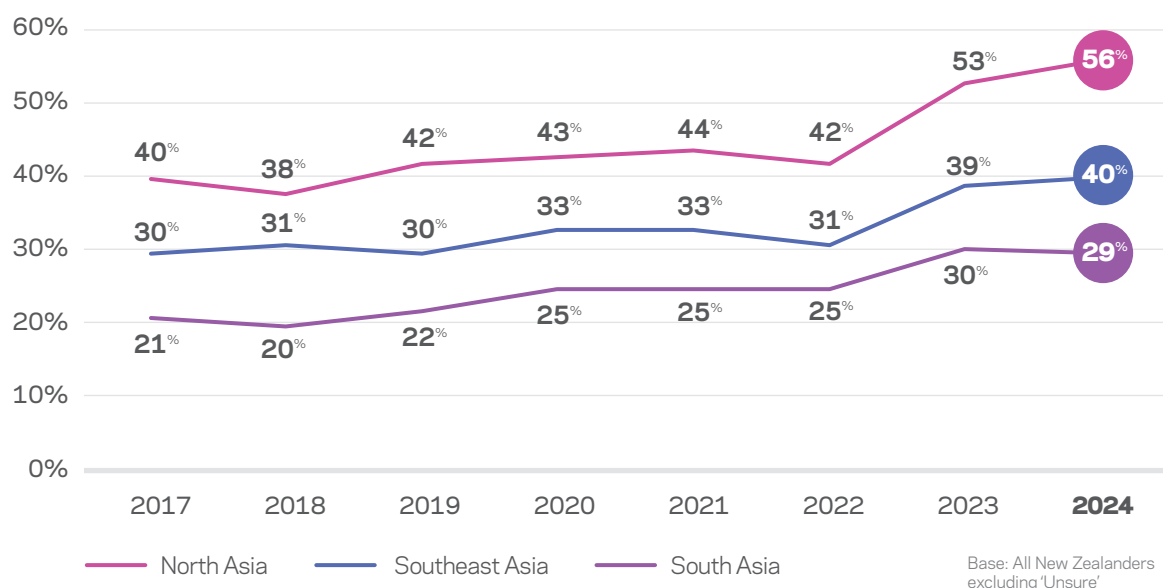
## New Zealanders' knowledge of Asia's sub-regions has increased since 2017

New Zealanders' knowledge of all Asian sub-regions has increased considerably since 2017, with New Zealanders' knowledge of North Asia seeing the most dramatic increase.

The gap in knowledge between North Asia and South/Southeast Asia is considerably wider than it was in 2017, a finding broadly correlated with increases in perceptions of the three sub-regions' importance.

**FIG. 16: TIME TREND: KNOWLEDGE OF ASIA'S SUB-REGIONS HAS INCREASED SINCE 2017**

And how much do you feel you know about the following (Asian) regions?



## TOP OF MIND RESPONSES ABOUT ASIA

**"Highly populated area that is surrounded by a beautiful vast ocean."**

Female, 35-39 years, New Zealand European, Northland

**"Food, beaches, crowded, cities, growth, manufacturing."**

Female, 20-24 years, Southeast Asian, Otago

**"Northeast of Australia, a polyglot of diverse languages and cultures."**

Male, 35-39 years, New Zealand European, Canterbury

**"Noodles, beautiful clean world, rice, humility."**

Female, 20-24 years, New Zealand European and Māori, Southland



# Connections to Asia

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“New Zealand already benefits from the wonderful people of **the Philippines**. And I believe New Zealand benefits when we embrace diversity and all cultural backgrounds.”

Female, 20-24 years, African, Auckland





# Key findings

Over half of New Zealanders feel **connected to Asian cultures** in their daily lives.

**Food and cuisine** head New Zealanders' Asia-related interests.

**Mandarin** and **Japanese** are the favoured Asian languages to learn.

There is a drop in the perceived importance of **Asia-related skills** for New Zealand's future workforce, but confidence in dealing with people of Asian cultures is still seen as critical.

While most New Zealanders feel at least fairly confident **engaging with people** from Asia, one in five lack confidence.



## Over half of New Zealanders feel connected with Asian cultures in their daily lives

New Zealanders' sense of connection with Asian cultures remains similar to the last survey.

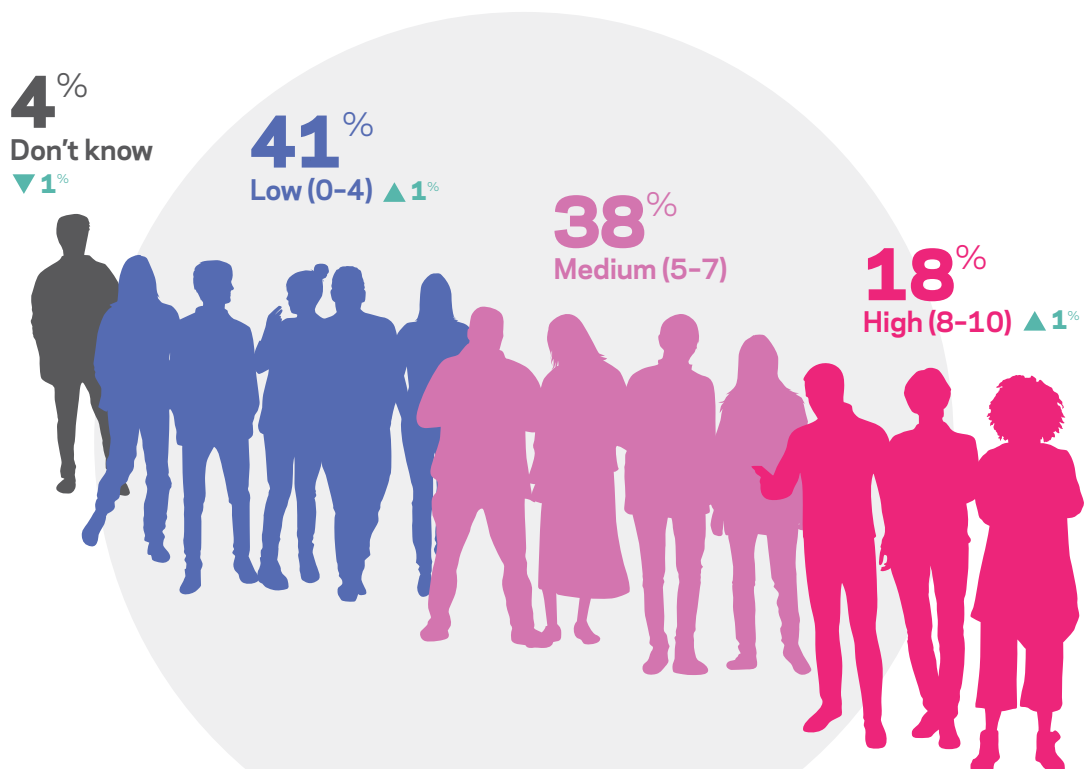
Nearly one in five (18 percent) feel a strong sense of connection while nearly two in five (38 percent) say they feel a reasonable sense of connection. Seven percent feel very connected, while one in eight (12 percent) say they do not feel at all connected (compared with 13 percent in 2023).

The sense of daily connection with Asian cultures is greatest among New Zealanders of Asian heritage (71 percent have a strong/very strong connection), as well as among those seeing or reading Asia-related media.

Perceived knowledge of Asia is also linked to feeling connected with Asian culture: 27 percent of those who say they know at least a fair amount about Asia feel a strong sense of connection, compared with only five percent of those who know little or nothing about Asia.

### FIG. 17: HOW CONNECTED TO ASIAN CULTURES ARE NEW ZEALANDERS IN THEIR DAILY LIVES?

Looking back over the past five years, how connected have you felt, in your daily life, with Asian cultures?



Base: All New Zealanders – (2024) n=2,300, (2023) n= 2,300

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## Food and cuisine head New Zealanders' Asia-related interests

Asian cuisine continues to lead Asia-related interests for New Zealanders, reflecting its wide availability across New Zealand.

**Tourism and travel** rank a clear second, with **business** coming third. Males have a stronger interest in business and trade than females (37 percent versus 23 percent respectively).

Moving down the list, nearly a quarter of New Zealanders are interested in **music, art and literature** (23 percent interest), while interest in **politics, history and current affairs** has dropped five percentage points.

Another area of notable decline is in **Asian languages**, which dropped by seven percentage points since the last survey.

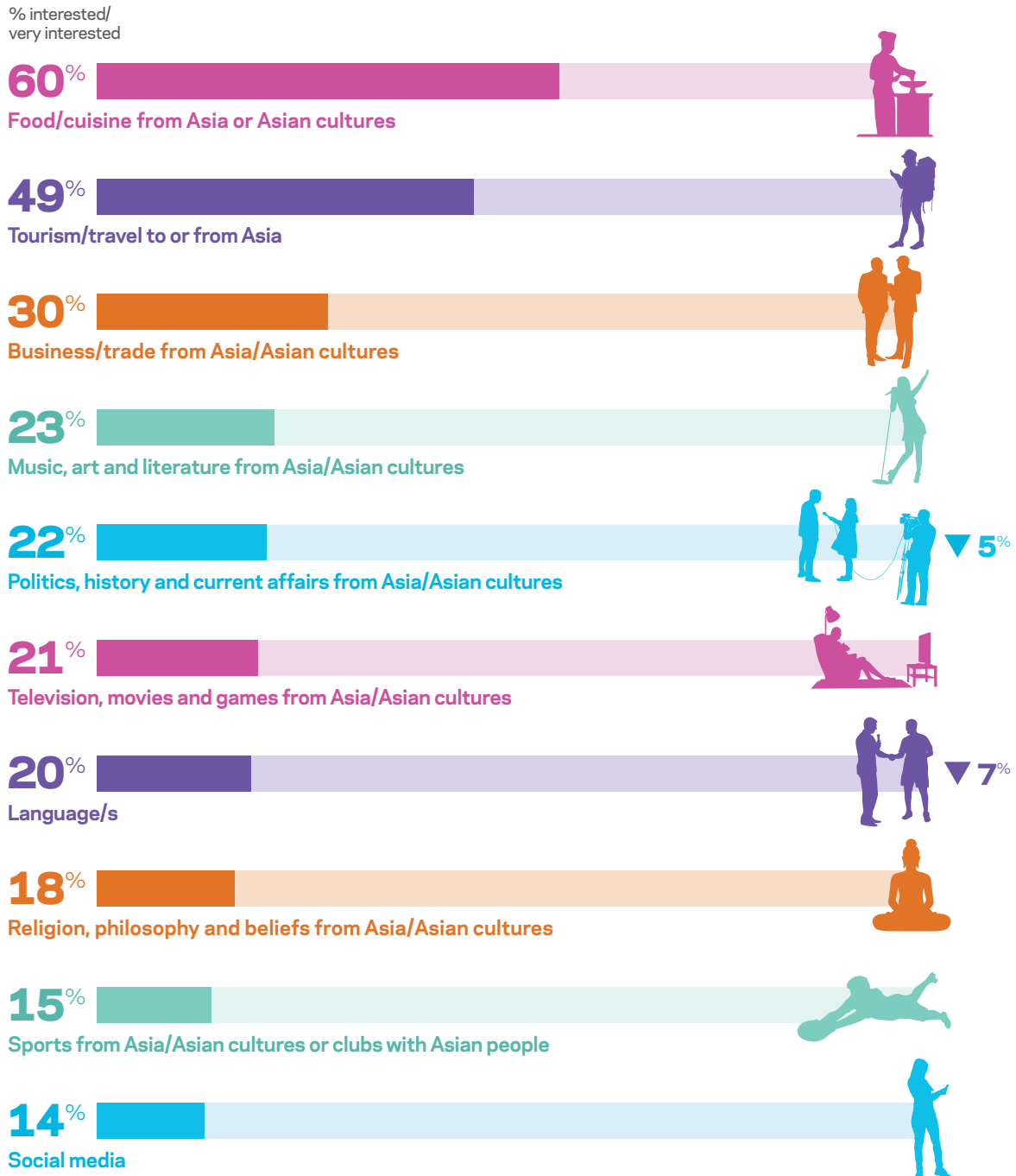
**Social media from Asia or Asian cultures** is of least interest to New Zealanders (only 14 percent expressing positive interest).

As to be expected, those of Asian heritage have greater interest in each area, with very high interest levels in Asian cuisine (78 percent) and Asia-related travel (73 percent).



**FIG. 18: WHAT ARE NEW ZEALANDERS' BIGGEST ASIA-RELATED INTERESTS?**

How interested, or not, are you in the following Asia-related areas in your day-to-day life?



▼ Indicates significantly lower compared to previous year

Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300



## New Zealanders are most interested in learning Mandarin and Japanese

One quarter of New Zealanders speak an Asian language.

This result is driven by the large majority of New Zealanders of Asian heritage who speak an Asian language (84 percent) compared to those of other backgrounds (12 percent).

Among those of Asian heritage, 73 percent of Chinese New Zealanders speak a variant of Chinese, and 70 percent of Indian New Zealanders speak Hindi. Among Southeast Asian New Zealanders, 34 percent speak Filipino and 22 percent speak a Chinese variant.

Among New Zealanders of non-Asian heritage, Japanese and Chinese language variants are the

most commonly spoken (by four percent and three percent respectively).

The likelihood of speaking an Asian language is higher among younger respondents: 39 percent of those under 30 speak an Asian language, compared with 26 percent of those aged 30-to-59 years, and 12 percent of those aged 60 and over.

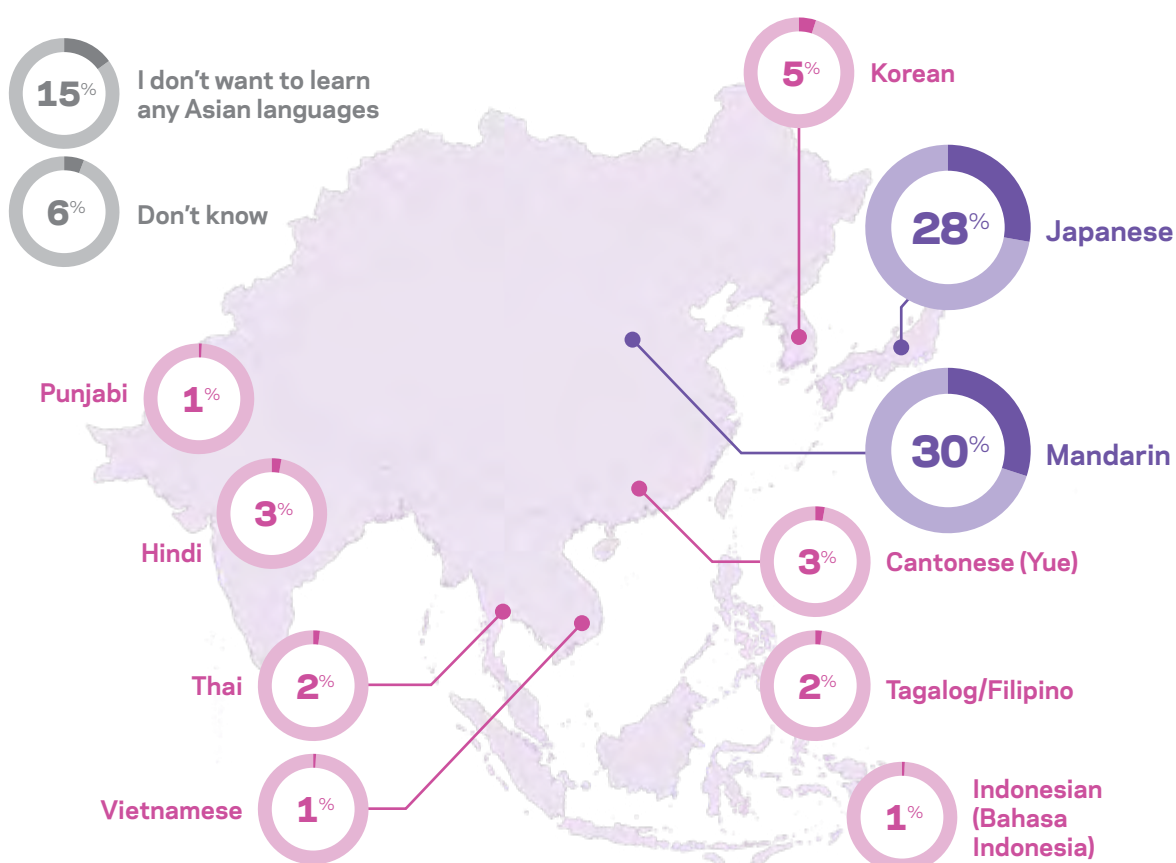
One in five New Zealanders (20 percent) are very interested or interested in Asian languages, with just over half (53 percent) expressing some interest.

When New Zealanders were asked what Asian languages they would most like to learn, Mandarin and Japanese emerge as clear favourites (30 percent and 28 percent respectively).

New  
question

### FIG. 19: INTEREST IN LEARNING ANY ASIAN LANGUAGES

If you could learn an Asian language, which one would you most want to learn?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300. Note: 0% not shown

## Talking with friends and family is the most helpful way to learn a language

We asked New Zealanders who speak an Asian language what they found most effective in learning or maintaining their language skills.

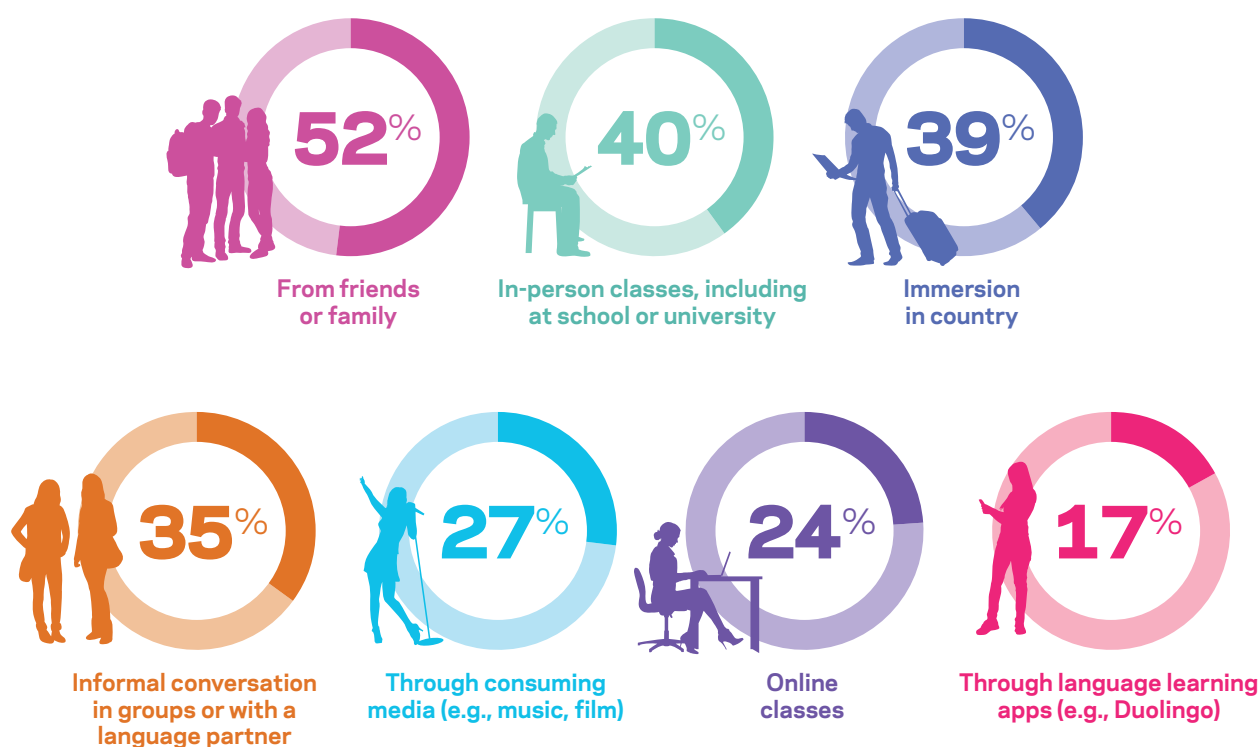
Just over half of New Zealanders (52 percent) said that talking with friends and family was the most effective method.

