

COUNTING OURSELVES

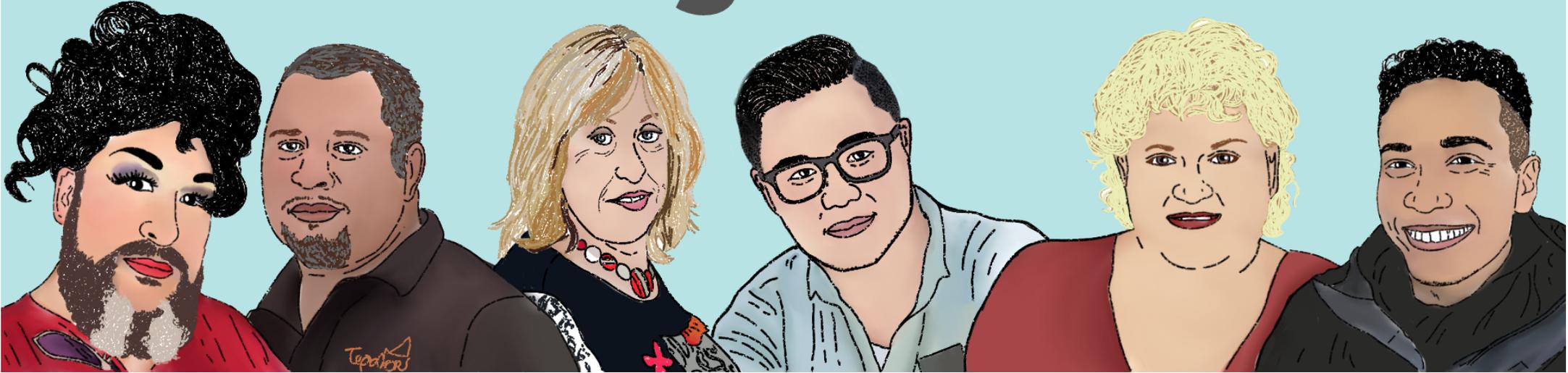
Counting the population of trans people in Aotearoa:
*Using evidence from a large transgender health survey
to inform population measurement*

Population Association of New Zealand Conference 2019

Dr Jaimie Veale, Senior Lecturer
Jack Byrne, Research Officer
University of Waikato

Outline

Counting Ourselves



- ▶ About the survey
- ▶ Demographics
- ▶ Participants' responses to sex and gender questions
- ▶ International best practice for transgender-inclusive gender questions
- ▶ Recommendations for measuring gender in Aotearoa surveys

Counting Ourselves Methods

- ▶ Team led by trans people
- ▶ Community advisory group
- ▶ Peer review of questionnaire
- ▶ Includes NZ population survey questions
- ▶ Live from 21 June - 30 September 2018

1170 responses from
trans and non-binary people
living in Aotearoa
aged 14 and older

"WE can no longer be left behind, being counted is OUR collective responsibility. Being counted will no longer give anyone an excuse to make US invisible."

- Phylesha



How old are you?

14-18	17%
19-24	29%
25-29	19%
30-34	10%
35-39	6%
40-44	5%
45-49	5%
50-54	3%
55-59	3%
60-64	2%
65 years or older	2%

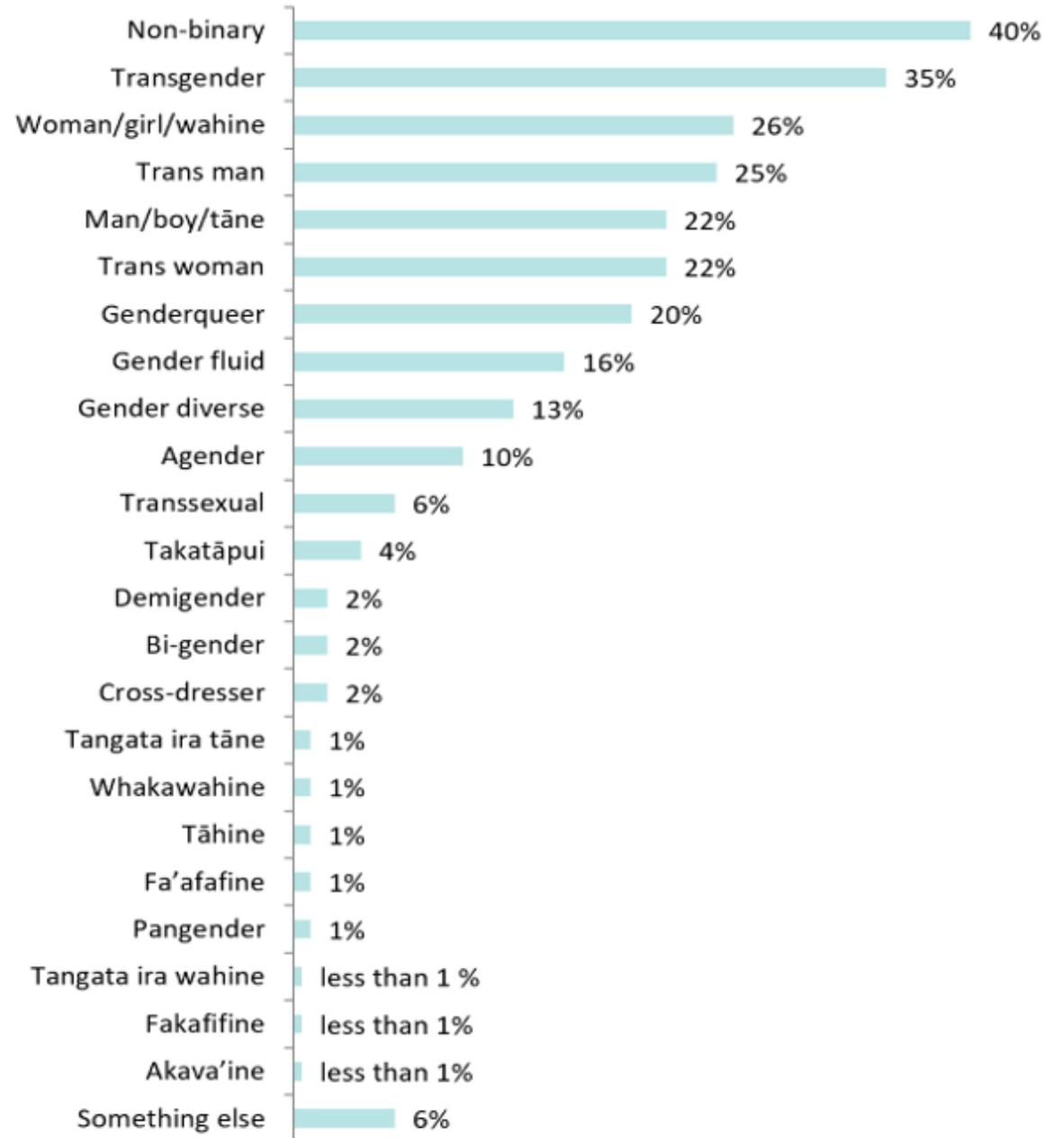


**"I would like to see older Maori trans people engaging in the survey so that their voices can be heard."
- Roxanne**

What gender or genders do you currently identify with?

