

Monday, 27 February 2017

Most Important Problems facing New Zealand in 2017 are Housing related, but the World faces Economic and War & Terrorism problems in almost equal measure according to New Zealanders

In January 2017 **Government/ Public Policy/ Housing issues** are still clearly the most important problems facing **New Zealand** according to New Zealanders. A massive 41% of respondents (up 1% since October 2016) mention these issues. Within this bundle of concerns Housing affordability/ Increasing house prices (15%) and Housing shortage/ Homelessness (11%) are the most prominent.

Prime Minister Bill English has announced the New Zealand Election will be held on Saturday September 23 – almost three years to the day since former Prime Minister John Key led National to its last election victory. Today's survey results show that if English is to secure an election victory later this year he will have to convince New Zealanders he has worthwhile policy solutions to the 'Housing Crisis' facing many electors.

Economic issues 27% (up 2%) are considered the biggest problem facing the **World**, just ahead of War & Terrorism/ Security/ Refugee Crisis issues 26% (down 4%) according to the latest Roy Morgan NZ survey conducted in January 2017 with a representative cross-sample of 1,000 New Zealanders.

New Zealand views on Problems facing New Zealand

When asked about the most important problem facing **New Zealand**, 41% of New Zealanders mention some kind of Government/ Public Policy/ Housing issue. This is up 1% from October 2016 and is still well ahead of Economic issues 30% (down 1%), Social issues 12% (down 3%) and Environmental issues 8% (up 4%).

In terms of Government/ Public policy/ Housing issues a large number of New Zealanders (26%) mention Housing as a major problem – 15% (down 2%) mention Increasing house prices/ Housing affordability and a further 11% (up 1%) mention the Homeless/ Homelessness/ Housing shortage. These issues are well ahead of other issues including Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government Spending 6% (unchanged) and Immigration/ Refugees 4% (unchanged).

The most important Economic issue facing **New Zealand** is Poverty / The gap between the rich and poor 17% (up 1%) ahead of Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession/ High Dollar 4% (unchanged), Unemployment/ Job security 3% (down 2%) and Cost of living/ Inflation/ Financial hardship 3% (unchanged).

New Zealand's 'Housing Crisis'

Men (17%) regard House prices/ Housing affordability as a greater problem than Women (14%) while this is reversed for the Homeless/ Homelessness/ Housing shortage: Women (13%) cf. Men (8%).

New Zealand's largest city is clearly most heavily impacted by the Housing crisis with 32% of Auckland residents mentioning either Increasing house prices/ Housing affordability (20%) or the Homeless/ Homelessness/ Housing shortage (12%). Auckland is clearly ahead of the next highest region – the South Island outside Christchurch – a total of 28%; Increasing house prices/ Housing affordability (13%) and the Homeless/ Homelessness/ Housing shortage (15%).

Attitudes to New Zealand's 'Housing Crisis' are covered extensively in this related release: ['New Zealand Housing Crisis dominates domestic issues as PM Bill English announces Election date'](#).

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New Zealand views on Problems facing the World

The biggest **World** problems are now Economic issues 27% (up 2% since October 2016). The key Economic issues facing the **World** mentioned most often by New Zealanders are Poverty/ The gap between rich & poor/ Imbalance of wealth 15% (up 2%), the Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession 4% (unchanged), Over-population 4% (up 1%) and Cost of living/ Inflation/ Financial hardship/ Household debt 3% (down 1%). Just behind are the next biggest set of **World** problems which are War & Terrorism/Security issues / Refugee Crisis 26% (down 4% since October 2016). Within that group New Zealanders most frequently mention Terrorism 11% (up 2%), Wars & Conflicts/ Unrest 9% (down 5%) and Religion/ Religious Conflict 3% (up 1%). Other important **World** problems mentioned are Climate change/ Global warming/ Ozone layer/ Greenhouse effect 9% (up 2%), Donald Trump 7% (new), Social apathy/ Lack of values/ Lack of empathy towards others/ Intolerance 6% (down 1%) and Government/ Politicians/ Political Unrest 5% (down 3%).

