

# ATTACHMENT 2

## Addressing Social and Community Context

As a local community, Mosman has built a strong sense of local identity and is recognised both within and outside its boundaries as a unique and historic part of Sydney. Mosman Council plays an important role in continuing to foster community connections and provide its residents with a high level of service in accordance with community expectations. In turn, the Mosman community has indicated that it is highly satisfied with the performance of its Council.

Having the right scale and capacity as a local government authority should take into account, as a primary consideration, whether the authority is actually serving its residents in a manner that the community is satisfied with. The information contained in this attachment provides an overview of the people who live in Mosman, the kinds of issues faced by this community, its views on Council performance, the level of community connectedness and, importantly local views on Council mergers. Collectively, it demonstrates a community that is cohesive, proud of its local identity, able to tackle the issues that confront it, supportive of its continued independence and happy with the model of local government currently in place.

### Demographics

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Mosman is located 8 kilometres north-east of the CBD on Sydney's lower north shore. With an area of 8.7 square kilometres, Mosman has a population of just over 30,000 (2014 ABS estimated resident population) and is characterised by high quality residential and commercial neighbourhoods as well as stunning natural bushland and foreshore parklands. The major thoroughfares of Military and Spit Roads connect residents of Mosman and those from further north to other parts of Sydney.

Mosman's population has experienced small but steady growth in its recent years. According to the NSW Population, Household and Dwelling Projections 2014 commissioned by the NSW Government, the Mosman population is expected to grow at an annual average rate of 1% between 2016 and 2031 - up from an average annual increase of 0.8% between 2011 and 2016.

The 2031 population estimate for Mosman, based on this forecasted rate of growth, is 35,350 people, with the most significant increases in population being in the 70+ age group.

According to the latest ABS Census statistics (2011), slightly more of Mosman's residents are female than male, and 32% have moved to the area from another country. Fewer residents in Mosman come from non-English speaking countries or identify as being of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent than other areas of Sydney, although Mosman does have a higher than average number of residents born in the United Kingdom, New Zealand and the USA.

Of more than 11,000 households in Mosman, the average household size in 2011 was 2.3 persons (compared with 2.69 for Sydney), although Mosman also has a significantly larger number of lone-person households than the Sydney average. Couples with or without children (at over 52%) represent the predominant household type in Mosman.

Mosman residents live in a variety of dwellings, with separate houses still being the major type of dwelling. The proportion of separate houses (36.8%) is, however, significantly smaller than for Sydney as a whole (58.9%), while the proportion of medium and high density dwellings is significantly above the figure for Sydney overall.

The qualifications of Mosman residents are higher than those for the average Sydney resident, and Mosman also has a significantly larger proportion of high income households than the Sydney average. There is also a significantly higher proportion of managers and professionals living in the area, and unemployment is consistently low when compared to Sydney overall.

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (or SEIFA) measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage in an area based on a range of census statistics. It is derived from attributes such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, jobs in relatively unskilled occupations and variables that reflect disadvantage rather than measure specific aspects of disadvantage. The higher the score, the lower the level of disadvantage.

For the SEIFA index, Mosman has the second highest index score in Sydney at 1110.7 (with scores even higher in some Mosman localities), being above all other Council areas in the SHOROC region, as well as all other Councils in 'OLG Group 2' (i.e. the category of Councils against which the NSW Office of Local Government annually compares Mosman Council).

Mosman has a strong community spirit, with a significantly higher proportion of volunteers than the Sydney average. At the last census 23% of Mosman residents indicated that they had carried out voluntary work in the past 12 months. This compares to an average of 15% across Sydney.

## Local Issues and Priorities

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In 2012 and 2014 Council commissioned biennial Community Surveys to gauge the views of residents on local services, facilities and other issues. These surveys were conducted by telephone and involved 400 randomly-selected residents. The results of these surveys demonstrate that local infrastructure improvements, particularly in relation to roads, footpaths, car parking and public spaces are priorities for the local community.

In the 2012 Survey, respondents identified the top issues facing Mosman in the next 10 years as traffic, development, parking, population, roads and footpaths, environment and public transport.

Of all issues raised by residents in 2012, traffic represented 45% of responses.