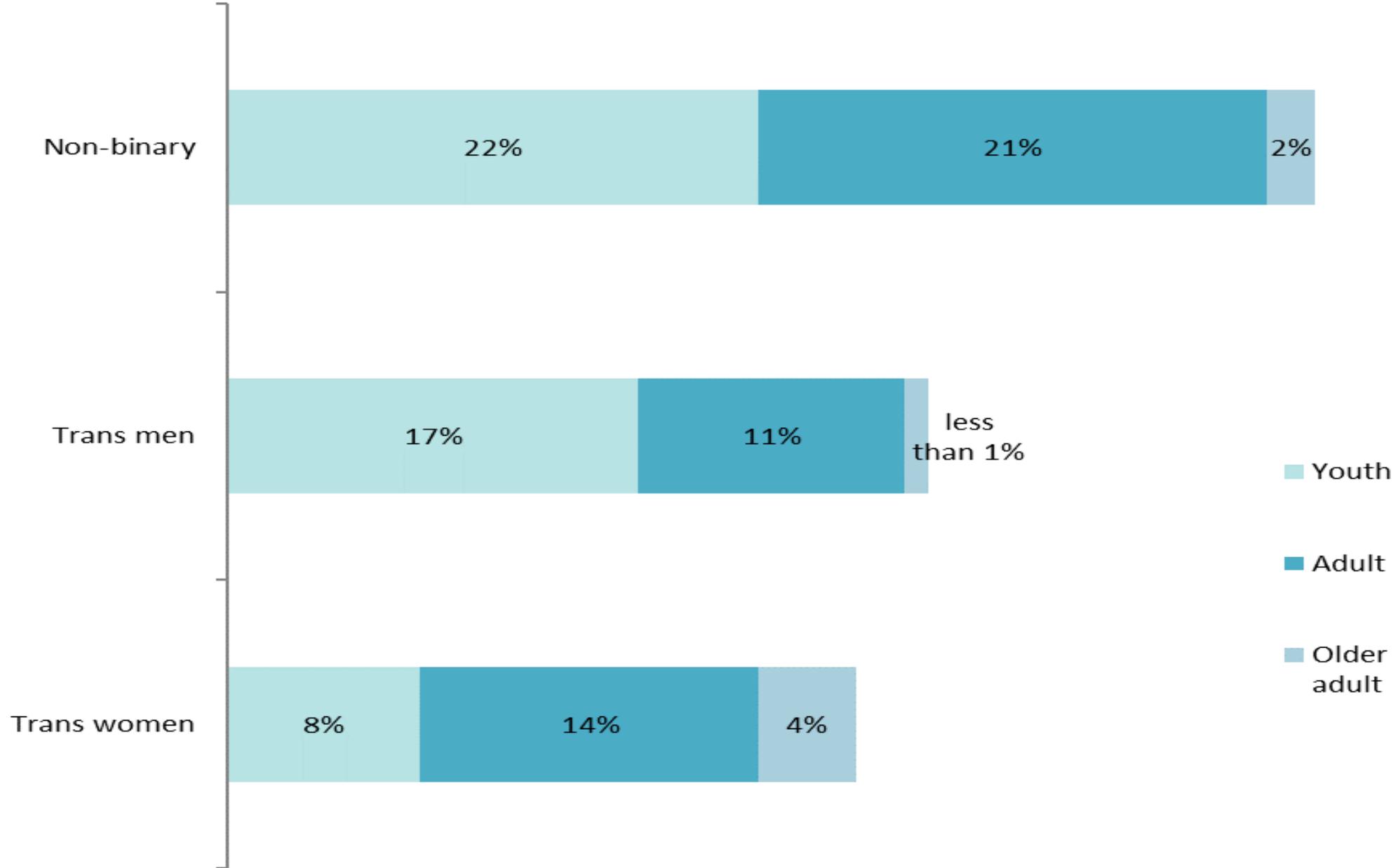
- ▶ Non-binary: 40%
- ▶ Transgender: 35%
- ▶ Woman/girl/wahine: 26%
- ▶ Trans man: 25%
- ▶ Man/boy/tāne: 22%
- ▶ Trans woman: 22%
- ▶ Genderqueer: 20%
- ▶ Gender fluid: 16%
- ▶ Gender diverse: 13%
- ▶ Agender: 10%
- ▶ Transsexual: 6%
- ▶ Takatāpui: 4%

What gender or what genders do you currently identify with?



Fakaleiti
Akava'ine
Tangata ira wahine
Fa'afafine
Whakatāne
Fa'afatama
Kohine rakau Taka
Tangata ira tāne
Hijra Hine hua
Takātāpui
Two-Souled
Whakawahine
Kua xing bie
Tutu Vaine
Hine hi
Tahine
Fakafifine
Two-Spirit
Vakasalewalewa

Gender and Age of Participants



Sex assigned at birth and sex characteristics

All participants:

- ▶ Assigned female at birth: 63%
- ▶ Assigned male at birth: 37%

Non-binary participants

- ▶ Assigned female at birth: 78%
- ▶ Assigned male at birth: 22%

Do you have an intersex variation?

