



## Tuhono Research Platform

*“Mahia te mahi, hei painga mō te iwi”*

# Māori wellbeing

**“Do it, do it right, do it right now”**

December 2019

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## Executive summary

This report provides results from a survey of Tuhono Research Panel members conducted in October and November 2019. The sample of n=744 is weighted by age, gender and highest education level to be representative of the Māori population at the 2018 census. The maximum margin of error at the 95% confidence level <sup>1</sup> is  $\pm 3.6\%$  <sup>2</sup>. The survey is the first of two Tuhono plans on approaches to measuring Māori wellbeing.

This study provides an overview of who Māori think are responsible for their wellbeing, the relevance of Te Ao Māori and tikanga Māori to their future, which issues are considered of most importance and the future role and value of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Very strong support was measured across all eight questions we asked about wellbeing and Te Ao Māori in general.

Levels of agreement were:

- Promoting and enhancing all aspects of wellbeing is of critical importance to Māori (96%)
- The Treaty of Waitangi being used as the basis for developing Te Ao Māori wellbeing indicators (54%)
- Te Ao Māori values should be central to designing and measuring wellbeing for Māori (81%)
- Whanau are important in delivering sustainable wellbeing and intergenerational change for Māori individuals and collectives (93%)
- Taking a holistic approach for enhancing whanau wellbeing (83%)
- The development and use of wellbeing indicators from a Te Ao Māori perspective (80%)
- Enhancing Treaty partnership relationships between the Government and Māori being critical to achieving improved wellbeing for Māori (70%)
- Establishment of a Te Ao Māori Collaborative Forum to provide advice and guidance on the development of wellbeing indicators (75%)

This suggests that Māori see wellbeing as crucially important, and that whanau have an essential role to play, as well as iwi, hapu and the wider community.

The Treaty of Waitangi is not seen as a great basis for developing wellbeing indicators, and Te Ao Māori would be a much better choice – if agreement could be reached on the specific indicators to measure.

The establishment of a collaborative forum is seen as a good idea, although there is some scepticism as to the value of it. It would need to deliver quickly to have credibility.

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<sup>1</sup> See the footnote on page five for an explanation of this.

<sup>2</sup> This margin of error is based on the full sample of n=744 and a measure of 50% (“50% of people think x”). It increases substantially when looking at sub-groups (for example male versus female) or making comparisons of any kind (“this time versus last time”).

Some indicative comments left by respondents to explain their views include:

- *“... sustaining our overall wellbeing as Māori is vital to our existence.”*
- *“Māori health is vital for future generations.”*
- *“The Tiriti o Waitangi is a priority.”*
- *“Well [the Treaty] is an important document – that’s a given – but to measure wellbeing going forward from such an old piece of writing... I disagree there are any benefits.”*
- *“Māori think and value things differently and we haven't had a proper opportunity to develop and grow what we know is best for us.”*
- *“Te Ao Māori has been deeply colonised and as an effect our people suffer from inter-generational trauma. Te Ao Māori must be restored in order for Māori to begin healing.”*
- *“I am worried that urbanised Māori will feel disempowered because they don't know Te Ao Māori - we see this all the time in my field of work....Māori feeling like they are not Māori enough.”*
- *“I believe whanau are important in delivering sustainable wellbeing and intergenerational change if they're educated and wise, even if it means partnering with others or professional organisations.”*
- *“Without whanau support many collectives and individuals struggle, especially with mental health.”*
- *“Wairuatanga - connection with all living beings and the decolonised and then unapologetic tirohanga Māori driving that [outcome].”*
- *“Make sure whanau feel safe, confident and understand what is happening.”*
- *“The world created in Aotearoa by the colonisers was for the benefit of a privileged few. The holistic approach is one where everyone benefits.”*
- *“Once again, context is everything, and it needs to be clear what indicators are to measure, whom they are to measure and for what purpose the measurements are to be made.”*
- *“If we feel good about ourselves in a positive way we are more inclined to be receptive to improving ourselves.”*
- *“What kind of indicators? A clear indicator would be that I am not putting others at risk by my actions.”*
- *“... we can't rely on [the relationship with Government] solely. If the Government doesn't come to the party then we have to continue to figure out how to improve the wellbeing for Māori without them.”*
- *“If we ever get to a place where Māori feel they can trust government we might have the beginning of a relationship.”*
- *“Sheesh! Another money-sucking suit forum, seriously?”*
- *“Only if [a collaborative forum] includes the little people like myself who are at ground level [and] who can actually relate.”*