In the Mosman Community Survey carried out in 2014, issues relating to 'traffic', including traffic management and congestion, were again the predominant concerns residents felt Mosman would face in the next 5-10 years. Other issues of primary concern included the adequacy of infrastructure, car parking and maintenance of roads and footpaths.

Research carried out in conjunction with the development of Mosman Council's Community Strategic Plan, MOSPLAN 2013-2023 considered the results of community surveys as well as other information available to Council. Major issues and challenges identified for Mosman and which remain relevant today include:

### Transport

Results from Council's 2012 and 2014 Community Surveys clearly demonstrate that traffic is residents' greatest area of concern over the next 5 – 10 years. The Military Road/Spit Road corridor is a major contributor to traffic frustrations in Mosman and Council has over many years been active in advocating for improved transport solutions along this route. In 2010, Council joined with its SHOROC colleagues to endorse '*Shaping our Future*', a regional strategy that places strong emphasis on improved outcomes along both this corridor and corridors east-west from the northern beaches. This united voice has produced excellent results in recent years, with a \$633 million investment being made over five years on key public transport and road improvements through the Northern Beaches Transport Action Plan released by the NSW Government in June 2014. It is recognised that ongoing

involvement in the Plan's implementation will be critical to maintaining the current momentum for improved traffic and transport solutions.

On a related issue Council has also been working on developing a new Parking Strategy for Mosman based on resident feedback. This strategy was adopted by Council in April 2015 and will provide new guidance and direction for future management and improvement of local parking.

### Protecting Residential Amenity

First and foremost Mosman is a residential area – a place that provides a premier living environment for residents. A continuing challenge for Council is to protect and nurture the area's unique features so that the community continues to enjoy the excellent Mosman lifestyle.

This means making sure that amenity in residential neighbourhoods is thoughtfully and sympathetically preserved and that priority is given to providing high quality sporting, recreational and public spaces. It also means conserving Mosman's exceptional natural landscape and maintaining a real sense of community for future generations.

Issues such as external regulation, finite resources, regional impacts and competing priorities mean that the task of protecting and nurturing Mosman's residential amenity is not always easy. Nevertheless, it remains a core priority of Council to plan, provide and advocate for the protection and enhancement of the type of place Mosman residents value. Council's concerted efforts to reduce unnecessary signage in recent years are having a positive impact on public amenity. Council's advocacy on 10/50 tree removal regulations introduced in 2014 has also had some impact, although further advances are needed to prevent unnecessary destruction of Mosman's tree canopy.

### Infrastructure Renewal

The issue of renewing and maintaining local infrastructure at appropriate levels has been raised in numerous surveys and consultations. Mosman residents value high quality infrastructure and over the past year Mosman Council has delivered a path forward to ensure that Council not only delivers infrastructure in accordance with resident expectations but in a manner that is financially sustainable.

In August 2013 Council adopted a new Asset Management Policy and Strategy, together with new Asset Management Plans that were progressively adopted in 2012 and 2013 for more than \$400 million worth of buildings, roads and footpaths, parks and open space, marine structures and drainage. An Asset Management Reference Group comprising Council representatives and members of the local community assisted in the determination of appropriate “levels of service” in regards the condition of Mosman's assets. These standards were adopted across Council's Asset Management Plans, with each plan defining appropriate condition intervention levels.

On the basis of work undertaken, Council identified in 2014 that Mosman's infrastructure backlog, which stood at \$8.6 million, would increase to \$12 million within 10 years if Council did not put in place an appropriate funding strategy to either reduce or clear the existing gap in asset maintenance and renewal. An extensive financial planning and community engagement process subsequently resulted in Council lodging a Special Rate Variation application for 2015/16 which, if successful, would clear its infrastructure backlog within 10 years, improve the level of asset maintenance and provide Council with a financially sustainable future. This application was approved by IPART in May 2015, enabling an accelerated capital works program to commence in 2015/16.

### The Planning Landscape

Development is a critical issue in Mosman and high quality urban planning and development assessment are essential to the maintenance of Mosman's unique character.

