

March, 2018

# Snapshot Auckland 2017 – Commentary

By Susan Warren, chief executive, COMET Auckland

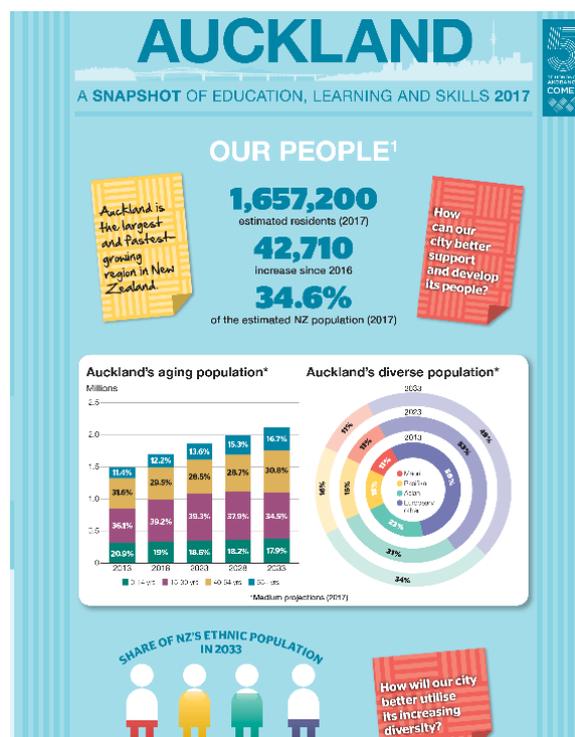
COMET Auckland is delighted to release [Snapshot Auckland 2017](#), the latest in our popular series of data updates on education, training and skills in Auckland.

**Snapshot Auckland 2017** brings together useful information on learning pathways in Auckland, from early learning, through school to tertiary education and employment.

It looks at enrolments, staffing ratios, learning of te reo Māori and other languages, achievement and qualifications, and post-study employment and earnings.

We've got some more detailed commentary below, but some of the highlights include:

- A special feature on how the **high and rising cost of housing** and living in Auckland is affecting education for students, families and teachers.
- Data on **school leavers** that show we are failing to prepare significant numbers of young Aucklanders to earn a living, with more than 25,000 aged 15-24 not in education, employment or training last year.
- Challenging statistics on **te reo Māori and other languages** in schools.



There is still a great deal to do to make our education system more equitable for all Aucklanders. We need different kinds of collaboration if we are to transform the lives of our children, families and communities.

The snapshot and commentary can be downloaded from [our website](#).

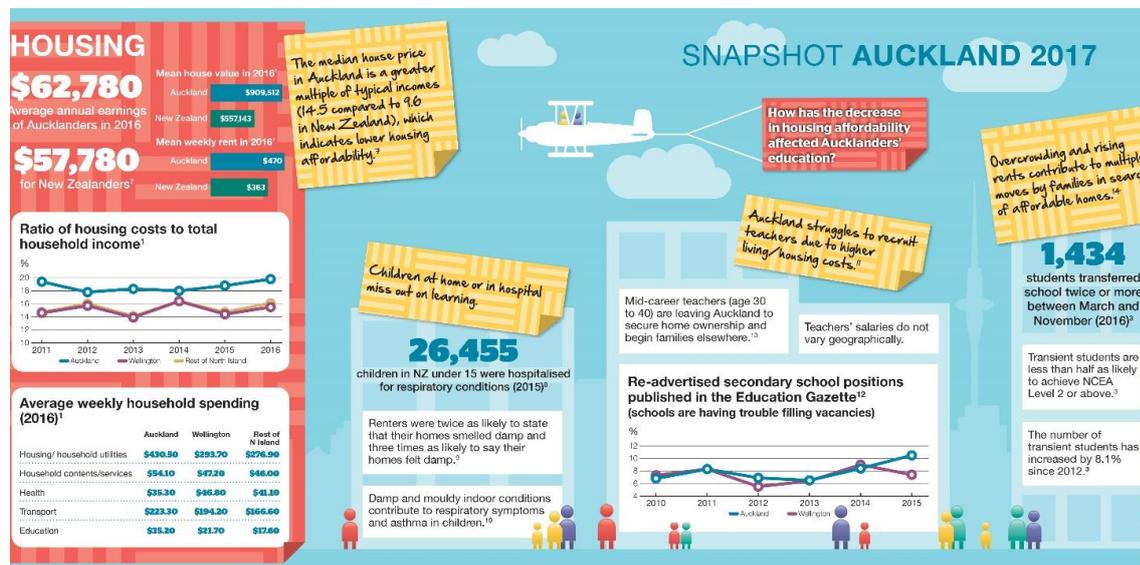
## Special Feature: Housing and Education

[Snapshot Auckland 2017](#) has a special feature looking at how the high and rising cost of housing and living in Auckland is affecting education.