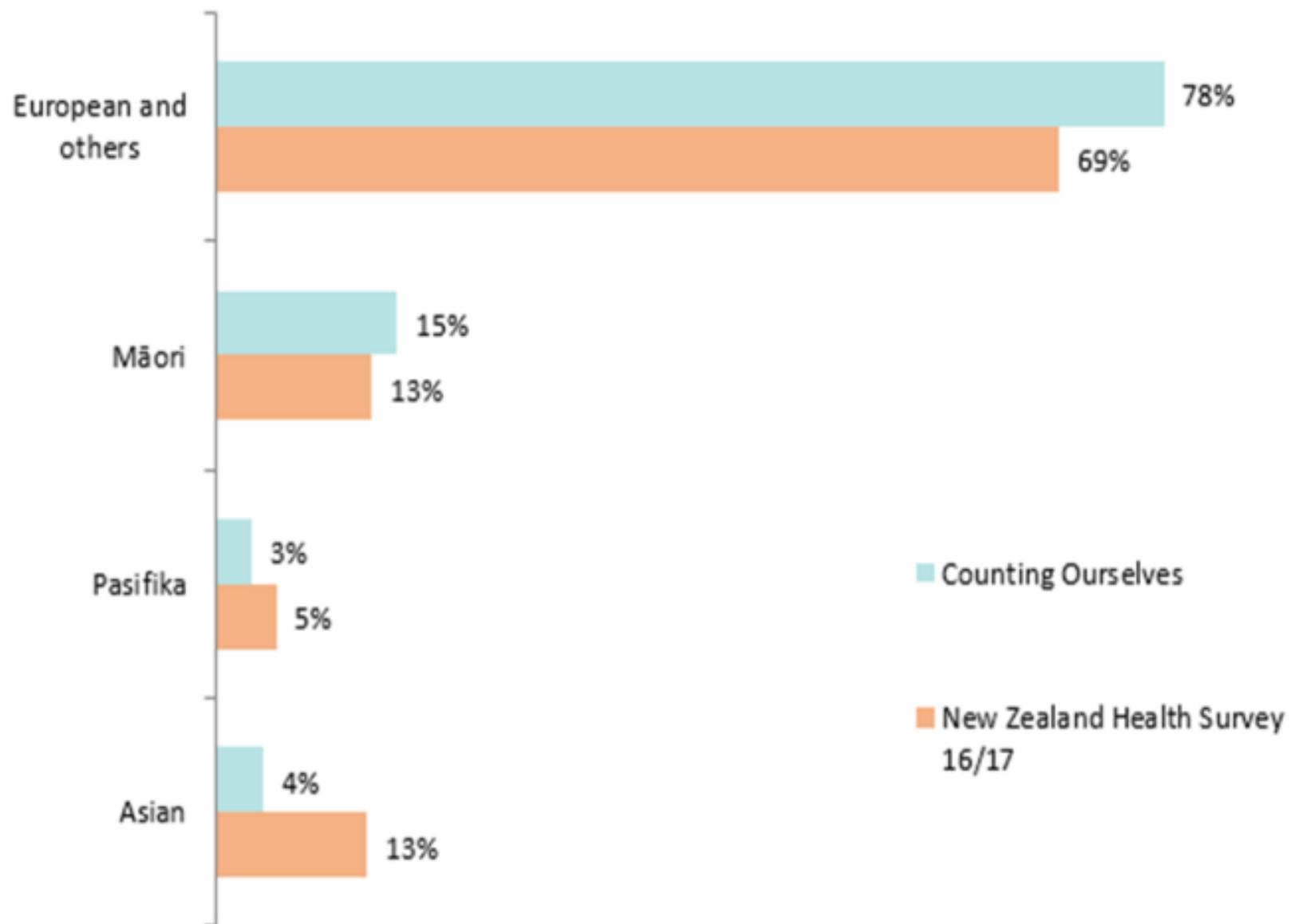
- ▶ Yes: 3%
- ▶ I don't know: 21%



"In particular, those of us on the margins in our own communities - trans sex workers, intersex trans people, disabled trans people - need to be counted so our needs are taken into account."

- Ki

Which ethnic group or groups do you belong to?





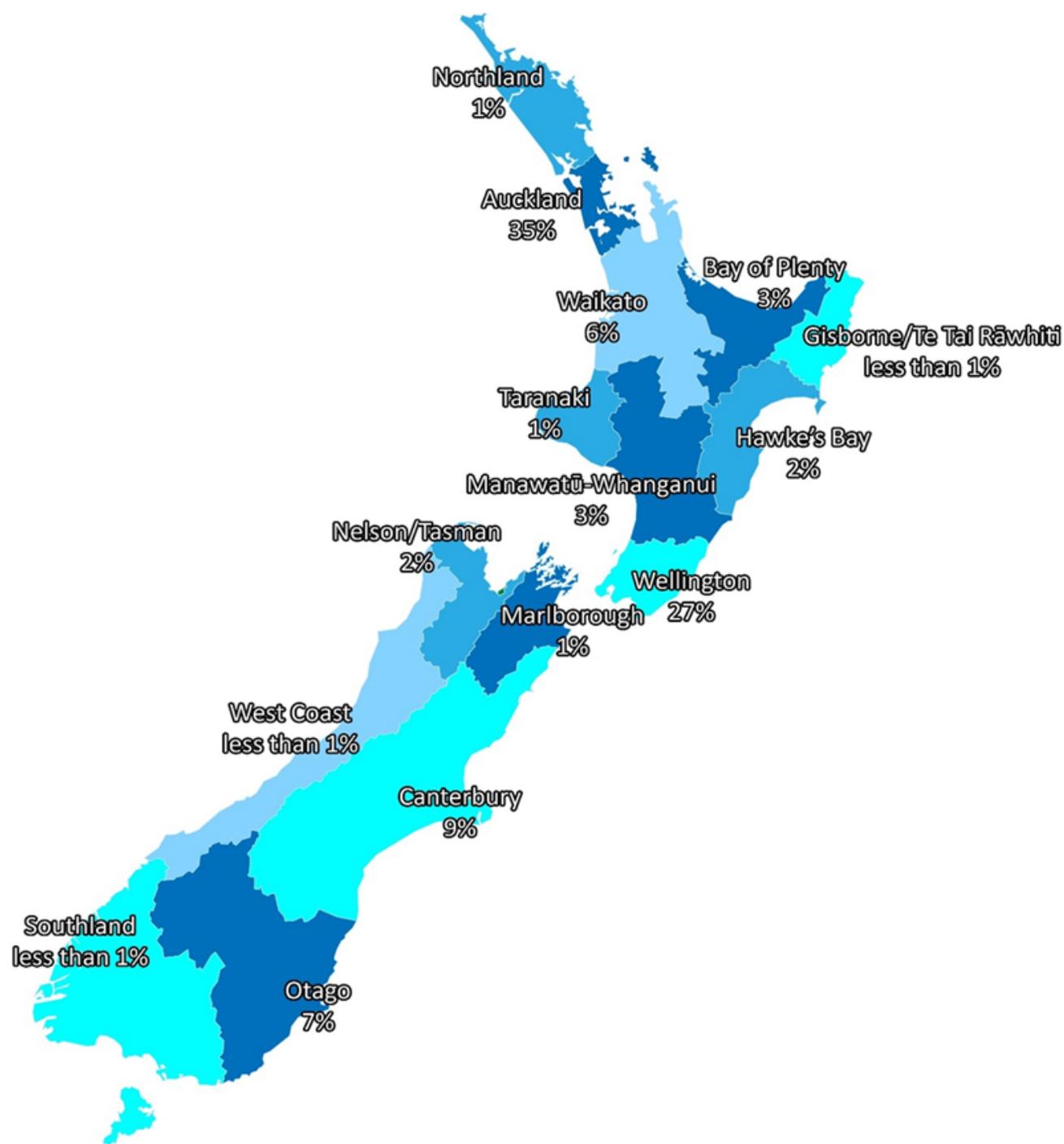
**"Takatāpui, whakawāhine,
tāhine, tāngata ira tāne.
Filling this survey is gifting
a taonga that will help
improve things for us all.**