## Report

Respondents were presented with the following preamble to the survey:

*“Ways are being developed to officially measure New Zealanders' wellbeing.*

*In its broadest sense, that means trying to measure how we are doing in life, including our health, happiness, prosperity and welfare.*

*In this first survey on the issue, we'd like to know whether or not wellbeing should also be measured from a Maori perspective, possibly leading to the development and use of Te Ao Maori wellbeing indicators.*

*So, we look forward to learning from your responses to the eight questions in this 5-minute survey what's important to your wellbeing and Maori overall...”*

- All data collected from this survey, including all verbatim comments, is securely retained on the Tūhono Research Service Platform.

## Key priority areas of Wellbeing

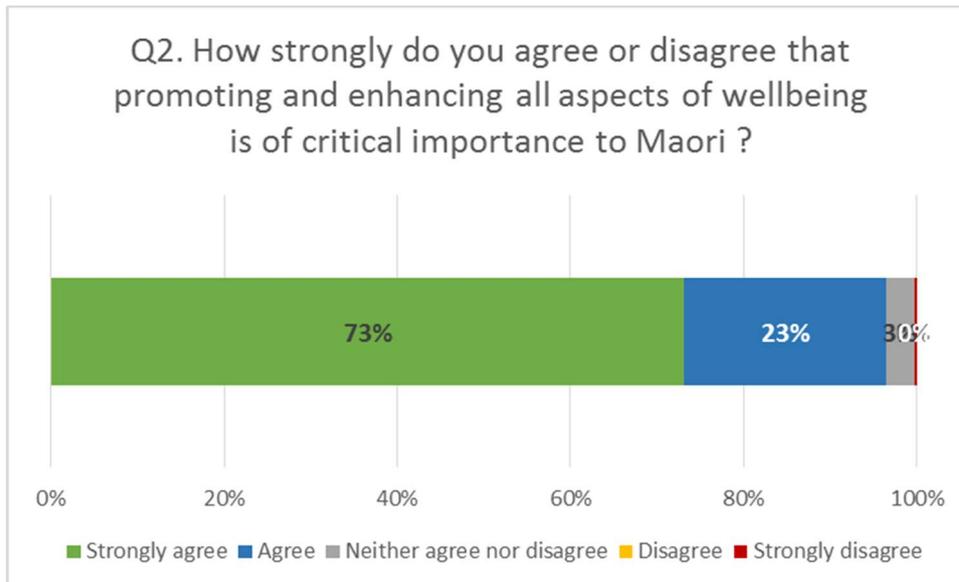
### 1. Of the 11 key areas of wellbeing below, tick which, if any, are the most important to you...

**Results for 786 people who answered this question (format: Multichoice Multiselect)**

A.	Maoritanga/Te Reo/Culture		69%
B.	Whanau wellbeing		82.6%
C.	Health		89.7%
D.	Employment		70.4%
E.	The future for young people		73.1%
F.	The environment		77.9%
G.	Housing		68.3%
H.	Personal and household income growth		49.8%
I.	Law and order		49.0%
J.	Economic growth		40.6%
K.	Education		71.2%
L.	None of these are important to me		0.8%

## Wellbeing

There is almost universal agreement that all aspects of wellbeing is critical to Māori.



There were no significant differences (at the 95% level <sup>3</sup>) for the four demographics we tested. (Gender, age, household income and highest level of education for that person).

