

Annual public awareness and attitudes survey 2026

May 2026

verian 

Irirangi Te Motu
NZ On Air



Support for NZ On Air remains strong and is tied to people's experience of local content.

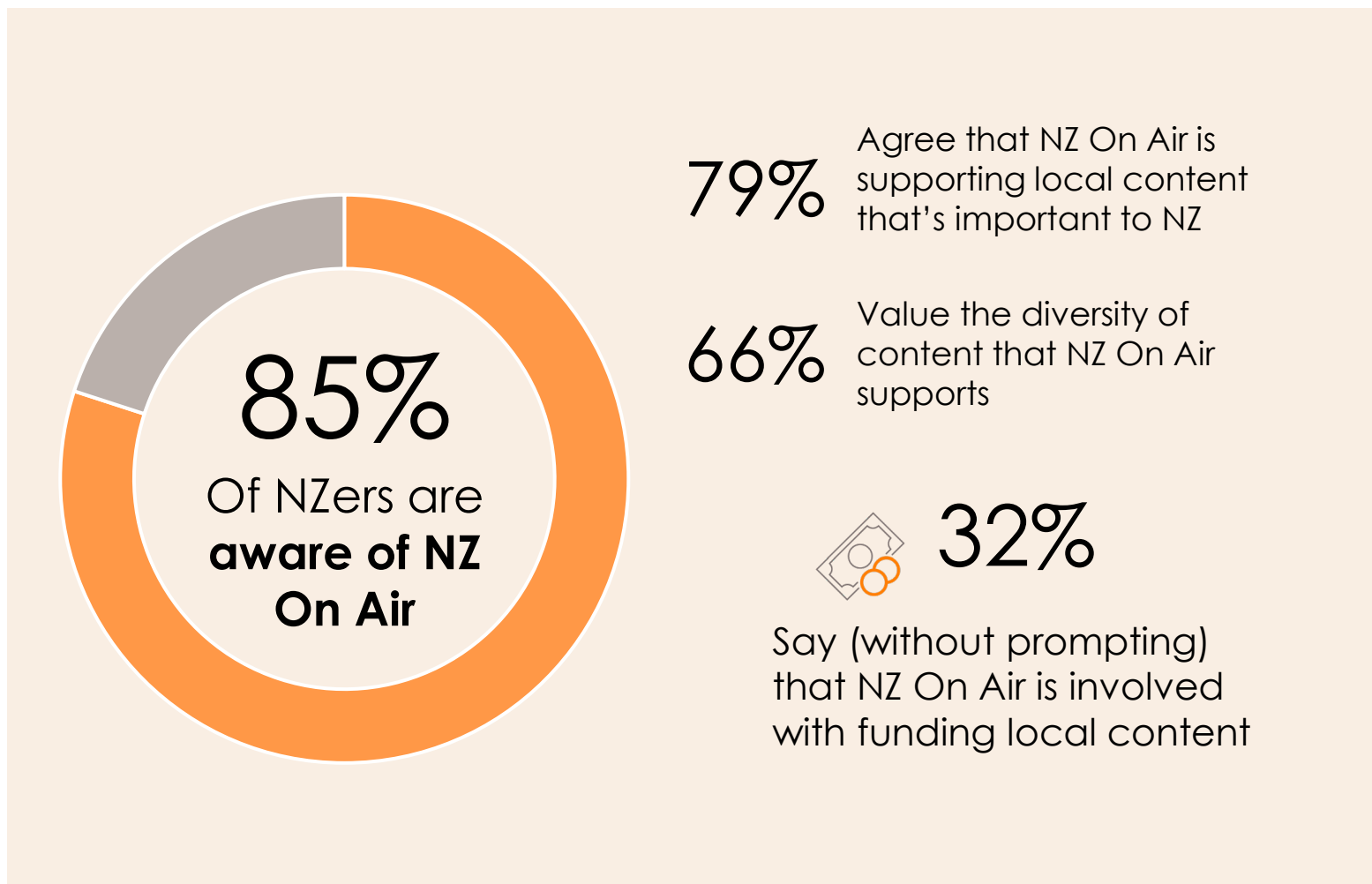
Awareness and support for NZ On Air are shaped by how people engage with local content.

- People who engaged with local content recently have higher awareness of NZ On Air, show stronger support for funding, and experience deeper connection with connection to New Zealand's culture, people and environment.
- Awareness of NZ On Air remains high, and most New Zealanders continue to support its role in funding local content that is seen as important and diverse.
- Engagement with local content is widespread, with most New Zealanders watching or listening to local content in the past month.

Relevance and connection help explain public support, while disengagement reflects personal relevance rather than opposition.

- These patterns highlight the importance of maintaining a mix of established and emerging content formats, reflecting how people of different ages engage with local media.
- Local content resonates most when it reflects people's lives, communities and voices in ways that overseas media cannot.
- Where content feels less relevant, people tend to disengage rather than oppose or reject public funding altogether.
- People want continued investment in local stories, communities and emerging talent across platforms.

An overview of this year's key results - support for NZ On Air's role in funding local content remains strong.



Public views on the **importance** and **likeability** of all content types are **consistent with 2025**, except for TV

“ Respondent quote
“I like that local artists are given spotlight where most mainstream artists would be playing. Local talent needs to be acknowledged at a larger scale like this.”