In-person classes and in-country immersion rank second equal as the next most helpful activities. Only 17 percent said they found language learning apps, such as Duolingo, the most helpful.



**FIG. 20: MOST EFFECTIVE WAY OF LEARNING/RETAINING AN ASIAN LANGUAGE**

In your opinion, what is the most helpful way of learning and/or retaining an Asian language?



Base: All New Zealanders – (2024) n=2,300

## Most New Zealanders feel at least fairly confident in dealing with people of Asian cultures, but one in five still lack confidence

Confidence in dealing with people of Asian cultures outweighs a lack of confidence: 27 percent of New Zealanders say they feel extremely or very confident, while 20 percent say they feel not very or not at all confident. Around half feel fairly confident.

While confidence is reasonably consistent across the age groups, the over 60s are more likely than younger people to say they are not confident (24 percent compared with 20 percent overall). As expected, New Zealanders of Asian heritage express greater confidence than New Zealanders of other backgrounds (54 percent versus 22 percent feeling extremely or very confident).

Connection with Asian cultures and confidence in dealing with people of Asian cultures go hand-in-hand. Two in three (66 percent) of New Zealanders

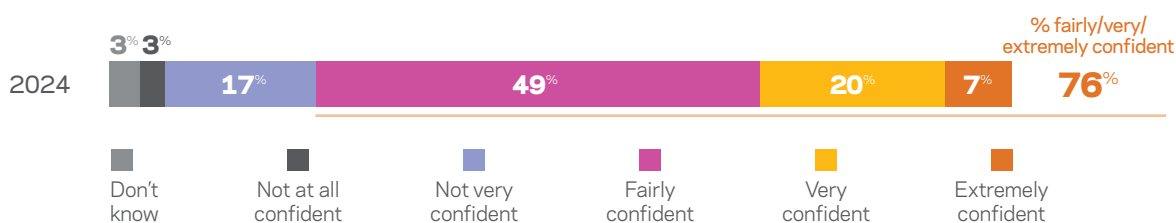
who feel connected to Asian cultures in their daily lives feel confident, compared with only 13 percent of those who feel less connected. Confidence also increases with knowledge: 40 percent of those who say they know at least a fair amount about Asia feel confident, compared with only 11 percent of those who know less.

Confidence in dealing with people from Asian cultures is greater among those with higher education levels: 36 percent of New Zealanders with a university degree or higher qualification feel confident. This compares with 24 percent of those with a lower-level tertiary qualification and 17 percent among those with no tertiary qualifications. Confidence levels are also higher among New Zealanders living in large cities (32 percent confident), and lowest among those living rurally (18 percent confident), reflecting potential varying levels of contact with people of Asian backgrounds.

New question

### FIG. 21: CONFIDENCE IN DEALING WITH PEOPLE FROM ASIAN CULTURES

How confident are you in dealing with people from Asian cultures?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300

## Confidence in engaging with Asian cultures continues to be seen as most important for our future workforce

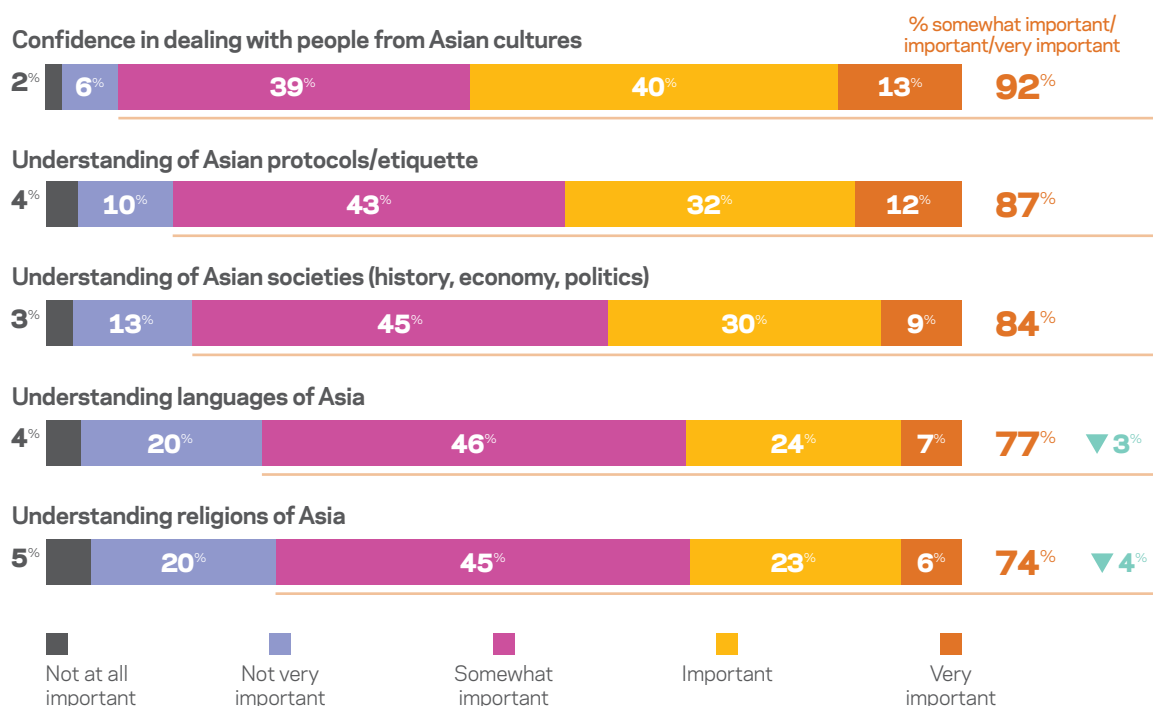
Over 90 percent of New Zealanders view confidence in dealing with people of Asian cultures to be the most important for New Zealand's future workforce. This is a similar result to the last survey.

Understanding Asian protocols and etiquette is considered second most important, followed by an understanding of Asian societies.

Understanding of Asian languages and/or religions are both considered to be of lesser importance this year than last.

### FIG. 22: IMPORTANCE OF ASIA-RELATED SKILLS FOR OUR FUTURE WORKFORCE

How important are the following Asia-related skills for our future workforce and the career path of New Zealanders?



▼ Indicates significantly lower compared to previous year

Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300, (2023) n=2,300







# PART 2: CURRENT TRENDS

This section looks at New Zealand's closest friends and biggest threats in the region, and which powers New Zealanders trust the most to act responsibly in the world. It also looks at which countries are the most important defence and security partners, and includes a spotlight on New Zealand's relationship with India.







# New Zealand's relationships in Asia

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"New Zealand views **Indonesia** as a vital player in Southeast Asia, acknowledging its influence in regional politics and economic development. This partnership is further evidenced by substantial trade agreements that enhance bilateral economic ties, creating opportunities for both countries."

Male, 20-24 years, New Zealand European/other European, Hawke's Bay



# Key findings

**Japan** and **Singapore** head the group of countries in Asia New Zealanders regard as friends, followed by the Philippines and South Korea, then India.

Most Asian countries are seen as **closer friends** this year, with Southeast Asian countries seeing a significant increase in friend perceptions.

**Trade and economic partnerships** are the major contributor to friendship, along with tourism links, immigration and shared value systems.

**China** is considered both a 'friend' and a 'threat', with recent events causing a spike in threat perception.

Perceptions of the **United States** as a friend and as a responsible actor have declined over the past year.

**Japan** is the country in Asia most trusted to act responsibly in the world, while New Zealanders lack confidence in China's and Russia's ability to do so.



## New Zealanders see Japan and Singapore as their closest friends in Asia, while North Korea continues to be seen as the greatest threat

New Zealanders were asked which countries from a list of 22 they regard as friendly (a country viewed to be safe and trustworthy) or a threat (one viewed with caution or suspicion).

Three Commonwealth countries continue to lead the friend group, with small increases in their ratings. **Australia**, the **United Kingdom** and **Canada** are viewed as being the friendliest to New Zealand, with 93 percent mention for Australia, 85 percent for the United Kingdom and 84 percent for Canada.

**Japan, Singapore, the Philippines** and **South Korea** are considered New Zealand's closest friends in Asia, each mentioned by at least six in ten respondents. Japan has consistently been seen as the friendliest Asian country to New Zealand, ranking fourth of the 22 countries. Four in five (80 percent) rate Japan as a friend.

Singapore follows close behind, with 77 percent viewing it as friendly to New Zealand (up from 69 percent in 2023). The Philippines and South Korea rank seventh and eighth of the 22 countries, each up nine percentage points since 2023.

**Thailand, Malaysia** and **India** are seen as friends to New Zealand by around one in two New Zealanders, while Viet Nam and Indonesia are considered friends by just under half.

Overall, New Zealanders rate most countries in Asia as closer friends this year. Countries in Southeast Asia and South Korea saw the biggest gains in friend perceptions, jumping between eight to ten percentage points from the previous survey.

**North Korea** and **Russia** continue to be seen as the biggest threats to New Zealand (73 percent and 68 percent respectively), with fewer than eight percent regarding either country as a friend.

---

**"It will be interesting to see what the world looks like after a second Trump term and who succeeds him... and whether the BRICs nations can create a new global order with the USA looking to take a step away from being a controlling influence. We live in interesting times."**

Male, 40-49 years, New Zealand European, Canterbury

## How do New Zealanders view China and the United States?

New Zealanders’ views of both China and the United States have changed significantly over the past year.

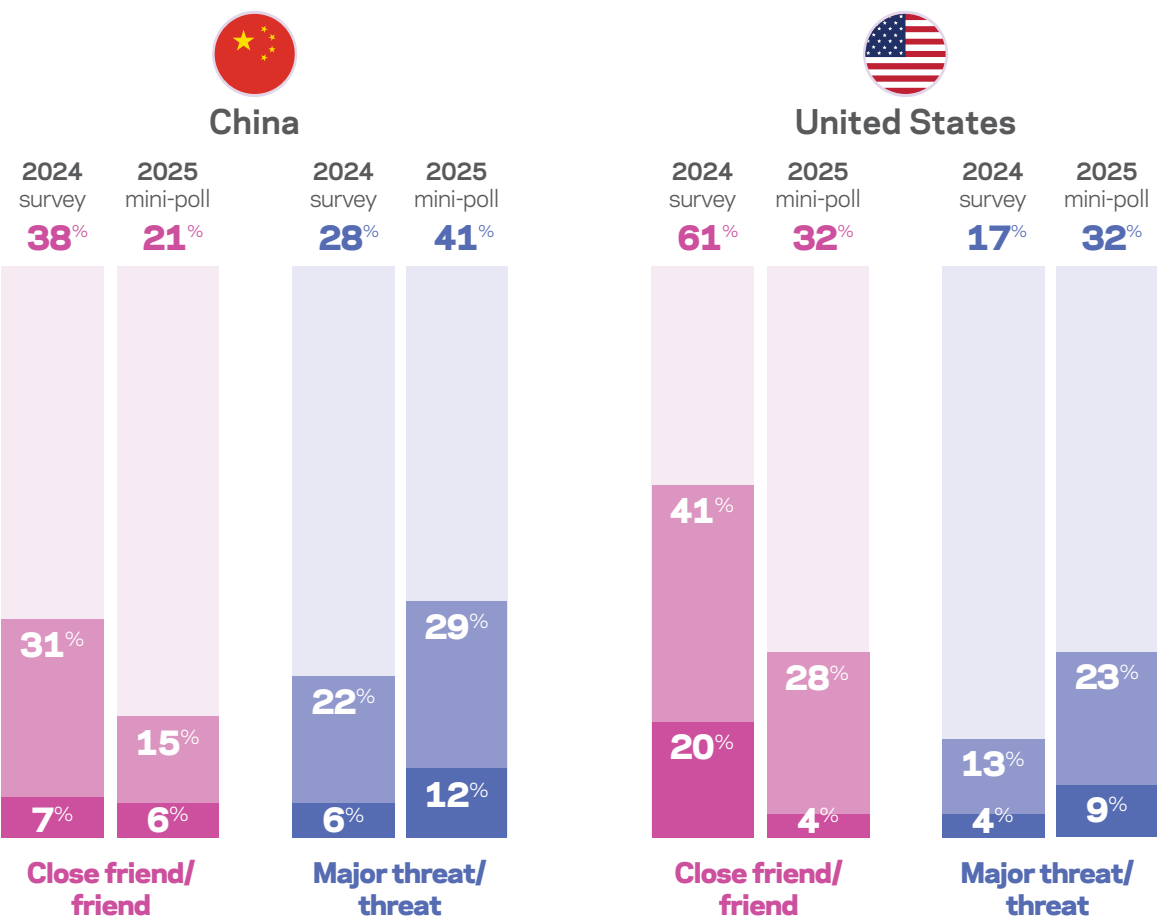
In 2024, perceptions of **China** as a friend to New Zealand outweighed threat perceptions. Thirty-eight percent regarded China as a friend, up from 33 percent in the last survey, while 28 percent considered it a threat, down from 32 percent.

The **United States** was the only country to experience a significant negative change in friend perceptions in the 2024 poll, dropping four percentage points to 61 percent. Threat perceptions of the United States also increased six percentage points – the largest shift for any country.

Perceptions of both the United States and China changed significantly as of March 2025 when we carried out a snap ‘mini-poll’ to gauge New Zealanders’ views following a period of international turmoil. New Zealanders’ friend perceptions of the United States and China had dropped considerably, while threat perceptions for both rose.

China once again tipped into net threat, with 41 percent seeing China as a threat and 21 percent considering it a friend. Perceptions of the United States fell more dramatically, from 61 percent to 32 percent friend. Threat perceptions rose from 17 percent to 32 percent. While New Zealanders’ perceptions have fluctuated over time, the mini-poll marks the first time the United States is not a net friend.

FIG 23: PERCEPTION CHANGES OF THE UNITED STATES AND CHINA





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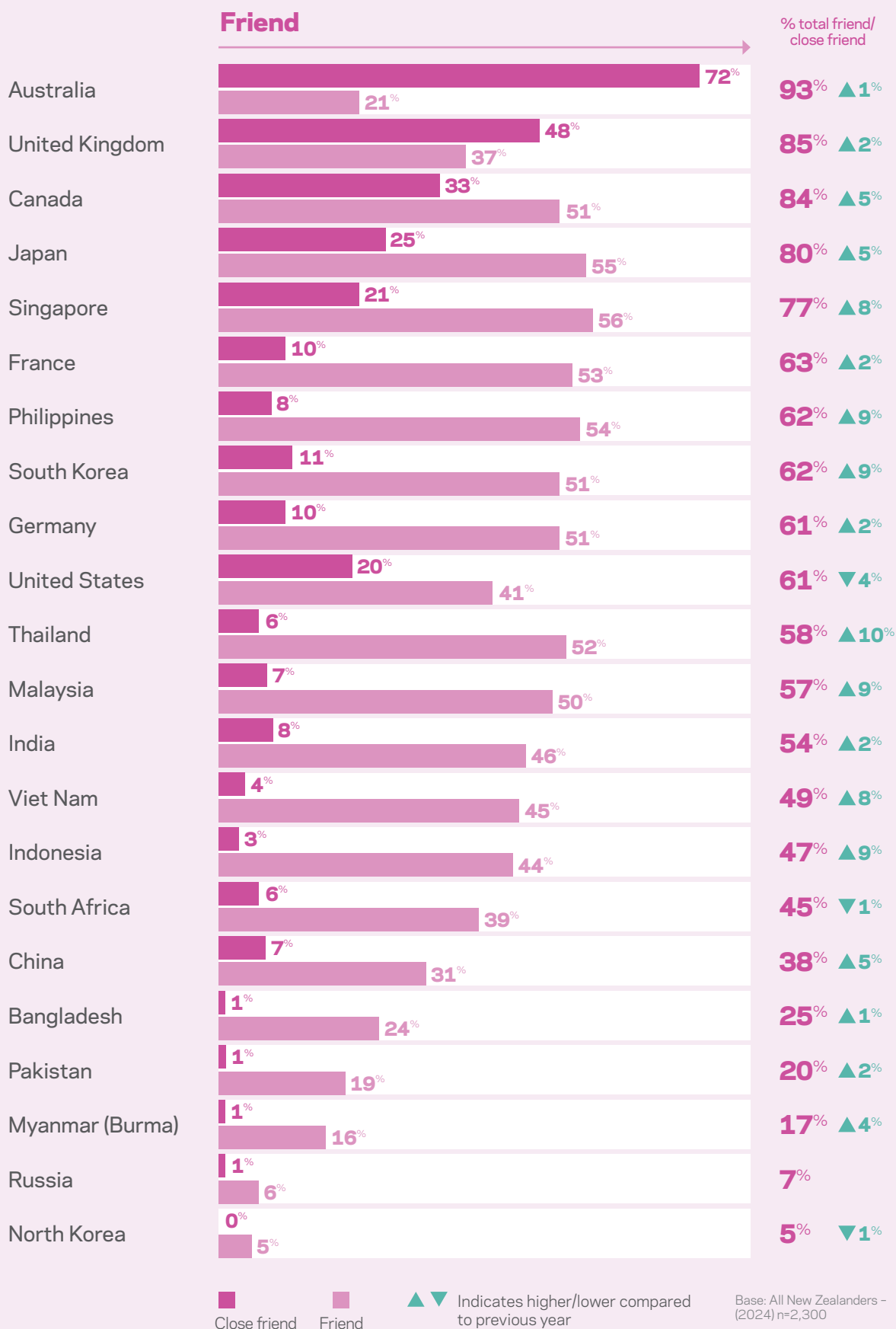
**"North Korea have shown themselves to be a threat to the security of their local area with the potential of dragging other nations into any conflict they wish to start."**

