

Social Cohesion

From “Understanding the Landscape of Auckland & Northland: An Evidence Review”

Written by the Centre for Social Impact (July 2018)

This topic extract is taken from the above report which summarises the key findings of an evidence review completed by the Centre for Social Impact to inform the implementation of Foundation North’s 2018 Strategic Plan. These key findings have been used to inform the development of funding priorities for the Foundation alongside the development of a broader range of positive outcomes that best contribute to the Foundation’s overall vision.

Key Findings

There are 10 topic-specific extracts from the full report.

All extracts and the full report are available at www.foundationnorth.org.nz/how-we-work/resources

1. Population profile | 2. Population change | 3. Income inequality and deprivation | 4. Economic wellbeing | **5. Social cohesion** | 6. Education | 7. Children and young people | 8. Housing | 9. Environmental wellbeing | 10. Community sector

(i) Why is social cohesion an important indicator?

- 1) Social cohesion is an indicator of how strong, inclusive and equitable in opportunity a society is.
(Auckland Council, 2015).
- 2) Social cohesion can be measured through indicators such as income inequality, civic participation, trust in communities, government and other institutions, life satisfaction, feelings of belonging, inclusion and connectedness and social mobility i.e. opportunities to move out of disadvantage.
(OECD, n.d.).
- 3) The Treasury highlights the importance of social capital for living standards - “when there are high levels of participation, interconnection and cohesion, there are correspondingly high levels of social capability; that is, a high level of the ability of various interests in society to co-operate towards common goals.”
(Treasury, 2001, p24).
- 4) Life satisfaction is a key component of social cohesion. Many of the indicators of life satisfaction for Māori are the same as those for non-Māori (e.g. health status, income adequacy, trust); however, whanaungatanga (relationships) plays a greater role in life satisfaction for Māori than it does for other population groups.
(Statistics New Zealand, 2015c).

(ii) What are the regional trends and issues?

1) New Zealand ranks ninth out of 30 OECD countries in terms of trust indicators. Over two-thirds (69%) of New Zealanders express trust in other people, which is above the OECD average of 59%. <i>Source: OECD, 2016a.</i>	OECD country	% Pop ⁿ expressing trust	Rank in OECD
	Denmark	89%	1/30
	New Zealand	69%	9/30
	Australia	64%	12/30
	OECD total	59%	
2) Low levels of life satisfaction and sense of purpose are issues in Northland compared to the rest of New Zealand. Northlanders rank well in terms of their sense of belonging, have lower levels of loneliness and feel that they have good access to support during a crisis. <i>Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2015b.</i>	Indicator	% Pop ⁿ	Rank in New Zealand
	Life satisfaction (7/10 or above)	80.2%	15/16
	Sense of purpose (7/10 or above)	84.8%	14/16
	Sense of belonging	95.9%	5/16
	Loneliness (never felt lonely in past 4 weeks)	71.4%	4/16
	Social support (access to support in crisis)	97.1%	7/16

<p>3) There are issues with social cohesion in Auckland. Aucklanders have a below average sense of purpose and sense of belonging. They also have the second lowest level of social support (i.e. access to support in times of crisis) in the country.</p> <p>Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2015b.</p>	Indicator	% Popⁿ	Rank in New Zealand									
	Life satisfaction (7/10 or above)	82.7%	7/16									
	Sense of purpose (7/10 or above)	82.9%	12/16									
	Sense of belonging	93.7%	12/16									
	Loneliness (never felt lonely in past 4 weeks)	70%	6/16									
	Social support (access to support in crisis)	94.9%	15/16									
<p>4) Where communities have opportunities to connect, engage in community planning and decision-making and participate in community-based activities (sports, recreation, arts, cultural events and other community activities), social cohesion can be strengthened.</p> <p>Source: Centre for Social Impact, 2017.</p>	Key enablers of social cohesion											
	Reducing inequalities											
	Supporting participation											
	Community and social networks that support belonging and inclusion											
	Community-led development											
	Equity of access to key community opportunities (housing, education, employment, health services, community activities)											
<p>5) Levels of life satisfaction for Māori, Pacific, and to a lesser extent, Asian populations, are lower than those for NZ European populations. This challenges social cohesion in New Zealand's communities.</p> <p>Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2015b.</p>	Life satisfaction above or below total population by ethnicity											
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Ethnicity</th> <th>Life Satisfaction Difference</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Asian</td> <td>-1.1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pacific</td> <td>-4.5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Māori</td> <td>-4.7</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NZ European</td> <td>1.5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Ethnicity	Life Satisfaction Difference	Asian	-1.1	Pacific	-4.5	Māori	-4.7	NZ European
Ethnicity	Life Satisfaction Difference											
Asian	-1.1											
Pacific	-4.5											
Māori	-4.7											
NZ European	1.5											
<p>6) Evidence shows that key issues for older people include loneliness, social isolation, elder abuse and neglect and quality of care. For older Aucklanders, data indicates that key issues include feeling valued, feeling safe, feeling that there is a sense of community, income inequality and perceptions of housing affordability.</p> <p>Source: Age Concern, 2016; Auckland Council, 2017a.</p>	Older Aucklanders – key issues											
	1 in 5 think housing costs are unaffordable											
	60% feel a sense of community in their local area											
	60% feel safe											
	41% feel that older people are valued in Auckland											
	Median personal income for over 65s is \$20,900, compared to \$29,600 for over 15s											

References

- Age Concern New Zealand (2016). Valuing Age: The economic contribution of older New Zealanders. Retrieved from: <https://www.ageconcern.org.nz/files/valuingage.pdf>
- Auckland Council (2015). Research strategy and priority research areas 2013 – 2016: Research plans. Retrieved from: <http://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/assets/publications/Auckland-Council-research-plans-March-2015.pdf>
- Auckland Council (2017a). Older Aucklanders: A quality of life status report. Retrieved from: <http://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/assets/publications/TR2017-014-Older-Aucklanders-quality-of-life-status-report.pdf>
- Centre for Social Impact (2017). Evidence review – effective philanthropy to strengthen communities. Developed for Eastern and Central Community Trust.
- OECD (n.d.). Social cohesion. Retrieved from: <http://www.oecd.org/dev/inclusivesocietiesanddevelopment/social-cohesion.htm>
- OECD (2016a). OECD Social indicators. Retrieved from: http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/society-at-a-glance_19991290
- Statistics New Zealand (2015b). New Zealand General Social Survey 2014. Retrieved from: http://archive.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/Well-being.aspx
- Statistics New Zealand (2015c). Ngā tohu o te ora: The determinants of life satisfaction for Māori 2013. Retrieved from: http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/people_and_communities/Māori/te-kupenga/determinants-life-satisfaction-Māori.aspx
- The Treasury (2001). Towards an inclusive economy. Retrieved from: <https://treasury.govt.nz/publications/wp/towards-inclusive-economy-wp-01-15>