What changes this year

Awareness of NZ On Air support for community broadcasting increases (83%, up from 77%)

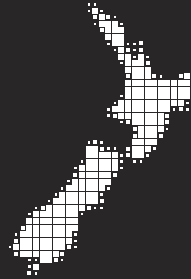
The following return to 2024 levels:

- TV likeability (81%, down from 85%)
- Free-to-consume importance (84%, down from 89%)

Objectives and methodology



1000 ONLINE INTERVIEWS
7 minutes



FIELDWORK DATES:
17 MARCH – 9 APRIL 2026

OBJECTIVES

NZ On Air commissioned Verian to research and track New Zealanders' understanding of:

- NZ On Air,
- NZ On Air's role in funding local content, and
- their views on that content.

METHODOLOGY

- 1000 interviews were conducted online, sourced through an online panel
- Changes in 2026: Interviews were fully conducted via online panel, and the sample size was increased to n=1000. Some questions were added, changed or removed to uphold relevance.
- Changes in 2024: The proportion of interviews being conducted via online panel increased from 50/50 to 65/35.
- Changes in 2022: Previously, the survey used a mix of landline and mobile sampling. The change in method was agreed to place the survey on a more sustainable footing moving forward.
- If the respondent had any children aged 15-17 in their household, the respondent had the option of inviting the 15-17 year old to complete the survey.
- The online script uses automated question routing to help support the quality of the data.
- Weighting was applied by age, gender and region to ensure that the sample was representative of the New Zealand adult population (based on 2023 Census data).
- Whenever differences are reported (for example, an increase or decrease since last year, or previous years) these are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level or greater unless otherwise stated.
- Significant changes are noted with ▲ (significant increase) and ▼ (significant decrease)

01 High level awareness and perceptions

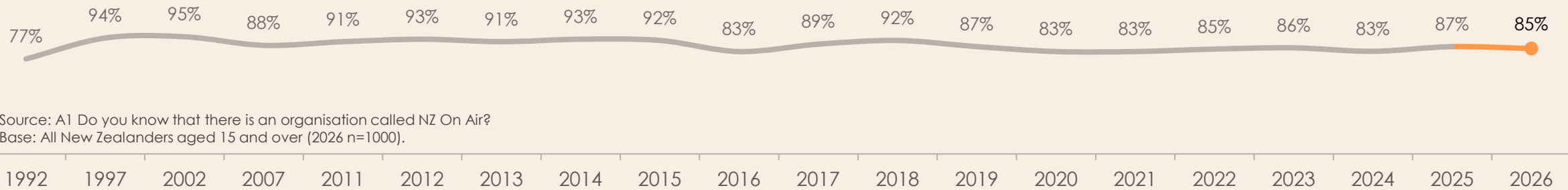
Local content shapes public support for NZ On Air.



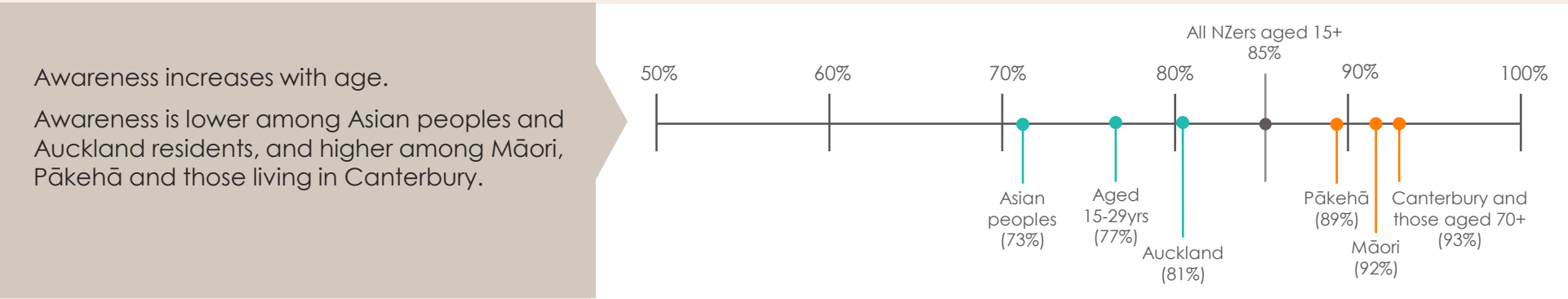
Consistent with last year, awareness of NZ On Air remains high, at 85%

Awareness increases with age and tends to be lower among Asian peoples, younger people and Auckland residents – those who are less likely to engage with the more established formats.

Aware of NZ On Air



Source: A1 Do you know that there is an organisation called NZ On Air?
 Base: All New Zealanders aged 15 and over (2026 n=1000).



When people think of NZ On Air, they tend to think of its funding role, and fewer New Zealanders this year appear to mistakenly associate NZ On Air with broadcasting.