Male, 60-69 years, New Zealand European, Taranaki



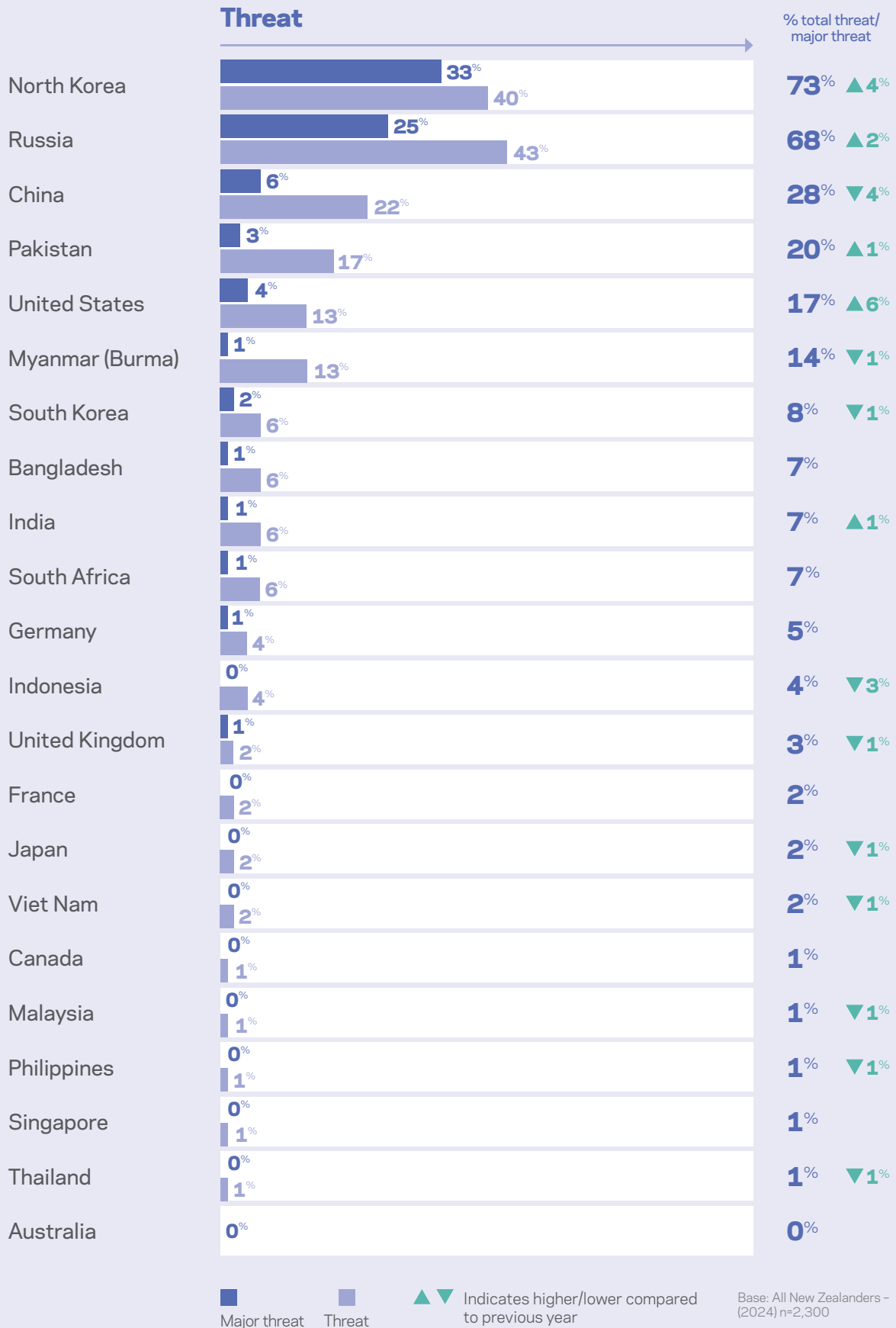
**FIG. 24: FRIEND PERCEPTIONS**

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



**FIG. 25: THREAT PERCEPTIONS**

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



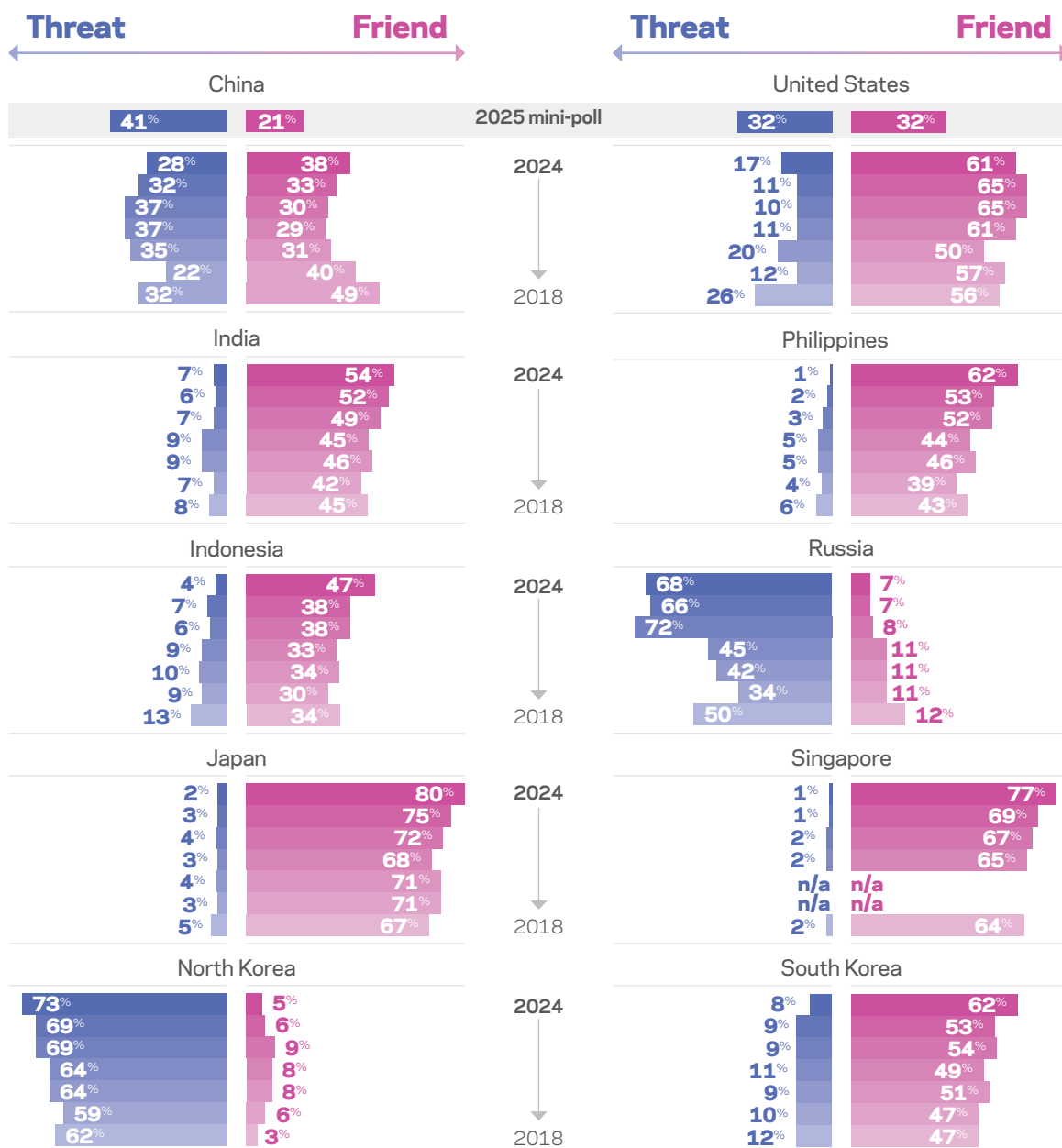
## Friend and threat perceptions over time

New Zealanders' friend and threat perceptions have fluctuated over time.

For example, friend perceptions of Japan and the Philippines have increased significantly over the past

seven years – a 13 percentage point increase for Japan, and 19 for the Philippines. In the same time period, threat perceptions of Russia and China have also gone up significantly, 18 percentage points for Russia and nine for China.

**FIG. 26: A CLOSER LOOK: HOW HAVE FRIEND AND THREAT PERCEPTIONS CHANGED SINCE 2018?**





## Why are Japan, India and China seen as friends?

Trade and economic ties are the major contributor to friendships, along with tourism links, immigration and shared value systems.

When New Zealanders who view Japan, India and China as friends to New Zealand were asked to explain why, common reasons emerged.

- **Trade and economic ties** continue to be seen as key to positive relationships across all three countries.
- Shared **tourism** ties help create connections and friendships, particularly for Japan and China, less so for India.
- For India, **immigration** is considered a key contributor to the friendship, along with a shared colonial past.
- New Zealanders also take into account cultural aspects and **positive societal attributes** they associate with specific countries (whether from travel or immigration).

### JAPAN - 80 PERCENT FRIEND

Four in five New Zealanders regard Japan as a friend to New Zealand, with 25 percent regarding it as a close friend. The strong trade and economic ties, generally positive nature of the relationship, and tourism links between the two countries are cited as key reasons for this closeness. New Zealanders consider Japan a peaceful nation with a stable political system that does not interfere in other countries' affairs, and whose people embody many positive cultural qualities. Some respondents talked of personal connections to Japan from travel and friendships, as well as technology-related benefits from the relationship.

**"Japan's commitment to peace and being a good world player."**

Male, 35-39 years, New Zealand European, Auckland

**"Japan is a significant export market and supplier of manufactured goods. We share common interests in defence."**

Male, 20-24 years, Chinese, Auckland

### INDIA - 54 PERCENT FRIEND

Over half of New Zealanders see India as a friend. Forty-three percent name trade ties as the key reason for this, while over a third point to immigration. A shared colonial past and Commonwealth membership also contribute to these friend perceptions. New Zealanders also identify shared democratic and cultural values, as well as having sporting interests in common.

**"Commonwealth ties, respect for Hillary, cricket in common. New Zealand is respected for its independent foreign policy (to a degree), lots of other small things that add up."**

Male, 40-49 years, New Zealand European, Waikato

**"India and New Zealand work closely together, we have a wonderful Indian community in NZ and are both sporting mad."**

Female, 20-24 years, New Zealand European, Auckland



### CHINA - 38 PERCENT FRIEND

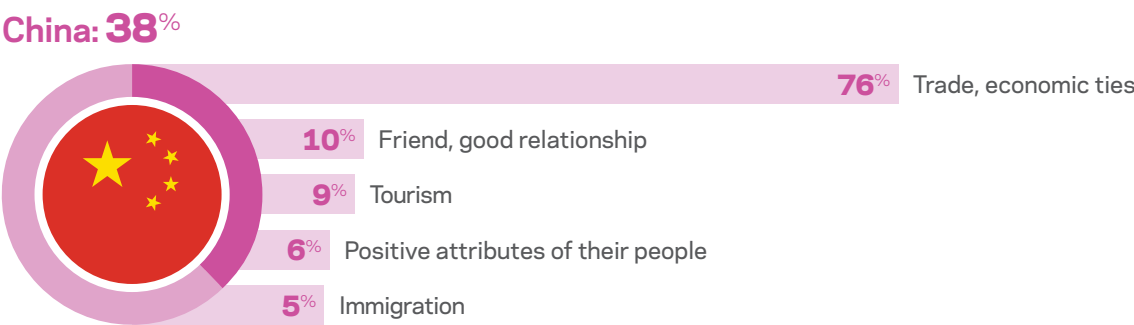
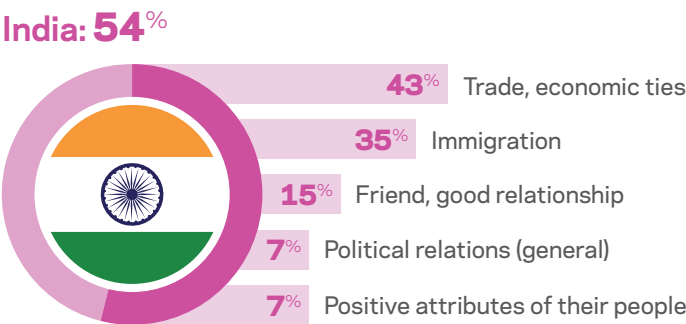
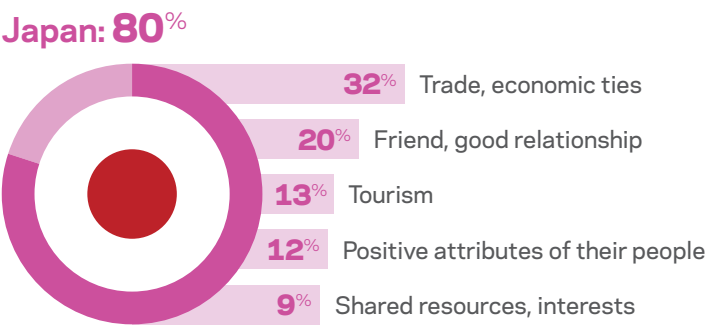
Trade and economic ties drive New Zealanders’ friend perceptions of China. Seventy-six percent of those who see China as a friend note the importance of our bilateral trade. Generally positive perceptions of the relationship were a distant second (ten percent) followed by tourism ties (nine percent), positive attributes of Chinese people (six percent) and immigration (five percent).

**“[China] is one of our major trading partners and we accept immigration and tourism from them.”**  
Male, 40–49 years, New Zealand European, Hawke’s Bay

**“We have a lot of Chinese immigrants which makes for a more enriched, cultured community.”**  
Female, 20–24 years, other European, Auckland

FIG. 27: WHY ARE JAPAN, INDIA AND CHINA SEEN AS FRIENDS?

Why do you view [insert country] as a friend?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) Japan, India, China (n=318 responses coded for each)

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## Why are North Korea, Russia and China seen as threats?

Authoritarian governments and autocratic leaders pursuing aggressive foreign policies are considered the greatest threats by New Zealanders.

When New Zealanders were asked their reasons for considering specific countries as threats, the following themes emerged:

- Countries with **leaders** who are seen as unstable, unpredictable and ego-driven.
- Countries with **authoritarian political systems** and ideologies that are antagonistic toward Western countries.
- Countries that are **politically volatile** and/or viewed as being corrupt.
- Countries with **expansionist policies** that are actively aggressive toward other nations (such as Russia's aggression toward Ukraine).
- Countries with strong **military capability** and **nuclear weapons**.



## NORTH KOREA - 73 PERCENT THREAT

North Korea is viewed as the most threatening country to New Zealand, with 73 percent of New Zealanders considering it a threat to New Zealand and 33 percent describing it as a major threat. Views are based on perceptions of North Korea as an isolated authoritarian country, with a volatile leader who shows a disregard for human rights. North Korea's military and nuclear capabilities are also considered dangerous to the world at large.

**"North Korea is volatile and unpredictable. Because of their isolation, their motivation for doing things isn't widely understood. They have a massive military which they have recently shown they are not afraid to use in other regions and countries."**

Female, 35-39 years, New Zealand European, Canterbury

**"Constant sabre rattling and very antagonistic leader towards Western countries like New Zealand. Would not trust them especially given their current outward pro-allegiance towards the Russian war on Ukraine."**

Male, 20-24 years, Chinese, Auckland

## RUSSIA - 68 PERCENT THREAT

Those who consider Russia a threat to New Zealand distrust President Putin and see him as a global threat. They describe him as "ego-driven", "corrupt", "ambitious", a "bully", "autocratic" and a "warmonger". Some express concerns about Russia's antagonism toward the West and its efforts to destabilise the economies and political systems of other countries. New Zealanders express strong concern about the potential escalation of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the ongoing threat of nuclear war.

**"Ukraine war and its mission to destabilise other areas such as Syria and the near East. They control major sources of energy and to some extent disrupt the democratic process in countries they view as hostile. They do not play nice and are a very poor global citizen."**

Male, 40-49 years, New Zealand European, Waikato

**"Because of the war against the West, interference in elections and invasion of Ukraine."**

Male, 30-34 years, New Zealand European, Auckland

## CHINA - 28 PERCENT THREAT

China is considered a lesser threat than North Korea or Russia. However, those who regard China as a threat note it has an authoritarian leader with expansionist ambitions. China's behaviour in the Pacific, namely its financial investments and military strength, are of particular concern.

While trade and economic ties are the main reason China is seen as a friend, its economic power and influence also contribute to its threat perception given New Zealand's dependence on the trade relationship.

China's human rights record is also of concern, as is its environmental impact on the world.

**"Expansionist rhetoric into the South China Sea, military spending, destabilising influence on other world affairs such as war in Ukraine, human rights record especially in Xinjiang and Tibet."**

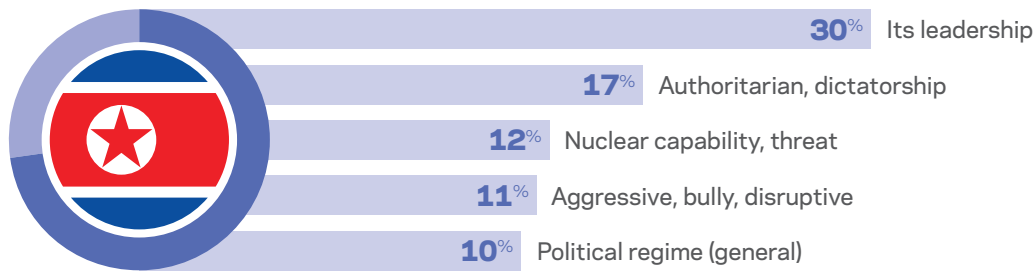
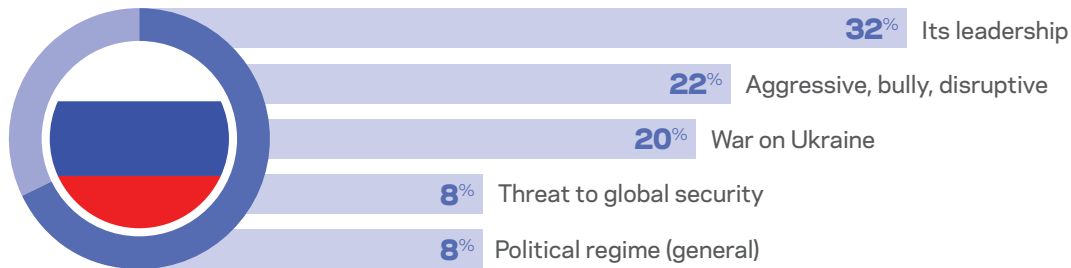
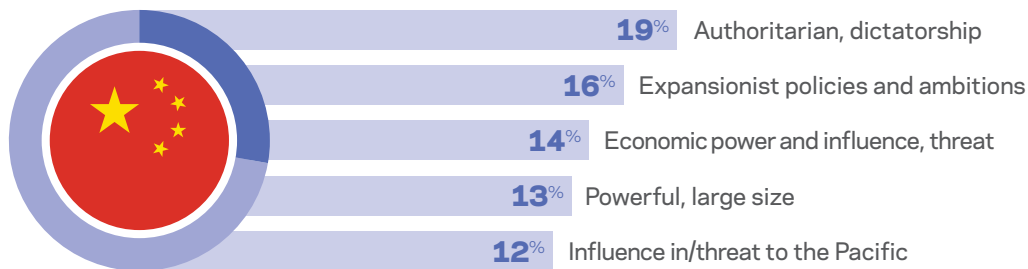
Male, 40-49 years, New Zealand European, Waikato

**"China's treatment of its neighbours is one of domination and control. It is dangerous to allow China to have too much power in New Zealand or the Pacific."**

Female, 20-24, Māori, Wellington

**FIG. 28: WHY ARE NORTH KOREA, RUSSIA AND CHINA VIEWED AS THREATS?**

Why do you view [insert country] as a threat?

**North Korea: 73%****Russia: 68%****China: 28%**

Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) North Korea n=1,181, Russia n=1,181, China n=503



## New Zealanders have high trust in Australia, Japan and the United Kingdom to act responsibly in the world

No country enjoys complete trust to act responsibly in the world including New Zealand, which was included for the first time to provide a baseline.

However, New Zealand is the most trusted country, with 75 percent saying they have high trust in New Zealand to act responsibly in the world. Levels of trust in the other ten major and middle powers listed range widely from a high of 72 percent trust to a low point of five percent.

Only three other countries are trusted by over six in ten New Zealanders:

- Middle power **Australia** continues to be most trusted, with 72 percent expressing high trust and 28 percent very high trust. Views are consistent with last year's results. Trust in Australia is based on a shared colonial past and political system, the ANZAC relationship, close neighbourhood ties and trans-Tasman migration.
- Trust in **Japan**, the only Asian power assessed to enjoy high trust, is now equal to the **United Kingdom**, with over six in ten New Zealanders (62 percent) expressing high trust in both countries. While there has been no change in trust in the United Kingdom since the last survey, trust in Japan has increased by six percentage points.

Trust in both Australia and Japan has increased significantly since 2021, when this question was first asked. Trust in Australia has increased from 61 percent to 72 percent, and trust in Japan has grown from 49 percent to 62 percent.