Some verbatim comments indicating the range of views behind these results include:

- *“Absolutely agree, sustaining our overall wellbeing as Māori is vital to our existence”*
- *“It is important for now and a good time to start teaching the future generations”*
- *“It's critical for everyone.”*
- *“Māori health is vital for future generations.”*

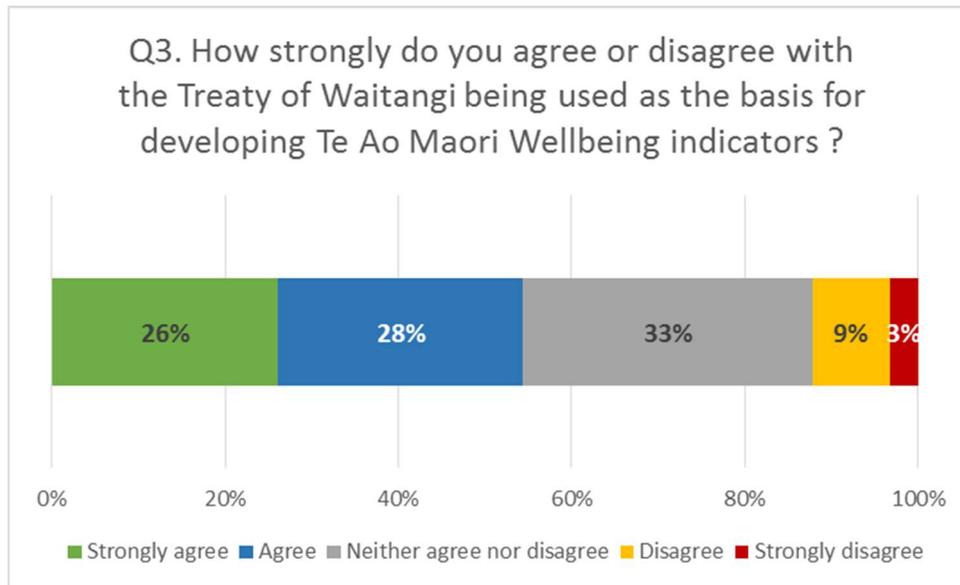
- Of the **776** responses received, **190** (24%) comments were also provided

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<sup>3</sup> This means that the chance of a “false positive” is only 5%. That is, any significant difference between sub-groups detected (say, male compared to female) is only 5% likely to have happened by chance and therefore we can be 95% confident that the difference is real and not a product of sample variation. However, when a large number of tests are conducted, there are likely to be some of these “false positives” (showing a difference when there isn’t really one) in the study.

## Treaty of Waitangi

Although a majority support the Treaty of Waitangi being used as the basis for Te Ao Wellbeing indicators, there is almost the same amount who are undecided (neither agreeing nor disagreeing) or who are opposed.



Support (agreement) is significantly higher amongst people aged 65 years or older (73%) compared to people aged under 35 (43%).

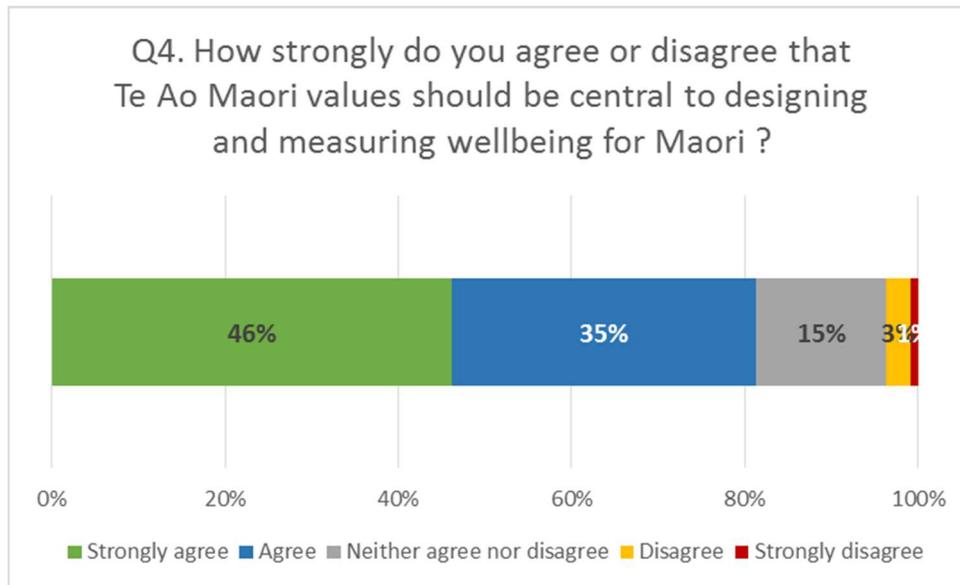
Some verbatim comments indicating the range of views behind these results include:

- *“The Tiriti o Waitangi is a priority.”*
- *“The Treaty of Waitangi secures our rights as tangata whenua and as citizens of this country. But there may be other foundations for developing well-being indicators for Māori including settlements and aspirational frameworks belonging to whanau, hapu and iwi.”*
- *“Well it’s an important document – that’s a given – but to measure well-being going forward from such an old piece of writing... I disagree there are any benefits.”*

- Of the **770** responses received, **211** (27%) comments were also provided

## Te Ao Māori values

Support for Te Ao Māori values being central to designing and measuring wellbeing for Māori is just over 80%, with most of the remainder neither agreeing nor disagreeing.



Support is higher amongst females (85% compared to 77% for males). It is also higher with people aged under 35 years of age (89%) as opposed to 76% for those 35 and over.

Households with lower incomes are also more supportive (88%) although this is likely confounded with age.

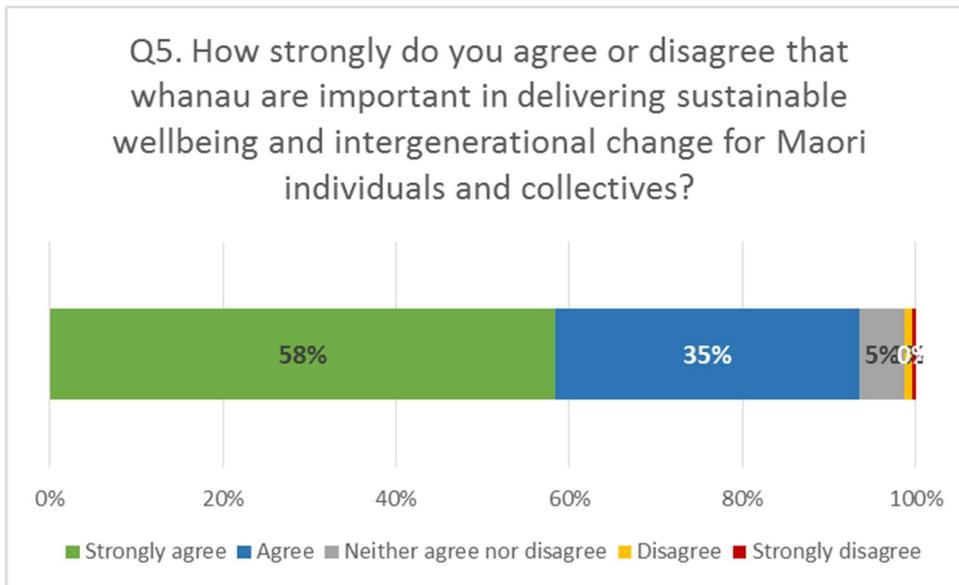
Some verbatim comments indicating the range of views behind these results include:

- *“We are being set up to fail by the taura the bald head the colonizers - i live breath and work kaupapa Māori o te ao Māori tikanga Māori.”*
- *“Māori think and value things differently and we haven't had a proper opportunity to develop and grow what we know is best for us.”*
- *“Te Ao Māori has been deeply colonised and as an effect our people suffer from inter-generational trauma. Te Ao Māori must be restored in order for Māori to begin healing.”*
- *“I am worried that urbanised Māori will feel disempowered because they don't know Te Ao Māori - we see this all the time in my field of work....Māori feeling like they are not Māori enough.”*

- Of the **759** responses received, **145** (19%) comments were also provided

## Whanau-centred

There is extremely high support for sustainable wellbeing and intergenerational change being whanau-based, both for individuals and collectives.



