



How accepting are we of cultural and religious diversity?

The topic:

On Friday afternoon 15 March 2019, 50 people peacefully praying in two mosques in Christchurch were gunned down and killed by a lone shooter. Many others were injured.

This represents the worst mass killing in New Zealand's history, and the ninth worst in the world in recent times.

New Zealand's outpouring of grief has been unprecedented and there have been immediate cries for the reform of New Zealand gun laws and a refocusing of government resources on internal white supremacist elements.

Three days later, on Monday 18 March, we launched a poll, canvassing a nationally-representative sample of New Zealanders' opinions about these and other matters.

Key results:

The key results are as follows:

- ◆ Respondents were **polarised** in terms of whether they felt New Zealanders are 'accepting of cultural and religious diversity'.
 - ◆ Almost one-in-five respondents (17%) categorically stated that New Zealanders are **not** 'accepting of cultural and religious diversity'.
 - ◆ While over twice as many (43%) believed New Zealanders **are** accepting, over one-third were **undecided** (38%).
 - ◆ Therefore, 55% either held the view that New Zealanders are **not** 'accepting of cultural and religious diversity', or were unsure.
- ◆ Reflecting these results are respondents' thoughts in terms of New Zealanders' core values:
 - ◆ Less than one-half of respondents (45%) agreed that '**treating all people as equals**, regardless of who they are or what they represent' is a value that 'most, if not all New Zealanders currently live by'. In contrast, 55% disagreed or were unsure if this was the case.
 - ◆ While two-thirds agreed (65%) that 'fairness' is a value that 'most, if not all New Zealanders currently live by', 34% disagreed or were unsure if this was the case.



- ◆ Similarly, while two-thirds (65%) agreed that 'kindness' is a value that 'most, if not all New Zealanders currently live by', 34% disagreed or were unsure if this was the case.
- ◆ Finally, two-thirds of respondents (66%) agreed that 'compassion' is a value that 'most, if not all New Zealanders currently live by', However, 33% disagreed or were unsure if this was the case.
- ◆ Perhaps because of these results, the **large majority** of respondents felt 'discrimination exists in New Zealand'.
 - ◆ Over one-half of respondents (52%) categorically stated that 'discrimination **exists** in New Zealand'.
 - ◆ While a much smaller percentage (10%) **disagreed** with this, many respondents were undecided (38%).
 - ◆ Therefore, 90% either held the view that discrimination exists, or they were unsure.

One respondent, who felt discrimination exists, expressed their views as follows:

"I work with Maori organisations and colleagues. Knowing what they face regularly; the attitudes I come across toward them from other white New Zealanders, I am surprised that so many seem to think New Zealand is such a discrimination-free country. But, on the other hand, if anything good can come of this, maybe it is that we will become more galvanised in our commitment to be a fair and non-discriminating society."

- ◆ Against this background, one-in-four respondents (30%) stated they had '**personally** experienced some form of discrimination in the last 12 months'.
- ◆ Focusing on the shootings in Christchurch, a little over one-half of respondents (57%) stated they felt 'New Zealand will change as a result of the shootings'.
 - ◆ In comparison, almost one-in-five (18%) stated that it will **not** change.
 - ◆ While significantly more of those who felt New Zealand would change believed New Zealand would change **for the better** (33%) – compared with change for the worse (8%) – many said it would change 'a bit in both directions' (57%).

One respondent expressed this sentiment as follows:

"I have spent all weekend with a tear in my eye; occasionally more than one. I answered that it will change New Zealand for both better and worse. For the vast majority, it will bring us closer together, much like New York and London after their attacks, but this time a whole country. However, it may embolden the extremists on both sides to be more vocal and divisive."



Hopefully, the vast majority of us will be able to suppress those extremist views.”

- ◆ As an indication of some of the changes expected as a result of the shootings:
 - ◆ 73% of all respondents agreed that **government resourcing** should increase so that ‘(white supremacist) individuals and groups are more actively monitored’¹.

