



# Workplace Inclusion Barometer methodology

Te Uru Tāngata Centre for Workplace Inclusion

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## Survey methodology

The Workplace Inclusion Barometer is a rolling, continuously open survey designed to measure workplace inclusion across four domains:

- Trust and belonging
- Lived experience
- Structural conditions
- Observed inclusion climate.

The Barometer uses a consistent set of Likert-scale questions, with responses converted to a 0–100 scale to enable comparison across time and groups. Scores are aggregated into domain sub-indices and an overall Barometer, which provides a concise summary of the inclusion climate.

### Survey administration

The Barometer is administered as an open-access, anonymous online survey hosted on SurveyMonkey. It is available year-round and open to all workers in Aotearoa New Zealand. Participants are not required to log in or provide identifying information. The survey is designed to be accessible on both desktop and mobile devices, with clear, inclusive language, and culturally appropriate phrasing. Demographic questions are voluntary and include “prefer not to say” options to ensure participant comfort.

Te Uru Tāngata promotes the survey through its networks, social media, and partner organisations to encourage broad participation across sectors and communities. Because the survey is continuously open, new responses are collected on an ongoing basis and aggregated into four-monthly reporting cycles.

### Ethical considerations

The Workplace Inclusion Barometer adheres to ethical research principles, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and data privacy. Participants are provided with clear information about the purpose of the survey, how their data will be used, and their right to withdraw at any time. No personally identifiable information is collected, and all responses are stored securely in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020. Findings are reported in aggregate form only, and subgroup results are only published when sample sizes are sufficient to protect anonymity and ensure statistical reliability.

## Reporting approach

Each snapshot reflects responses collected over a four-month period. Because the Barometer is a rolling survey, each snapshot captures a cross-section of experiences at a point in time. The data are anonymised and self-reported, and participation is voluntary.

To ensure clarity and accessibility, these snapshots focus on high-level trends and domain scores. They highlight areas of strength and opportunity in workplace inclusion, and where sample sizes permit, they include disaggregated insights by demographic groups, e.g., gender, ethnicity, age, and disability; or by workplace type, e.g., public sector, private sector, and non-profit/community sector, depending on the focus of that snapshot. However, to protect privacy and ensure statistical reliability, subgroup findings are only reported when sample sizes are sufficient.

## Sample characteristics

Detailed information about the survey sample, e.g., demographic composition, sectoral distribution, and response rates, is not included in the snapshots. Instead, this information is compiled and published annually in the full Workplace Inclusion Barometer Annual Report. The annual report also integrates qualitative insights from focus groups to provide deeper context and narrative around the survey findings.

## Interpretation notes

- The Barometer reflects perceptions of inclusion, not objective measures of workplace policy or compliance
- Differences of five points or more on the 0–100 scale are generally considered meaningful, though context matters
- Because the survey is open to all workers in Aotearoa New Zealand, the results reflect the views of those who chose to participate during the reporting period. While efforts are made to promote broad participation, the sample is not weighted to match national workforce demographics.

## Scoring and index calculation methodology

### Converting survey responses to a 0–100 scale

All Likert-type items are standardised to a 0–100 scale for consistency across the survey. This involves assigning numeric values to each response option and rescaling to a percentage range. For example, on a five-point agreement scale (“Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree”), we assign 0 to “Strongly Disagree”, 25 to “Disagree”, 50 to “Neither disagree nor agree”, 75 to “Agree”, and 100 to “Strongly Agree”. The same approach is applied to other five-point scales:

- **Inclusivity scale (Q4):** “Not at all inclusive” = 0, “Slightly inclusive” = 25, ... up to “Extremely inclusive” = 100.
- **Ease/difficulty scale (Q5 matrix):** “Very difficult” = 0, “Difficult” = 25, “Neutral” = 50, “Easy” = 75, “Very easy” = 100 (since greater ease indicates more inclusion). If a respondent answered “Not sure” for a particular group, we treat it as a neutral **50**, or exclude it from the average for that respondent.
- **Personal diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) stance (Q10):** Ordered from least supportive (“DEI need not be a focus”) to most supportive (“I actively champion inclusion”) and mapped to 0, 25, 50, 75, 100. This question reflects personal attitude rather than observed climate, so its role in the inclusion index is discussed later.

For negatively phrased items (where agreement indicates *lower* inclusion), scores are reverse-coded before aggregation. For instance, in Q15 (“I have been treated unfairly because of my identity”), an “Agree” response is negative for inclusion; we convert it to 25 (whereas “Disagree” would be 75, indicating a more inclusive experience). We apply such reverse scoring to Q15, Q16, and Q18, and to Q11 (“Socio-economic background influences career opportunities”) since agreement with these statements signifies problems in the workplace. Reverse scoring ensures that for all items, higher numeric scores consistently reflect more inclusive experiences.

