

Measuring Public Opinion for over 75 Years

Tuesday, 18 July 2017

New Zealanders' concerns highlighted in run to election: Poverty and the gap between the rich and poor is the single biggest issue facing New Zealand and the World according to New Zealanders

New in-depth research exploring the concerns of New Zealanders both in New Zealand and globally found New Zealanders, like Australians, are concerned about war and terrorism on the global front. But at home in the run-up to this year's election it's all about the economy especially housing affordability, housing shortages, cost of living, inflation, unemployment and homelessness.

Most important problems facing New Zealand

Quantified thematic analysis of the verbatim responses of a nationally representative sample of 1,000 New Zealanders found the economy and things economic to be the biggest theme to emerge.

Economic issues like poverty and the gap between the rich and poor and housing issues including house prices, housing affordability & housing shortages and the homeless or homelessness more generally dominate the issues facing **New Zealand**.

Economic Issues were mentioned by just under 27% of respondents with an additional 23% mentioning Housing/Homelessness Issues as the most important problems facing **New Zealand** – totalling more than half of all respondents.

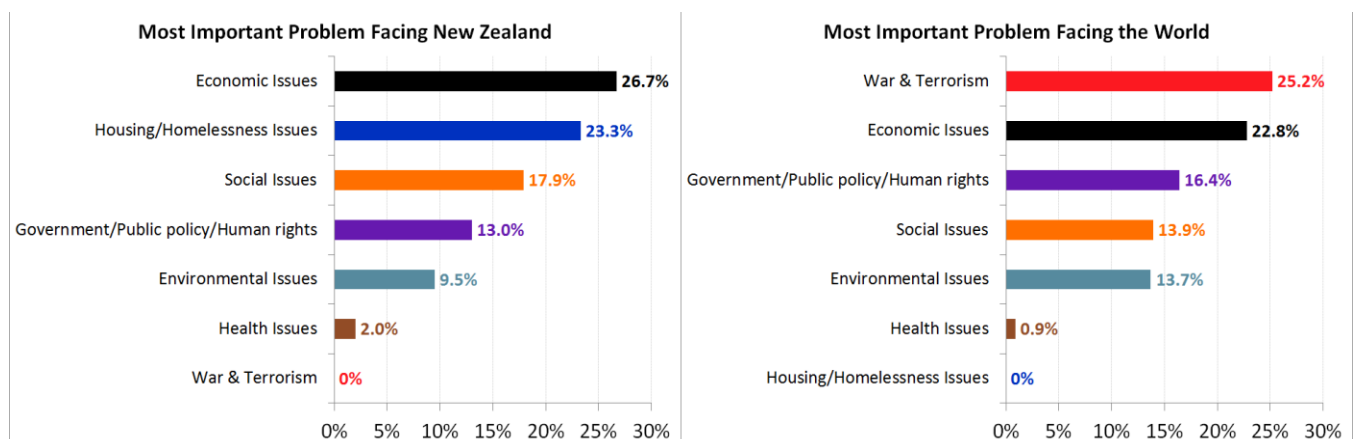
Three further themes emerged:

- Social issues like Crime, Social welfare, Youth issues were mentioned by 18% of New Zealanders;
- Government, Public Policy and Human rights issues were mentioned by a further 13%; and
- Environmental issues, were mentioned by just under 10% of New Zealanders.

Most important issues facing the World

When considering the wider **World**, the largest themes to emerge were concerns related to War & Terrorism. These issues including Terrorism, War and Conflicts, Religious conflict and Lack of World peace were mentioned by just over 25% of New Zealanders and a further 23% mentioned Economic issues.

The third biggest theme was Government/Public policy/ Human rights issues mentioned by over 16% of New Zealanders followed by Social issues and Environmental issues with both of these themes mentioned by just under 14% of respondents each as the biggest problems facing the **World**.



Source: Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 1,000 New Zealanders in May 2017.