Children in damp, mouldy homes or in hospital because of **respiratory diseases** are missing out on learning. Overcrowding and rising rents contribute to **multiple moves** by families in search of affordable homes.

**More than 1400 Auckland students transferred school twice or more in the school year in 2016.** That's the most recent data available, but with the worsening housing crisis we expect transience to

rise further. Transient students are less than half as likely as their peers to achieve NCEA Level 2 or above.



We hear a lot now about how Auckland is struggling to recruit and keep teachers because of high housing costs. But the snapshot shows Auckland’s **teacher shortage** was already clear back in 2015, and getting worse compared with elsewhere in the country.

However, it was only last year when we began to see Government action – in May with the Beginner Teacher Project, which was only small numbers. That was expanded in December as part of the broader [Teacher Supply Package](#). We’re only now beginning to see a system-wide approach.

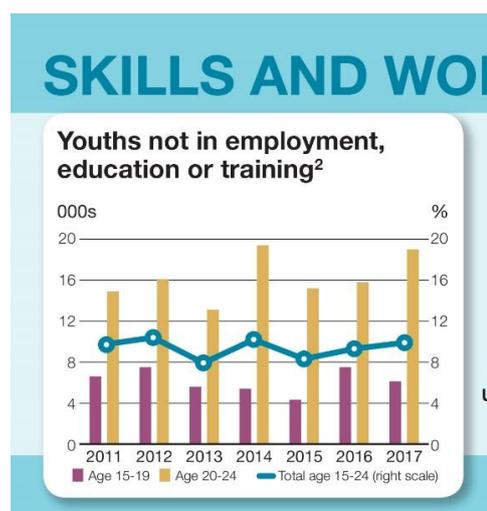
It’s encouraging to see the Ministry is now contacting every principal in Auckland to get a better idea of the specific problems facing Auckland’s schools. We will look forward to seeing the actions that come from this survey.

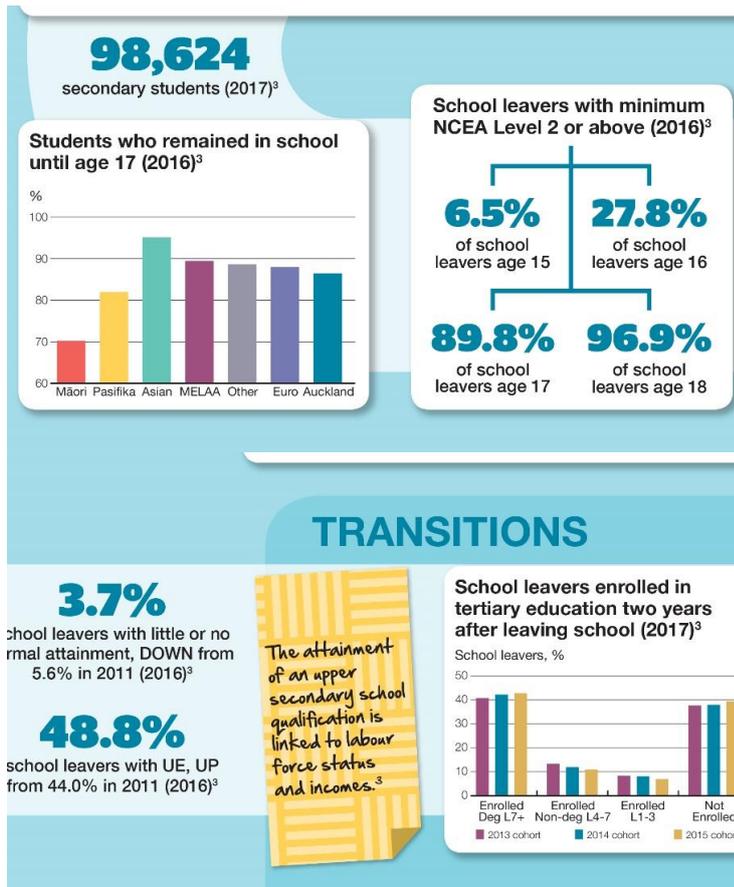
### Focus: School Leavers and Transition

The [Snapshot Auckland 2017](#) data on school leavers’ qualifications and transition to further study and work show we are failing to prepare a significant number of young Aucklanders for employment.

In 2017, more than 25,000 Aucklanders aged 15-24 were **NEETs – not in education, employment or training**. That’s about one in every 10.

Further, **nearly four out of 10 school leavers were not enrolled in tertiary education** two years after leaving school, and tertiary enrolments were down for Level 1-3 and non-degree Level 4-7 courses.





The data shows students who stay longer at school are more likely to attain NCEA Level 2 or above (96.9 percent by age 18).