Comments made by New Zealanders about the World Economy

"The economy – especially because of oil and gas, the prices will be going up."

"Economic instability – part of the global market, when one goes down it takes everyone else with it."

"The amount and extent of debt in the world."

"Unemployment – no jobs, no money."

"Increase in costs because of Oil and Gas prices."

"Low income families living below the poverty line."

"Global economy."

"Financial Uncertainty."

"The financial crisis never went away, rise in petrol prices inflate the cost of everything else."

"World economies not stable."

"Globalisation – Rich getting richer and poor getting poorer."

"Global trade – the Chinese are the manufacturer of everything."

"The over valuation of the stock market."

"The economy – It's harder to get a job, harder to buy food, harder to buy a house."

"Economics – funding of health care and education on a global level – or the lack of funding of them."

Comments made by New Zealanders about Donald Trump

"Donald Trump" (Multiple times without qualification)

"Trump is a loose cannon."

"Trump is dangerous. I just think he's a dangerous person."

"Trump is a problem. Global Trade International relations."

"Trump will scare people and add some insecurity to world markets."

"Trump as President is a negative."

"Donald Trump – it's uncertain what he actually stands for – apart for himself."

"Donald Trump's policies are not helping world stability."

"Uncertainty of having a loose-lipped President in the most powerful country."

"Donald Trump is crazy and unpredictable and that could lead to crazy and unpredictable events."

"Donald Trump is a bit radical."

"Donald Trump – he's going to blow Mexico up!"

"Donald Trump because he's a dickhead and he's in a position of power."

"Donald Trump is the personification of the Western mistrust of anything different."

"First the war in Syria and then Donald Trump and all the trouble he is going to cause the world."

Michele Levine, Chief Executive Officer, Roy Morgan says:

*“New Zealand’s ‘Housing Crisis’ – mentioned by 26% (down 1% since October) of New Zealanders 15% (Housing affordability/ Increasing house prices) and 11% (Housing shortage/ Homelessness) as the biggest problem facing **New Zealand** in January looks set to be the key issue for New Zealand electors heading towards this year’s election – and we have covered New Zealand’s ‘Housing Crisis’ extensively in a separate release: ‘[Housing Crisis dominates domestic issues as PM announces Election date](#)’.*

“The New Zealand Election is now just under seven months away, on Saturday September 23, 2017, and all indications are that National under new Prime Minister Bill English will win re-election for a fourth term. Today’s latest New Zealand Roy Morgan Poll shows National (48%) well ahead of a combined Labour/ Greens coalition (39%) and New Zealand First at 8% not enough for the Opposition to win.

“In addition to the ‘[Housing Crisis](#)’, other key issues mentioned by respondents include Poverty/ The gap between the rich and the poor/ Imbalance of wealth (17%), Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government spending (6%) and Immigration/ Refugees (4%), Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession/ High dollar 4%), Cost of Living/ Inflation/ Financial hardship (3%) and Unemployment/ Job security (3%).

“Only 12% (down 3%) of New Zealanders mentioned Social issues and just 8% (up 4%) mentioned Environmental issues like Climate change/ Global warming 2% (up 1%) – although it should be noted that this surveying was conducted before the recent Christchurch bushfires.

*“For the first time since June 2015, nearly two years ago, New Zealanders nominate Economic issues 27% (up 2%) as the biggest problems facing the **World** now just ahead of War & Terrorism/ Security/ Refugee Crisis issues 26% (down 4%).*

*“A further 15% (up 3%) mention Environmental issues and 13% (up 3%) mention Government/ Public Policy/ Human Rights issues which **for the first time includes a new category for the new US President Donald Trump – himself mentioned by 7% of respondents as the biggest problem facing the World.***

“The biggest Economic issue mentioned is Poverty/ The gap between the rich and poor/ Imbalance of wealth 15% (up 1%) ahead of the Economy/ Financial crisis/ Recession 4% (unchanged) and Over-population 4% (up 1%) while Terrorism 11% (up 2%) is now considered a slightly bigger problem than Wars & Conflicts/ Unrest 9% (down 5%). Clearly the most prominent Environmental issue is Climate Change/ Global Warming/ Greenhouse Effect/ Ozone layer 9% (up 2%).”

