



2022 Auckland local election voter turnout

Who did and did not vote?

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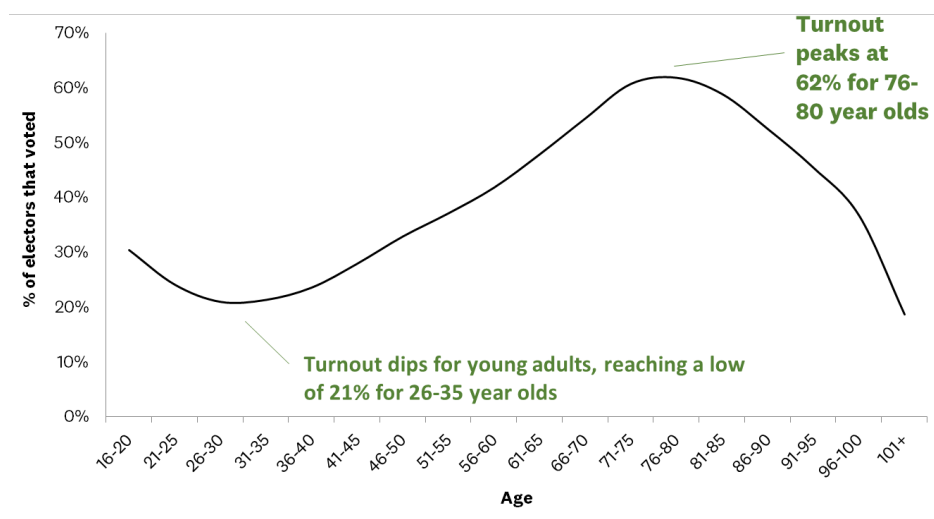
New Zealand local elections are held every three years, with the most recent election taking place between 16 September and 8 October 2022.

This document provides information on who did and did not vote in the 2022 Auckland Council elections in terms of age, Māori descent status, neighbourhood area (SA2), and relative socio-economic deprivation.¹ It also includes a note on similarities with 2019 trends.

There were 1,128,255 registered electors in Auckland, of whom 399,543 (35.4%) voted.

Younger Aucklanders were less likely to vote

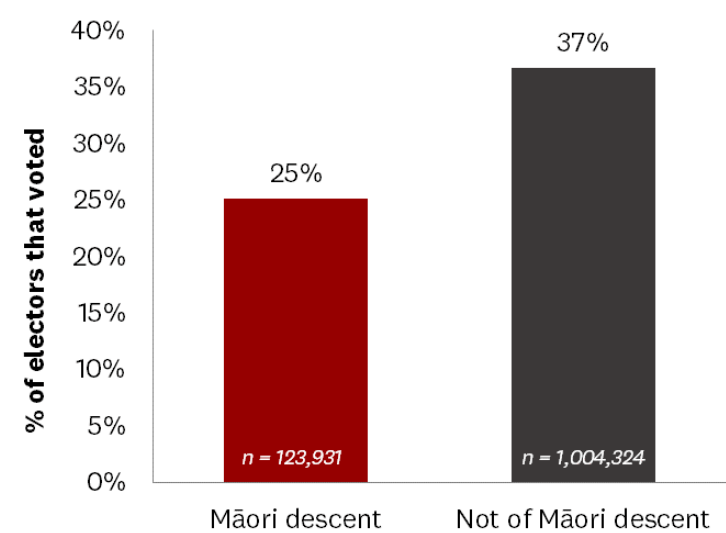
An elector's age has a strong bearing on whether they are likely to vote. Turnout was lowest for those aged between 26 and 35 years (only 21% of eligible electors in this age group voted) and increased with age, reaching a high of 62 per cent amongst those aged 76 to 80.