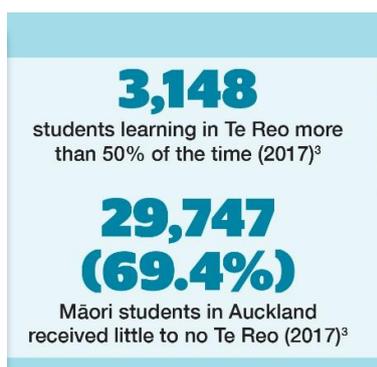
But the number of Māori students leaving school before the age of 17 is still around 30 percent. We also know the Māori rate for NEETs is higher.

This is one reason we're excited to be working with several kura kaupapa Māori to trial a Mātauranga Māori approach to our Youth Employability Programme: Licence to Work.

We know anecdotally from the students on YEP in previous years that is an incentive to stay at school, because they can see a pathway towards further training and work.

## Focus: Te Reo Māori and Languages

[Snapshot Auckland 2017](#) raises some challenging statistics on learning of te reo Māori and other languages in schools.



Last year 3,148 students learnt **te reo Māori** more than half the time, most in kura kaupapa or Māori immersion units.

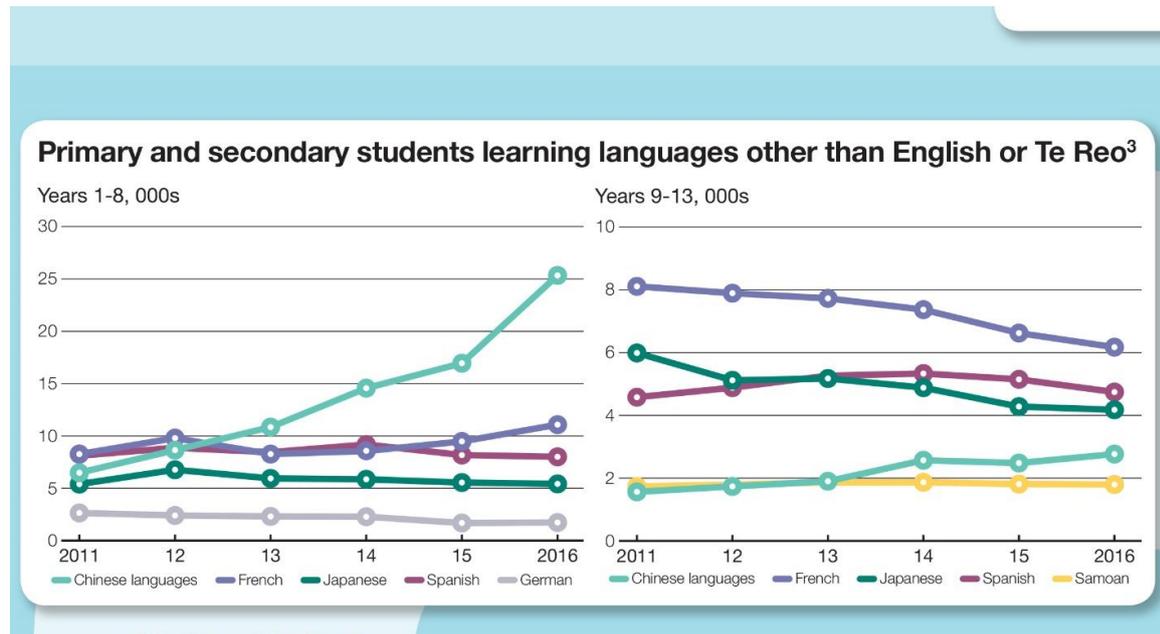
But nearly seven out of 10 Māori students received little or no te reo Māori at school, which is hugely disappointing.

A recent [NZCER survey](#) shows most primary and intermediate teachers are using at least some Māori words in class and are willing to do more.

But there needs to be a strategy and funding to build teacher capacity. It should start with training more teachers who are already fluent in te reo so, first, Māori students can get more and better te reo teaching and, then, all students can have it as a core subject.

The snapshot shows **teaching of Chinese languages in schools** has leapt as a result of [government funding for Asian languages](#). It demonstrates what's possible with even a small amount of funding

when parents and kids want to learn a language, and schools want to provide it. Similarly, the adding of Samoan to NCEA has seen the language grow and now stabilise in secondary schools.



However, it is a real concern to see **learning of other languages in secondary schools down significantly** and over a long period. Schools are struggling to provide languages and to recruit and retain teachers. Often it only takes the loss of one teacher for a language to be dropped.

### PS: About National Standards

You will notice we have included data on National Standards. With the Government’s decision to scrap National Standards and Ngā Whanaketanga Rumaki Māori we understand the 2016 figures in our snapshot will be the last to be reported, certainly on a regional or national level. We are looking at other ways to report on primary and intermediate achievement in future.

COMET Auckland is an independent charitable trust and CCO of Auckland Council, advancing goals for education, training, skills and lifelong learning under the Auckland Plan.

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