While confidence in most major powers to act responsibly has been consistent since 2022, there has been a decline in trust in the **United States**, dropping from 38 percent to 33 percent since the last survey. This loss of trust likely reflects the outcome of the United States presidential election in October 2024, with changes expected to foreign policy and relationships with major world powers.

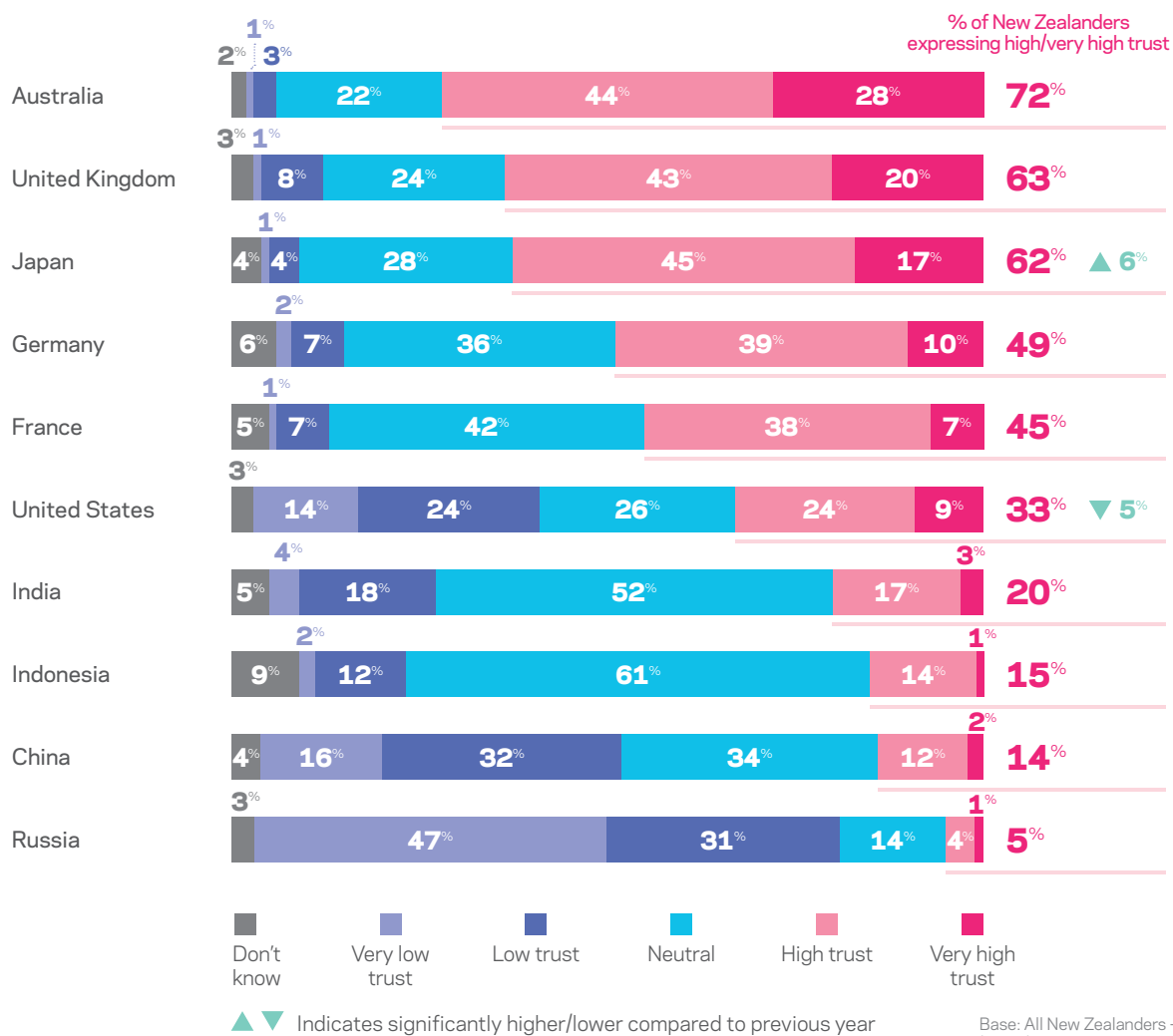
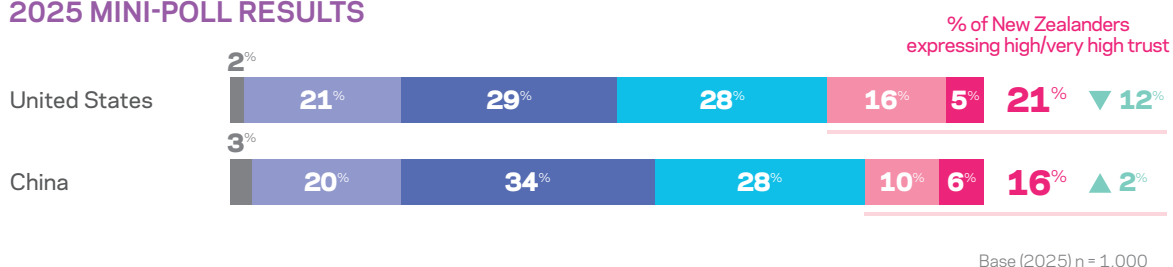
The March 2025 'mini-poll', which followed the announcement of tariffs on key trade partners and a highly publicised meeting between President Trump and Ukraine's President Zelensky, showed that levels of high/very high trust in the United States had dropped to a record low of 21 percent.

The pattern of responses is different for four other major powers:

- For **India** and **Indonesia**, at least half of all New Zealanders have a neutral view of their ability to act responsibly (52 percent for India and 61 percent for Indonesia). Levels of positive trust are similar to levels of low trust expressed for both (20 percent).
- New Zealanders are more likely to have low trust in **China** than high trust. Forty-eight percent of New Zealanders express little trust in China to act responsibly and only 14 percent express high trust. One in six New Zealanders (16 percent) say they have very little trust in China to act responsibly in the world.
- The March 2025 'mini-poll' results show that trust in China remains low but seems to be becoming more polarised. While 16 percent reported high or very high trust in China (an increase of two percentage points from the 2024 survey), 54 percent say they have low or very low trust in China (an increase of six percentage points from 2024).
- New Zealanders have little trust in **Russia**. Seventy-eight percent express low trust in Russia to act responsibly in the world, and nearly half of New Zealanders (47 percent) have very low trust.

**FIG. 29: LEVELS OF TRUST IN MAJOR POWERS TO ACT RESPONSIBLY IN THE WORLD**

How much trust do you have in the following major powers to act responsibly in the world?

**2025 MINI-POLL RESULTS**



## Spotlight: New Zealand-India relations

India is the world's most populous country, having overtaken China in 2022. Its population of almost 1.46 billion people is one of the world's youngest, with a median age of 29.5 years, and around ten million people joining its labour force every year. Tech is one of India's biggest industry sectors.

## NEW ZEALAND-INDIA RELATIONS

New Zealand and India have a long-standing relationship based on shared democratic values, sporting interests and colonial experiences.

India's importance to New Zealand is increasing, reflecting India's expanding economy, its growing geopolitical influence, and deep personal ties through the now significant Indian diaspora in New Zealand, which numbers around 300,000.

The South Asia region in which India is a major player is less well known to New Zealanders than other regions of Asia. Around three in ten New Zealanders (29 percent) say they know at least a fair amount about South Asia, while four in ten (40 percent) know at least a fair amount about Southeast Asia and over half (56 percent) about North Asia. This comparative lack of knowledge impacts perceptions and rankings of South Asia relative to its Southeast Asian neighbours and the power houses of North Asia.

## IMPORTANCE TO NEW ZEALAND'S FUTURE

- India ranks third in importance to New Zealand's future, behind Japan and China.
- Fifty-nine percent see India as very important or important to New Zealand's future, with 24 percent regarding it as very important. Only a minority (12 percent) do not consider India to be important to New Zealand's future.

## FRIEND OR THREAT

- Over half of New Zealanders (54 percent) consider India a friend, with eight percent considering it a close friend. India's shared colonial past and its Commonwealth membership are key factors in shaping perceptions. New Zealanders acknowledge India's economic power and the strong trading relationship, along with the value that Indian immigration has brought to New Zealand. New Zealanders also note the countries shared democratic and cultural values and common sporting interests.
- Only seven percent see India as a threat to New Zealand.

**"India has a large population, loads of positive immigration to New Zealand, and a growing economy."**

Male, 35-39 years, New Zealand European, Canterbury

**"India offers new and upcoming ideas for growth in infrastructure."**

Male, 25-29 years, Indian, Waikato

**"A major source of high intelligence, high value jobs and a great market for milk products."**

Male, 30-34 years, Indian, Auckland

## A priority relationship in Asia

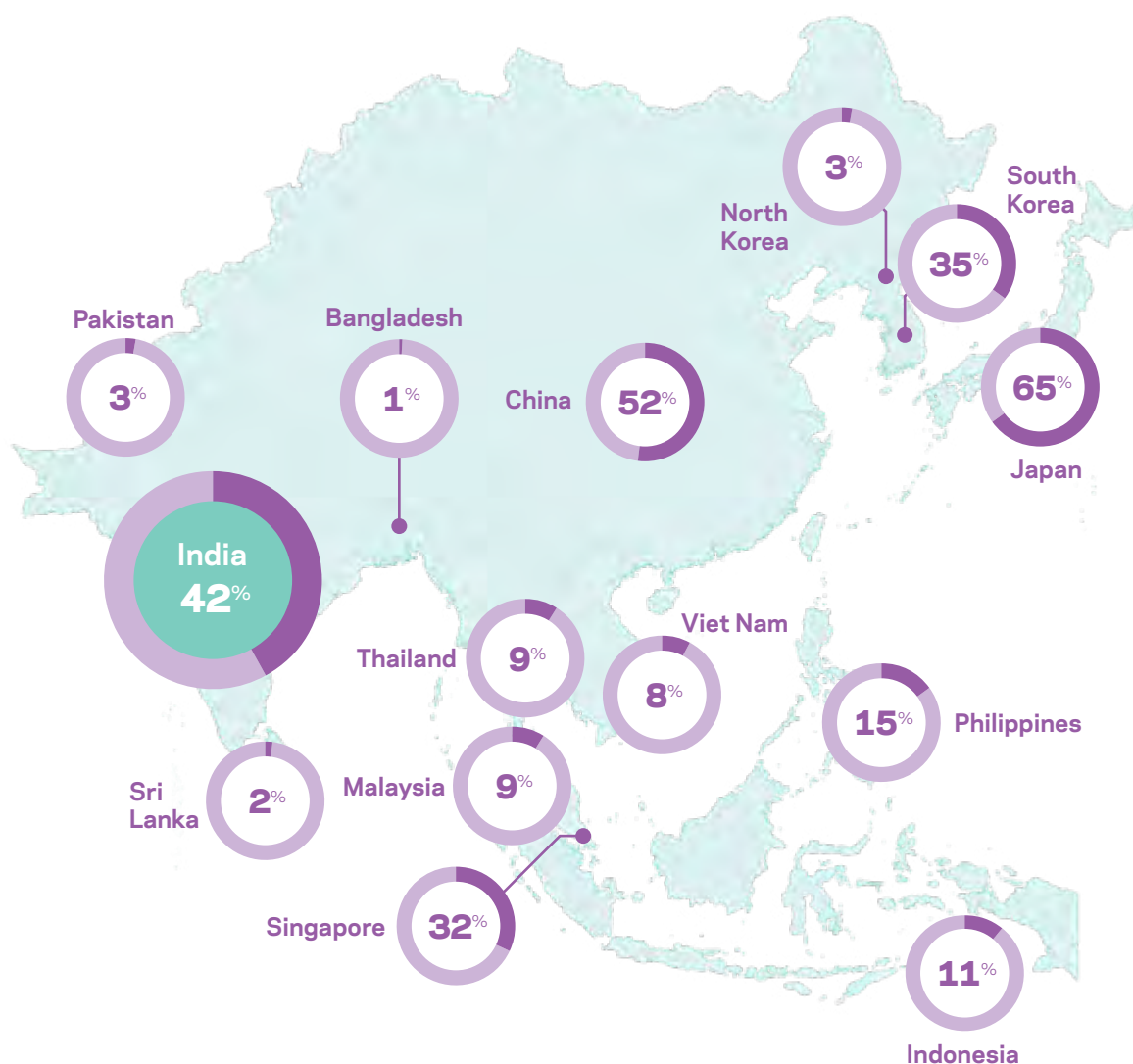
India ranks 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 14 Asian countries as a relationship meriting extra effort.

Over four in ten New Zealanders (42 percent) would like to see New Zealand put extra effort into its relationship with India, following Japan and China.

India is considered a priority relationship because of trade and economic opportunities, its growing size and influence in the world, and its growing status as a major power. Opportunities for technology and innovation exchange also figure in New Zealanders' thinking.

New  
question

**FIG. 30: WHICH RELATIONSHIPS DO NEW ZEALANDERS WANT TO INVEST MORE EFFORT IN?**



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300



## Priorities for New Zealand's relationship with India

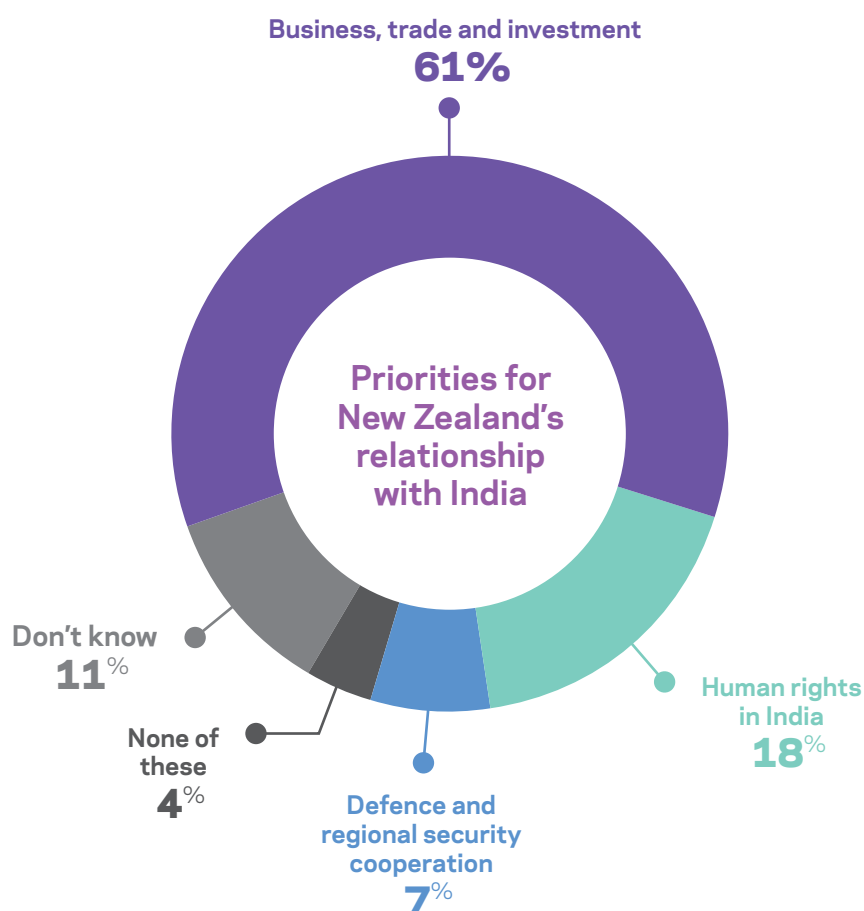
Three in five New Zealanders think that business, trade and investment should be prioritised in New Zealand's relationship with India.

Human rights in India and defence and regional security cooperation are a distant second and third (18 percent and seven percent respectively).

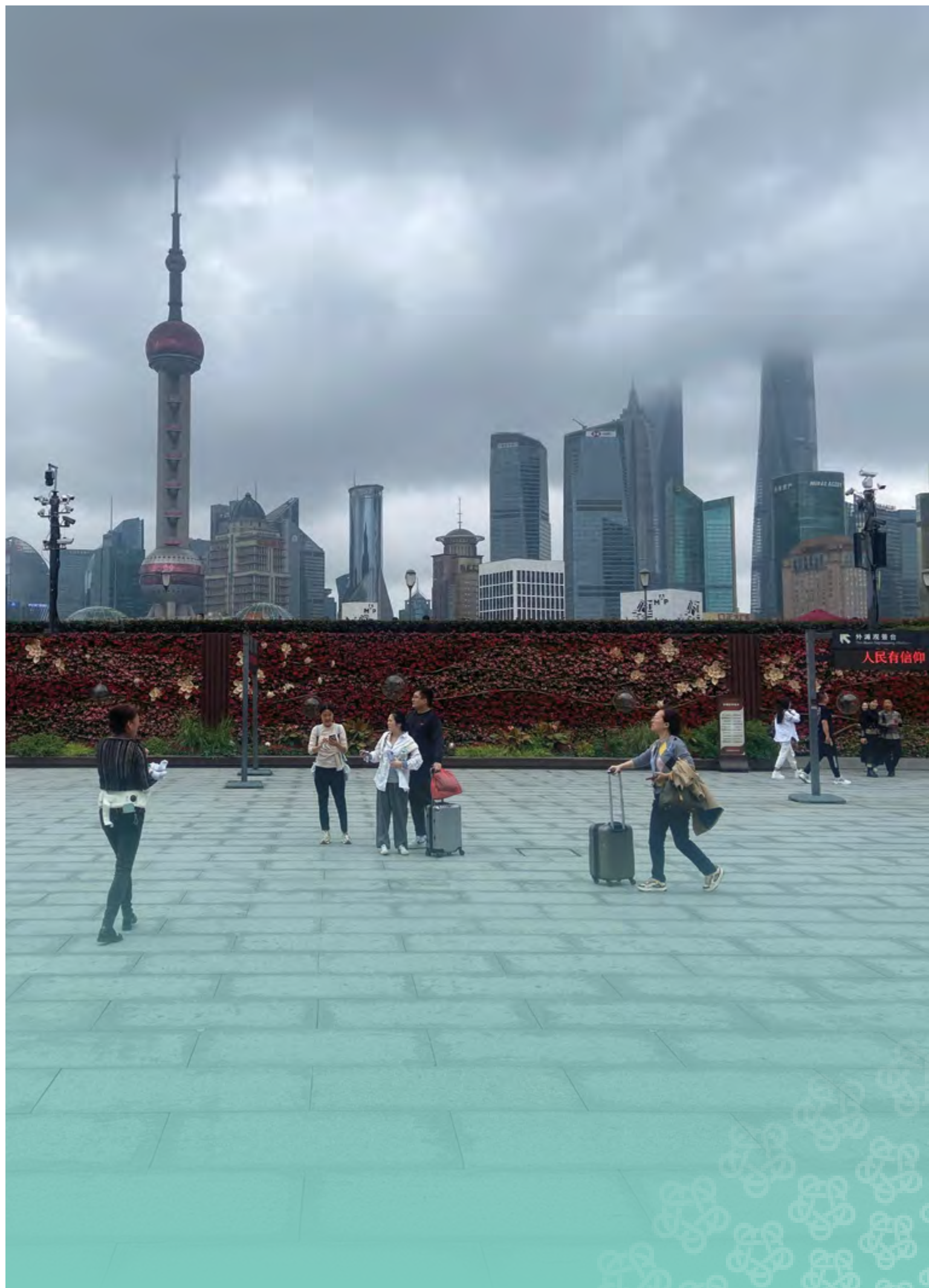
Males are particularly likely to select business, trade and investment as the highest priority (71 percent), as are those aged 60 years and over (79 percent), New Zealanders of Asian heritage (69 percent) and those who recall Asian-related media content (67 percent).