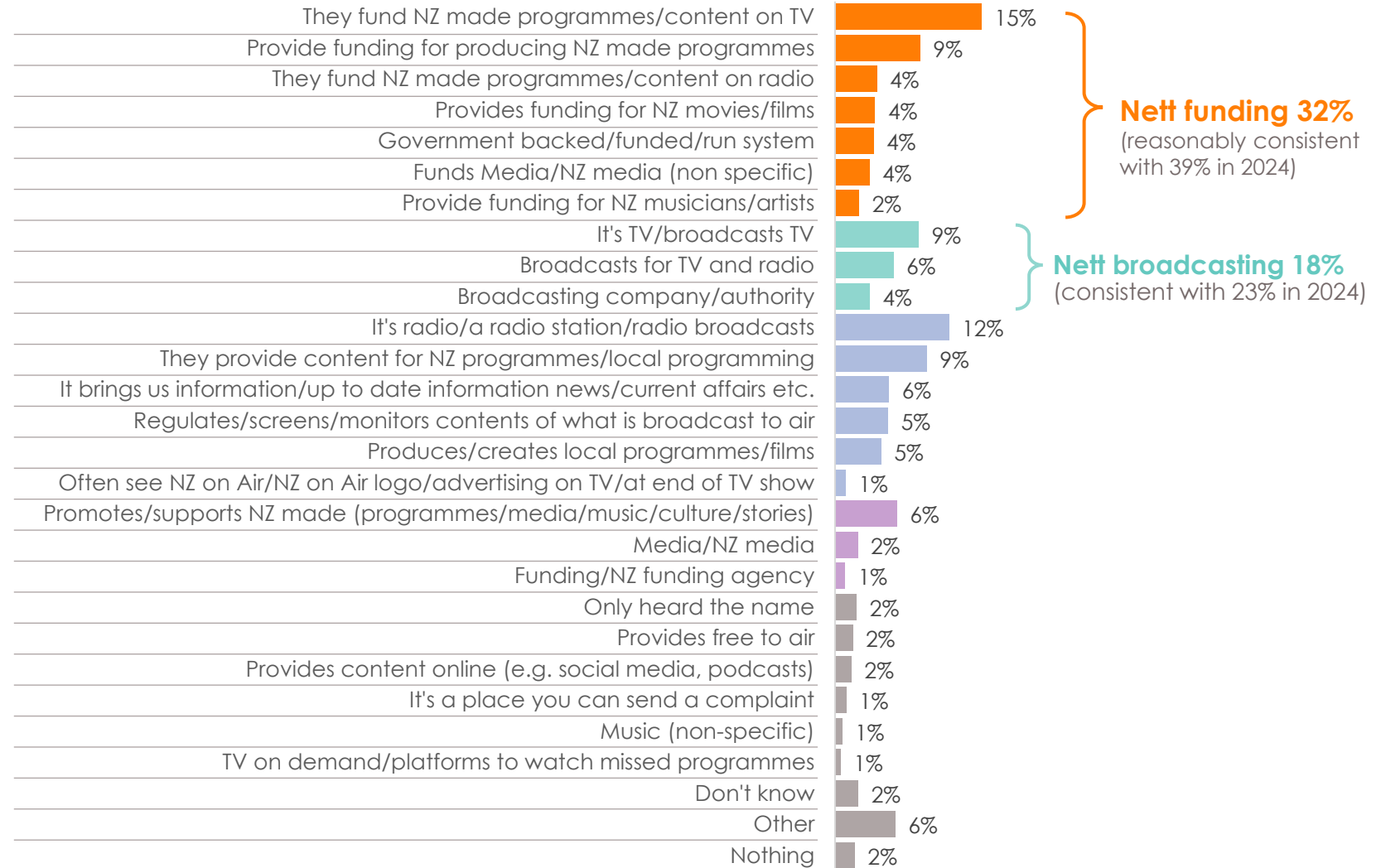


Respondent quote

I remember growing up seeing their name announced after certain shows. I think they help shows air on NZ TV

Unprompted impressions of what NZ On Air does

Coded open-ended responses

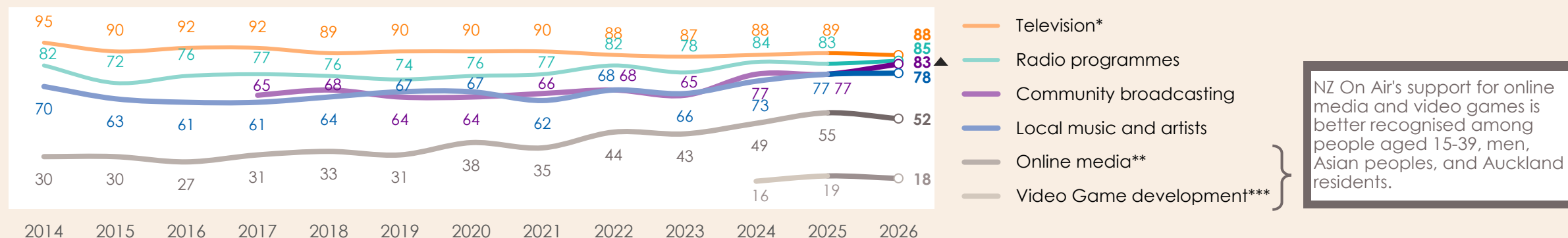


Source: A2. Please describe everything you know about what NZ On Air does
 Base: All New Zealanders who are aware of NZ On Air, 2026 (n=855)
 Note: Codes mentioned by less than 1% not shown

NZ On Air’s support for established content is widely recognised. Support for emerging formats tends to be recognised by audiences less aware of NZ On Air, suggesting that emerging content can play a role in building awareness among newer or less engaged audiences.

Think NZ On Air supports content type

% supports



NZ On Air's support for online media and video games is better recognised among people aged 15-39, men, Asian peoples, and Auckland residents.

The increase in Community broadcast since 2025 has been driven partly by a significant increase among:

- Women
- People in their 50s
- Pākehā.