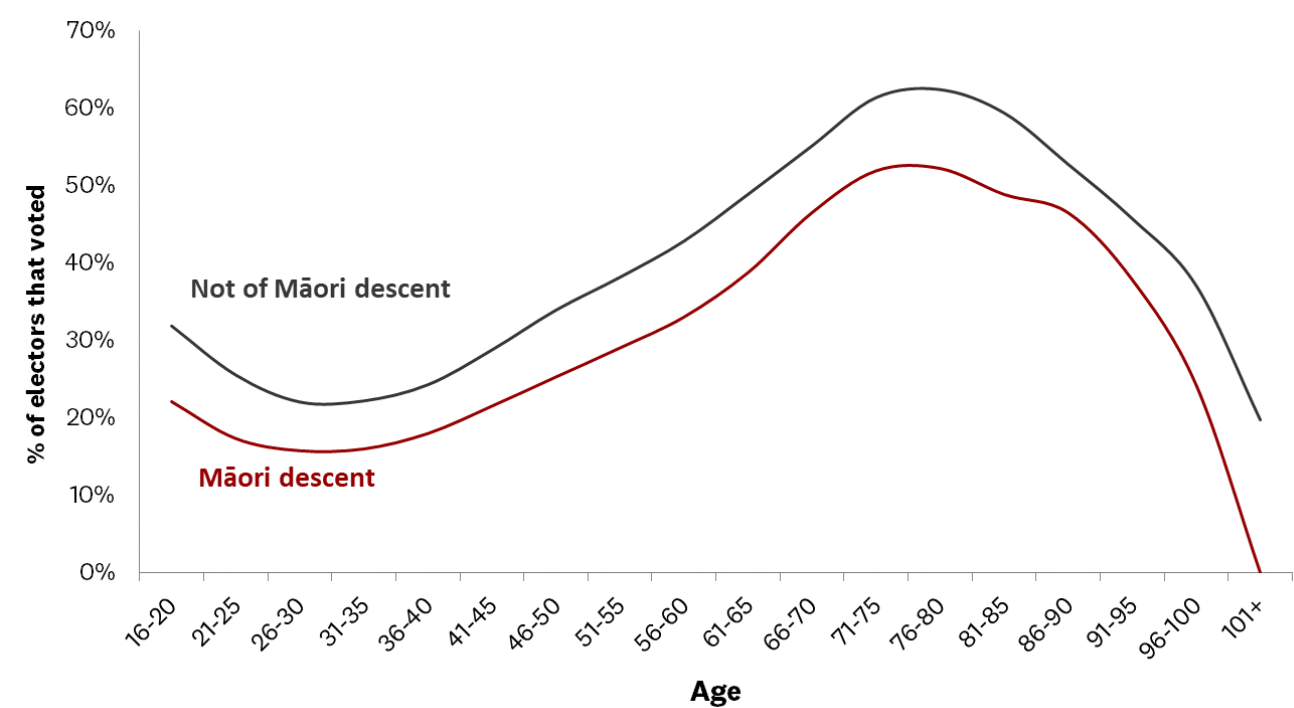
¹ Information on other ethnic groups and hard-to-reach communities is not available as it is not recorded in the electoral roll.

Aucklanders of Māori descent were less likely to vote

Electors are asked whether they are of Māori descent when enrolling. There was a 12 percentage point difference in voter turnout between electors who indicated Māori descent and those who did not (25% compared with 37%). See chart below.



Further analysis shows that the approximately 12 percentage point difference between electors of Māori descent and those not of Māori descent was relatively stable across different ages. The differences between Māori and non-Māori do not appear to be notably different in older and younger generations.