This support is significantly more evident amongst people under 35 years of age (99%) compared to those over 35 (90%) even though the latter group still shows very high levels of support.

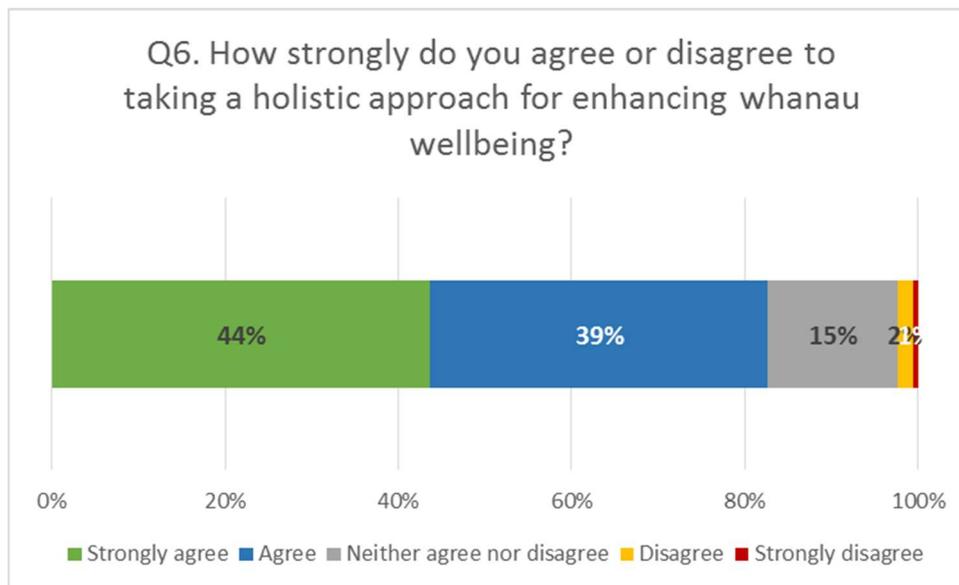
Some verbatim comments indicating the range of views behind these results include:

- *“The whanau has to be empowered and able to do these things. Again, it depends on which whanau and the circumstances.”*
- *“I believe whanau are important in delivering sustainable wellbeing and intergenerational change if they're educated and wise, even if it means partnering with others or professional organisations.”*
- *“Living in Christchurch teaches that rely on yourself and those with money hold the power. Here connections to power mean everything.”*
- *“Without whanau support many collectives & individuals struggle, especially with mental health.”*

- Of the **753** responses received, **161** (21%) comments were also provided

## Holistic approach for whanau wellbeing

There are also high levels of support for taking a holistic approach to wellbeing.



This level of support is higher for those under 35 years of age (89%) compared to those who are older, especially those aged 65 years or more (75%).

It is also higher amongst those with a bachelor's degree (or higher) at 92% as opposed to those whose highest qualification is NCEA level 1 (or equivalent) and those without any formal qualification (80%).