**Nākau te rourou, nāu te
rourou, ka ora ai te iwi.
please share your insights,
so we have evidence to push
for change."**

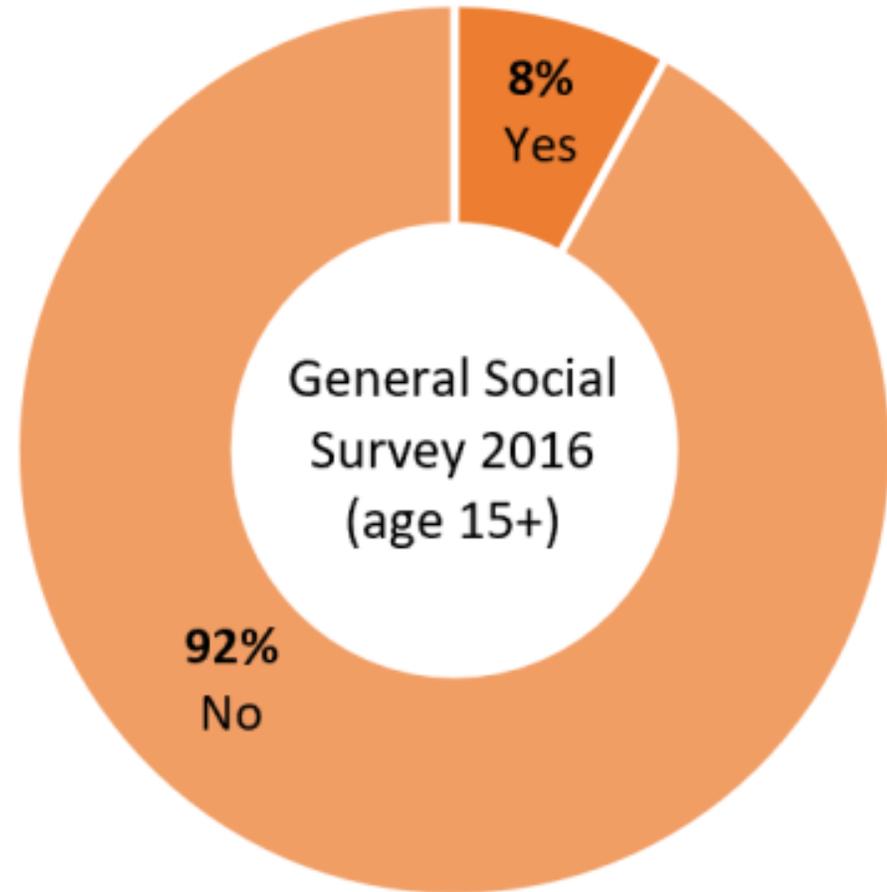
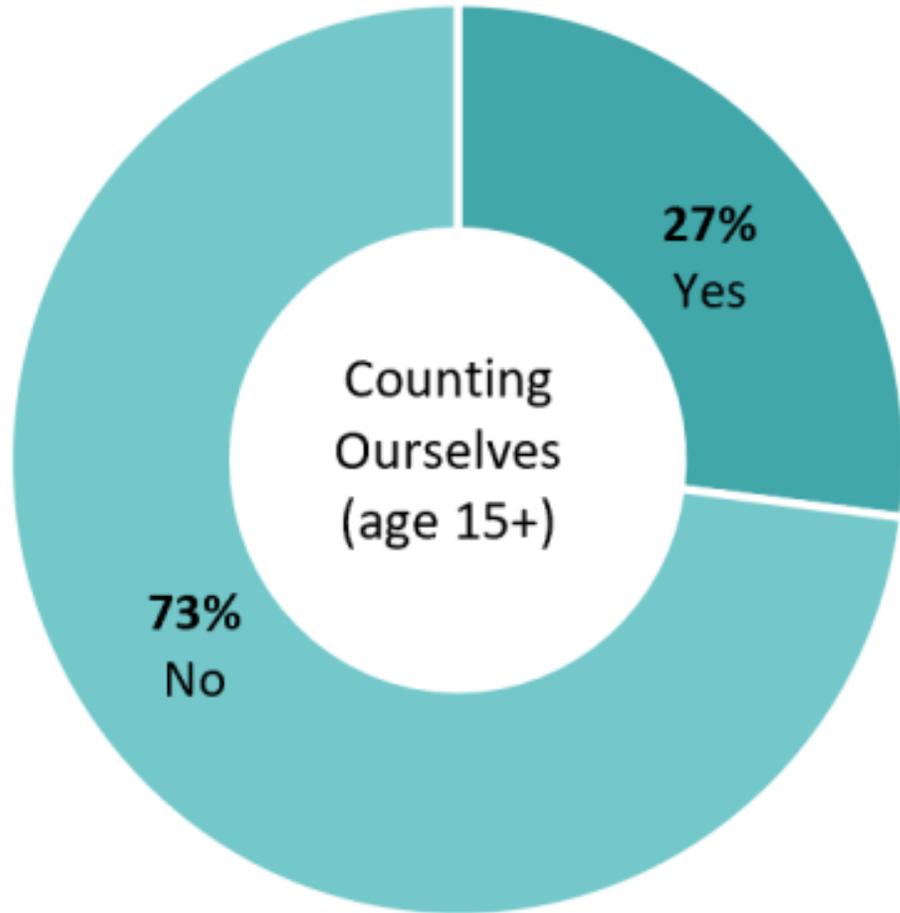
- Ahi