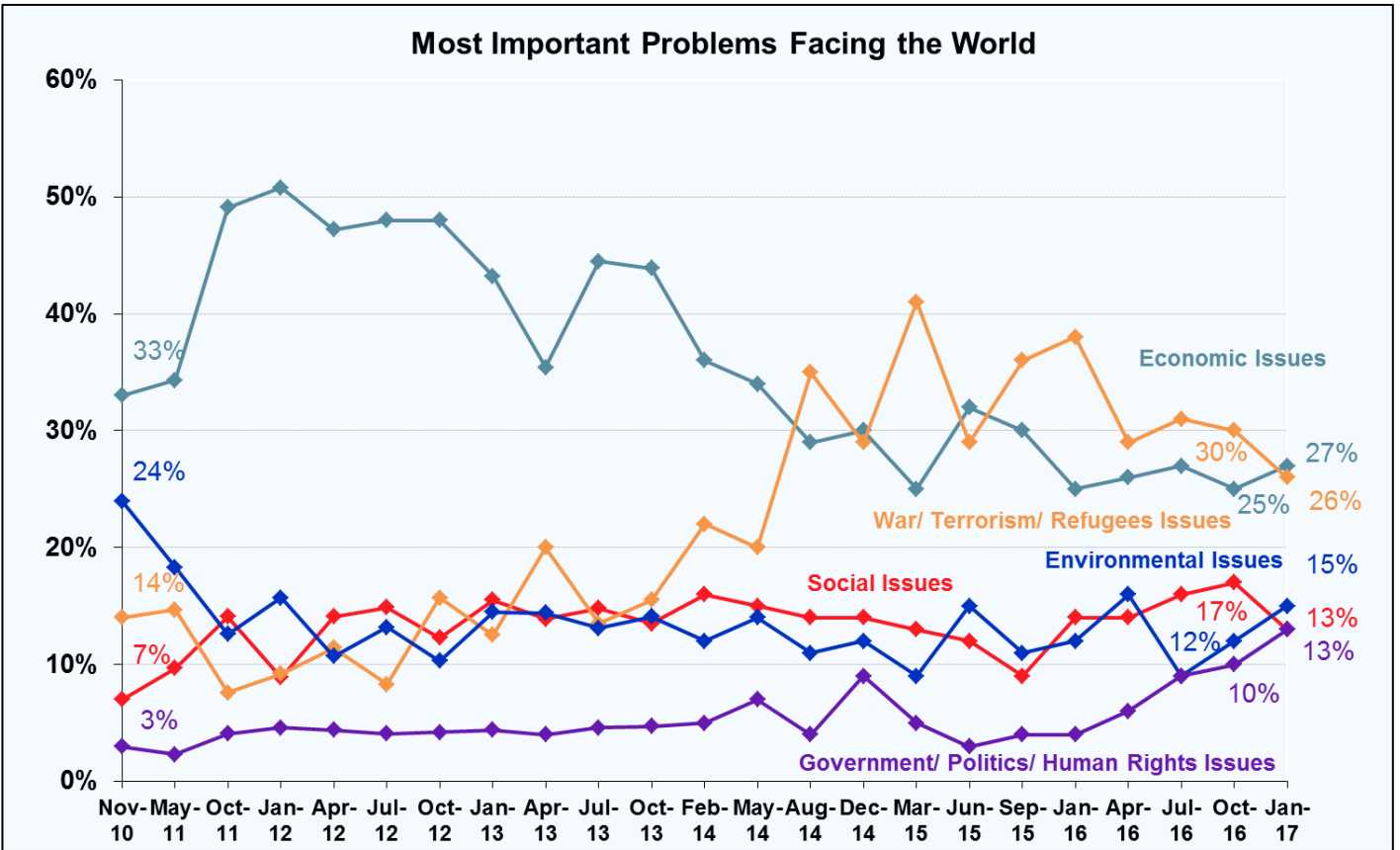
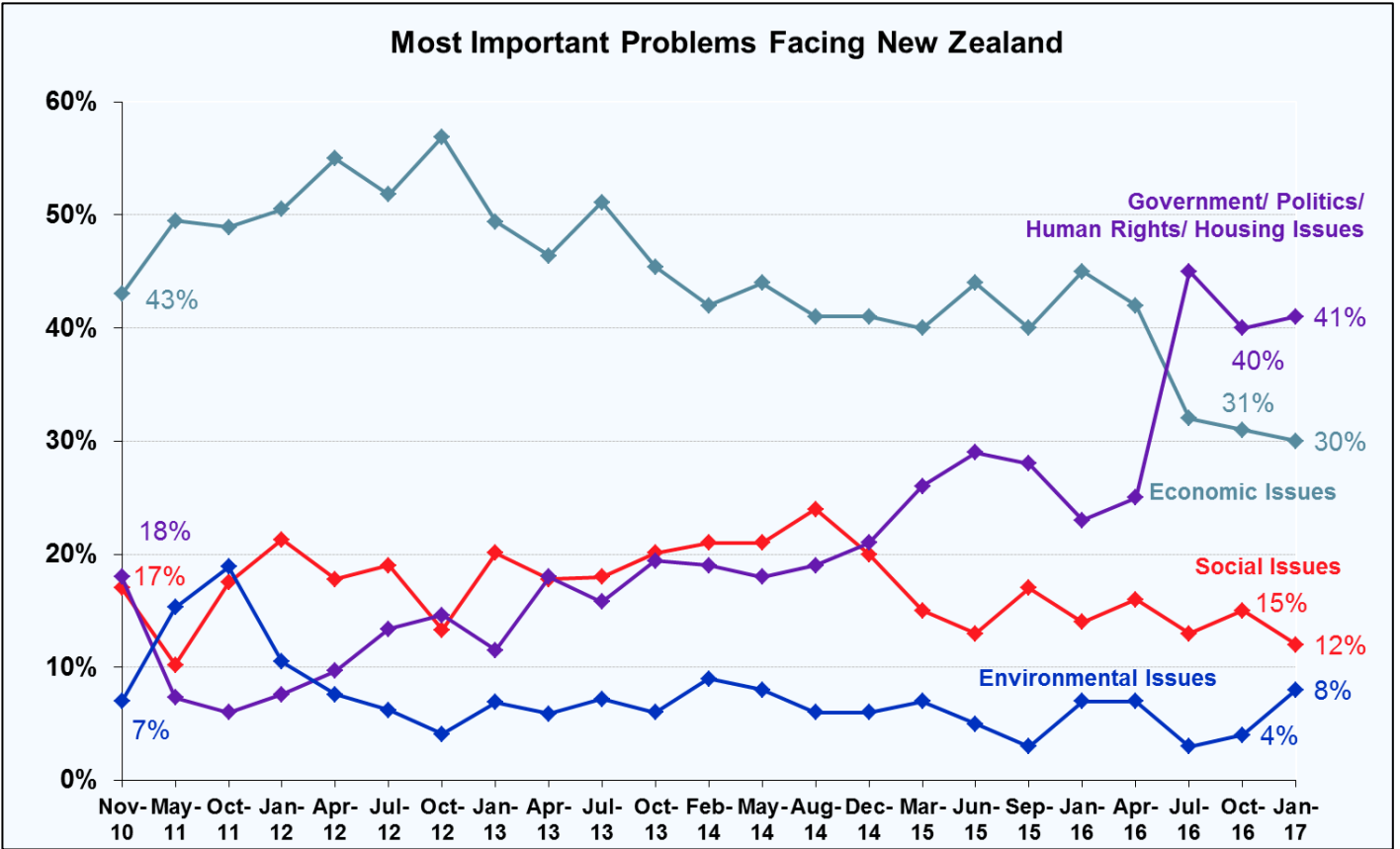
These findings come from a special New Zealand Roy Morgan survey conducted with New Zealanders aged 14+ asked what are the most important issues facing **New Zealand** and the **World** today.

