

## News Release

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### **Research reveals LGBTI community less comfortable holding hands**

The simple act of holding hands in public has been explored in new research commissioned by ANZ and launched today in the lead-up to the Auckland and Wellington Pride Festivals.

The research shows New Zealand's LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) community is more than twice as likely (39%) than non-LGBTI (18%) to feel less comfortable holding hands in public, with young Kiwis leading the statistics.

The study was conducted by Galaxy Research in the past fortnight, with 504 New Zealanders aged 18 years and older taking part.

ANZ Managing Director Retail and Business Banking and ANZ NZ Pride Network sponsor Antonia Watson says the research reveals unease in the community.

"Holding hands is a very simple and public way of declaring love, but, sadly, not everyone in our community feels comfortable," Ms Watson said.

"While most Kiwis take holding hands in public for granted, members of our LGBTI community feel judged doing so."

A negative response from others (48%) is the leading reason the LGBTI community surveyed felt self-conscious holding hands. Almost a third (31%) had been made to feel uncomfortable because of a negative response from others.

Of the LGBTI people that said they have felt uncomfortable holding hands, it was young New Zealanders who led the age groups, with Gen Y at 23%, followed by Gen X at 21% and Baby Boomers at a low of 15%.

The LGBTI community polled said they are most comfortable holding hands in front of their extended family (73%), but least likely to feel comfortable in front of an elderly stranger (14%).

These insights are the inspiration behind ANZ's #HoldTight campaign which launched today to support the LGBTI community. New Zealanders are encouraged to snap and share their own hand-holding photos on social media, with a special Twitter emoji prepared for the awareness campaign. ANZ Australia will be running the campaign at the same time.

"We've launched this new #HoldTight initiative so we can get behind our LGBTI staff, customers and community to share our support for equality," Ms Watson said.

"It also sends a powerful message to our staff that we want them to be true to themselves at work.

"We're hoping Kiwis jump on board the campaign and demonstrate how we live in an accepting and open society that's proud to celebrate diversity."

Auckland couple and ANZ staff members Teresa Cropp and Toni Fraser said at times they've felt self-conscious holding hands.

“At the start of our relationship back in 2015 I know I was a bit hesitant to hold hands in public and still am, particularly around older generations,” Ms Fraser said.

“It’s such a natural thing to do but I was worried about the response I’d get from strangers, like a rude stare or snide remark.

“As a member of ANZ and the Pride community, I’m proud we’re having this conversation and hope others will feel encouraged by the campaign,” Ms Cropp said.

Toni and Teresa will lead ANZ marchers at the Pride Parade holding hands, the longest period of time they have done so in public.

In 2017, ANZ continues as a sponsor of both Auckland and Wellington Pride Festivals. GAYTMs will again dazzle Auckland streets to raise funds for youth LGBTI network OUTline.

-ENDS-

EDITORS’ NOTE: Research findings are included below. To view images of Toni Fraser and Teresa Cropp and the #HoldTight video please go [here](#). Please be in touch with interview requests.

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## **ANZ #HoldTight research findings**

### **Key findings:**

- The vast majority (95%) of New Zealanders agree that everyone, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, should feel comfortable showing affection in public by holding hands with their partner or date
- While many New Zealanders take for granted the simple act of hold hands, in reality, not everyone feels the same level of freedom. While less than one in five (18%) New Zealanders say they have ever felt uncomfortable holding hands with their partner public, this figure is twice as high (39%) for the LGBTI community
- The main reasons New Zealanders say they have felt uncomfortable holding hands in public with their partner are:
  - they felt concerned about what other people might think of them (45%)
  - their partner/date felt uncomfortable (34%)
  - they were worried they might experience a negative response from other members of the public (26%)
- The LGBTI community is more likely to say they have felt uncomfortable holding their partner's hand in public because:
  - they were worried they might experience a negative response from other members of the public (48% compared to 19%)
  - they had experienced a negative response from other members of the public in the past (31% compared to 9%)
- Gen Y (23%), Gen X (21%) and Baby Boomers (15%) are the most likely generations to say they have ever felt uncomfortable holding hands with their partner or date in public
- For the LGBTI community, the pressure to 'let go' of their partner's hand is much greater, with four times as many LGBTI (40%) saying they have done this compared to non-LGBTI (12%)
- The LGBTI community is more likely than non-LGBTI to feel uncomfortable holding hands with their partner in front of:
  - extended family (aunts/uncles/cousins) (27% compared to 8%)
  - elderly stranger (14% compared to 3%)

The LGBTI community is more likely than non-LGBTI to feel uncomfortable holding hands with their partner in the following situations:

- while walking down a main street (24% compared to 7%)
- while shopping (21% compared to 9%)
- on public transport (14% compared to 7%)

### **Research methodology:**

This study was conducted by Galaxy Research online among a nationally representative sample of New Zealanders aged 18 years and older. The sample was 504 respondents, distributed throughout New Zealand including both capital city and non-capital city areas. Following the completion of interviewing, the data was weighted by age, gender, sexual orientation and region to reflect the population estimates for New Zealand.