Mosman's Local Environmental Plan (LEP) was legally made in December 2011 and came into effect on 1 February 2012. New Development Control Plans were subsequently adopted by Council in March 2012. The preparation of each of these environmental planning instruments was undertaken in close consultation with the community and required extended advocacy and negotiation with the State Government. The Mosman Development Assessment Panel (MDAP) is close to completing its fourth full year of operation and, while this panel is responsible for development applications not otherwise dealt with by staff, the elected Council retains responsibility for applications impacting public land, as well as developing and refining the strategic policy framework against which such applications are assessed. A comprehensive review of the MDAP and the local development application process has been undertaken with a further Planning Review close to completion.

Council has also been actively participating in development of the latest Sub-Regional Plans being coordinated by the NSW Government to give effect to the Metropolitan Strategy released in December 2014. These contributions are currently being progressed collaboratively with other Councils in the Northern Sydney sub-region.

## Changing Demographics

Mosman's demographic makeup continues to change, with a growing proportion of residents in older age brackets. This presents challenges not only in catering for larger numbers of older residents, but also Mosman's capacity to support a healthy mix of ages, a strong working-age population, housing options that attract diverse households, and a community that is vital, engaged and well-connected. Mosman Council is well-placed to help address these challenges through provision and facilitation of services, infrastructure and positive planning frameworks at local and regional levels.

## Local Government Reforms

The local government reform process that has been ongoing since the Destination 2036 Summit in 2011 has been, and continues to be, of significant importance to all NSW Councils and communities. Mosman Council has actively contributed to the various stages of the reform process and has objectively assessed its future options in consultation with the Mosman community. This proposal reflects work undertaken over recent months to address the NSW Government's Fit for the Future reform package.

## **Local Satisfaction and Wellbeing**

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Mosman Council conducts major Community Surveys biennially to provide information on mid-term and end of term Council performance, local issues and connectedness, as well as to provide base data for development of Community Strategic Plans and Delivery Programs. These surveys are independently conducted, with 400 residents randomly contacted by telephone.

The latest and most relevant data is provided by the 2012 and 2014 Community Surveys, with further satisfaction data also obtained from random intercept surveys conducted during community engagement on the Fit for the Future reforms.

***Key results from each of these surveys, outlined below, demonstrate strong and improving community satisfaction with Mosman Council's performance as well as healthy levels of community connectedness and local identity.***

## *Council Performance*

### ***Mosman Community Survey 2012***

- Overall satisfaction with Council performance in 2012 was 88%.
- As a mean score, this satisfaction rating was above the NSW benchmark.
- In terms of providing 'value for money' respondents to the 2012 Community Survey gave Mosman Council a mean score of 6.45 out of 10, representing an improvement on the 2010 score as well as an earlier survey conducted in 2006.
- The 2012 survey results indicated that overall satisfaction with Mosman Councillors remained fairly stable (and above the NSW benchmark) between 2010 and 2012 – with higher satisfaction recorded for survey respondents who could recall recent contact with a Councillor.
- Of 18 comparable measures for local government services and facilities provided by NSW Councils, Mosman Council scored above the NSW benchmark for 13 of these services and facilities

### ***Mosman Community Survey 2014***

- Overall satisfaction with Council performance in 2014 was 91%, an improvement of 3% on the 2012 result
- As a mean score, this satisfaction rating was again above the NSW benchmark - and more so than in 2012
- Satisfaction improvements also extended to the overall performance of Council Staff and Mosman Councillors, with residents significantly more satisfied in comparison to 2012 and the All of NSW Benchmarks
- Resident satisfaction significantly increased across 7 of the 36 service areas surveyed
- Of 25 comparable measures for local government services and facilities provided by NSW Councils, Mosman Council scored above the NSW benchmark for 17 of these services and facilities

- In terms of providing 'value for money' respondents to the 2014 Community Survey gave Mosman Council a mean score of 6.54 out of 10, representing a further improvement on the score achieved in 2012.

