

Desired outcomes

New Zealanders share a strong national identity, have a sense of belonging and value cultural diversity. Everybody is able to pass their cultural traditions on to future generations. Māori culture is valued and protected.

Cultural identity

Introduction

Culture refers to the customs, practices, languages, values and world views that define social groups such as those based on nationality, ethnicity, region or common interests. Cultural identity is important for people's sense of self and how they relate to others. A strong cultural identity can contribute to people's overall wellbeing.

Cultural identity based on ethnicity is not necessarily exclusive. People may identify themselves as New Zealanders in some circumstances and as part of a particular culture (eg Māori, Chinese or Scottish) in other circumstances. They may also identify with more than one culture.

The desired outcomes recognise the importance of a shared national identity and sense of belonging, and the value of cultural, social and ethnic diversity. They recognise New Zealand is a multicultural society, while also acknowledging that Māori culture has a unique place. For example, under the Treaty of Waitangi, the Crown has an obligation to protect the Māori language.

Defining a national identity is not simple. New Zealand is a diverse nation, made up of many cultural groups, with many different customs and traditions. While people may describe themselves as "New Zealanders", how they define their "New Zealand-ness" will vary from person to person. For example, some people might see a New Zealand identity in aspects of New Zealand's history or in New Zealander's achievements in sporting, artistic or other endeavours, while others might see it through a sense of national characteristics or traits, or through national symbols and icons. Māori culture may form one aspect of national identity, since it is both unique to New Zealand and a part of our identity in the outside world.

Cultural identity is an important contributor to people's wellbeing. Identifying with a particular culture helps people feel they belong and gives them a sense of security. An established cultural identity has also been linked with positive outcomes in areas such as health and education.⁸⁷

It provides access to social networks, which provide support and shared values and aspirations. Social networks can help to break down barriers and build a sense of trust between people, a phenomenon sometimes referred to as social capital.

However, strong cultural identity expressed in the wrong way can contribute to barriers between groups. And members of smaller cultural groups can feel excluded from society if others obstruct, or are intolerant of, their cultural practices.

Indicators

Three indicators are used in this report to provide a snapshot of the health of New Zealand's cultural identity.

The first indicator is the share of New Zealand content programming on television. Since television is the dominant cultural medium for most New Zealanders, it has a strong influence on how we see ourselves.

The second indicator measures the health of the Māori language. Language is a central component of culture and a necessary skill for full participation in Māori society.

The final indicator, the proportion of people who can speak the first language (other than English and Māori) of their ethnic group, is an indicator of the degree to which people are able to retain their culture and traditions and to pass them on to subsequent generations.

Local content programming on New Zealand television

Definition

The number of hours of local content screened on New Zealand television channels during prime-time (6pm to 10pm), as a proportion of the total prime-time schedule.

Local content is generally defined as material that is both predominantly made in New Zealand and reflective of New Zealand identity and culture. From 2005 the indicator includes information from Māori Television Service and Prime Television, in addition to the core channels of TV One, TV2 and TV3. From 2006 it also includes information from C4.

Relevance

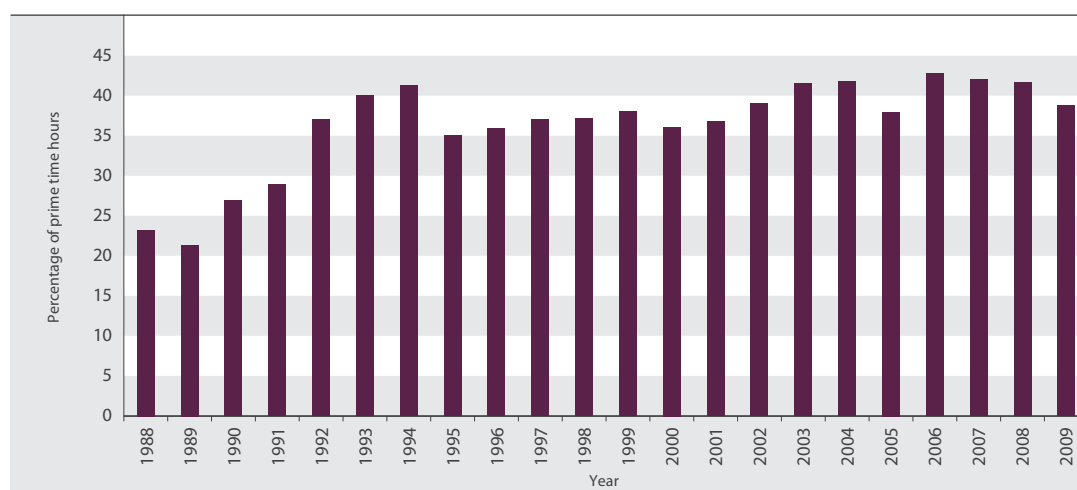
Television is the dominant cultural medium for most New Zealanders. A 2009 survey indicated that New Zealanders spend more than three hours a day watching television.⁸⁸ Ninety-eight percent of New Zealand households have at least one television set.⁸⁹ For many people, television is a major source of news, information and entertainment and it strongly influences their sense of local and national identity. A local content measure reflects the extent to which we see our culture reflected through this medium.

Current level and trends

In 2009, local content on six national free-to-air television channels made up 39 percent of the prime-time schedule. This is below the figure recorded in 2008 (42 percent). The proportion of local content on the three main free-to-air channels rose from 24 percent in 1988 to a peak of 42 percent in 1994, before dropping to 35 percent in 1995. It reached 42 percent again in 2003 and 2004. The fall to 38 percent in 2005 was mainly attributable to the inclusion of Prime Television which had a low level of local content. The subsequent addition of more local sport to Prime Television's schedule and to those of other free-to-air channels, along with the inclusion of C4's local entertainment programming, were important factors behind the increase in 2006.