Regions

- ▶ Auckland: 35%
- ▶ Wellington: 27%
- ▶ Canterbury: 9%
- ▶ Otago: 7%
- ▶ Waikato: 6%
- ▶ Bay of Plenty: 3%
- ▶ Manawatū/Whanganui: 3%
- ▶ Nelson/Tasman: 2%
- ▶ Hawkes Bay: 2%



People with Disabilities



Definition: "could not" or "had a lot of difficulty" seeing, walking, hearing, concentrating or remembering, communicating, or caring for oneself (such as washing or dressing)

Washington Group

Chart Set



'Let's create a gender affirming health system that caters for everyone's uniqueness and diversity, so we don't have to explain each time - I don't want to explain every time that I have a disability and I am trans. Let the system expect all kinds of people.'

- Allyson

Income

Counting Ourselves Survey

Median annual income

- ▶ All participants: \$15,001-\$20,000
- ▶ Disabled participants: \$10,001-\$15,000

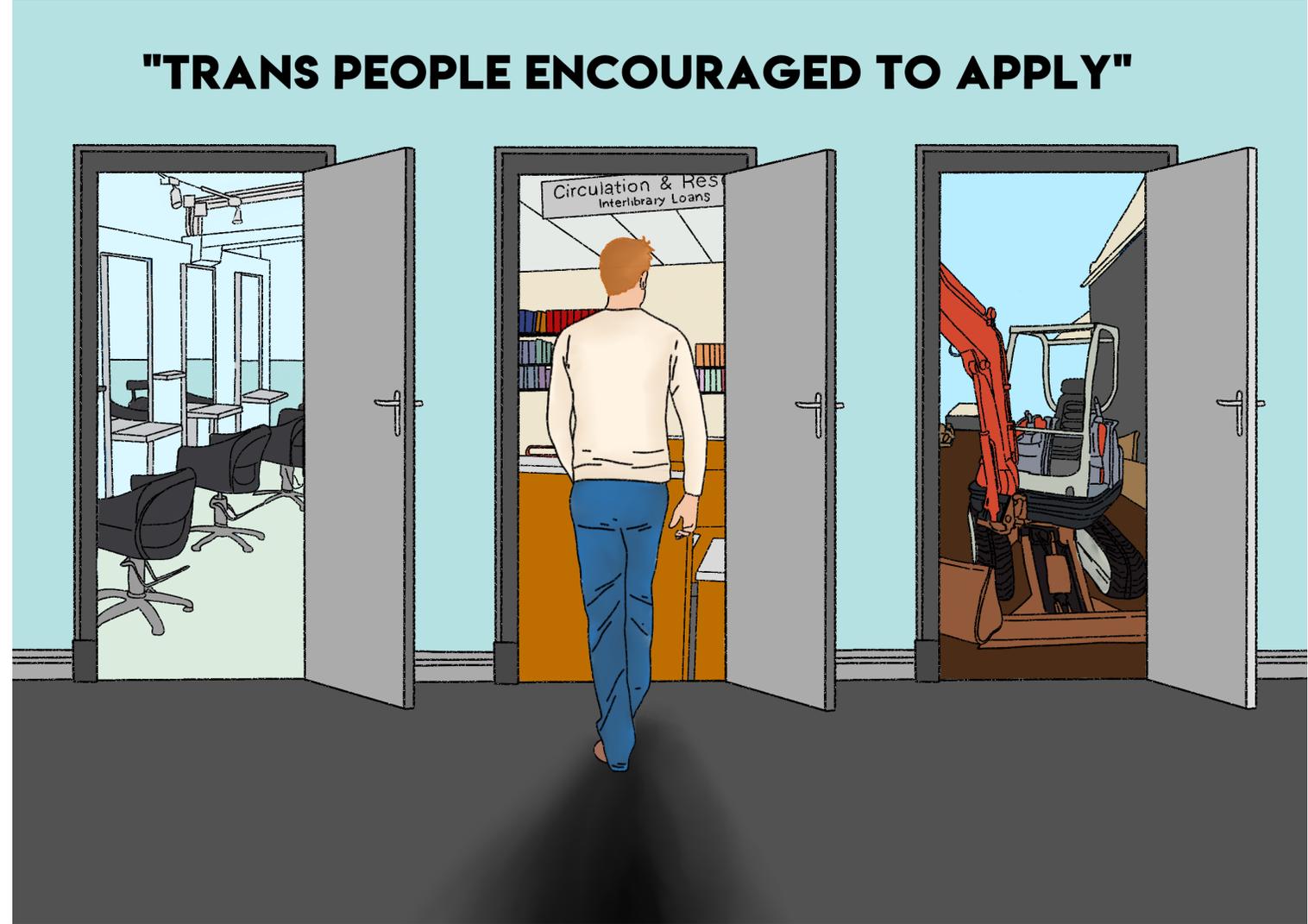
Income less than \$35,000:

- ▶ 61% of all participants

2016/17 NZ Health Survey

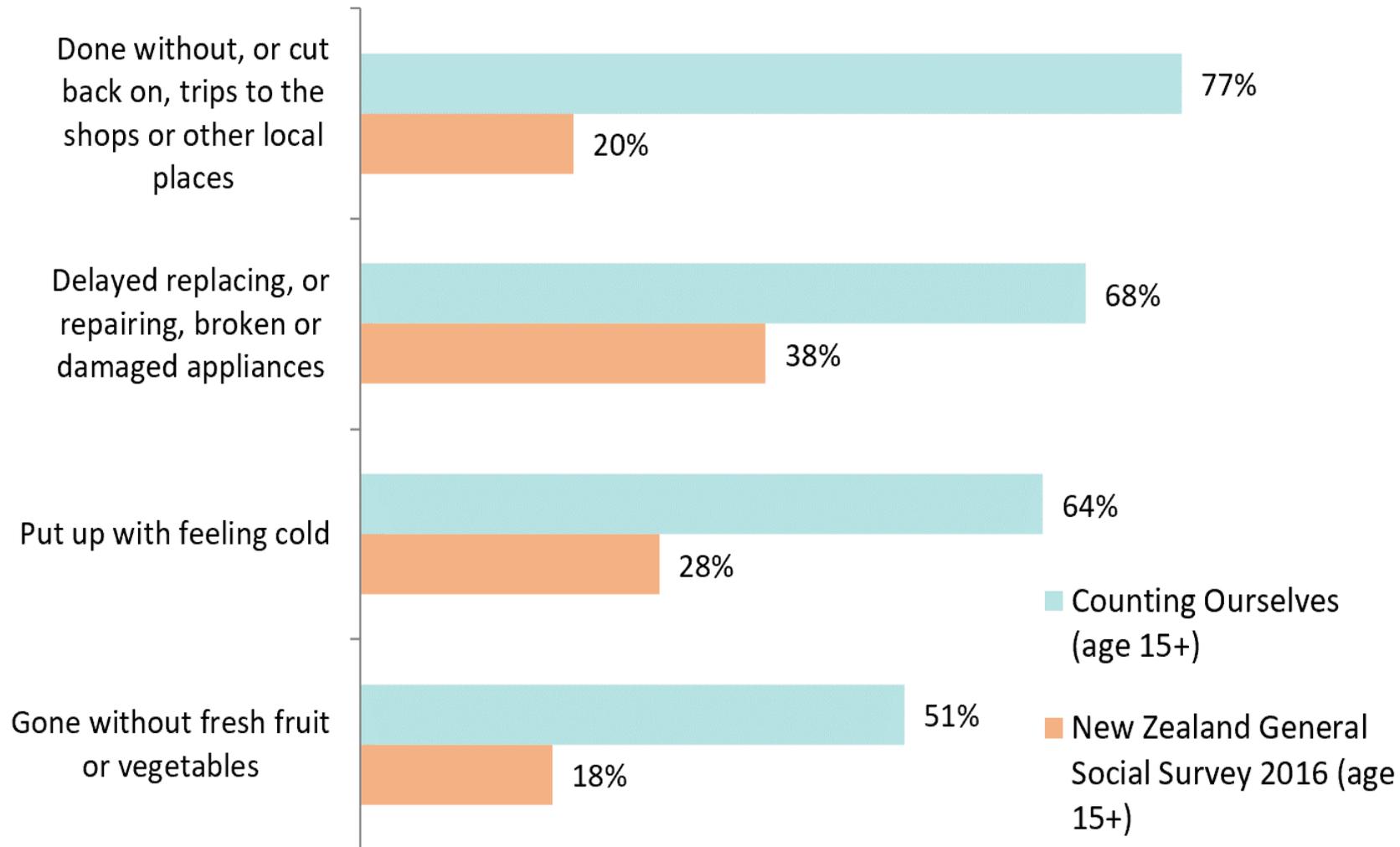
Median annual income

- ▶ All participants: \$35,001-40,000



Financial Hardship

In the last 12 months, have you done any of the following things to keep costs down?



Disabled participants more likely to have:

- Gone without trips to shop or other local places (86%)
- Delayed repairing appliances (79%)
- Put up with feeling the cold (73%)
- Gone without fresh fruit and vegetables (68%)

Asian participants more likely to have:

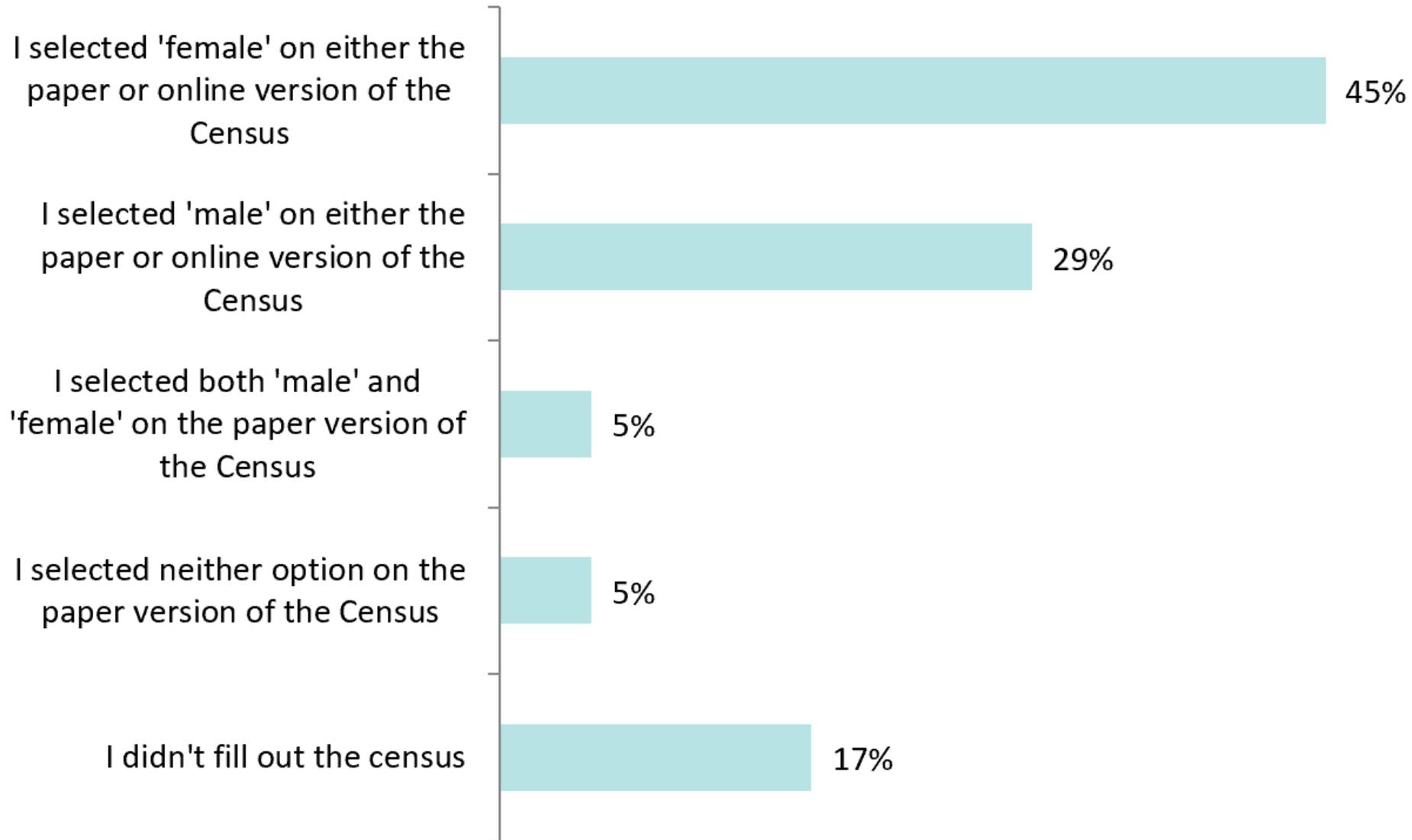
- Put up with feeling cold (80%)

Responses by *Counting Ourselves* participants to

Currently Used Sex and Gender Questions

2018 Census

The March 2018 Census had this question, asking if you are male or female. How did you respond to this question?