In New Zealand, a cross-section of 1,000 men and women aged 14 or over were interviewed by telephone in January 2017. Respondents were asked: “*Firstly, 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?*” 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).

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%
1,000	±3.2	±2.7	±1.9	±1.4



Most Important Problem Facing New Zealand

New Zealand

	Jun 2015 %	Sep 2015 %	Jan 2016 %	Apr 2016 %	Jul 2016 %	Oct 2016 %	Jan 2017 %
Increasing house prices/ Housing affordability	11	10	7	7	17	17	15
Homeless/ Homelessness/ Housing shortage	3	*	3	2	12	10	11
SUB-TOTAL HOUSING RELATED	14	10	10	9	29	27	26
Government/ Politicians/ Leadership/ Government Spending	8	10	7	9	6	6	6
Immigration/ Refugees	2	5	4	3	6	4	4
Education	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Health Issues/ Disease/ Obesity/ Poor Health	1	1	1	1	2	*	1
Health System/ Shortage of Doctors/ Health Services	1	1	1	2	1	1	1
Benefits Given to the Maori/ Inequality Between Maori and Other Ethnic Groups	1	*	*	1	*	1	1
Not enough people/ People leaving New Zealand	1	1	-	*	*	*	*
TOTAL GOVERNMENT/ PUBLIC POLICY/ HOUSING/ HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES	29	28	23	25	45	40	41
Poverty/ The Gap Between Rich & Poor/ Imbalance of Wealth	21	14	22	17	17	16	17
Economy/ Financial Crisis/ Recession/ Exchange Rate/ High Dollar	10	15	6	4	4	4	4
Cost of Living/ Inflation/ Financial Hardship/ Household Debt	4	3	3	4	2	3	3
Unemployment/ Job Security	5	6	7	7	4	5	3
Foreign Ownership/ Selling our Assets	1	1	1	*	1	1	1
Low Wages	1	*	1	1	1	2	1
Need to Increase Exports	1	*	5	8	2	1	1
Quake Recovery & Rebuilding – Christchurch, South Island, Wellington etc.	*	*	-	*	-	*	*
TOTAL ECONOMIC ISSUES	44	40	45	42	32	31	30
Drugs/ Alcohol Issues/ Drink Driving	2	1	1	*	1	2	2
Social Welfare System	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Social Apathy/ Lack of Values/ Lack of Empathy Toward Others/ Intolerance	3	3	4	4	4	3	2
Breakdown of Family Unit/ Family Violence	1	1	*	1	1	1	1
Child Abuse/ Lack of Care of Children/ Bringing up Children Wrongly	3	7	1	2	2	2	1
Crime/ Law & Order	1	1	1	3	1	2	1
Greed/ Materialism	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Racism/ Racial Tension	1	2	2	2	1	1	1
Violence/ Gangs	*	*	1	*	1	1	1
Youth Issues such as Behaviour/ Pregnancies/ Crime/ Drinking/ Drugs/ Lack of Discipline	1	1	1	1	*	1	*
TOTAL SOCIAL ISSUES	13	17	14	16	13	15	12
Climate Change/ Global Warming	2	1	3	2	2	1	2
Environmental Issues/ Degradation	2	1	3	3	1	2	2
Environmental Pollution/ Water Pollution	*	*	1	1	1	1	2
(Other) Natural Disasters/ Tsunamis/ Floods/ Volcanic Eruptions	1	-	*	1	*	-	2
Earthquakes & Quake Damage – Christchurch, South Island, Wellington etc.	-	*	*	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES (INCLUDING CHRISTCHURCH)	5	3	7	7	3	4	8
Other	*	*	-	-	-	-	-
Can't say	9	12	11	10	7	10	9
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Less than 1%.