### Computing the Barometer (overall score)

We calculate each participant’s overall inclusion score as the average of their responses to all scaled questions (after converting to 0–100 and applying any necessary reverse-coding). The respondent's answers to all scaled questions translate to an overall inclusion score out of 100. This single-number **Workplace Inclusion Barometer** provides a concise summary of the inclusion climate, which can be tracked over time and compared across groups.

*Technical note:* The overall Barometer is calculated as an average of the four domain sub-indices rather than a straight average of all questions. This approach gives each inclusion domain equal weight in the overall Barometer, preventing a category with many survey items, for example, *structural conditions*, which includes the multi-part Q5, from dominating the score. If the domains have unequal numbers of questions, averaging by domain (instead of by item) will balance their influence on the overall Barometer.

## Calculating domain sub-indices

For each of the four inclusion domains, we compute a sub-index by averaging the 0–100 scores of the questions mapped to that domain (Table 1). Each sub-index reflects performance on that specific dimension of inclusion. For instance, the *trust and belonging* domain might average around 60, while the *observed inclusion climate* might be higher (say, 70–75), indicating relatively stronger day-to-day inclusive behaviours. These domain scores are visualised to show the inclusion profile across domains and allow demographic comparisons.

## Weighting considerations

We have given equal weight to each survey item when computing domain sub-indices and the overall Barometer. This straightforward approach treats each question as equally important and is easy to explain to stakeholders. Research best practices indicate that using consistent Likert scales across all items improves reliability and justification for equal weighting. All of the core Likert questions use a five-point format, which is ideal for robust composite scoring.

- *Rationale for equal weighting:* In the absence of strong evidence that some questions predict inclusion outcomes better than others, equal weighting is a transparent and fair approach. It ensures that each facet of inclusion (and each domain) has a comparable impact on the final scores. This aligns with the Barometer’s goal of treating all four domains as equally important components of workplace inclusion.
- *When to consider differential weighting:* If a particular question has very low statistical reliability or variance, e.g., nearly everyone answers it the same way, it may contribute less information and could be weighted slightly lower or even removed. Any such adjustments should be based on data analysis; for instance, Cronbach’s alpha can assess internal consistency within each domain scale, and factor analysis can identify which items account for more variance in the “inclusion” construct. These techniques help ensure that weighting improves the Barometer’s validity and is not driven by subjective importance.

- *Handling multi-part questions:* Question Q5 (ease/difficulty for various groups) represents 14 sub-items. To prevent this single question from overpowering the *structural conditions* domain, we compute an average Q5 score for each respondent (across all groups) and use that average as one input into the *structural conditions* sub-index. This way, Q5 as a whole has comparable weight to other questions in the domain. If there is reason to believe certain groups' experiences should be emphasised, we could explore weighting sub-items of Q5 differently (for example, giving more weight to marginalised groups of particular focus). However, a balanced approach is often preferable.

Given the above, we have started with equal weighting of items when computing the indices. This approach is simple, transparent, and supported by the survey's consistent use of five-point scales for most items. Each domain sub-index should be the arithmetic mean of its component questions (after scoring adjustments), and the overall Workplace Inclusion Barometer can then be the average of the four domain scores. This method yields an easy-to-communicate overall Barometer score, e.g., 68 out of 100, and four domain indices that can be tracked in regular reports. Table 1 lists each survey question (excluding demographic items) with its assigned domain and its role in the Barometer calculations.

*Table 1 Survey questions mapped to domains and index contributions*

| Q#        | Survey question (Abbreviated)  | Domain              | Contribution to Barometer   | Scoring   |
|-----------|--|---------------------|---|---|
| Q1        | I trust my employer to act fairly and inclusively in decisions and practices.        | Trust and belonging | Included in <b>trust and belonging sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better inclusion. | 0–100 (Strongly Disagree = 0, Strongly Agree = 100) |
| Q2        | I feel a sense of belonging at my workplace.   | Trust and belonging | Included in <b>trust and belonging sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.           | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)                     |
| Q3        | I feel I can express my true self at work while maintaining professional boundaries. | Trust and belonging | Included in <b>trust and belonging sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.           | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)                     |
| Sub-index | Average of Q1-Q3.  | Trust and belonging |   | Mean score on Q1–Q3                                 |