Comments

“Although I am binary female, I would have preferred the option to choose to designate myself as transgender so that I would be counted in stats.”

“I rung to enquire what gender I have to select being that I am a trans man. I was told I had to put what I was born as, so I select female although I do not identify as female.”

“It was horrendous, I was infuriated that the Census would choose to be statistically incorrect rather than acknowledge diverse genders”

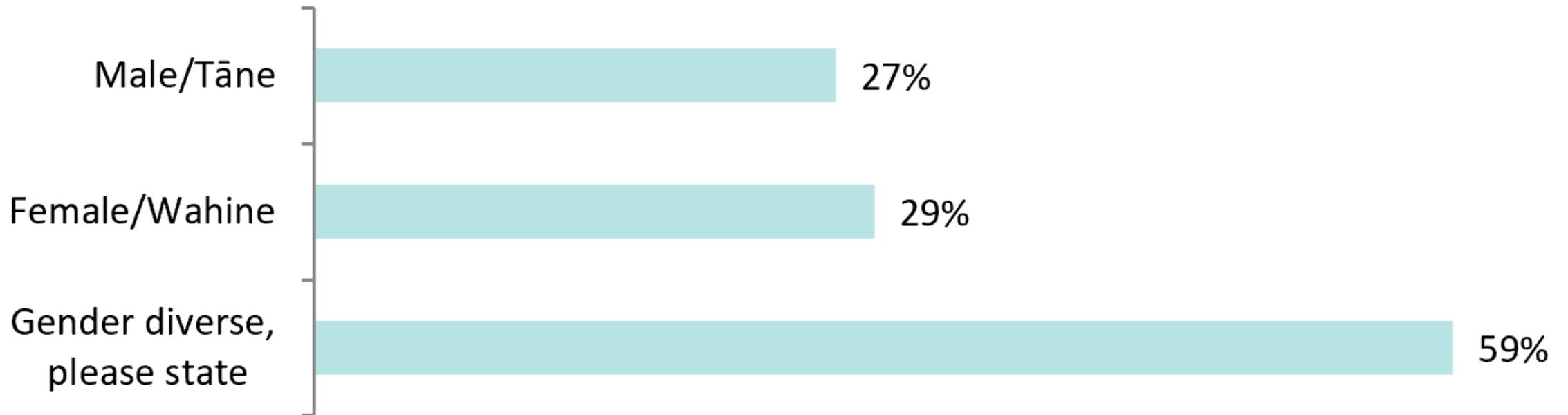
“The question said "Are you" and didn't identify as being about biological sex or gender identity or expression. The options provided ... are usually used in reference to biological sex. I provided the one that closest matched what was asked for, whether it was a full representation or not.”

“It was confusing and felt like I was giving wrong information.”

“Make it clear in regards to asking our sex OR gender. I answered female but only because I was forced between one or the other and I am AFAB.”

Responses by *Counting Ourselves* participants to questions based on: the 2015 SNZ Standard for Gender Identity

Some organisations are now using the following question based on the 2015 Statistics New Zealand Standard for Gender Identity. How would you respond to this question:
What gender do you identify as?



Comments

“I am a man. But I am legally female. The 2015 Statistics NZ standard for gender identity makes it seem as though trans people aren't men or women, but many of us are!”

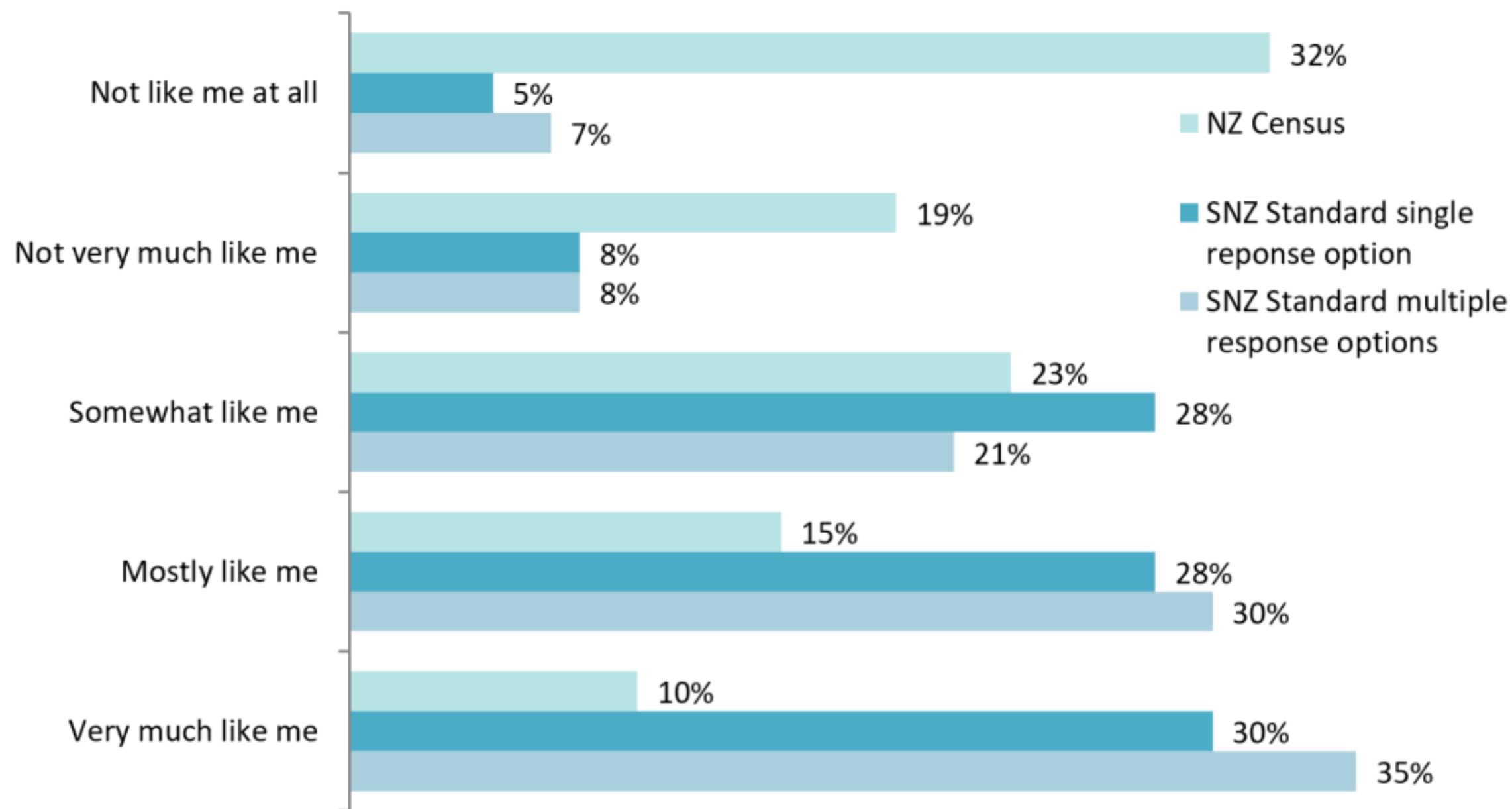
“'Gender diverse' isn't a gender. To properly reflect these parts of my identity, there would need to be 2 questions, one for gender (with multiple options), and another for trans status.”