Source: A3. Below is a list of types of local or New Zealand media content. For each one, please indicate whether or not you think NZ On Air supports it?
 Base: All New Zealanders who are aware of NZ On Air, 2026 (n=855), 2025 (n=523), 2024 (n=501), 2023 (n= 537), 2022 (n= 542), 2021 (n=522), 2020 (n=512), 2019 (n=524), 2018 (n=566), 2017 (n=553), 2016 (n=540), 2015 (n=553), 2014 (n=458). *Wording added in 2024 "(including on demand)", **Wording change in 2024 from "Digital media including web and mobile content" to "Online media including content on websites and social media; ***New in 2024

Different content reaches different audiences – emphasising the importance of maintaining a mix of established and emerging

Established content formats

Emerging content formats

TV · Radio · Music · Community broadcasting

More likely to be recognised by:

- Older audiences
- Women

“ Respondent quote

“Good to see local production being played on TV and radio”

Online media · Video games

More likely to be recognised by:

- Younger audiences
- Men

“ Respondent quote

“It is good to see local artists get a chance to get their work made and out there; also, I am fond of indie games”

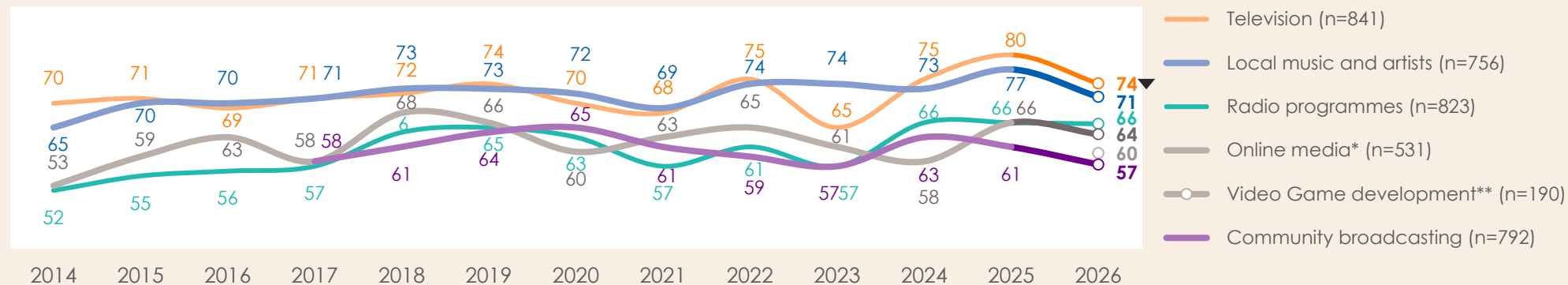
Together, established and emerging content formats cover all generations and platforms.

Note: This slide shows broad patterns of connection to content rather than prescriptive group attitudes

NZ On Air-funded content is broadly well liked among those who are aware of it - however likeability has decreased for television content this year. These results vary considerably year-on-year, hinting that likeability may be closely tied to the specific titles or genres currently on air, rather than to NZ On Air-funded television content overall.

Likeability of NZ On Air-funded content types

% NETT like (4 or 5 out of 5)



Community broadcasting stands out as a clear favourite for some audiences, particularly people in their 30s, Māori and Pacific peoples.

TV likeability has softened since 2025, particularly among:

- People in their 40s
- Asian peoples.

Source: B3. How much do you like or dislike the following types of NZ On Air funded local content?

Base: Those who are aware that NZ On Air supports each type of content (n=refer to chart).

*Wording change in 2024: from "Digital media including web and mobile content" to "Online media including content on websites and social media"; **New to 2025.

Most New Zealanders share NZ On Air's values, even if they don't know the details.

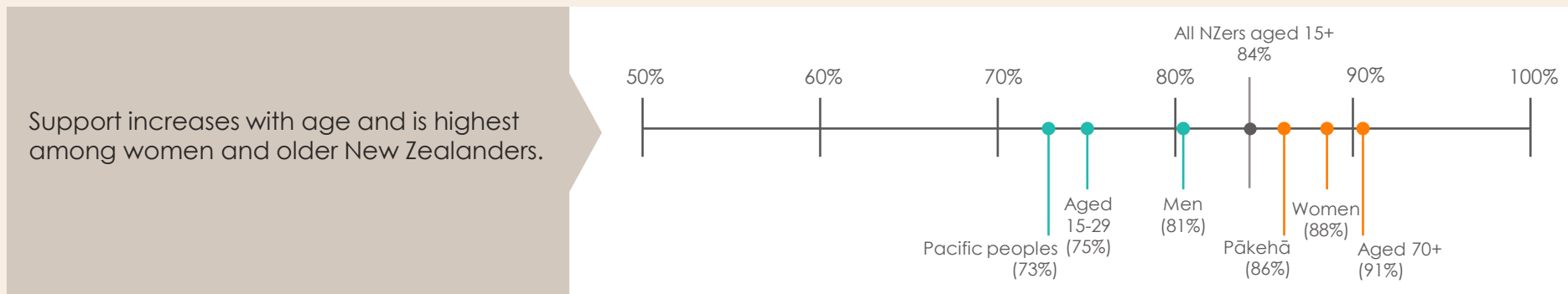
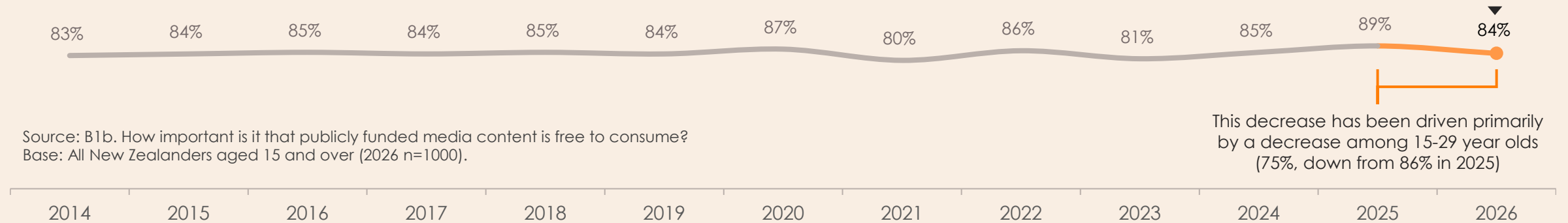


Most New Zealanders believe publicly funded media should remain free.