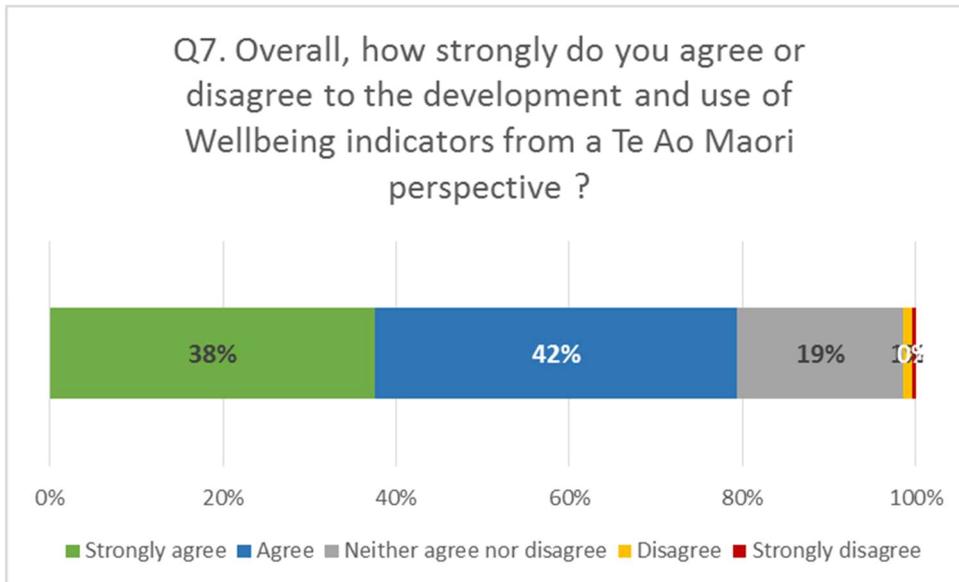
Indicative verbatim comments on this include:

- *“Wairuatanga - connection with all living beings and the decolonised and then unapologetic tirohanga Māori driving that [outcome].”*
- *“Make sure whanau feel safe, confident and understand what is happening.”*
- *“Guide your youngsters: Respect your elders!”*
- *“The world created in Aotearoa by the colonisers was for the benefit of a privileged few. The holistic approach is one where everyone benefits.”*

- Of the **750** responses received, **191** (25%) comments were also provided

## Te Ao Māori perspective

The development of wellbeing indicators from a Te Ao Māori perspective is well-supported.



This support is more evident amongst females (86% vs 72% for males).

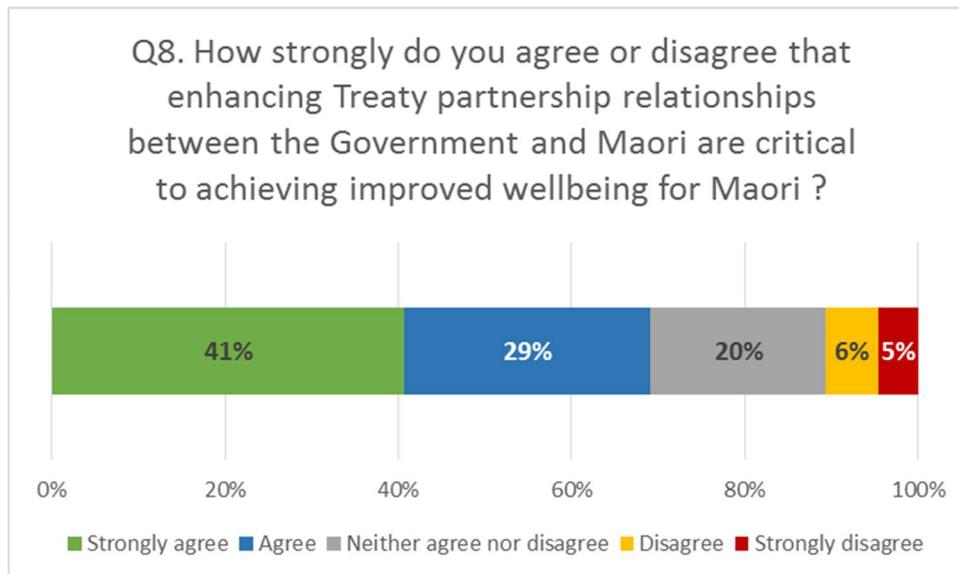
Indicative verbatim comments on this include:

- *“Do it, Do it right, Do it right now”!!*
- *“Te Ao Maori have some excellent models of wellbeing which can be used to develop and use as indicators to measure well-being but keep it simple!!”*
- *“Once again, context is everything, and it needs to be clear what indicators are to measure, whom they are to measure and for what purpose the measurements are to be made.”*
- *“The people in judgement always judge by their standards.”*
- *“If we feel good about ourselves in a positive way we are more inclined to be receptive to improving ourselves.”*
- *“What kind of indicators? A clear indicator would be that I am not putting others at risk by my actions.”*

- Of the **749** responses received, **108** (14%) comments were also provided

## Partnership relationships

Partner relationships between Māori and the government are seen as very important, with almost half strongly agreeing that it is not just important but critical.