Most Important Problem Facing the World

	The World						
	Jun 2015 %	Sep 2015 %	Jan 2016 %	Apr 2016 %	Jul 2016 %	Oct 2016 %	Jan 2017 %
Poverty/ The Gap Between Rich & Poor/ Imbalance of Wealth	19	15	15	14	14	13	15
Economy/ Financial Crisis/ Recession	4	6	4	3	5	4	4
Over-population	3	4	3	4	2	3	4
Cost of Living/ Inflation/ Financial Hardship/ Household Debt	3	3	2	2	3	4	3
Food Shortages/ Feeding the People	2	1	*	1	2	1	1
Unemployment/ Job Security	1	1	1	2	*	2	1
TOTAL ECONOMIC ISSUES	32	30	25	26	27	25	27
Terrorism	11	8	21	16	16	9	11
Wars & Conflicts/ Unrest	12	9	9	5	7	14	9
Religion/ Religious Conflict	4	3	4	3	3	2	3
Peace/ Lack of World Peace	2	1	2	1	1	2	2
Refugee/ Migrant Crisis	n/a	15	3	4	3	3	1
TOTAL WAR & TERRORISM/ SECURITY/ REFUGEE CRISIS ISSUES	29	36	38	29	31	30	26
Climate Change/ Global Warming/ Ozone Layer/ Greenhouse Effect	8	7	8	11	6	7	9
Environmental Issues/ Changes/ Degradation	2	1	1	2	1	1	2
Environmental Pollution	1	1	1	2	1	2	2
Famine/ Hunger/ Starvation	3	2	2	2	1	1	2
Natural Disasters – Earthquakes/ Tsunamis/ Floods/ Volcanic Eruptions	1	*	*	*	-	*	-
TOTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES	15	11	12	16	9	12	15
Donald Trump	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	7
Government/ Politicians/ Political Unrest/ Instability/ Greedy & Corrupt Governments	2	3	3	5	8	8	5
Education	*	*	1	*	1	*	*
Health Issues/ Disease/ Obesity/ Poor Health	1	1	1	2	1	1	*
TOTAL GOVERNMENT/ PUBLIC POLICY/ HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES	3	4	4	6	9	10	13
Social Apathy/ Lack of Values/ Lack of Empathy Toward Others/ Intolerance	5	4	6	7	6	7	6
Greed	4	3	3	4	3	3	3
Racism/ Racial Tension	*	1	1	1	1	1	2
Drug/ Alcohol Issues/ Drink Driving	1	*	*	*	*	2	1
Violence	*	*	2	1	3	1	1
Crime/ Law & Order	1	1	1	1	1	2	*
Lack of Religious or Spiritual Values	1	1	1	1	1	1	*
TOTAL SOCIAL ISSUES	12	9	14	14	16	17	13
Shortage of Resources/ Consumption of Resources	2	1	*	1	1	1	1
Water Shortage/ Clean Water	1	1	*	1	1	1	1
Energy Crisis/ Fuel Shortage/ Need Renewable Energy Sources	1	*	*	-	*	*	*
TOTAL ENERGY/ RESOURCE ISSUES	3	2	1	1	2	2	2
Other	*	1	-	-	-	-	-
Can't say	6	7	6	8	6	4	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

*Less than 1%.

Roy Morgan New Zealand Electorate Profiles

Roy Morgan New Zealand provides the most in-depth analysis of each New Zealand electorate with our New Zealand Electorate profiles. Each electorate profile answers the key questions about the electorate. Who are the electors? What are they thinking? What media do they use? Who are they voting for? What are they doing? View a sample Roy Morgan New Zealand Electorate Profile [here](#).