Support remains high, despite a small decline, particularly among younger New Zealanders.

Importance of publicly funded content being free to consume

NETT important (4 or 5 out of 5)

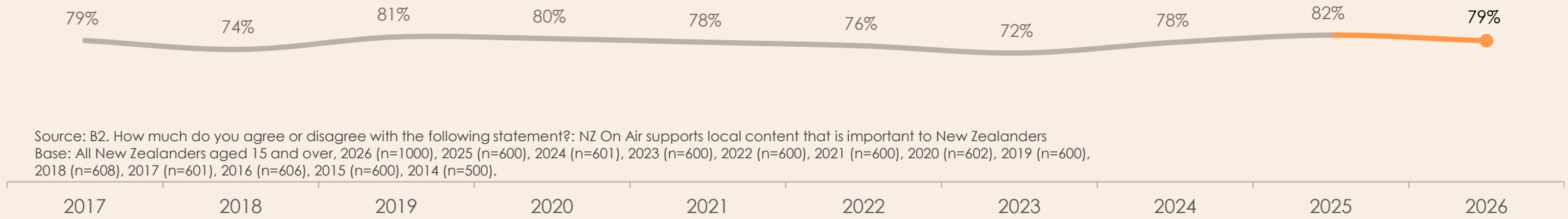


Four in five New Zealanders agree that NZ On Air supports local content that matters.

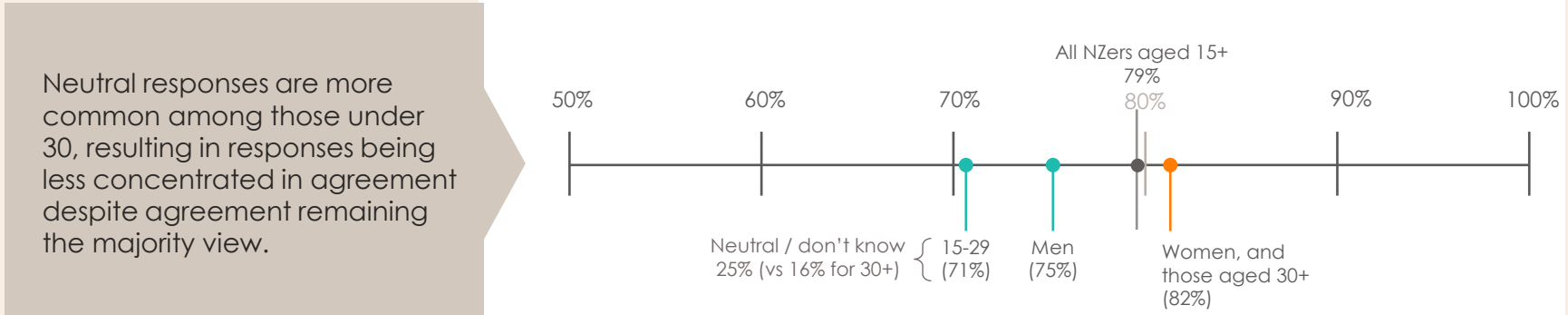
Younger New Zealanders are less likely to agree, with a greater share of neutral responses compared with those aged 30+, while agreement is highest among women and those aged 30+.

NZ On Air supports local content that is important to New Zealanders

NETT agree (4 or 5 out of 5)



Source: B2. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?: NZ On Air supports local content that is important to New Zealanders
 Base: All New Zealanders aged 15 and over, 2026 (n=1000), 2025 (n=600), 2024 (n=601), 2023 (n=600), 2022 (n=600), 2021 (n=600), 2020 (n=602), 2019 (n=600), 2018 (n=608), 2017 (n=601), 2016 (n=606), 2015 (n=600), 2014 (n=500).

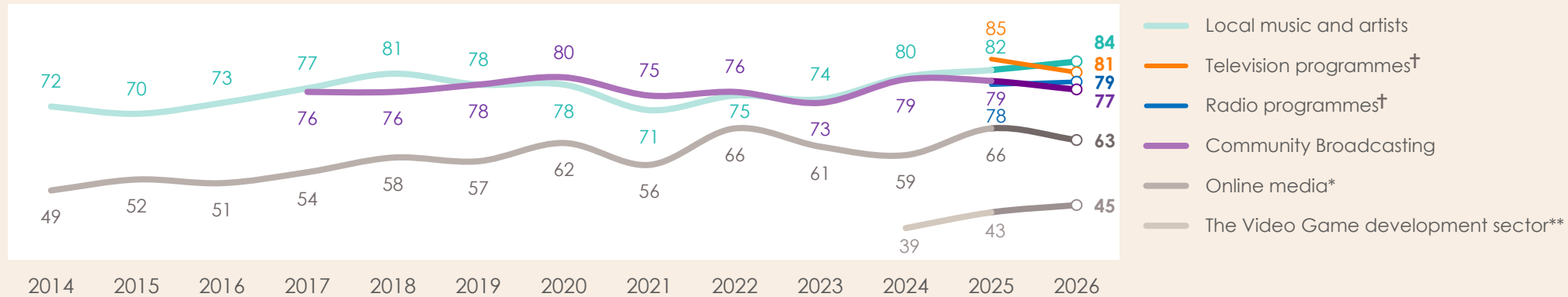


Support remains strongest for established content formats, while support for video game development continues to grow.