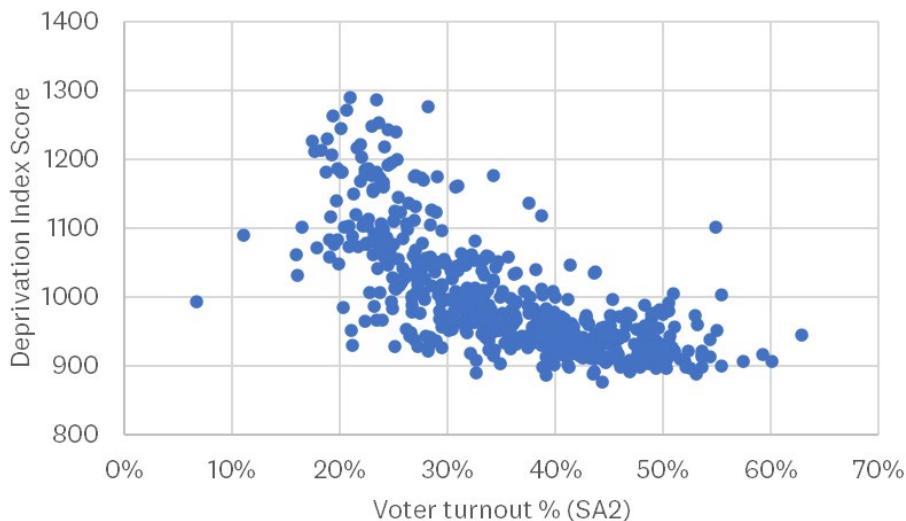


Turnout varies dramatically across Auckland's neighbourhoods

Voter turnout was notably lower in southern areas of Auckland, as well as in pockets of west Auckland, the Glen Innes area on the Auckland isthmus and the Glenfield area on the north shore. Rural and coastal areas tended to have higher turnout than other parts of Auckland. Three maps are provided on the following pages, showing turnout at neighbourhood areas for all electors, and for those of Māori descent and not of Māori descent separately.

Voter turnout is lower in socio-economically deprived neighbourhoods

The maps of turnout across Auckland presented on the following pages mirror the distribution of relative socio-economic deprivation across Auckland. Plotting each neighbourhood's 2018 New Zealand Deprivation Index² score against voter turnout shows that there is a strong negative correlation between the two ($r = -0.71$). That is, people living in areas with higher socio-economic deprivation were less likely to vote than those living in lower deprivation areas.