| Q# | Survey question (Abbreviated)   | Domain                     | Contribution to Barometer  | Scoring   |
|----|---|----------------------------|--|---|
| Q4 | Overall, how inclusive do you find your workplace?  | Observed inclusion climate | Included in <b>observed inclusion climate sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.   | 0–100 (“Not at all” = 0, “Extremely” = 100)   |
| Q5 | Ease/difficulty for various groups (disabled people, ethnic minorities, Māori, etc.) to be hired and succeed.               | Structural conditions      | We average across the 14 group ratings for each respondent to yield one “ease of inclusion” score. This <b>average contributes as one item</b> in the <b>structural conditions sub-index</b> . Higher = better (easier for all groups to succeed). | 0–100 per group (“Very difficult” = 0, “Very easy” = 100). Not sure = 50. We compute one score per person by averaging all group items. |
| Q6 | People in my workplace are respectful, even when opinions differ.   | Observed inclusion climate | Included in <b>observed inclusion climate sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.   | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)   |
| Q7 | My organisation is committed to removing barriers to workplace inclusion.   | Structural conditions      | Included in <b>structural conditions sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.  | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)   |
| Q8 | Reasons why the organisation appears committed to inclusion (leaders talk about inclusion, leaders take active steps, etc.) | Structural conditions      | <b>Not scored</b> in index (diagnostic only; not a scaled agreement). However, frequent selections can be reported qualitatively to explain Q7.  | (Qualitative – not scored)  |
| Q9 | Reasons why the organisation does not appear committed (leaders do not talk about inclusion, lack of accountability, etc.)  | Structural conditions      | <b>Not scored</b> in index (diagnostic only; not a scaled agreement). Use qualitatively to supplement Q7.  | (Qualitative – not scored)  |

| Q#  | Survey question (Abbreviated)  | Domain                     | Contribution to Barometer   | Scoring  |
|-----|--|----------------------------|---|--|
| Q10 | Respondent's stance towards DEI efforts.   | Lived experience           | Included in <b>lived experience sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = more supportive stance. Note: This item reflects personal orientation to DEI, not the climate. | 0–100 (5 options). Most supportive stance = 100  |
| Q11 | Socio-economic background influences career opportunities in my organisation.                      | Structural conditions      | Included in <b>structural conditions sub-index</b> (equal weight). <b>Reverse-scored</b> (agreement indicates perceived bias, which lowers inclusion).                | 0–100, <b>reverse-coded</b> (agreement means a negative condition). e.g., "Strongly Agree" = 0 |
| Q12 | My team leader/manager is inclusive and treats everyone with empathy and respect.                  | Observed inclusion climate | Included in <b>observed inclusion climate sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.  | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)  |
| Q13 | People on my team make an effort to include colleagues with different backgrounds or perspectives. | Observed inclusion climate | Included in <b>observed inclusion climate sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.  | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)  |
| Q14 | I have been treated unfairly at work because of an aspect of my identity or background.            | Lived experience           | Included in <b>lived experience sub-index</b> (equal weight). <b>Reverse-scored</b> (agreement indicates unfair treatment, lowering inclusion score).                 | 0–100, reverse-coded (Agree = 0, Disagree = 100)   |
| Q15 | I have experienced bullying and/or harassment at work in the last 12 months.                       | Lived experience           | Included in <b>lived experience sub-index</b> (equal weight). <b>Reverse-scored</b> (agreement indicates negative experience, lowering inclusion).                    | 0–100, reverse-coded (Agree = 0)   |

| Q#           | Survey question (Abbreviated)  | Domain                     | Contribution to Barometer  | Scoring   |
|--------------|--|----------------------------|--|---|
| Q16          | If I witness or experience bullying or harassment, I will feel comfortable reporting it.       | Lived experience           | Included in <b>lived experience sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better (psychological safety).  | 0–100 (Agree = 100; a higher score is positive)                     |
| Q17          | Public debate about diversity and inclusion affects how safe I feel expressing myself at work. | Lived experience           | Included in <b>lived experience sub-index</b> (equal weight). <b>Reverse-scored</b> (agreement indicates feeling less safe, a negative outcome). | 0–100, reverse-coded (Agree = 0, Disagree (no effect) = 100)        |
| Q18          | My organisation's actions on inclusion feel genuine and sustained, not just symbolic.          | Structural conditions      | Included in <b>structural conditions sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better (perception of authentic action).                             | 0–100 (Agree = 100; Disagree = 0, as this is a positive statement)  |
| Q19          | My workplace respects Māori cultural values and Te Tiriti o Waitangi.                          | Observed inclusion climate | Included in <b>observed inclusion climate sub-index</b> (equal weight). Higher = better.   | 0–100 (5-point agreement scale)                                     |
| Sub-indices: | Avg of relevant Qs (as above) for each domain.   | (Four domains)             |  | Each domain sub-index is the mean of that domain's question scores. |