People in their 30s are most likely to support emerging content formats.

Importance that NZ On Air supports each content type/activity

% important (4 or 5 out of 5)



Source: B2b. How important, or not, is it that NZ On Air supports each of the following?

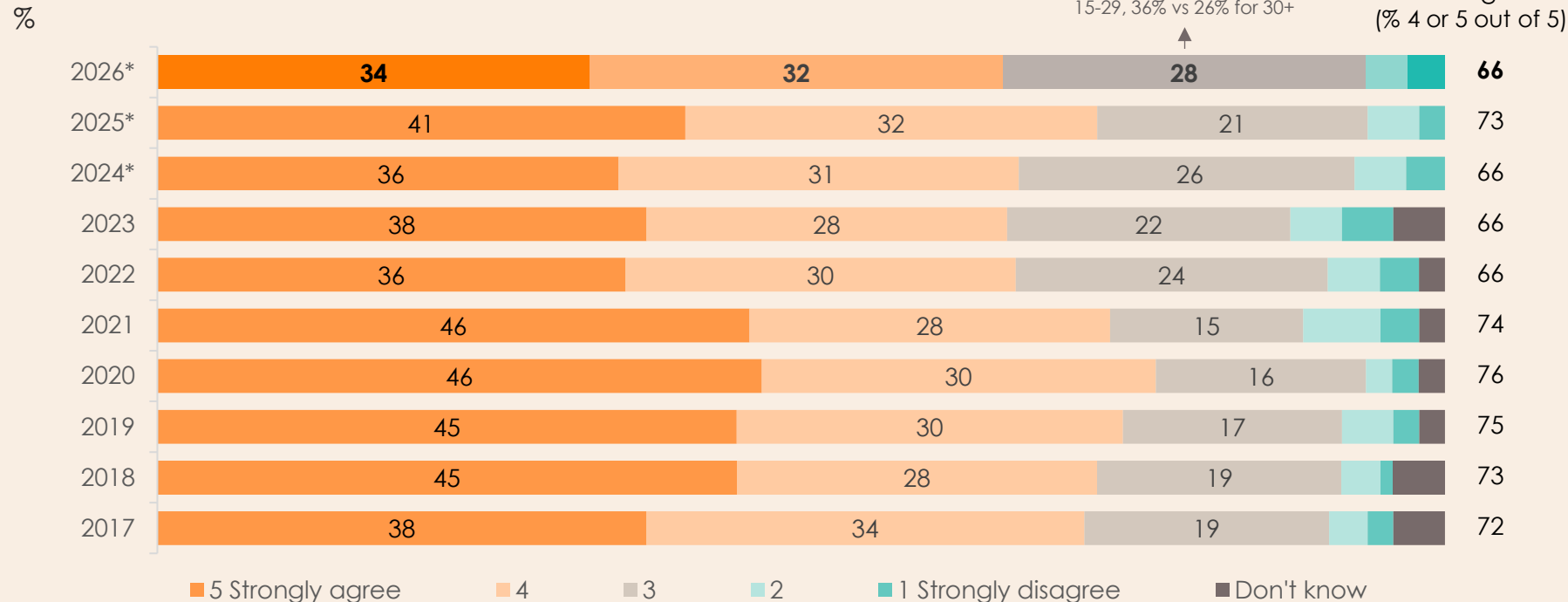
Base: All New Zealanders aged 15 and over, 2026 (n=1000), 2025 (n=600), 2024 (n=601), 2023 (n=600), 2022 (n=600), 2021 (n=600), 2020 (n=602), 2019 (n=600), 2018 (n=608), 2017 (n=601), 2016 (n=606), 2015 (n=600), 2014 (n=500).

*Wording change in 2024 from "digital media" to "online media"; **First asked in 2024; †First asked in 2025

Two-thirds of New Zealanders value the diversity of local content funded by NZ On Air.

This measure shows typical year-to-year fluctuations, with lower agreement in 2026 reflecting greater ambivalence among 15-29 year olds rather than increased disagreement.

Value the diversity of local content that NZ On Air supports



People in their 30s show the strongest appreciation of diverse content, aligning with higher support for both established and emerging content formats. Among 15-29 year olds, agreement remains the majority view, but responses are more dispersed across the neutral band too, resulting in lower overall agreement. This pattern may reflect differences in how strongly this measure resonates at this life stage, rather than a shift away from valuing diversity or public funding.

Respondent quote

"It has a lot of Kiwi content and is diverse to cover a multi-cultural community."

Source: B7. How much do you agree or disagree that you value the diversity of local content funded by NZ On Air? **Don't know" answer option not provided from 2024
 Base: All New Zealanders aged 15 and over, 2026 (n=1000), 2025 (n=600), 2024 (n=601), 2023 (n=600), 2022 (n=600), 2021 (n=600), 2020 (n=602), 2019 (n=600), 2018 (n=608), 2017 (n=601), 2016 (n=606), 2015 (n=600), 2014 (n=500).
 Note: Percentage points for 1, 2 and "don't know" not shown.

Local content helps
people feel
connected to
Aotearoa.



Most New Zealanders engaged with local content over the last month.

Watching local screen content is more common than listening to local music.