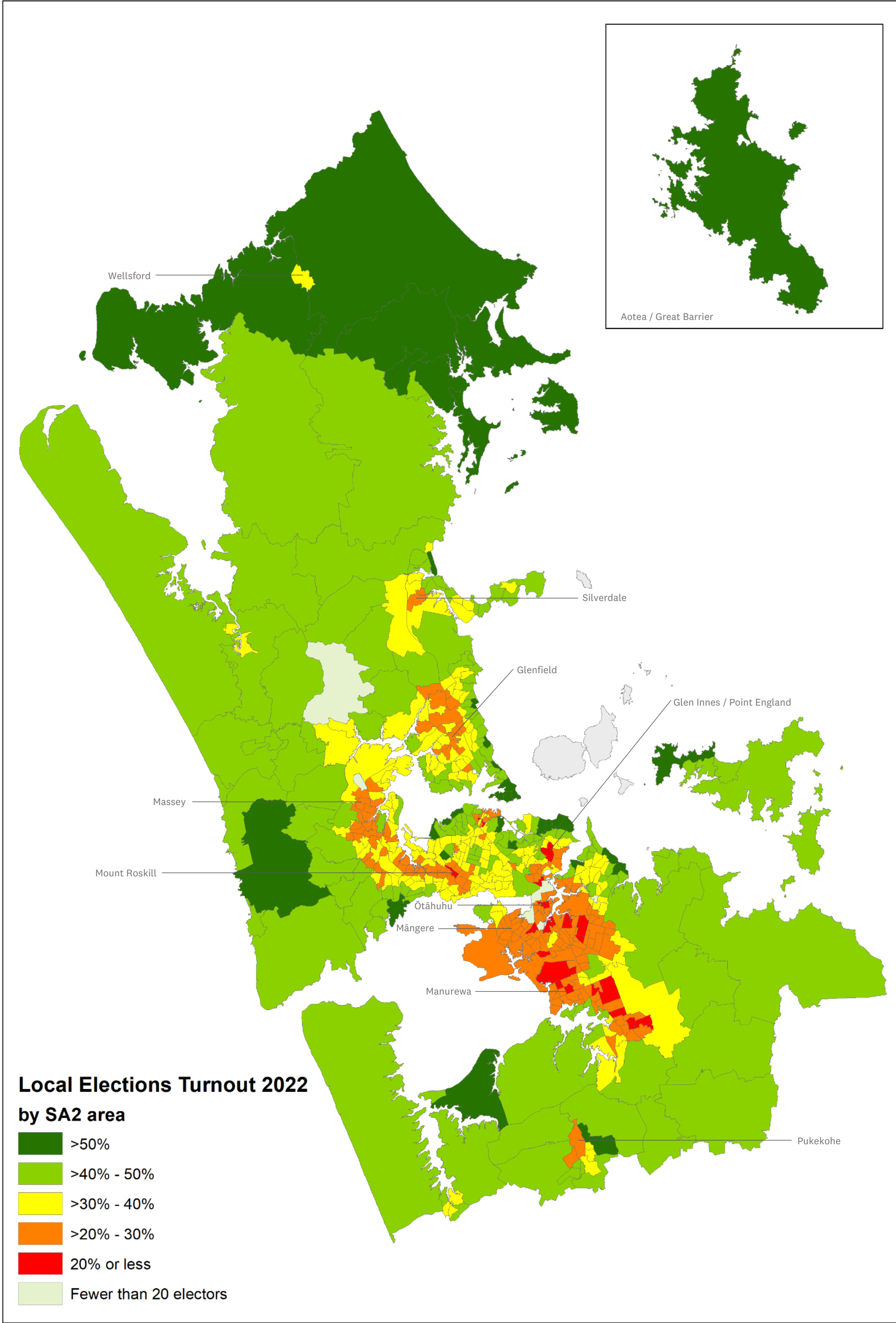


Note, higher deprivation index scores reflect higher levels of neighbourhood deprivation.

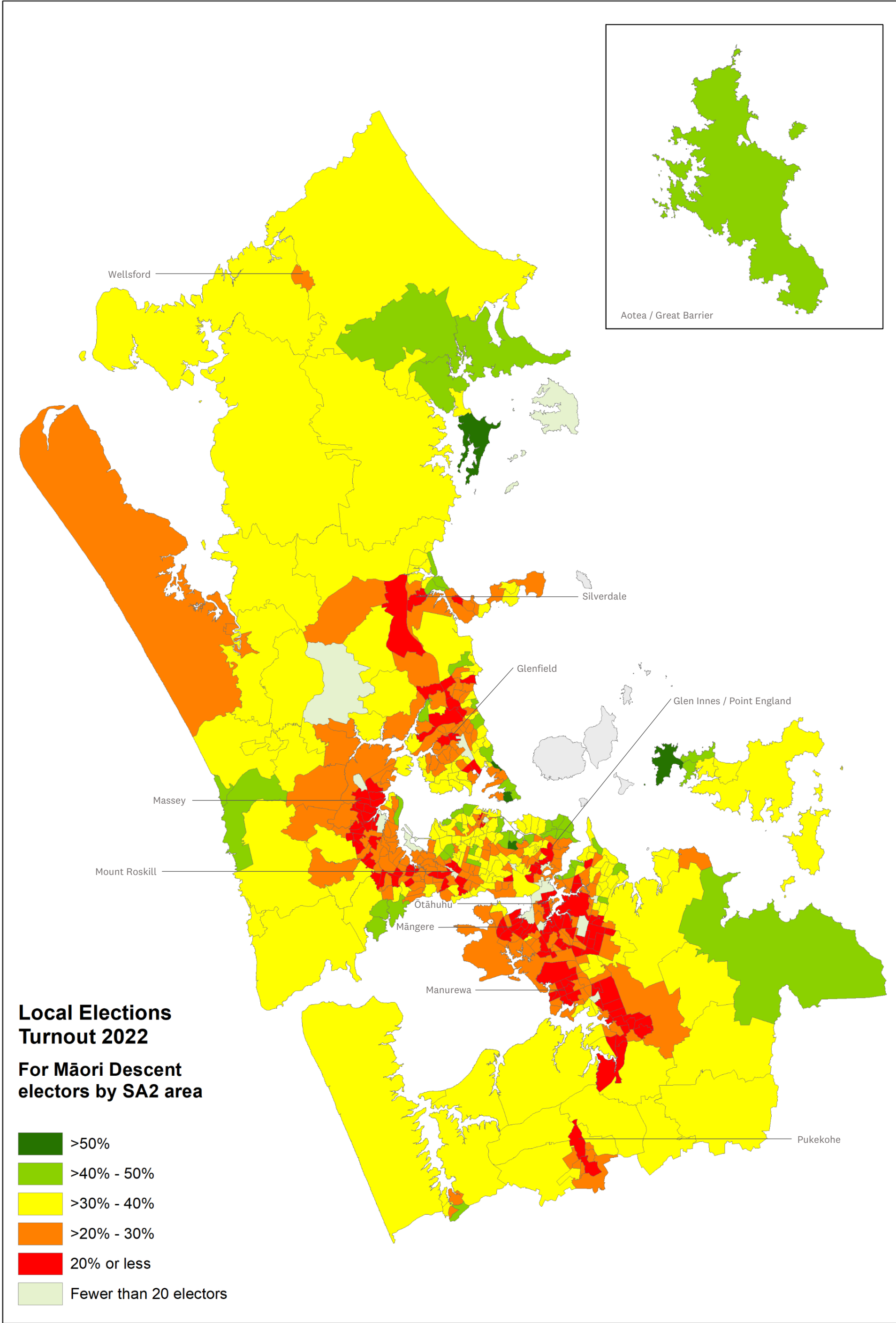
² 'Neighbourhood' is represented by Statistical Area 1 level information in this analysis.