New  
question

**FIG. 31: WHAT SHOULD NEW ZEALAND PRIORITISE IN ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA?**  
Of these, which would you say New Zealand should give highest priority to in its relationship with India?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300



# Defence and security in the region

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"**China** is both friend and threat: our principal trading partner, and a major source of migrants, tourists and students; but under Xi Jinping its actions in the South China Sea and against Taiwan, its buildup of the PLA's force projection capabilities, and its corrosive impact on Pacific governance and democracy constitute a threat."

Male, 50-59 years, other ethnicity, Wellington

# Key findings

Non-traditional security issues, particularly **fake news** and **cyber-attacks**, are seen as the biggest threats to New Zealand's vital interests.

Asian countries across the region are seen as increasingly important **defence and security partners** for New Zealand.

**Japan** is considered New Zealand's most important defence and security partner in Asia, with **South Korea** and **Singapore** seen as increasingly important.

New Zealanders are concerned about **China's** foreign policy in the South Pacific and Tasman Sea, but are more concerned about **US** foreign policy towards **Ukraine**.

The tri-lateral partnership **AUKUS** is considered likely to have a positive impact, or no impact, on the Asia region.



## Fake news and misinformation lead concerns about threats to New Zealand's vital interests over the next ten years

Fake news and misinformation is the only issue to be considered a major concern by at least half of all New Zealanders (up seven percent from last year).

**Climate change, cyber attacks from other countries, and the rise of authoritarian systems of government around the world** (a new category) are also of concern, followed by **terrorism and violent extremism**.

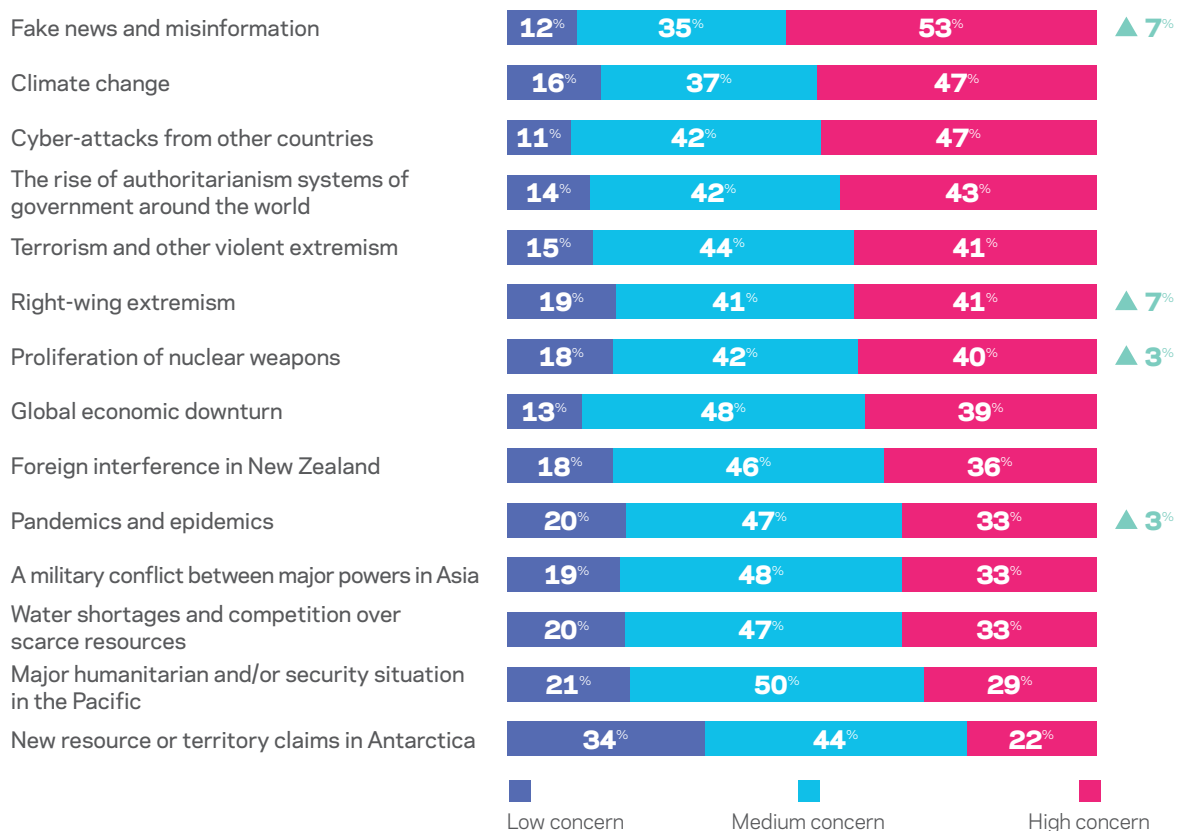
The perceived threat of **right-wing extremism** has increased significantly since the last survey, from 34 percent to 41 percent.

New Zealanders rank military conflict in Asia as tenth out of 14 possible threats. **New resource or territory claims in Antarctica** continue to be regarded as the least significant threat to New Zealand in the next ten years, with only 22 percent expressing high concern about this issue.

Demographic subgroups view these threats differently. New Zealanders of Māori and/or Southeast Asian heritage tend to express above average concern about these various threats. Older respondents also express greater concern than average, while the under 30 age group have below average concern.

### FIG. 32: WHAT ARE NEW ZEALANDERS MOST CONCERNED ABOUT?

How concerned, or not, are you with the following possible threats to New Zealand's vital interests over the next ten years?



Base: All New Zealanders – (2024) n=2,300, (2023) n=2,300



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## Japan is considered New Zealand's most important defence and security partner in Asia

Over half of all respondents (57 percent) identify Japan as New Zealand's most important defence and security partner in Asia, up nine percent from the last survey.

Japan is the only country to have been consistently chosen by at least half of all New Zealanders since the question was first asked in 2021.

**South Korea** and **Singapore** are considered the second and third most important defence and security partners in Asia with 39 percent and 38 percent mention respectively, a ten percentage point increase for both since the last survey.

Three in ten New Zealanders (30 percent) consider **China** an important defence and security partner, with **India** ranking fifth, at 27 percent.

While there have been minor fluctuations year-on-year, the same five countries have consistently been identified as key defence and security partners since 2021.

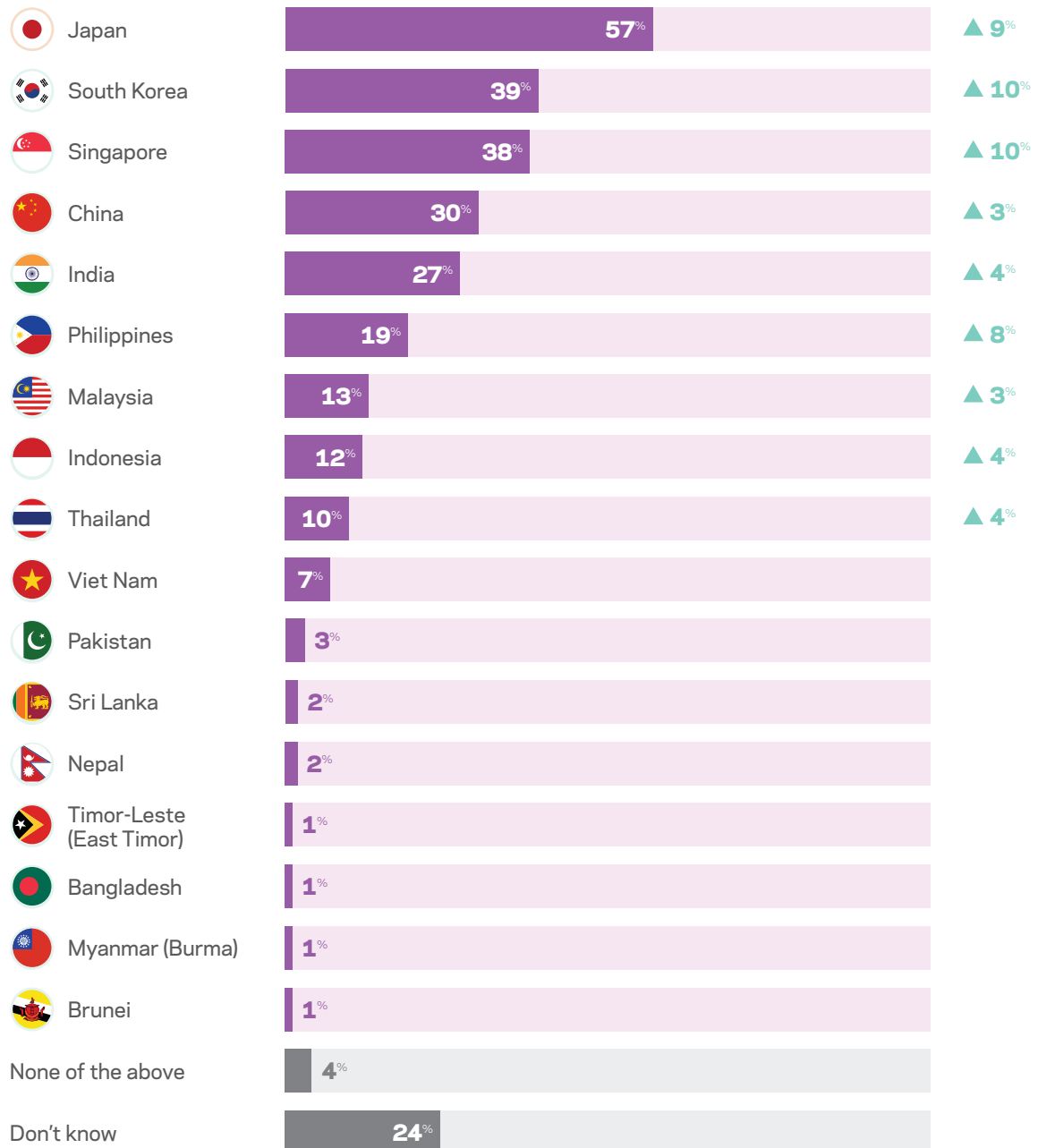
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**"Japan is a friend as they are [part of] a Western alliance with military bases for the US etc. Japan has always been friendly with NZ balancing the threat of China. Japan has a business and tourism relationship with New Zealand and gets along nicely with the West."**

Female, 25–29 years, New Zealand European and Samoan, Auckland

**FIG. 33: MOST IMPORTANT DEFENCE AND SECURITY PARTNERS IN ASIA**

In terms of New Zealand's defence and security, which Asian countries are New Zealand's most important partners to work with? (Please select up to five)



▲ Indicates significantly higher compared to previous year

Base: All New Zealanders –  
(2024) n=2,300,  
(2023) n=2,300  
Note: 0% not shown

## Views are mixed about whether and where conflict is most likely to occur in Asia in the next ten years

New Zealanders have mixed opinions about the military conflict most likely to occur in Asia over the next decade.

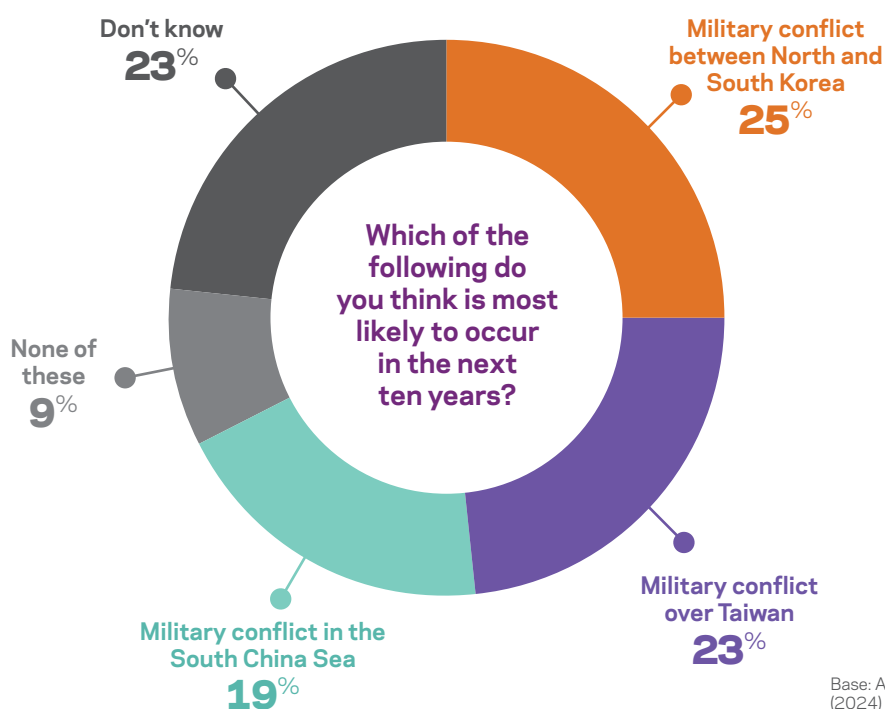
One in four New Zealanders (25 percent) think that conflict between **North and South Korea** is most

likely, while another one in four (23 percent) are worried about a conflict over **Taiwan**. One in five New Zealanders (19 percent) are most concerned about a conflict in the South China Sea. Only nine percent think that conflict is unlikely in any of these places in the next ten years.

New  
question

**FIG. 34: NEW ZEALANDERS' VIEWS OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT IN ASIA**

Which of the following do you think is most likely to occur in the next ten years?



## AUKUS is considered likely to have a positive impact, or no impact, on the safety of the region

**AUKUS** is a trilateral security partnership between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States centred on the Indo-Pacific region. Formed in 2021, the AUKUS partnership has two pillars, one focused on providing Australia with a conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability, and the second on developing joint advanced military capabilities.

New Zealanders were told that AUKUS is the security partnership between Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom, and were asked if they think it will make the Asia region more safe, less safe or make no difference.

On balance New Zealanders believe that AUKUS is likely to make the Asia region safer rather than less safe: 35 percent say it will make the region safer, and 25 percent say it will make no difference. Seven percent of the total sample think that AUKUS will make the region less safe.

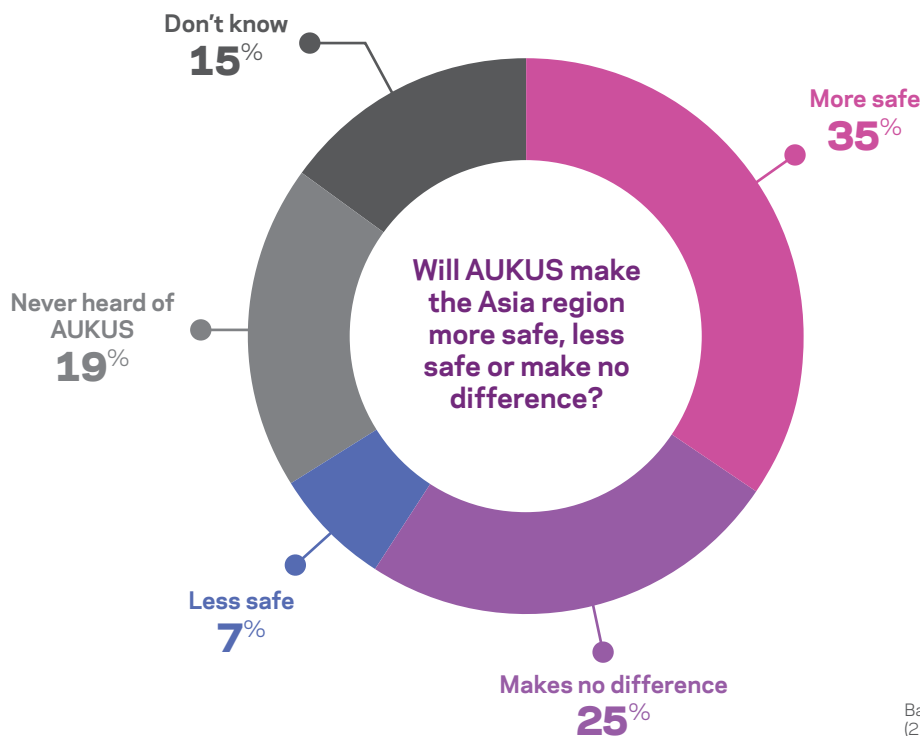
One in five New Zealanders have not heard of AUKUS, and another 15 percent do not know what impact AUKUS might have on the region.

The likelihood of not having heard of AUKUS is greatest among the under 30 age group. New Zealanders of Chinese heritage are more likely than other New Zealanders to think that AUKUS will make Asia less safe, with 18 percent holding this view.

New  
question

### FIG. 35: LIKELY IMPACT OF AUKUS ON THE SAFETY OF THE ASIA REGION

Thinking about regional partnerships, do you think AUKUS, the security partnership between Australia, the United States and the United Kingdom, will make the Asia region more safe, less safe or make no difference?



Base: All New Zealanders -  
(2024) n=2,300

## New Zealanders are worried about China and US foreign policy

News in February and early March was dominated by developments in China and US foreign policies.

In a March ‘mini-poll’, New Zealanders were asked how worried they were about each of the following recent world events:

- China’s live firing exercises in the Tasman Sea
- The Cook Islands and China signing a comprehensive strategic partnership agreement
- US tariff announcements on key trade partners
- US foreign policy towards Ukraine

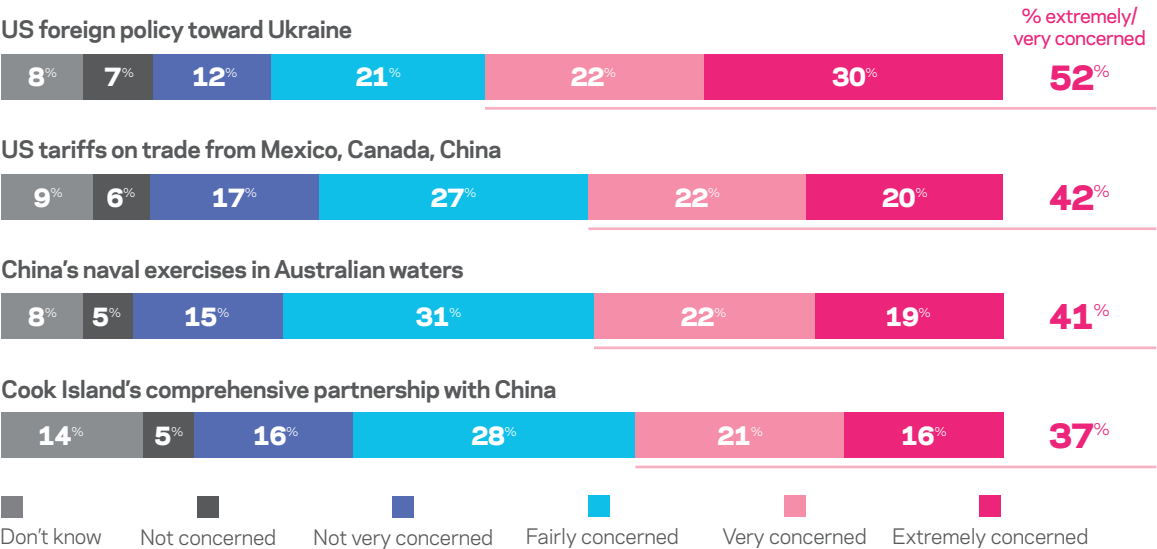
New Zealanders are most concerned about US foreign policy towards Ukraine by a considerable margin, with 52 percent very or extremely concerned.

The US tariffs on trade from Mexico, Canada and China, and China’s naval exercises in Australian waters are the next most concerning developments at 42 percent and 41 percent respectively.

Despite having the most direct implications for New Zealand’s global relations, New Zealanders are less concerned about China’s comprehensive strategic partnership agreement with the Cook Islands than other recent developments, with 37 percent very or extremely concerned.

FIG. 36: CONCERNS ABOUT RECENT WORLD EVENTS (MINI-POLL MARCH 2025)

When it comes to recent world events, how concerned or not concerned are you about the following?