“Picking multiple answers suits me best as I do identify as a 'man' yet also want to be counted as 'trans' as I feel that's important information that needs to be recorded statistically and properly reflects my history.”

“I would select gender diverse, because if organisations are collecting information I think it's important that gender diverse people have a presence (if I select male - which is probably how I more strongly identify in my day to day life, then that is one less transgender person that they are collecting information on).”

“More options gives an accurate representation.”

How well did the response options to this question fit you?



International Best Practice For Transgender-inclusive Gender Questions

International Best Practice for Transgender-inclusive Gender Questions

- ▶ **Why collect data on transgender people?** Herman (2017)
- ▶ We collect data on gender - this should be inclusive of non-binary people
- ▶ **For the same reasons we collect data for other minority groups:**
 - ▶ Understand the size of the group, demand for services
 - ▶ Help with visibility
 - ▶ Understand inequities: social, health, discrimination
 - ▶ Help to inform policies, laws, etc

Questions for use in population surveys:

Single step transgender questions

▶ Youth '12

Do you think you are transgender? This is a girl who feels like she should have been a boy, or a boy who feels like he should have been a girl (e.g., Trans, Queen, Fa'afafine, Whakawahine, Tangata ira Tane, Genderqueer)?

- ▶ Yes: 1.2%
- ▶ Don't know: 2.5%
- ▶ Don't understand the question: 1.7%

▶ Bauer et al. (2017)

Do you consider yourself to be trans (transgender, transsexual, or a person with a history of transitioning sex)?

- ▶ Yes
- ▶ No
- ▶ Don't know

International best practice for transgender-inclusive gender questions: Two Steps

► Bauer et al. (2017)

1. *What sex were you assigned at birth, meaning on your original birth certificate?*
Male, female.
2. *What best describes your current gender identity?*
Male, female, indigenous or other cultural minority identity, something else (e.g. gender fluid, non-binary)

► Statistics Canada: Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces

The following questions are about sex at birth and gender.

1. *What was your sex at birth?* 1: Male 2: Female
2. *What is your gender?* 1: Male 2: Female 3: Or please specify

Other considerations

- ▶ **Surveys vs. other means of collecting data**
 - ▶ Identity documents
 - ▶ Health records (e.g. NHI)
 - ▶ Other administrative records

- ▶ **Only collect data on being transgender if you need it**
 - ▶ Health Information Privacy Code
 - ▶ Yogyakarta Principles: the right to privacy
 - ▶ Fraser (2018)

Conclusion / recommendations

- ▶ Collect data on trans people in some population-based surveys - where this is relevant
- ▶ Update the statistical standard for gender identity to give guidance to:
 1. Ask about gender in a way that's inclusive of non-binary people
 2. Use a two-step approach to ask whether people are transgender when this is needed

"By sharing these reflections we demonstrate to others how we belong in communities, schools, workplaces and homes. It's not only answering questions in a survey it's standing up to belong."

- Tommy



Next Steps

- ▶ Report launch in August
- ▶ Conference presentations
- ▶ Joint publications
- ▶ Submissions / policy advice

“It's been nearly two years and I haven't stopped having 'happy' as my baseline mood. I love life and I love who I am, which is a stark contrast from before.”

“There is plenty of space in a traditional Maori context for gender diversity, and I have always felt seen, understood, and more comfortable in a Maori setting, at least so far as gender is concerned.”



References

Bauer GR, Braimoh J, Scheim AI, Dharma C (2017) Transgender-inclusive measures of sex/gender for population surveys: Mixed-methods evaluation and recommendations. *PLoS ONE* 12(5): e0178043.

Fraser, G. (2018). Evaluating inclusive gender identity measures for use in quantitative psychological research. *Psychology & Sexuality*, 9, 343-357.

Herman J (2017). Collecting data about gender identity: Importance, current practices, and exploring international best practices.

<https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/June-22-Gender-identity-presentation.pdf>

CREDITS / THANK YOU

Project team

- ▶ Dr Jaimie Veale
- ▶ Jack Byrne
- ▶ Kyle Tan
- ▶ Sam Guy
- ▶ Dr Tāwhanga Nopera
- ▶ Ashe Yee

Community advisory group

- ▶ Bea Alcorn
- ▶ Nathan Bramwell
- ▶ Phylesha Brown-Acton
- ▶ Tai Hartley-Parsons
- ▶ Roxanne Peoples-Henare
- ▶ Laurel McLachlan
- ▶ Soul Mehlhopt
- ▶ Scout Barbour-Evans
- ▶ Ahi Wi-Hongi
- ▶ Jevon Wright

Social media team

- ▶ Huriana Kopeke-Te Aho
- ▶ Izzy van der Ploeg
- ▶ Sam Orchard
- ▶ Stace Robertson

Promoting organisations

- ▶ Human Rights Commission
- ▶ Mental Health Foundation

Contact: trans-survey@waikato.ac.nz