There were no significant differences between the demographic sub-groups we tested.

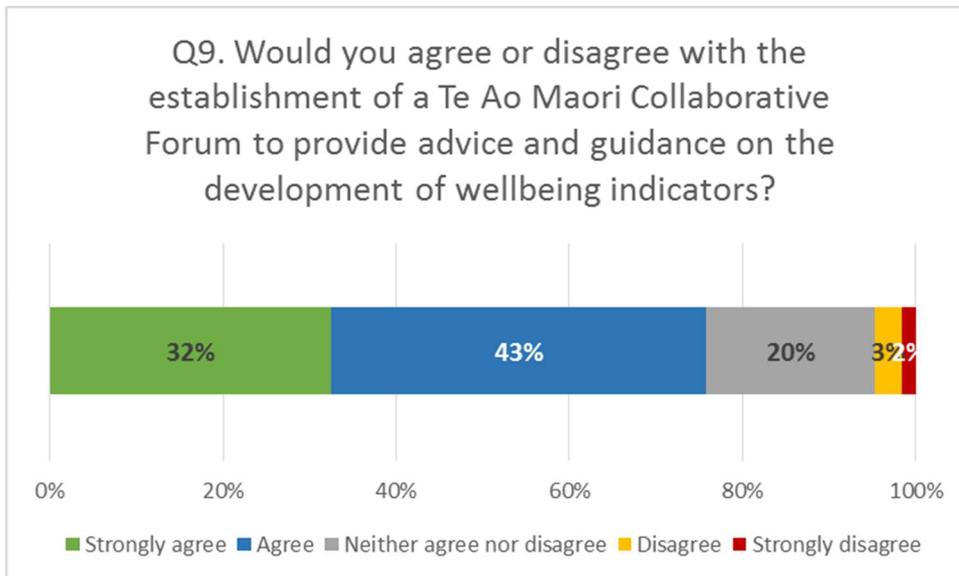
Indicative verbatim comments on this include:

- *“I agree to an extent but we can't rely on this relationship solely. If the Government doesn't come to the party then we have to continue to figure out how to improve the wellbeing for Māori without them.”*
- *“If we ever get to a place where Māori feel they can trust government we might have the beginning of a relationship.”*
- *“Government rules our country first and foremost that's why it's critical to enhancing our treaty partnership with them but at the same time it's our wellbeing at stake and we need to take a strong stand on this issue.”*
- *“If elected representatives acknowledge the prior atrocities and systemic undervaluing and mishandling of all parts of Māori and create a method that creates a society where all can thrive it would be a good thing.”*

- Of the **744** responses received, **173** (23%) comments were also provided

## Te Ao Māori collaborative forum

There is reasonably strong support for the establishment of a Te Ao Māori Collaborative Forum that could provide guidance on the development of the wellbeing indicators.



This level of support was consistent across age, gender, household income and level of education.

Some indicative verbatim comments on this include:

- *“Any coming together is a start to develop indicators.”*
- *“Only if that panel includes the little people like myself who are at ground level who can actually relate.”*
- *“As long as everyone is being heard and we are being respectful to each other no matter who they are when having these discussions.”*
- *“As long as it is grounded in tikanga and is 'owned' by Maori!”*
- *“Maori need to do it for themselves. As long as others want to drive this we will continue to be negative stats. These are our own they are our whanau they need to say what they want”.*
- *“The forum should only be Māori, and others (including Government) should only be invited to attend and asked for their thoughts only when asked”*

- Of the **738** responses received, **138** (19%) comments were also provided

- **161** comments were also provided regarding the survey in general