Base: All New Zealanders – (2025) n=1,000



## New Zealanders are divided on increasing defence spending

New Zealanders are divided on the appropriate level of national defence spending.

While 37 percent think the government is spending the right amount on defence, 35 percent of New Zealanders feel the government should be spending more. Only one in ten (11 percent) think the government should be spending less.


Those in the South Island are more likely to think New Zealand should be spending more on defence, with 42 percent saying the government should increase its defence expenditure, compared to 33 percent in the North Island.

### FIG. 37: VIEWS OF CURRENT SPENDING ON DEFENCE (MINI-POLL MARCH 2025)

When it comes to the New Zealand government's spending on defence relative to other priorities, which of the following comes closest to your personal view?







# PART 3: LOOKING FORWARD

This section looks at how New Zealand should continue to build and strengthen its relationships across Asia. It also looks at New Zealanders' main Asia-related interests, patterns of consuming media and Asia-related entertainment. It includes a spotlight on how New Zealanders expect Asia to impact life in New Zealand in the decades ahead.







博多っ子純情屋台

喜柳

ソフトボウリングCM出演



| 博多っ子純情屋台 喜柳 |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| ～お好み焼～      | ～博多名物～        |
| 島根とろろ 950   | 博多とんこラーメン 650 |
| 豚バラお好み焼 900 | 博多焼きラーメン 850  |
| 地鶏お好み焼 900  | 博多ごままき 900    |
| ふんわり 900    | 博多みかん 900     |
| ふんわり 850    | 博多～ロゼット 650   |
| ふんわり 650    | 博多地鶏バー 650    |
| ～博多名物～      | 博多コロッケ 800    |
| 明太子 800     | モチモチぎん 650    |
| 明太子 650     | からしメンコン 650   |
| 明太子 650     | かつお刺身 650     |
| 明太子 650     | おでん 150～      |
| 明太子 650     | おでん 150～      |
| 明太子 750     | おでん 150～      |





# How does New Zealand continue to build relationships with Asia?

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“We have developed strong diplomatic and trade ties in recent years with **Japan** and our values in the global system are broadly aligned.”

Male, 25-29 years, New Zealand European, Wellington



# Key findings

While New Zealanders support a range of activities to help grow relationships in Asia, doing **business and trade** together, having **strategic guidance** from government, and **engagement between governments** are considered critical.

**Japan** is considered the most important country in Asia for New Zealand to develop its relationship with.

New Zealanders view **trade** and **economic opportunities** as key reasons for relationship development with countries in Asia.

New Zealanders are divided on whether New Zealand's **economic interests** or **democratic values** should come first when these are in tension in New Zealand's Asia relations.



## Business and trade top the list for growing New Zealand's relationships in Asia

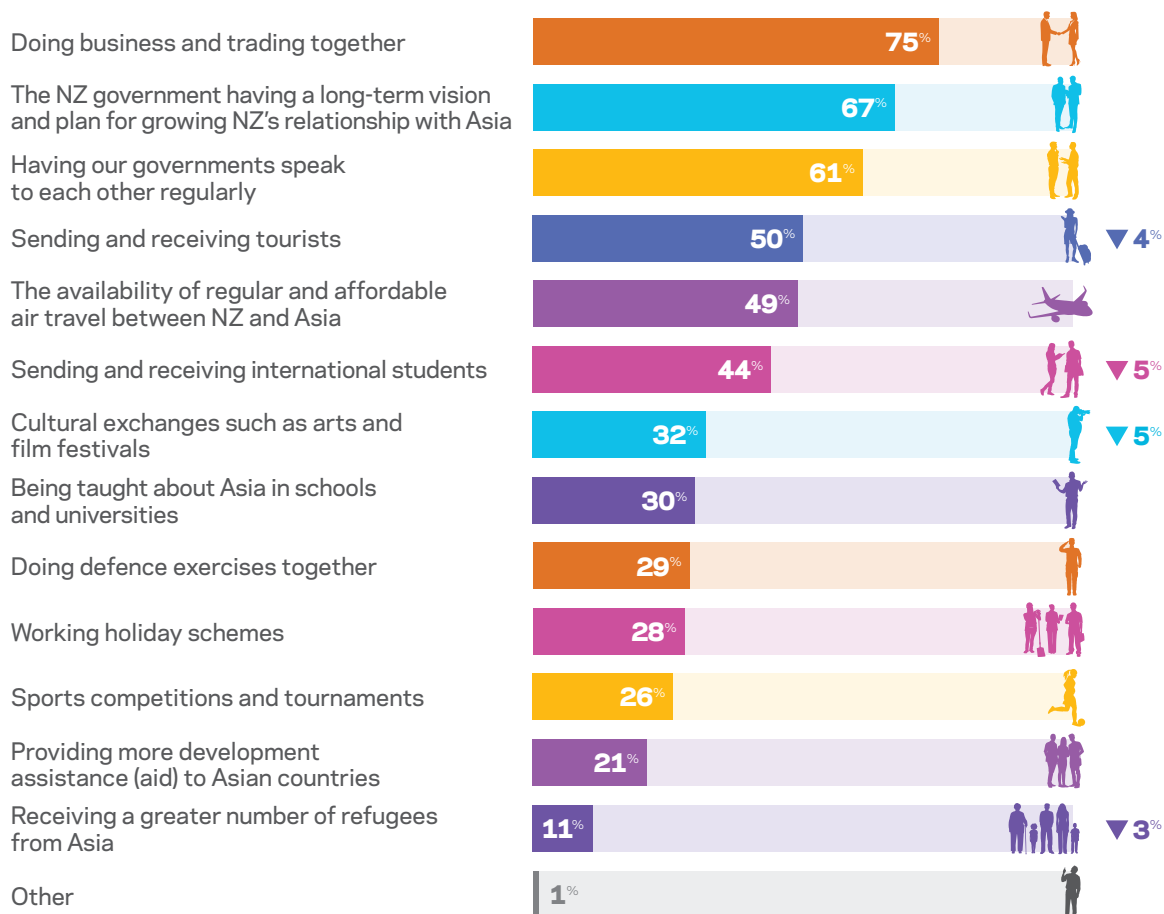
New Zealanders were asked about the importance of 13 activities for growing New Zealand's relationships in Asia.

Five of the 13 activities are considered important by at least half of New Zealanders. The pattern of responses is similar to views expressed in the last survey, with small decreases for some activities.

New Zealanders view business and governmental activities as the most important for developing ties in Asia. A second tier of activities, largely focused on tourism and education links, are seen as important by 40 to 50 percent of New Zealanders.

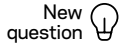
**FIG. 38: MOST IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES FOR GROWING NEW ZEALAND'S RELATIONSHIP WITH ASIA**

Which of these activities do you think are important to help grow New Zealand's relationship with Asia?



▲ ▼ Indicates significantly higher/lower compared to previous year

Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300



## Which relationships should New Zealand invest more in and why?

New Zealanders view Japan (65 percent), China (52 percent) and India (42 percent) as key relationships to invest effort in.

One in three respondents thinks that New Zealand should also invest effort into developing relationships with South Korea (35 percent) and Singapore (32 percent).

Trade and economic opportunities are the key reason for New Zealand to put extra effort into developing relationships in Asia. It is the dominant reason for selecting China, India or Singapore, although slightly less important for Japan and South Korea.

For Japan and South Korea, opportunities for technology and innovation are almost as important as trade and economic drivers.

China's perceived dominance as a world power is the second main reason for New Zealanders wanting to invest extra effort in this relationship.

Security and defence is a significant factor for South Korea, while growing population and influence is important for India.

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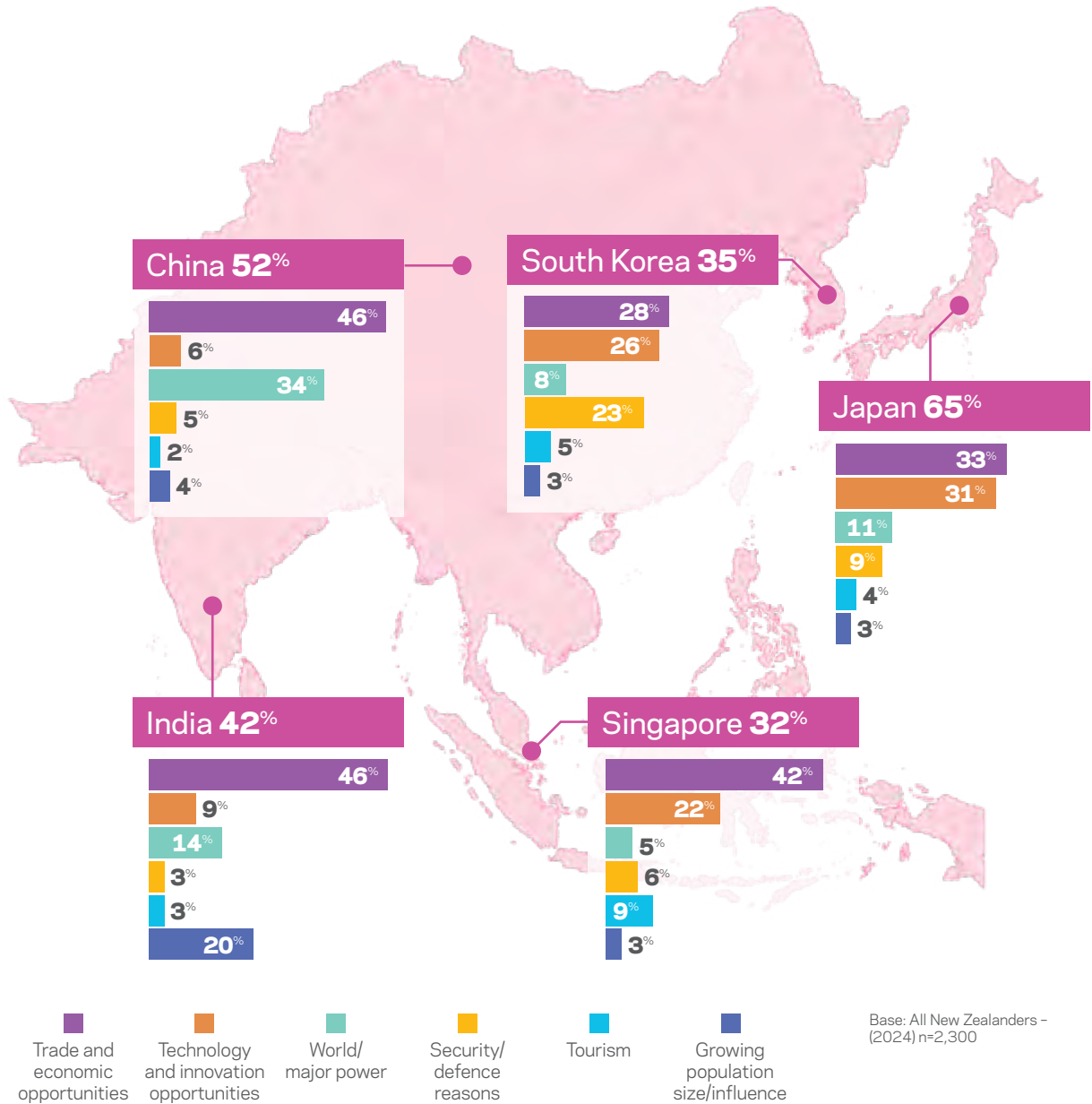
**"South Korea is an industrialised and innovative country. We have a strong trading relationship and there are many South Koreans living in New Zealand."**

Female, over 70 years, New Zealand European and other European, Auckland



## FIG. 39: REASONS WHY NEW ZEALAND SHOULD INVEST EXTRA EFFORT IN KEY RELATIONSHIPS IN ASIA

Why should New Zealand invest extra effort into building its relationship with [insert country]?





## What matters more in our relationships in Asia - economic interests or democratic values?

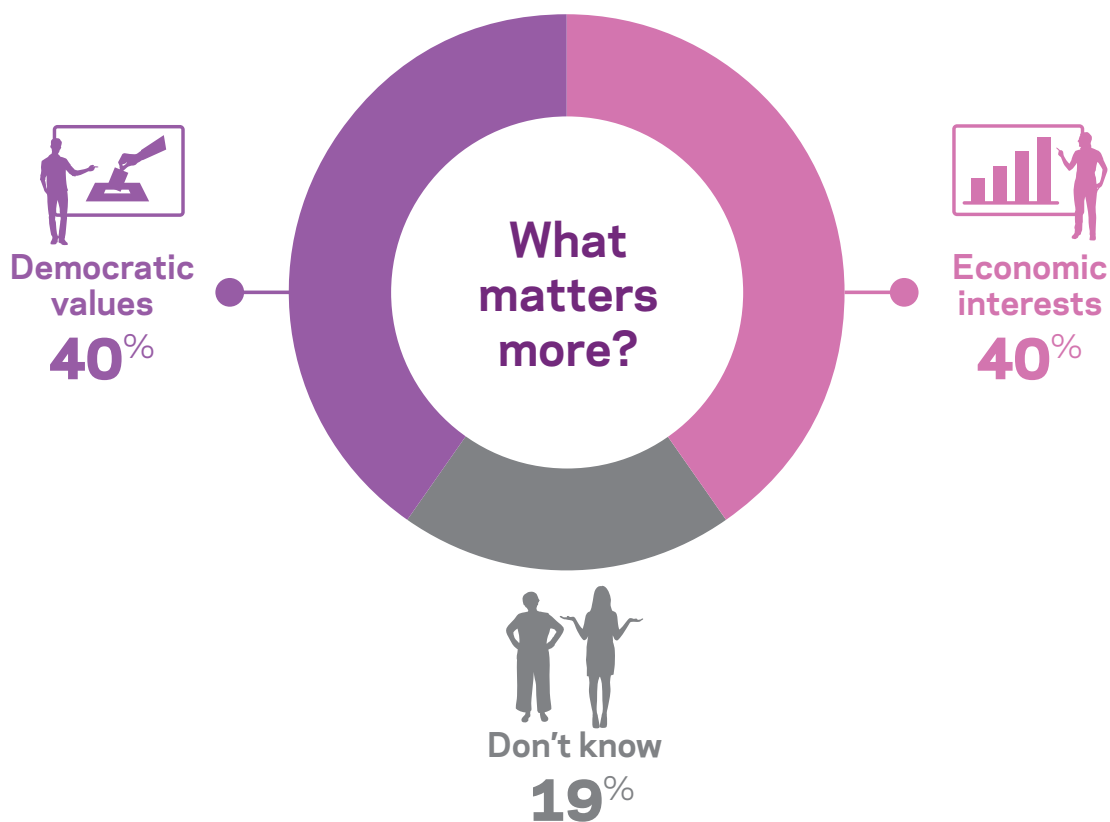
New Zealanders are divided on the relative importance of New Zealand's economic interests and democratic values when the two are in tension.

When it comes to New Zealand's relationships in Asia, 40 percent of New Zealanders believe economic interests matter more, while the same proportion maintain democratic values are most important.

New  
question

### FIG. 40: WHAT MATTERS MORE IN TIMES OF TENSION: NEW ZEALAND'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS OR DEMOCRATIC VALUES?

When it comes to New Zealand's relationship with Asia, there can sometimes be tension between New Zealand's economic interests and New Zealand's democratic values. When that happens, which one do you think is more important?



Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300



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**“India offers economic opportunities, is a democratic country, has many shared values and an increasing influence on the world.”**

Male, 60-69 years, New Zealand  
European, Waikato

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**“Malaysia’s population makes it an important trading partner.”**

Male, 60-69 years, New Zealand  
European, Canterbury





## Spotlight:

### How will Asia impact New Zealand in the decades ahead?

New Zealanders anticipate positive impacts from tourism, technology and economic growth.

Asia's potential environmental impact is an ongoing concern for New Zealanders.

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## New Zealanders continue to see increasingly positive impacts from Asia, with tourism and technology flows top of the list

Since 2019, New Zealanders have been asked how they think eight areas of activity will impact New Zealand in the next 10-to-20 years.

Perceived positive impacts for seven of the eight areas are significantly higher in this survey than the last.

New Zealanders continue to be most optimistic about **tourism and technology** flows from Asia, with over four in five believing these will have a positive impact. Eighty-six percent think that tourism will have a positive impact for New Zealand and 83 percent anticipate positive impacts from technology and innovation.

As in previous years, **economic growth and investment** from Asia are also expected to have significant benefits for New Zealand, with around three in four expecting positive impacts from these two areas. Seventy-seven percent think economic growth in Asia will have positive impacts for New Zealand, while 74 percent anticipate positive impacts from investment into New Zealand (up ten percent from the last survey).

Over half of New Zealanders also anticipate positive impacts from **Asian culture, language and traditions**, and **immigration** from Asia to New Zealand. Perceptions of the impact of immigration have improved significantly over the past five years. Fifty-six percent of New Zealanders anticipate positive impacts from immigration, up from 42 percent in 2019.

Two areas continue to be viewed more negatively. While 40 percent anticipate positive impacts from the **political and security situation** in Asia, over one in five (22 percent) still anticipate negative impacts.

**Environmental issues** are also an area of ongoing concern, with negative views continuing to outweigh positive. Thirty-six percent of New Zealanders anticipate negative impacts from environmental issues, while only 31 percent anticipate positive impacts. This is consistent with previous survey results.

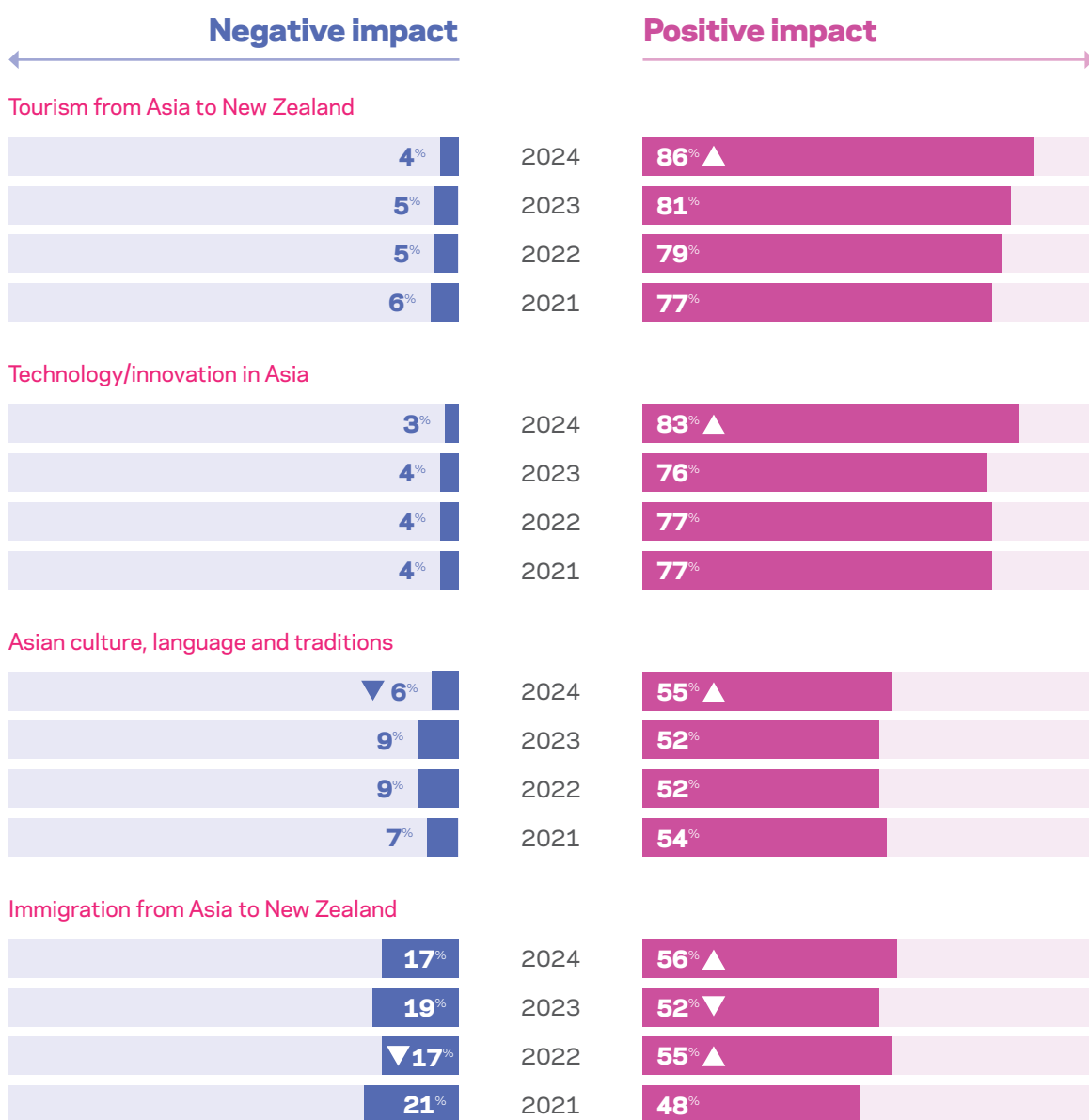
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### “We have a positive trade, education and tourism relationship with Viet Nam.”