One respondent expressed this view as follows:

“I believe that the affluent white middle class has been ignoring the presence of racism and extremism in New Zealand, and we are now facing the consequence. Our GSB focus on the Islamic terror threat was narrow and ill-informed as a strategy. We are at risk from all extreme views. I would rather the law provides for police and authorities to address the white supremacist threat, than have them waste time in confronting legacy Maori rights activist views driven by racism perpetuated still as a legacy of my immigrant forebears and our Pakeha whanau imposters on their land.”

- ◆ 79% of all respondents agreed that ‘**Facebook** and other social media platforms should be required to exercise greater control over what people are able to post on their social media platform’.
- ◆ 85% of all respondents disagreed that it should be legally possible to obtain a military style, **semi-automatic rifle**.

Most respondents expressed their views along the following lines:

“One gun - one licence. All guns should go on a register, so that individuals are flagged when they try to purchase more than one gun. No guns to be sold via Trade Me. All to be sold through licenced dealers, so there is a register of owners and boarders to be very vigilant for guns brought in from overseas. Social platforms far more vigilant with hate speech.”

However, others had a different view:

“I don't think that there should be a knee jerk reaction, in terms of firearms laws in New Zealand, because of one outlier event, when the vast majority of owners and users are responsible people and are totally safe and legal in their use of firearms. I am totally open to a discussion about firearm safety and ownership, however I don't feel that most of the general public understand enough about firearms to be a part of the discussion about firearms laws in our country.”

¹ The preamble to this question was, ‘It is being said that New Zealand government security agencies were not aware of the alleged gunman involved in the shootings on Friday, in part, because they were **not** focused on white supremacist individuals or groups’.



- ◆ Finally, most respondents (73%) stated they felt '**personally safe**' despite the shootings:
- ◆ However, almost one-in-four respondents (25%) felt unsafe or were unsure about their personal safety.
 - ◆ These respondents were more likely to be female, or younger respondents aged 18-44.
 - ◆ Differences by ethnicity and geographic location are not statistically significant.



Detailed results (by age):

1. Are New Zealanders are **accepting** of cultural and religious diversity?

Table 1:

Q8. How much do you think New Zealanders, in general, are accepting of cultural and religious diversity?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Very accepting 1	10	12	9	8
2	33	33	36	29
3	38	36	36	44
4	14	13	15	15
Not at all accepting 5	3	3	2	2
Don't know	1	2	1	1
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

2. Does **discrimination** exists in New Zealand?

Table 2:

Q9. How much do you feel discrimination exists in New Zealand?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Exists a lot 1	17	18	18	11
2	35	37	34	30
3	38	36	35	46
4	10	7	12	11
Does not exist at all 5	0	0	1	0
Don't know	1	1	0	0
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



3. Have you **personally** experienced some form of discrimination in the last 12 months?

Table 3:

Q10. In the past 12 months have you personally experienced any form of discrimination?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Yes	30	35	31	18
No	59	50	61	78
Don't know	9	13	7	3
Would rather not say	2	2	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

4. New Zealanders' core values

Table 4:

Treating all people as equals, regardless of who they are or what they represent

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	17	16	15	23
2	28	24	30	32
3	32	32	34	28
4	18	22	16	12
Strongly disagree 5	5	7	4	3
Don't know	0	1	0	0
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Table 5:

Fairness

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	24	19	26	35
2	41	41	43	38
3	24	26	22	19
4	9	11	7	6
Strongly disagree 5	1	2	2	1
Don't know	1	1	1	1
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 6:

Compassion

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	25	22	25	34
2	41	43	42	35
3	25	25	26	23
4	7	8	5	6
Strongly disagree 5	1	1	1	1
Don't know	0	0	0	1
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 7:

Kindness

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	24	22	24	31
2	41	41	44	38
3	26	28	25	23
4	7	9	5	6
Strongly disagree 5	1	1	1	1
Don't know	0	0	0	1
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