See <https://www.otago.ac.nz/wellington/departments/publichealth/research/hirp/otago020194.html> for more detail about the NZ Deprivation Index.

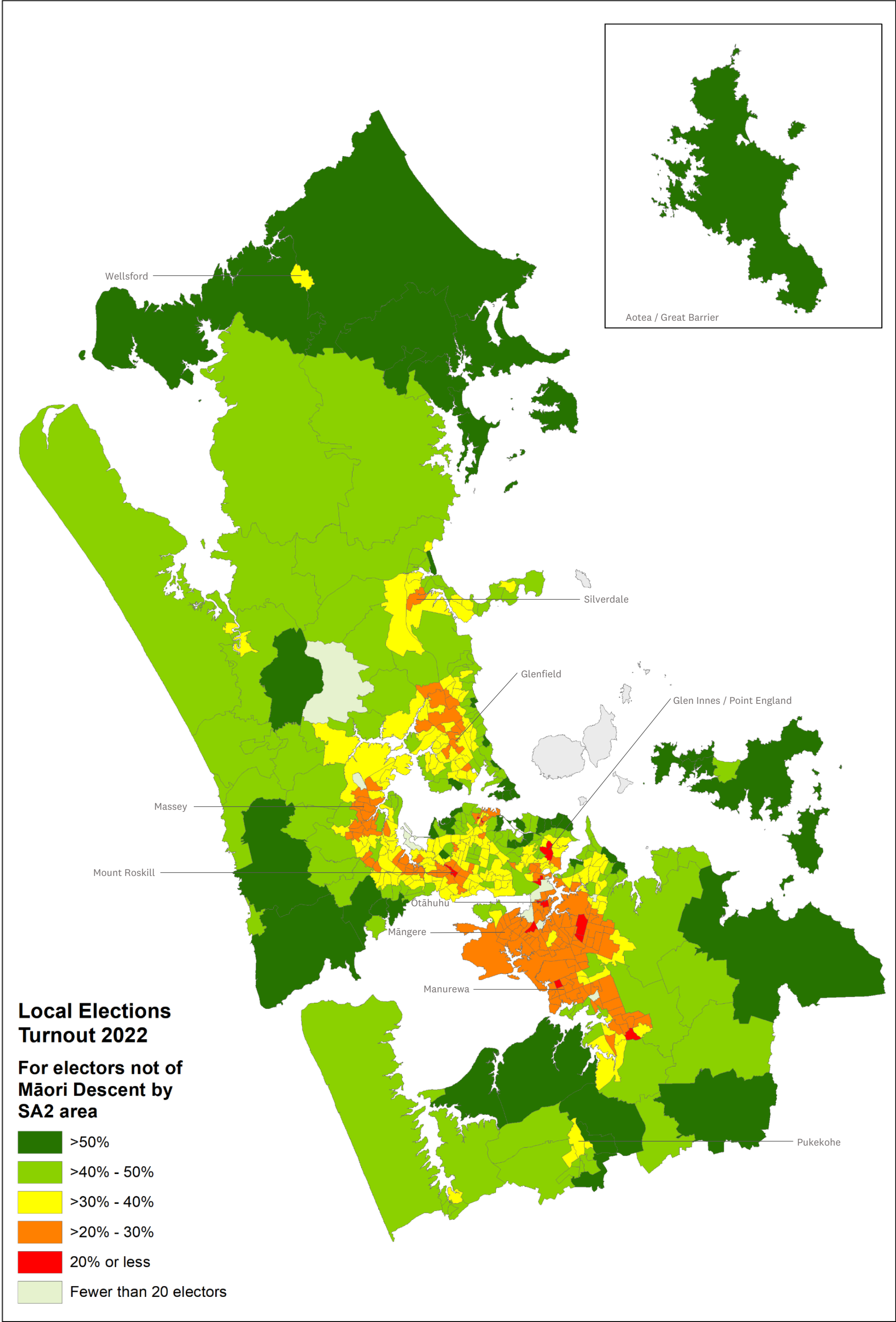
Proportion of all electors who voted, 2022 Auckland Council elections, by Statistical Area 2 (SA2)