Female, 40-49 years, New Zealand European, Auckland

**FIG. 41: ASIA'S IMPACT ON NEW ZEALAND OVER COMING DECADES**

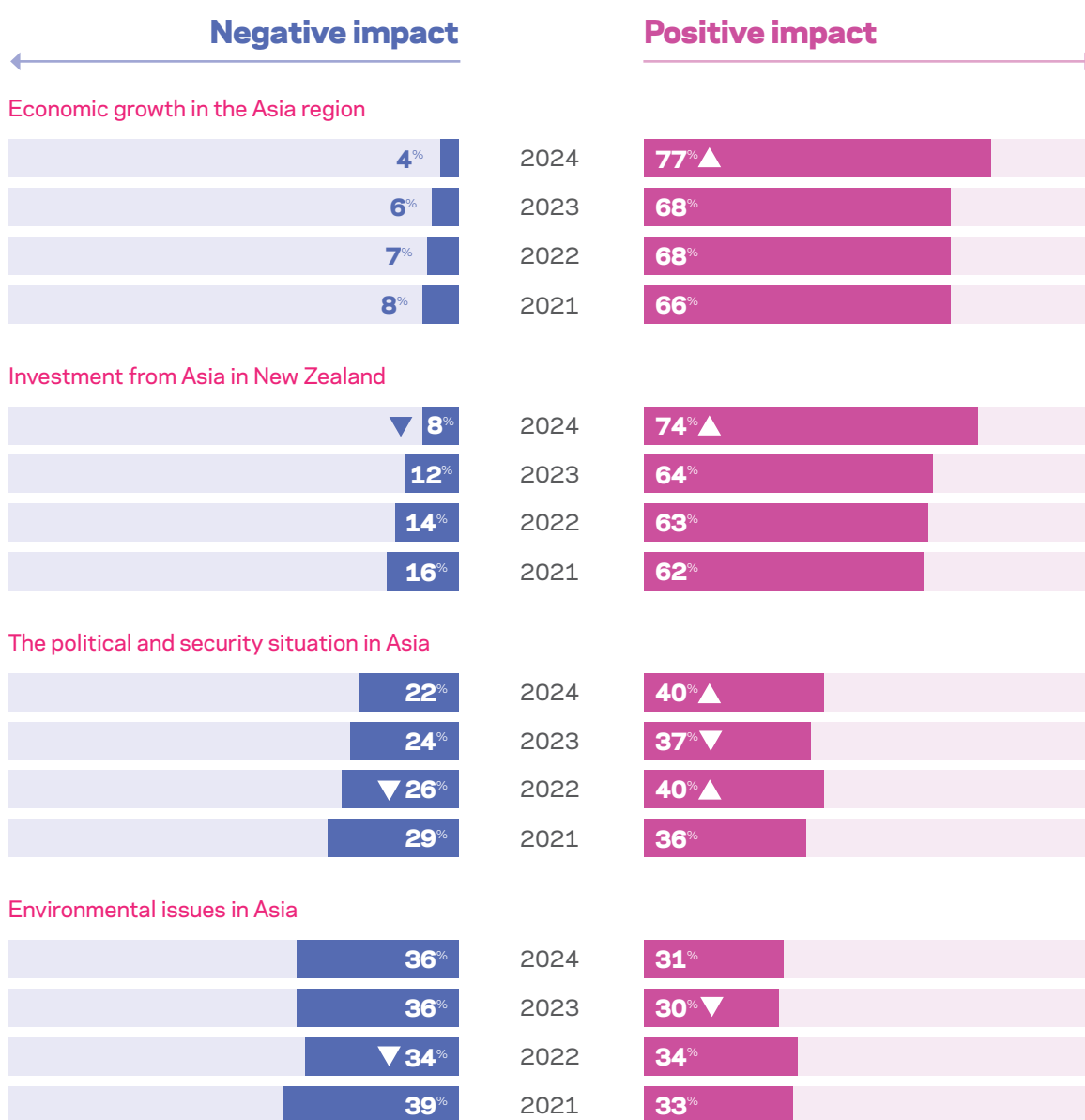
What kind of impact do you think each of the following will have on New Zealand's future, in the next 10-20 years?



▲ ▼ Indicates significantly higher/lower compared to previous year

Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300, (2023) n=2,300, (2022) n=2,323, (2021) n=2,334





▲ ▼ Indicates significantly higher/lower compared to previous year

Base: All New Zealanders - (2024) n=2,300, (2023) n=2,300, (2022) n=2,323, (2021) n=2,334



# How is **media and entertainment consumption** influencing perceptions of Asia?

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“Both **Indonesia** and **Viet Nam** are members of key international organisations, including ASEAN and APEC, which foster collaboration on trade, security and environmental management.”

Male, 20-24 years, New Zealand European/  
other European, Hawke's Bay



# Key findings

Recall of **Asia-related news content** continues to decline, with fewer than four in ten recalling content in the last three months.

**Social media** is a growing source of news about Asia, while traditional media sources are in decline. This is particularly the case for those under 30.

The proportion of those who think there is **too little media coverage** of Asia has grown steadily to 44 percent.

New Zealanders see Asia as the most **important world region** in which to have a foreign correspondent.



## Recall of Asia-related news content is in decline

New Zealanders' recall of seeing, hearing or reading something in the news or media in the last three months about Asia has continued to decline.

This year, 37 percent recall Asia-related media content, compared with 40 percent in 2023, and 45 percent in 2022.

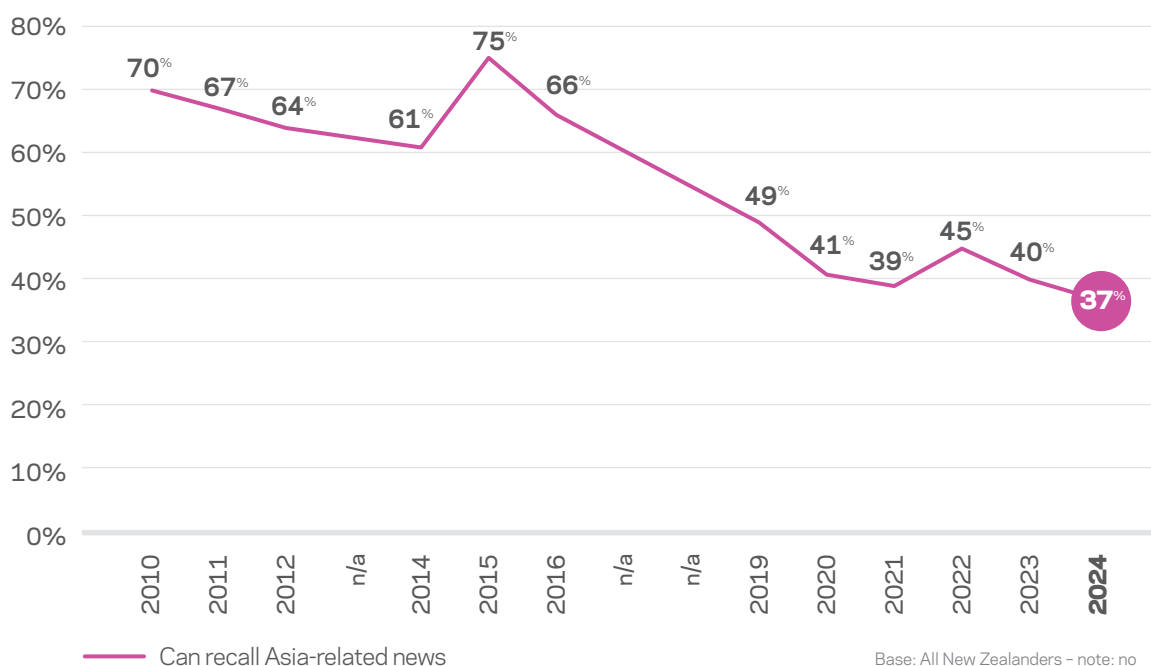
Recall is significantly higher among men than women (44 percent of men compared with 30 percent of women) and among those 60 years and over (47 percent versus 33 percent for those under 60 years).

Recall levels also increase with education qualifications: 29 percent of those with secondary school qualifications recall Asia-related media content, compared with 48 percent of those with a postgraduate degree.

Low recall highlights the impact of fragmentation in the media sector, as well as the advent of social media as a news source for young New Zealanders. The observed spike in recall in 2015 and 2016 was at the time of a spate of negative coverage of "foreign home buyers in New Zealand".

**FIG. 42: TIME TREND: PERCENTAGE OF NEW ZEALANDERS WHO RECALL RECENT ASIA NEWS**

Do you recall having seen, heard, or read anything in the news or media about Asia-related events, issues or people in the last three months?





## Social media is an increasingly important source of Asia-related content, while traditional media sources are in decline

Traditional media remains the top source for Asia-related content, but it is on the decline (down eight percent in the past year).

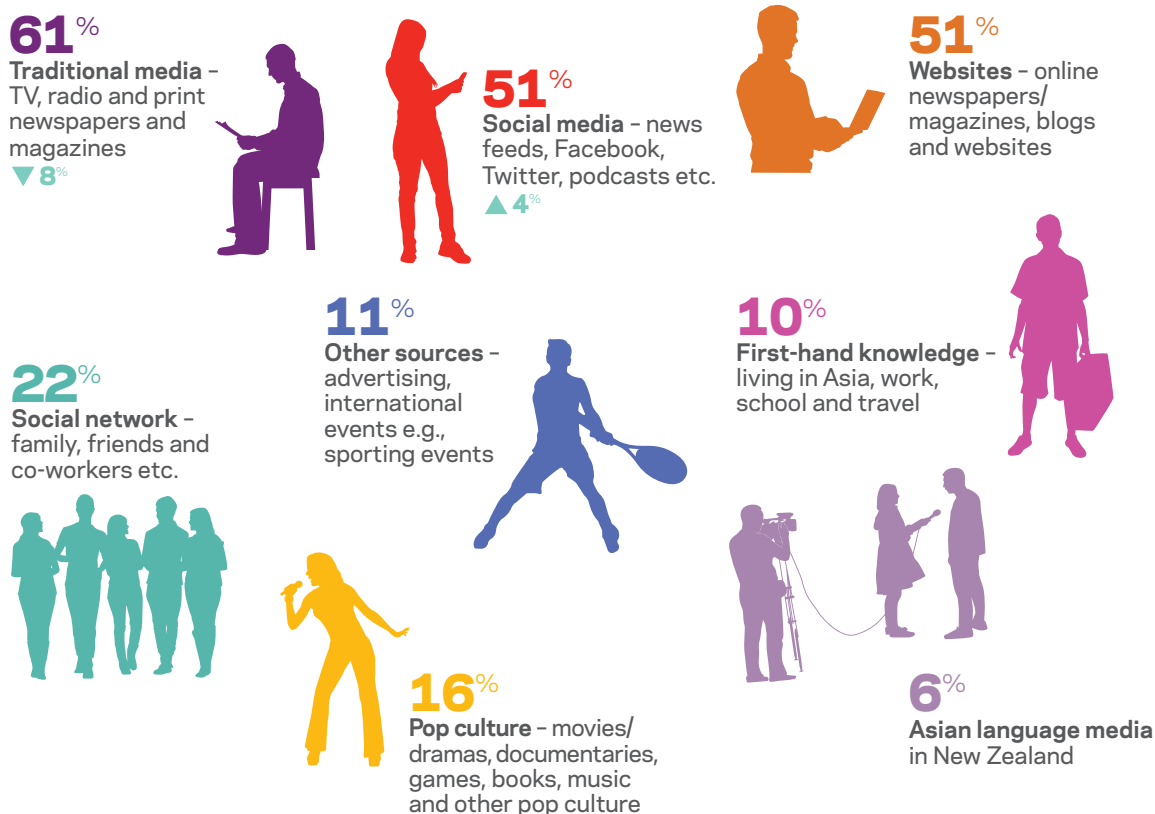
There is a corresponding increase in social media usage, up from 47 percent to 51 percent. Online newspapers/magazines, blogs and websites rank second equal at 51 percent mention.

Social networks rank fourth, with 22 percent naming friends, family or co-workers as sources of Asia-related content.

New Zealanders of Asian heritage are more likely than others to consume Asia-related content via social media (69 percent compared with 45 percent) and online websites (62 percent compared with 47 percent). Those of Asian heritage are also less likely to use traditional media (38 percent compared with 68 percent among New Zealanders of other backgrounds).

### FIG. 43: WHERE DO NEW ZEALANDERS GET THEIR ASIA NEWS FROM?

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



▲ ▼ Indicates significantly higher/lower compared to previous year

Base: New Zealanders who have seen/heard Asia-related media in the last three months – (2024) n=854, (2023) n=953

## The proportion of New Zealanders who think that Asia receives too little coverage in the New Zealand media is growing steadily

The proportion of New Zealanders who think that Asia receives too little coverage has grown, from 32 percent in 2022 to 44 percent today.

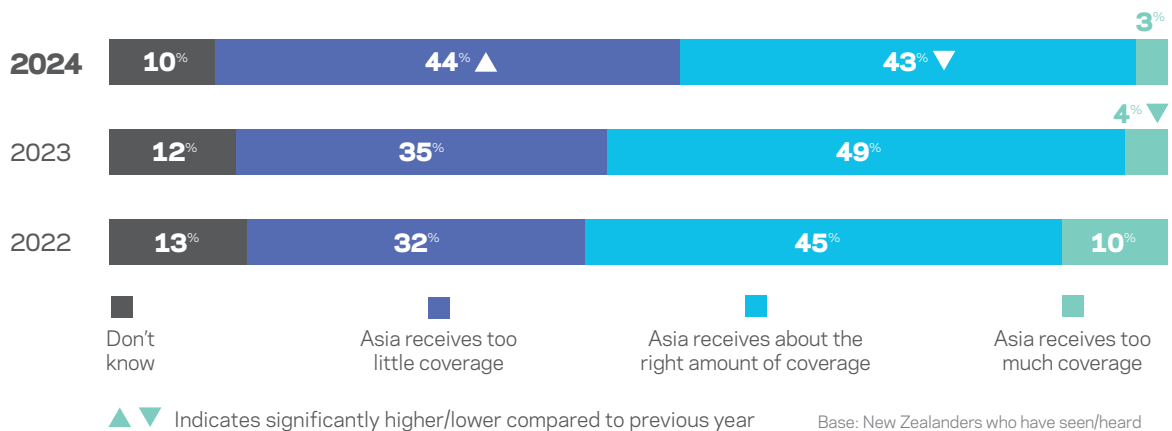
For the first time, more New Zealanders now think there is not enough Asia coverage than those who feel there is a sufficient amount. Forty-three percent consider that the coverage of Asia is about right.

The proportion saying that Asia receives too much coverage has reduced from ten percent in 2022 to three percent in this survey.

New Zealanders of Asian heritage are most likely to think that Asia receives too little coverage, with 52 percent saying this compared with 40 percent of New Zealanders of other backgrounds.

**FIG. 44: ASIA COVERAGE IN NEW ZEALAND MEDIA**

Does Asia receive too much or too little coverage in New Zealand media?



Base: New Zealanders who have seen/heard Asia-related media in the last three months - (2024) n=854, (2023) n=953, (2022) n=1,049

## Three topics dominate recall of Asia-related media coverage

New Zealanders are most likely to recall media coverage of conflicts and political instabilities; business, economic and trade developments; and natural disasters in Asia.

**Conflicts and political instabilities** receive greatest mention (61 percent), followed by **business, economic and trade developments** (56 percent). **Natural disasters** are recalled by around one in two New Zealanders (50 percent).

A second tier of topics includes **human rights issues, technology and science**, and **diplomatic relations and official visits**, each mentioned by around four in ten respondents.

Around one in three recall **environmental and climate issues** and/or **sports related topics**.

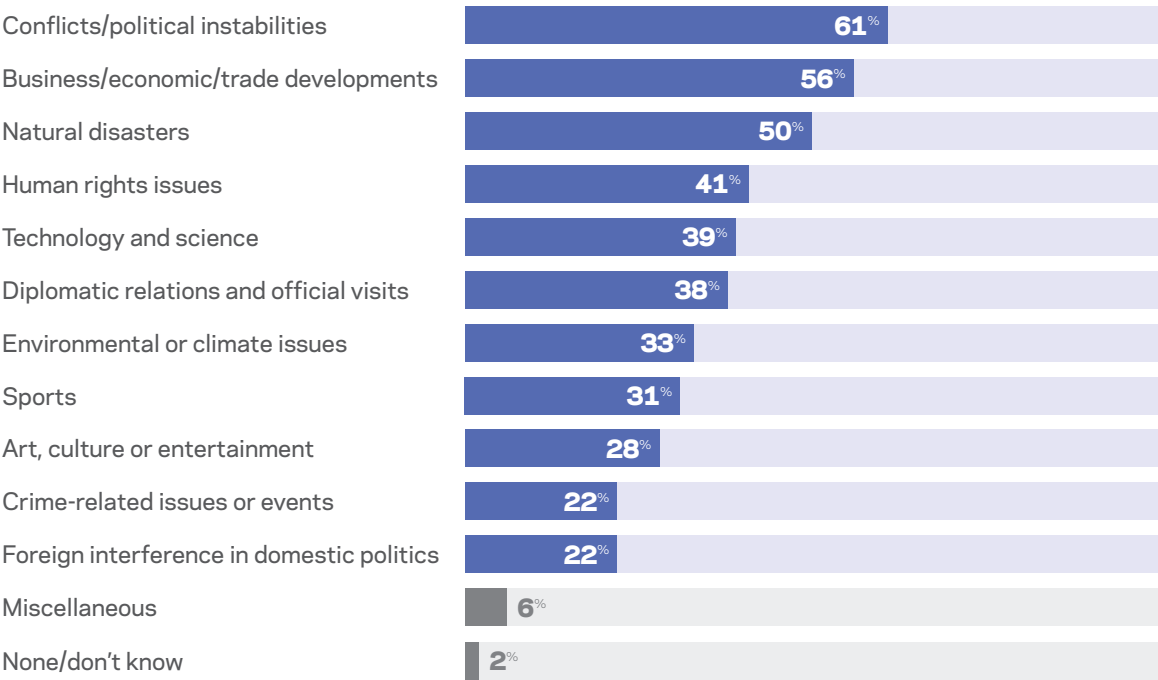
New Zealanders of non-Asian heritage are more likely to recall content about conflicts and political instabilities (65 percent compared with 47 percent among New Zealanders of Asian heritage), business and trade (58 percent compared with 48 percent), natural disasters (51 percent compared with 35 percent) and human rights issues (47 percent compared with 18 percent). Those of Asian heritage are much more likely to recall art, culture or entertainment-related topics (37 percent compared with 24 percent among New Zealanders of other backgrounds).