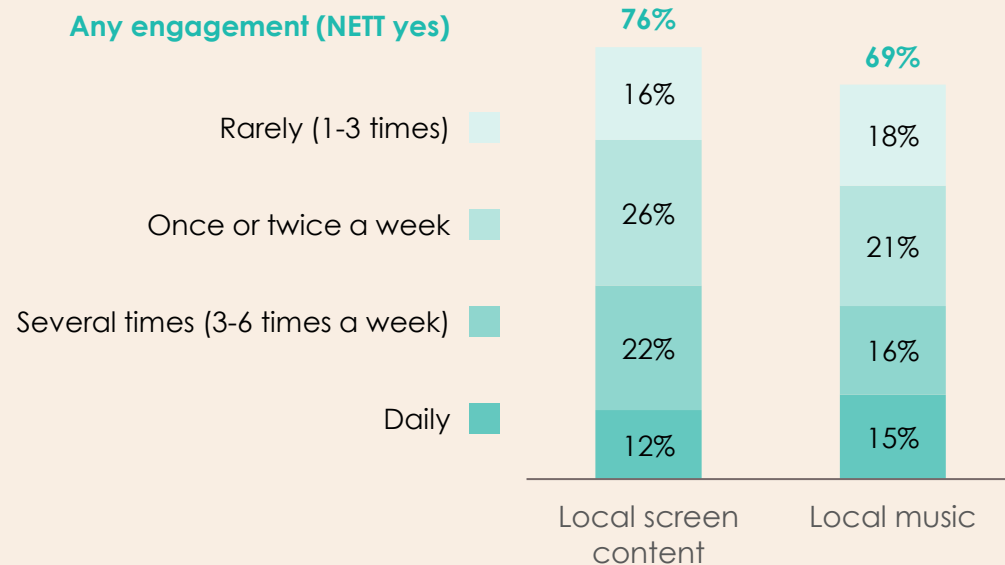
84%

Of New Zealanders listened to or watched local content in the last month.

Listening to local music is highest among people in their 30s, Māori and Pacific peoples. Watching local screen content is mostly consistent across subgroups, though people aged 40-59 are less likely to report doing so.

Frequency of engagement with local content in the last month

%



Source: B8 In the last month, have you watched any screen content that you believe was made in New Zealand and reflects local stories, perspectives, or culture?, B9 In the last month, have you listened to any music that you believe was made in New Zealand/by New Zealand artists and reflects local stories, perspectives, or culture?

Base: All New Zealanders aged 15 and over, 2026 (n=1000)

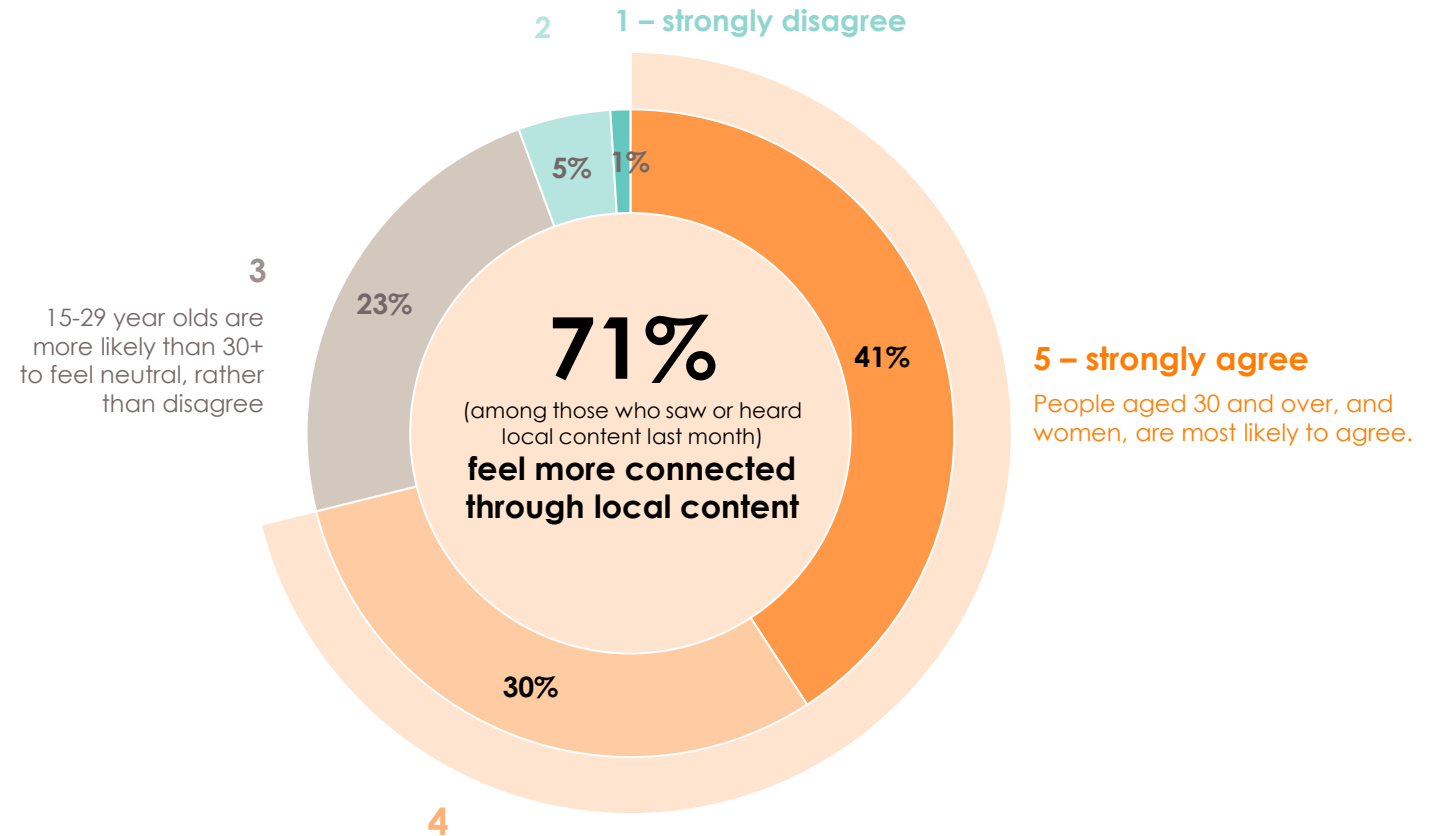
Local content strengthens connection to NZ culture, people and environment among those who engaged with local content recently.