### ***Fit for the Future Intercept Survey - March 2015***

During a random intercept survey conducted of 450 local residents in March 2015, interviewers asked respondents the following question:

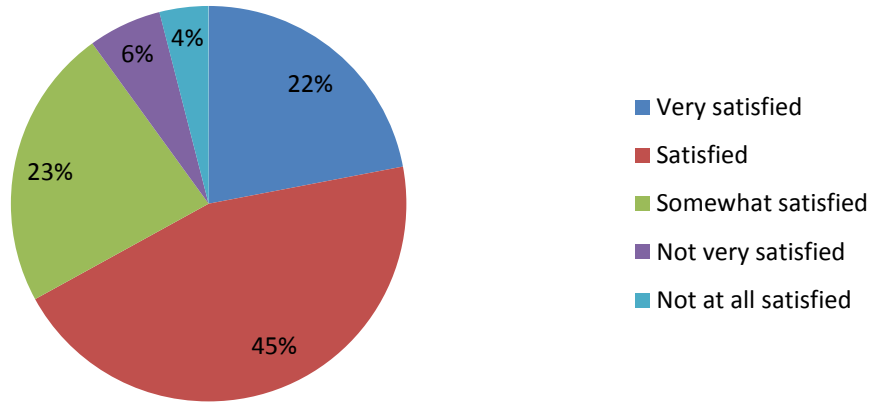
*"In general, how satisfied are you with the performance of Mosman Council and their services, not just one or two issues but across all responsibility areas?"*

The percentage responses to the question were as follows:

Very satisfied	22%
Satisfied	45%
Somewhat satisfied	23%
Not very satisfied	6%
Not at all satisfied	4%



### Satisfaction with Council - Intercept Survey



***With 90% of respondents at least somewhat satisfied with Council's performance, this is considered an extremely good result and a positive affirmation of the levels of service currently being delivered by Mosman Council.***

### Community Connections

#### **Mosman Community Survey 2012**

- The 2012 Community Survey results showed that Mosman residents generally feel very safe – with slightly more feeling safe to walk in their local neighbourhood (94%) than in 2010\*
- 93% of respondents stated that they are proud of their area, with 86% saying they could call on a neighbour or relative if they need assistance\*

- 81% of respondents stated that they feel they belong to the community they live in, with 63% considering they make a contribution to the local community\*

### ***Mosman Community Survey 2014***

- Compared to the 2012 Community Survey, the level of respondents' agreement with four out of nine statements regarding community pride and connectedness increased
- 97% of respondents stated that they felt safe in their home (up from 95% in 2012), with 95% (again up on 2012 figures) feeling safe while walking around their neighbourhood\*
- The level of pride in the local area remained consistent with 2012 results, with 88% (up from 86% in 2012) saying they could call on a neighbour or relative if they need assistance\*
- Respondents who recorded a high level of agreement with the statement "My neighbourhood is a friendly place to live" increased significantly compared to the 2012 survey results (88%, up from 84%)
- 82% of respondents stated that they feel they belong to the community they live in (up on 2012 results), with 68% considering they make a contribution to their community (up a significant 5% on 2012 results)\*

*\*Figures quoted above reflect a "High" level of agreement with each statement. Overall figures and comparability change marginally once "Moderate" levels of agreement are also taken into account.*

## Community Views on Independence and Amalgamation

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***The Mosman community has consistently and overwhelmingly voiced its support for Mosman's independence, repeatedly rejecting amalgamation.***

Six polls conducted by Council in relation to proposed amalgamations between 1962 and 2012 delivered the following results:

1962	91% of voters against
1974	90.7% of voters against
1977	87.3% of voters against
1983	89.2% of voters against
2004	79.4% of voters against
2012	81.3% of voters against

Following the NSW Government's announcement of its Fit for the Future package of reforms in September, Mosman Council resolved to again seek community views on this issue. The engagement in this instance was different to the polls of previous years, as community members were given the opportunity to comment on four different options ranging from independence to the large scale merger of lower north shore Councils proposed by the Independent Local Government Review Panel.

The consultation, undertaken between February and April 2015, provided residents and ratepayers with four independence/amalgamation options as follows:

### ***Option 1***

Maintain Mosman's independence along with extensive collaboration with other councils, especially with SHOROC

### ***Option 2***

Mosman Council 'mega merger' with North Sydney, Lane Cove, Hunters Hill, Willoughby and part of Ryde Councils

### ***Option 3***

Mosman Council merger with North Sydney Council

### ***Option 4***

Mosman Council merger with Manly Council

Various methods were used to inform and engage the community on the options presented. These included:

- A dedicated consultation page on Council's website ( see <http://yourvoicemosman.com.au> and go to the project "Mosman's Future: Your Say"), including an online survey of the four options commencing 27 February 2015 and concluding 2 April 2015 (five weeks)
- An information brochure letterboxed to local households and businesses in the week commencing 2 March 2015, including a reply-paid feedback card allowing respondents to indicate their level of support (across a five point scale from 'Strongly supportive' to Strongly opposed') for the four options, as well as provide further comments. **A copy of this brochure is included as Attachment 7.**
- Prominent news items and linkages to the engagement page on Council's homepage, as well as alternative opportunities to comment on the four options through Council's regular online submission form
- Information packages and feedback cards available at the Civic Centre and Library

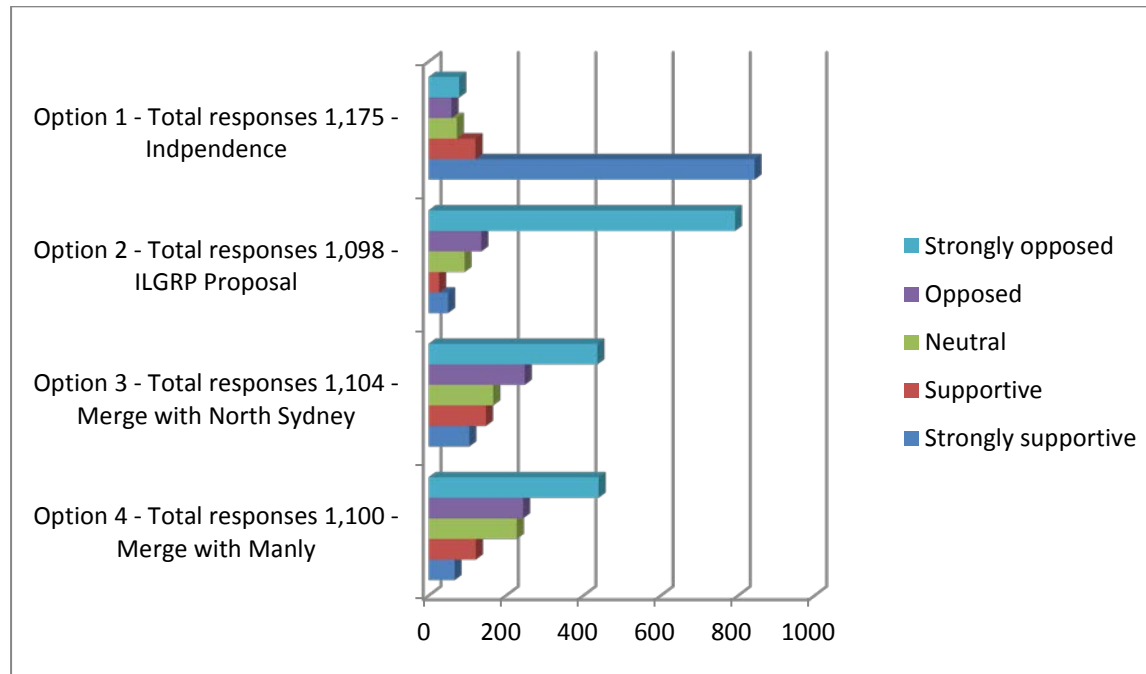
- A public meeting chaired by the Mayor on the evening of 9 March 2015, with close to 100 people in attendance
- Regular use of social media to advise of upcoming engagement opportunities and to encourage participation
- Four large-format newspaper advertisements (half page and quarter page advertisements in the Mosman Daily), together with media releases and coverage in the Autumn 2015 edition of the Mosman Now newsletter delivered to local households and businesses
- An intercept survey of almost 450 local residents conducted during the last two weeks of March at Mosman Junction, Spit Junction and Balmoral

At the conclusion of the engagement period on 2 April 2015, a total of 1,211 responses were received to the four options presented by Council.