Proportion of electors of Māori descent who voted, 2022 Auckland Council elections, by Statistical Area 2 (SA2)



Proportion of electors not of Māori descent who voted, 2022 Auckland Council elections, by Statistical Area 2 (SA2)



Similarities with 2019 voter turnout

This report replicates similar analyses conducted in 2019³ and therefore provides an opportunity to reflect on changes in voter trends over time.

Although the specific turnout figures are not fully comparable (the 2019 dataset was received prior to inclusion of special votes, whereas the 2022 dataset is more complete as it was received after the inclusion of special votes), the patterns are extremely similar over time. Comparing 2019 with 2022, the overall turnout was similar, the patterns across age were almost identical, and difference between Māori and non-Māori almost identical. Turnout across neighbourhood (SA2) is also similar, although comparing specific neighbourhoods (SA2 areas) over time is not recommended, given the differences in the datasets.

Implications

The voter turnout statistics presented here continue to reveal stark discrepancies in who is and is not voting across Auckland. They show large differences by age, Māori descent status, location and neighbourhood deprivation.

A range of interrelated factors may be contributing to these discrepancies, including:

- Differences in the perceived relevance of local government to the everyday life of different communities
- Differences in family and work commitments and an ability to pay attention to local politics in light of other life priorities
- Differences in civics education
- The complexity of the local government system and voting process, along with differences in knowledge about local government across communities in Auckland
- For some communities, a lack of identification with and ability to see one's identity reflected in the local governance system
- A distrust of and disengagement from the local government system, particularly amongst Māori
- The existence of a social norm of non-voting in some families, neighbourhoods and communities.

Although the causes for different levels of voter engagement across Auckland are complex and difficult to fix, the information contained in this report will provide useful assistance to those looking to increase voting in different communities across Auckland.

Auckland Council, January 2023

³ <https://knowledgeauckland.org.nz/publications/2019-auckland-local-election-voter-turnout-who-did-and-did-not-vote/>

Find out more: phone 09 301 0101, email
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knowledgeauckland.org.nz