“ Respondent quote

“Love being able to hear NZ musicians on the radio!”

Local content encourages connection to NZ culture, people and environment

%



Source: B10 How much do you agree or disagree that New Zealand stories (through TV and film) and songs help you feel connected with New Zealand's culture, people, or environment?
Base: All New Zealanders who watched local content in the previous month, 2026 (n=840)
Note: This question was added in 2026

People who engage with local content are more positive across key measures.

Compared with those who did not engage last month, recent engagers are more likely to be aware of NZ On Air and to express support for its purpose.

Engagement with local content aligns with stronger awareness, support and connection

	Recently engaged with local content (n=840)	Did not engage with local content recently (n=160)
Awareness and understanding		
Awareness of NZ On Air	86%▲+6	80%
Among those aware of NZ On Air	Recognise NZ On Air established content	99%▲+3
	Recognise NZ On Air emerging content	58%▲+26
Support and value		
Publicly funded media should be free	87%▲+15	72%
NZ On Air supports local content that's important	84%▲+32	52%
NZ On Air supported diverse local content is valuable	70%▲+26	44%
Connection		
Local stories/songs help me feel connected to Aotearoa	71%▲+26	45%

Source: A1, A3, B1b, B2, B7, B10

Base: All New Zealanders aged 15 and over unless otherwise specified, 2026 (n=1000)

People like NZ On Air–funded content for representation, relevance and local voice.

“ Television

Being an immigrant and more ways to learn about New Zealand.

I think it enables programming that we may not see otherwise.

I enjoy local produced content, there's so many American and English shows but few locally produced and shot locally shows. I find that I really enjoy shows produced and shot in NZ and Australia too.

They fund Q&A and Bluemurder Motel which I like watching.

“ Radio

I'm an avid RNZ National programme listener as the programmes are varied, interesting, contain local artists, and good presenters.

I enjoy listening to the radio on my way to work and it's always good to hear about what is happening locally.

I really enjoy listening to the radio. I find it fun, connecting and informative.

Good to see local production being played on tv and radio.

“ Music and artists

Love that fact they are supporting local musicians and artists.

Great way to experience Kiwi music and listen to some cool tunes.

I grew up listening to a lot of bands who received help.

I think it's good to promote NZ music to help give them a leg up.

Nice to hear NZ music on air, we have some very talented musicians.

Good to support our upcoming musicians.

“ Community broadcasting

I worked for b net stations and community radio for many years I understand it's importance first hand. It massively helps those of us that want to have a career in radio. It keeps small community stations alive as hard to keep the lights on with advertising alone.

Because community broadcasting delivers us the voice of the people in public call communities and brings us a shared culture.

I love the Pacific Islander broadcasting on air, I find their content relates to me.

Source: B4. Verbatim comments from people who liked each type of content.

“ Online media

It helps content creators to produce better material, more often, to reflect our culture and views.

It gives smaller creators/organisations more opportunities.

To support and promote online content creators to provide them a platform where they can succeed.

I love seeing NZ content and not just overseas stuff.

“ Video games

Im a gamer so I'm interested in it, and would love to see NZ become a major player in the industry.

We have great developers here but with a smaller base funding is vital.

I didn't know this was a thing NZ on Air did, but I think there is so much talent in NZ around video games - love that they are supporting!

It helps indie games in NZ.

Dislike typically reflects disengagement rather than rejection of public funding.

“ Television

Not relevant to me, prefer not to listen to or watch not interesting.

The ads are outrageously annoying, and I'm pretty sure there's only five of them on repeat. The TV shows themselves are really not my cup of tea, the tv "comedy" is so embarrassing and cringe... it's just all around not for me. My nana loves it, though.

None of the content is relevant to me.

“ Radio

The announcers have a habit of talking all the time sometimes absolute rubbish.

Radio is outdated, in decline and has lost relevance.

I don't listen to it.

I am Deaf and do not benefit from radio.

“ Music and artists

I am not a music fan and do not actively listen to any music.

Prefer overseas music artist and groups.

Dislike local music scenes because lots of local artists sport tattoos and that's offensive to me.

“ Community broadcasting

Don't speak Pacific languages enough to understand. Prefer radio without adverts and talking.

Its not informative.

Don't need it already enough content to available.

Source: B4. Verbatim comments from people who disliked each type of content.

“ Online media

I look up online media content by myself.

"Social media" is a complete waste of time and money. It should not be funded using tax-payer money.

Costs too much.

They can get sponsorship from private companies.

“ Video games

I have no interest in video games.

Video games aren't important.

I do not like ANY video game content!

I don't play video games.

Ngā mihi



verian 

Powering decisions
that shape the world.