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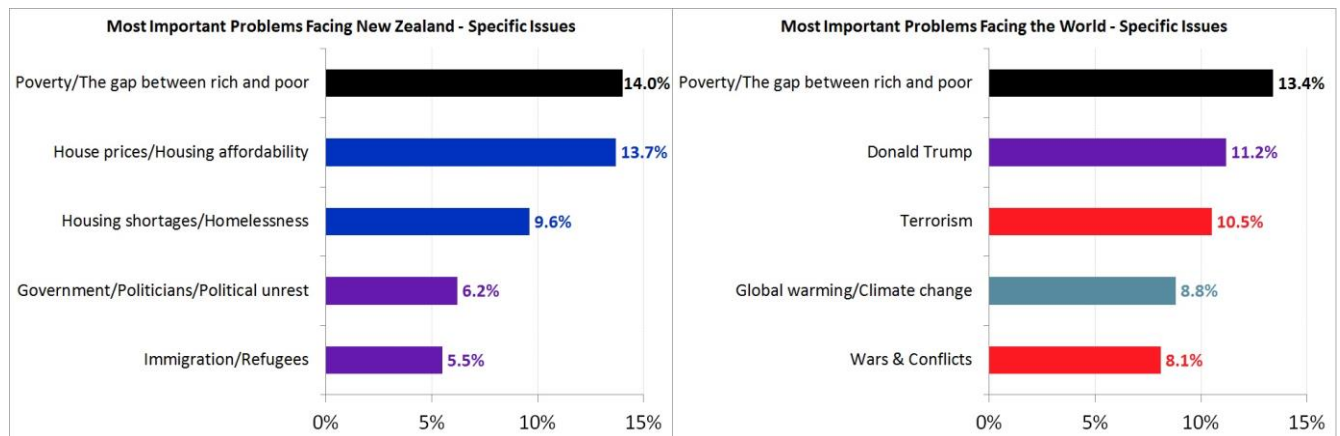
The charts above show the quantified thematic analysis of New Zealanders' concerns. Respondents were asked: "What do you think is the most important problem facing the **World** today?" and then "What do you think is the most important problem facing **New Zealand** today?"

Poverty/The gap between rich and poor is the single biggest issue facing NZ and facing the World

Single issue analysis of the responses shows the specific issue of greatest concern for New Zealand is Poverty and the gap between rich and poor mentioned by 14% of New Zealanders. This is more than any other single issue.

The next two most often mentioned single issues were:

- House prices/Housing affordability – mentioned by 14% of New Zealanders; and the related issue of
- Housing shortages/Homelessness – mentioned by just under 10% of New Zealanders;
- A key difference between New Zealand and Australia is that Unemployment is mentioned by only 3% of New Zealanders compared to 9% of Australians asked the same question in May.



Source: Roy Morgan interviewed a representative cross-section of 1,000 New Zealanders in May 2017.

Poverty/ The gap between rich and poor, Donald Trump and Terrorism the top World problems

The single biggest **World** problem is Poverty and the gap between rich and poor which was mentioned by over 13% of respondents ahead of US President Donald Trump – mentioned by over 11% of respondents and Terrorism – mentioned by just under 11% of respondents.

The largest Environmental problem facing the **World** is clearly Global warming/Climate change which was mentioned by just under 9% of respondents while a further 8% of respondents mentioned War & Conflicts as the single biggest problem the **World** faces.

Michele Levine, CEO Roy Morgan, says:

*"New Zealanders regard Poverty and the gap between rich and poor as the single biggest problem facing both **New Zealand** (14% of respondents) and the **World** at large (13%) – although beyond this crucial Economic issue there is a clear divergence on the problems facing **New Zealand** and the **World**.*

"New Zealand heads to an election in under three months and Housing issues are a huge concern for New Zealanders with just under 14% of respondents mentioning House prices or Housing affordability and a further 10% mentioning Housing shortages and Homelessness. These issues are most prominent in the minds of people in New Zealand's largest cities of Auckland (House prices 17% cf. Homelessness 12%) and capital city Wellington (House prices 12% cf. Homelessness 17%).

*"When it comes to the **World** after Poverty and the gap between rich and poor 11% of New Zealanders believe US President Donald Trump is the biggest problem facing the **World**. Concern about Terrorism (11%) and War & Conflicts (8%) are also prominent. Global warming/Climate change is also considered more of a **World** problem (9%) than a problem for **New Zealand** (only 2%).*

"In the coming weeks Roy Morgan will be releasing more detailed analysis of this important survey including analysing the data by political affiliation – a particularly important resource for political parties gearing up for this year's New Zealand election set for Saturday September 23."

The research was conducted in New Zealand, during May 2017 with a representative sample of 1,000 men and women aged 14 or over. Respondents were asked: “*What do you think is the most important problem facing the **World** today?*” and “*What do you think is the most important problem facing **New Zealand** today?*”

These findings come from a special Roy Morgan study of New Zealanders’ attitudes towards issues facing **New Zealand** and the **World** in the future. The research conducted was both **qualitative** (in that people were asked to use their own words) and **quantitative** (in that the ‘open-ended’ responses were analysed and ‘coded’ so that the results could be counted and reported as percentages).

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Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. The following table gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. The figures are approximate and for general guidance only, and assume a simple random sample. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
500	±4.5	±3.9	±2.7	±1.9
1,000	±3.2	±2.7	±1.9	±1.4
1,500	±2.6	±2.2	±1.5	±1.1
2,000	±2.2	±1.9	±1.3	±1.0