A summary of the (quantitative) responses received during the engagement period, including the level of support for each of the four options, is provided on **Page 16 of this Attachment**. By way of summary, key take-outs from the community feedback included:

- The highest number of responses was provided through the reply-paid feedback card, followed by the number of respondents to the random intercept survey
- ***The highest level of support was for Option 1 - Maintain Mosman's Independence, with 82% of respondents either 'Supportive' (10%) or 'Strongly Supportive' (72%) of this option***
- ***The highest level of opposition was for Option 2 - Mosman Council 'mega-merger', with 84% of respondents either 'Opposed' (12%) or 'Strongly Opposed' (72%) to this option***
- There was a definitive correlation (72%) between the number of respondents 'Strongly Supportive' of Option 1 and 'Strongly Opposed' to Option 2

- **Options 3 and 4, which foreshadowed 'smaller' mergers with either North Sydney or Manly Council, also attracted significant levels of opposition (61% and 62% respectively), with support for a North Sydney Council merger (23%) only marginally higher than that for a Manly Council merger (17%)**
- The level of 'neutral' polling for Options 3 and 4 was noticeably higher than that for Options 1 and 2, demonstrating stronger community sentiment and more definitive views on large scale mergers versus independence
- The trends between those indicating support, neutrality and opposition to the four options were broadly consistent between the results of the (random) intercept survey and the overall results, although typically with higher levels of neutrality expressed through the intercept survey



The qualitative responses received via the feedback cards, online submissions and following prompting in the intercept survey were extensive, with some of the more common feedback relating to:

*For Independence*

- Mosman should maintain its distinctive identity
- Amalgamation will reduce community spirit, representation and democracy
- Mosman has different issues and Mosman Council is attuned to local needs
- Collaboration with other Councils is important
- Concern that development will be less appropriate under a larger Council
- Larger councils increase administration and bureaucracy
- Services could diminish with amalgamation
- Mergers elsewhere have not produced good outcomes
- Mergers could increase administrative efficiency and reduce overheads

*For Amalgamation*

- Mosman is too small and lacks influence on important issues
- Amalgamation would provide vision, efficiency and economies of scale
- Mergers can reduce cost and duplication

*Neutral*

- There is no reason to amalgamate (or not amalgamate)

**COMBINED TABLE - RESPONSES TO FOUR INDEPENDENCE AND AMALGAMATION OPTIONS - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 2015**

		Feedback cards		Online Survey		Intercept Survey			TOTAL		
Option	Response	Total responses:719		Total responses: 54		Total responses:438			Total responses:1,211		
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	
<b>Option 1 Maintain Mosman's independence along with extensive collaboration with other councils, especially with SHOROC</b>	Strongly supportive	555	81	39	74%	249	57%	73%	843	72%	82%
	Supportive	47	7	5	9%	69	16%		121	10%	
	Neutral	17	2	-	0%	56	13%	13%	73	6%	6%
	Opposed	21	3	4	8%	34	8%	15%	59	5%	12%
	Strongly opposed	44	6	5	9%	30	7%		79	7%	
		684		53		438			1,175		
<b>Option 2 Mosman Council mega-merger with North Sydney, Lane Cove, Hunters Hill, Willoughby and part of Ryde</b>	Strongly supportive	22	4	3	6%	25	6%	9%	50	5%	7%
	Supportive	12	2	2	4%	13	3%		27	2%	
	Neutral	18	3	2	4%	73	17%	17%	93	8%	8%
	Opposed	43	7	6	11%	87	20%	75%	136	12%	84%
	Strongly opposed	512	84	40	76%	240	55%		792	72%	
		607		53		438			1,098		
<b>Option 3 Mosman Council merger with North Sydney Council</b>	Strongly supportive	54	9	6	11%	45	10%	25%	105	10%	23%
	Supportive	79	13	4	7%	65	15%		148	13%	
	Neutral	70	11	3	6%	94	21%	21%	167	15%	15%
	Opposed	134	22	16	30%	98	22%	53%	248	22%	61%
	Strongly opposed	275	45	25	46%	136	31%		436	39%	
		612		54		438			1,104		
<b>Option 4 Mosman Council merger with Manly Council</b>	Strongly supportive	29	5	1	2%	37	8%	21%	67	6%	17%
	Supportive	57	9	6	11%	59	13%		122	11%	
	Neutral	115	19	2	4%	111	25%	25%	228	21%	21%
	Opposed	128	21	15	28%	101	23%	53%	244	22%	62%
	Strongly opposed	280	46	29	55%	130	30%		439	40%	
		609		53		438			1,100		