5. Will New Zealand change as a result of the shootings?

Table 8:

Q4. It is being said that New Zealand will change as a result of the shootings. How much do you agree or disagree with this notion?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	23	24	22	23
2	34	37	32	30
3	20	17	22	24
4	13	12	15	11
Strongly disagree 5	5	4	6	5
Don't know	5	5	4	6
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

6. How will it change (based on sub-sample of respondents who believe it will change)?

Table 9:

Q5. Do you think this change will be for the better, worse or a bit of both?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	736*	124	306	306
	%	%	%	%
Better	33	31	30	42
Worse	8	4	11	13
A bit of both	57	62	56	44
Don't know	3	3	3	1
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

*Sub-sample based on those respondents who believe New Zealand will change as a result of the shootings.



7. Should government **resourcing** change/increase?

Table 10:

Q3. How much do you agree or disagree that the government should increase the resources it makes available so that these individuals and groups² are more actively monitored?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	50	52	45	54
2	23	22	24	22
3	16	16	16	14
4	6	5	8	6
Strongly disagree 5	2	1	4	2
Don't know	3	3	2	2
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

8. **Should Facebook** and other social media platforms be required to exercise greater control?

Table 11:

Q1. How much do you agree or disagree that Facebook and other social media platforms should be required to exercise greater control over what people are able to post on their social media platform?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	61	51	64	81
2	18	24	15	10
3	11	15	10	4
4	4	5	4	2
Strongly disagree 5	3	4	4	2
Don't know	2	3	2	0
Rather not say	0	0	1	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

² These individuals and groups were described in a preamble to the question as follows, 'It is being said that New Zealand government security agencies were not aware of the alleged gunman involved in the shootings on Friday, in part, because they were **not** focused on white supremacist individuals or groups'.



9. Should it be possible to legally obtain a military style, **semi-automatic rifle**?

Table 12:

Q2. Someone with a current New Zealand gun licence can legally obtain a military style, semi-automatic rifle.

Do you agree or disagree that this should be possible?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Strongly agree 1	4	4	4	6
2	4	5	4	3
3	5	5	5	4
4	10	12	9	5
Strongly disagree 5	75	73	76	82
Don't know	1	1	2	0
Rather not say	0	1	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

10. How **personally safe** do you feel as a result of the recent events?

Table 13:

Q7. How safe do you personally feel following the recent events?

	Total	18-44	45-64	65+
Unweighted base =	1344	200	566	578
	%	%	%	%
Completely safe 1	34	25	40	47
2	39	38	43	35
3	19	26	12	13
4	5	7	4	3
Not at all safe 5	1	2	1	1
Don't know	1	2	1	1
Rather not say	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



11. Profile of respondent who feel **unsafe** compared with those who feel safe

Table 14:

Age

	Total	Feel safe	Do not feel safe/Unsure
Unweighted base =	1332*	1071	261
	%	%	%
18-44	47	40	65
45-64	34	39	22
65+	19	21	13
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

Table 15:

Gender

	Total	Feel safe	Do not feel safe/Unsure
Unweighted base =	1332*	1071	261
	%	%	%
Male	48	53	33
Female	52	47	67
Total	100	100	100

Total may not sum to 100% due to rounding.



Comment:

“Like most New Zealanders, we at Research New Zealand, have felt the pain being felt by those directly affected by this senseless act. We want to be part of the social movement towards change so that this type of act never ever happens again in New Zealand”, said Research New Zealand Managing Partner, Emanuel Kalafatelis.

This survey of 1344 respondents aged 18 years and over was conducted online using the Research New Zealand recruitment panel in March 2019. The maximum margin of error is +/- 3.7 percent (at the 95 percent confidence level). The sample has been weighted by gender and age to ensure the results are representative of the population 18 years plus based on these demographic criteria.

*The survey was **not** undertaken on behalf of any organization, but as part of Research New Zealand’s social poll of New Zealanders’ opinions about topical issues.*

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