New  
question



### FIG. 45: ASIA-RELATED TOPICS RECALLED IN THE MEDIA

What Asia-related topics do you recall seeing, hearing or reading something about in the previous three months?



Base: New Zealanders who have seen/heard Asia-related media in the last three months – (2024) n=854

## Views of Asia media coverage in New Zealand remain consistent

Asia coverage in New Zealand media is considered reasonably balanced, if a little too negative.

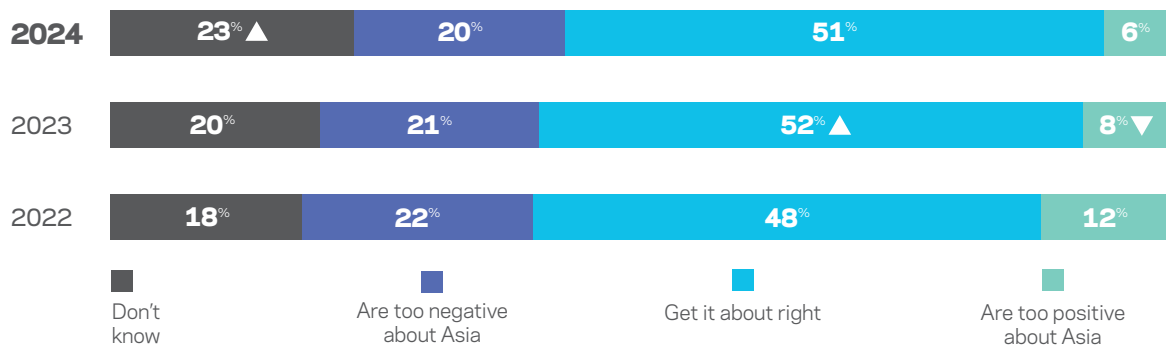
Half (51 percent) of those who have seen any Asia-related media or news coverage in the past three months feel that the New Zealand media portrayal of Asia is about right, while one in five (20 percent) consider it to be too negative.

Only a minority think that the New Zealand media portrayal of Asia is too positive (halving from 12 percent in 2022 to six percent in this survey).

New Zealanders of Asian heritage are more likely than others to think that the portrayal of Asia is too negative (28 percent saying it is too negative, compared with 18 percent of non-Asian heritage).

### FIG. 46: SENTIMENT OF ASIA COVERAGE IN NEW ZEALAND MEDIA

Which of the following best describes your view of how the New Zealand media portrays Asia? The media...



▲ ▼ Indicates significantly higher/lower compared to previous year

Base: New Zealanders who have seen/heard Asia-related media in the last three months - (2024) n=854, (2023) n=953

## There is positive support for having New Zealand foreign correspondents located in Asia

At least one in three New Zealanders think that Asia is the most important region in which to have a New Zealand foreign correspondent.

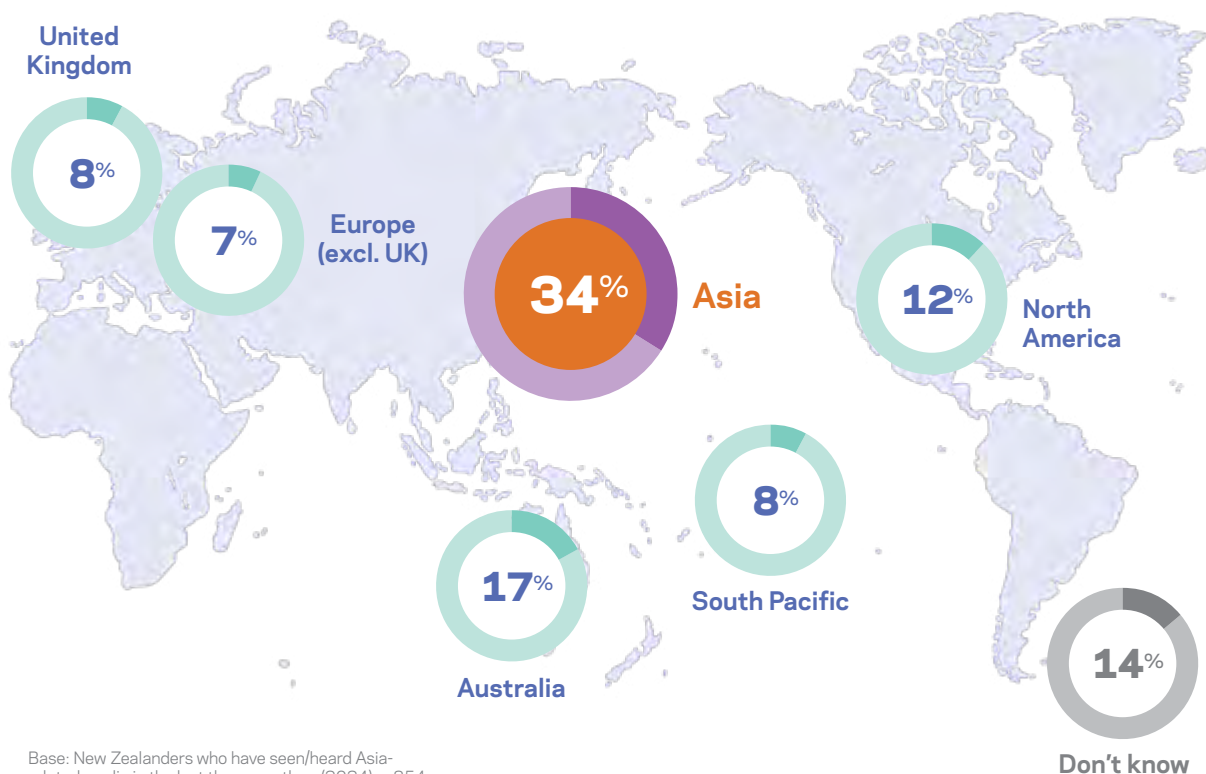
Australia is rated the second most important region (17 percent), followed by North America (12 percent).

One in two New Zealanders of Asian heritage (49 percent) think this, as do nearly one in three New Zealanders of other backgrounds (30 percent).

New  
question

### FIG. 47: MOST IMPORTANT REGION TO HAVE A NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN CORRESPONDENT

In what region do you think it is most important for New Zealand to have its own foreign correspondents to cover stories from a New Zealand perspective?





## One in three New Zealanders consume Asian entertainment at least monthly

One in three New Zealanders who watch, play or listen to Asian entertainment consume content at least monthly, down slightly from the last survey. Just under one in five (18 percent) do so weekly.

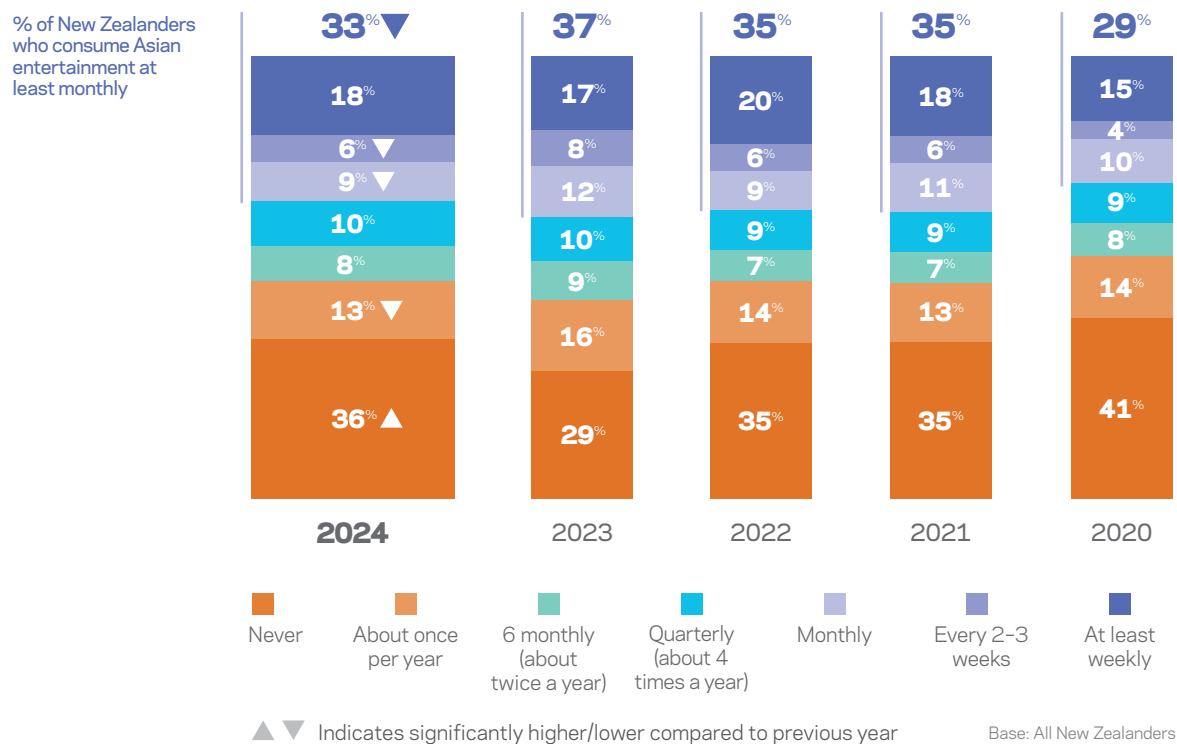
Entertainment consumption is greatest among under 30-year-olds compared to older age groups. Fifty percent of under 30s watch, play or listen to Asian entertainment at least monthly, compared with 28 percent of those over 30 years.

Three in ten under 30-year-olds (29 percent) are doing so at least weekly. This is down slightly from the previous year.

Those of Asian heritage are the most frequent consumers, with just over half (52 percent) doing so at least weekly, compared with 11 percent of New Zealanders of non-Asian heritage. Eighty percent of New Zealanders of Asian heritage consume content at least monthly.

### FIG. 48: HOW OFTEN DO NEW ZEALANDERS CONSUME ASIAN ENTERTAINMENT?

How often do you watch, play, or listen to Asian entertainment? By 'entertainment' we mean film, television and streaming services (e.g. Netflix or Neon), online games, and social media made in Asia, about Asia, or by an Asian artist etc.





# APPENDICES

This section provides the background context of the survey, the methodology used and detail on the sample profiles.



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## Background, methodology and sample profiles

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### ABOUT THE ANNUAL PERCEPTIONS OF ASIA AND ASIAN PEOPLES SURVEY

Since 1997, the Foundation has undertaken regular research to monitor New Zealanders' perceptions of Asia, focused on understanding their views of the barriers to and benefits of relationships across Asia.

The research helps inform the Foundation's policy direction, including identifying ways in which the Foundation might work to foster stronger relationships with Asia and how to better prepare New Zealanders to engage confidently in Asia.

#### Survey content

A core set of questions has been included over time to allow for comparisons between years to be made. Research content has evolved over time. It includes questions about:

- The perceived importance of Asia
- The perceived benefits to New Zealand of a relationship with Asia
- Perceptions of Asian peoples and cultures
- Perceived knowledge of Asia
- Involvement with Asian cultures
- Asia-related interests
- Media perceptions and consumption.

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### METHODOLOGY

#### Main survey

The quantitative survey was conducted via an online self-completion methodology (used since 2017).

Respondents were drawn from a mix of panels: 50% from Kantar's Consumer Link panel, 45% from Ipsos New Zealand's online I-Say panel and the remaining 5% from river sampling (an online sampling method that recruits respondents by inviting them to the survey while they are doing some other online activity).

Note: prior to 2023, the research was conducted using Kantar New Zealand's online panels. Some minor change is possible in metrics, given the change in panel.

A nationally representative sample of 2,300 respondents aged 15 years and over completed the survey. Fieldwork dates were 6 November to 4 December 2024. In 2023, the total sample size was n=2,300 respondents.

The survey took an average of 22 minutes to complete.



**New questions** in 2024 cover the following topics:

- Military conflicts most likely to occur in Asia in the next ten years
- The impact of AUKUS on the Asia region
- The three Asian countries New Zealand could put extra effort into developing relationships with, and reasons for selecting these countries
- Whether New Zealand's economic interests or democratic values are more important at times of tension in relationships with Asia
- What New Zealand should give greatest priority to in its relationship with India
- Confidence in dealing with people from Asian cultures
- The Asian language respondents would most like to learn, and the most helpful way of learning and/or retaining that language
- Asia related topics recalled in the media in recent months
- The most important regions for New Zealand media to have foreign correspondents.

Questions that were **not included in the 2024 survey** included:

- Countries that have the most influence over New Zealand now and reasons for this view
- Countries expected to have the most influence over New Zealand in ten-to-twenty years
- Place/s in Asia that most is known about, and source of this information
- Which Asian country are respondents most interested in visiting
- Place in Asia that is of greatest interest in learning more about, and reasons for this
- Preferred ways of learning more about Asia
- Māori relationships with Asia
- Asian diaspora: the value of skills to help New Zealand succeed in Asia and biggest opportunities for New Zealand in Asia
- Asia-related topics of interest in the New Zealand media
- Sources of news coverage of Asia.

## Mini-poll

A supplementary 'mini-poll' of 1,000 New Zealanders was conducted by Research New Zealand between 6 March and 10 March 2025 to gain further insight into the impact of recent foreign policy developments in China and the United States. These results were also weighted using 2023 Census data. Findings from this mini-poll have been identified as such in the report.

## Data analysis

**Coding of open-ended data:** Open ended questions were post-coded into themes.

Post-coded questions included:

- Top of mind associations with Asia
- Reasons for respondents viewing China/ India/Japan as a friend
- Reasons for respondents viewing China/ North Korea/Russia as a threat.

**Data weighting:** The survey data were weighted for the population aged 18 years and over using 2023 Census data, to ensure final results were representative of the New Zealand population by gender, age, region and ethnicity.

Details about the sample profile (unweighted and weighted) are included.



NOTES TO REPORT

Analysis

**Margin of error:** All sample surveys are subject to sampling error, the measure of uncertainty arising from survey estimates because only a sample of the population is observed. The maximum sampling error for the total sample of 2,300 is plus or minus 2.0% at the 95% confidence interval. That is, there is a 95% chance that the true population value of a result of 50% lies between 48% and 52%. The margin of error increases, as the observed result moves further away from 50%.

**Significance testing:** All subgroup differences reported are statistically significant at the 95% confidence interval unless otherwise stated. This means that the difference is a true difference statistically, and not due to random variation.

**Sample composition:** The composition of the sample can impact the sensitivity of the significance testing results. That is, the larger the sub-sample size (e.g., of a particular ethnicity), the greater the chance of detecting statistically significant results, compared with other smaller subgroups.

**‘Don’t know’** responses have been included where relevant (that is, when they are valid responses and add value to the findings). Please refer to the base descriptions on each page for more information.

**Rounding:** Individual responses have been rounded to the nearest whole number (e.g. 9.4% becomes 9%).

In some cases, NET percentages may not equal the sum of the individual response categories, due to rounding. There may be a one percentage point difference.

**Verbatim comments:** Verbatim comments are included throughout the report. These are sourced from responses to the open-ended survey questions.

SAMPLE PROFILE

The tables below show details of the sample achieved in 2024. The first column shows the proportion of respondents who responded to the survey (unweighted), while the second column shows the proportion of the total sample, for the weighted subgroups.

Sample profile tables

| Gender            | Unweighted % | Weighted % |
|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| Male              | 50           | 48         |
| Female            | 50           | 51         |
| Another gender    | <0.5         | <0.5       |
| Prefer not to say | <0.5         | 1          |

| Age           | Unweighted % | Weighted % |
|---------------|--------------|------------|
| 15-17 years   | 1            | 2          |
| 18-24 years   | 19           | 15         |
| 25-39 years   | 26           | 24         |
| 40-59 years   | 34           | 31         |
| 60 plus years | 29           | 28         |

| Region                                      | Unweighted % | Weighted % |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Northland                                   | 4            | 4          |
| Auckland                                    | 33           | 31         |
| Waikato                                     | 8            | 9          |
| Bay of Plenty                               | 6            | 7          |
| Gisborne/<br>Hawke’s Bay                    | 3            | 5          |
| Taranaki                                    | 3            | 3          |
| Manawatū/<br>Wanganui                       | 5            | 5          |
| Wellington                                  | 11           | 10         |
| Nelson/Tasman/<br>Marlborough/West<br>Coast | 5            | 6          |
| Canterbury                                  | 13           | 13         |
| Otago                                       | 5            | 5          |
| Southland                                   | 3            | 3          |

| Urban status        | Unweighted % | Weighted % |
|---------------------|--------------|------------|
| A major centre      | 49           | 50         |
| A provincial city   | 27           | 28         |
| A provincial centre | 15           | 13         |
| A rural area        | 5            | 9          |

Ethnicity-related aspects of the sample are as follows:

| Ethnicity*           | Unweighted % | Weighted % |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|
| New Zealand European | 70           | 70         |
| Other European       | 7            | 7          |
| Māori                | 13           | 15         |
| Pasifika             | 4            | 5          |
| Asian                | 15           | 14         |
| Other                | 3            | 3          |

| Asian heritage*                 | Asian heritage (weighted %) |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Base (those of Asian heritage): | 14% of total                |
| Chinese                         | 42                          |
| Indian                          | 43                          |
| Southeast Asian                 | 29                          |
| Japanese                        | 4                           |
| Korean                          | 3                           |
| Other Asian                     | 17                          |
| European                        | 1                           |
| Māori                           | 3                           |
| Pacific Islands/Fiji            | 3                           |
| All other                       | 1                           |

| Born in New Zealand | Total (weighted %) | Asian heritage (weighted %) | Non-Asian heritage (weighted %) |
|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Base                | 2,300              | 325                         | 1,863                           |
| Yes                 | 69                 | 24                          | 79                              |
| No                  | 30                 | 74                          | 21                              |
| Prefer not to say   | 1                  | 2                           | 0                               |

| Years living in New Zealand | Total weighted % | Asian heritage (weighted %) | Non-Asian heritage (weighted %) |
|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Base                        | 2,300            | 325                         | 1,863                           |
| 1-5 years                   | 4                | 11                          | 3                               |
| 5-10 years                  | 6                | 19                          | 3                               |
| 10-20 years                 | 15               | 27                          | 13                              |
| 20 plus years               | 74               | 43                          | 81                              |

| Education qualifications              | Unweighted % | Weighted % |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|------------|
| Primary/Intermediate school           | -            | 1          |
| Secondary school                      | -            | 25         |
| Vocational or trade qualification     | -            | 23         |
| University degree                     | -            | 35         |
| Postgraduate degree (Master's or PhD) | -            | 15         |
| Refused                               | -            | 1          |

\* Note: Respondents could nominate more than one ethnicity

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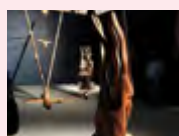
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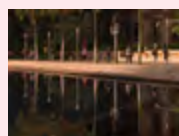
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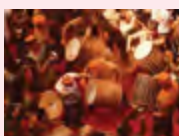
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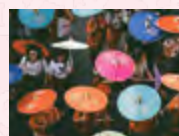
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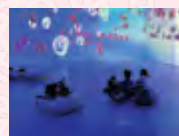
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