The percentage of local content in prime-time transmission hours in 2009 differs across the channels: TV One: 51 percent, TV2: 20 percent, TV3: 44 percent, Prime: 13 percent, Māori Television: 54 percent, and C4: 53 percent. Between 2008 and 2009, percentages of local content in prime-time television declined for TV1, Prime, Māori Television and C4 and increased slightly for TV2 and TV3.

Figure CI1.1 **Proportion of local content on prime-time television, 1988–2009**



Source: NZ On Air

Notes: (1) Up to 2004, the figures are for prime-time (6pm–10pm) local content on TV One, TV2 and TV3 only. (2) Figures from 2005 include Prime Television and Māori Television (2005 Māori Television figure derived by the Ministry of Social Development). (3) Figures from 2006 include C4.

Four programme types accounted for over three-quarters of the total local content hours in 2009: news and current affairs (33 percent), information programmes (15 percent), sports (14 percent) and entertainment (14 percent). This was similar to the pattern in 2008.

Table CI1.1 **Percentage share of total hours of local content, by programme type, selected years, 1988–2009**

Programme type	1988	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
News, current affairs	26	23	21	30	33	29	32	34	31	27	27	32	33
Information	10	5	8	17	21	18	19	17	15	15	18	15	15
Sports	24	39	31	20	13	18	14	14	11	17	16	15	14
Entertainment	14	12	9	7	9	10	8	9	13	17	15	16	14
Children's	15	13	15	10	8	8	10	8	8	8	8	9	9
Drama/comedy	2	1	7	6	6	6	6	6	5	6	8	6	5
Māori	6	3	3	6	6	5	6	6	9	4	3	2	3
Documentaries	2	3	5	4	4	5	5	6	7	6	6	6	6
Total New Zealand content hours	2,112	4,249	5,018	6,185	6,190	7,201	6,526	6,423	9,306	10,255	10,784	11,600	11,418

Source: NZ On Air

Notes: (1) Information on types of local programmes in prime-time hours was not published before 2005. (2) These figures relate to a 24-hour period up to 2002; from 2003 on, figures relate to 18 hours (6am to midnight). (3) Up to 2004, the figures are for TV One, TV2 and TV3 only; figures from 2005 include Prime Television and Māori Television (2005 Māori Television figure derived by the Ministry of Social Development); figures from 2006 include C4.

International comparison

International comparisons are difficult due to the inconsistencies in measurement approaches by different countries. However, in 1999, local content accounted for 24 percent of total transmission time in New Zealand, a smaller proportion than that in 10 other surveyed countries. This was compared to the United States (90 percent), the United Kingdom (BBC only, 78 percent), Canada (60 percent), Norway (56 percent), Finland (55 percent), Australia (which mandates a local content transmission quota of 55 percent on all free-to-air commercial networks) and Ireland (RTE only, 41 percent).⁹⁰ Note this is a measure of total air-time programming rather than prime-time programming, which is the measure this indicator is based on.

Māori language speakers

Definition

The number of Māori who reported in the five-yearly population census they could hold a conversation about everyday things in the Māori language (te reo Māori), as a proportion of the Māori population.⁹¹

Relevance

Māori language is a central component of Māori culture, and an important aspect of participation and identity. It also forms part of the broader cultural identity and heritage of New Zealand. In 1987, the Māori language was recognised as an official New Zealand language.

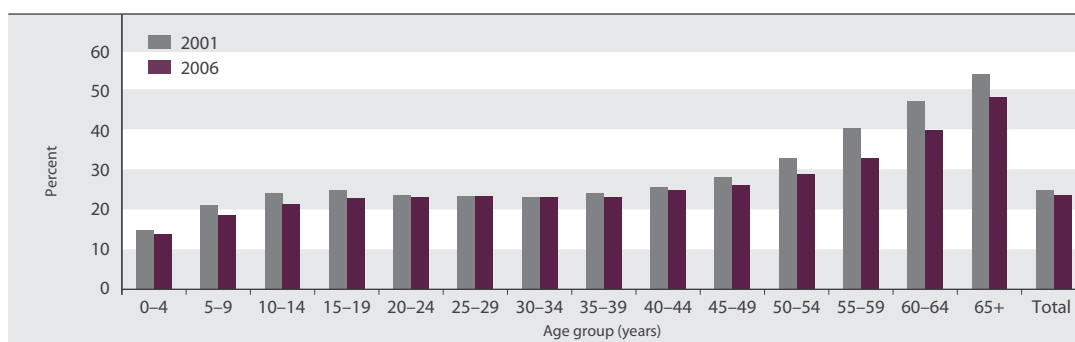
Current level and trends

Almost one-quarter of all Māori (24 percent, or 131,600 people) reported in the 2006 Census they could hold a conversation in Māori about everyday things. Of the 157,100 people (or 4 percent of the total New Zealand population) who could speak Māori in 2006, 84 percent were Māori.

The proportion of Māori who were fluent Māori speakers declined markedly over the last century, particularly following the rapid urbanisation of the Māori population in the 1950s and 1960s. The first national Māori language survey in 1973 estimated the proportion of fluent speakers had fallen to 18 percent. By the 1996 Census, the proportion of Māori who could hold a conversation in te reo Māori had risen to 25 percent and was still at that level in 2001. Although around 1,100 more Māori could speak Māori in 2006 than in 2001, the Māori population had grown by a greater number (39,000 people) and so the proportion of Māori language speakers recorded in the 2006 Census declined slightly, from 25 percent in 2001 to 24 percent in 2006.

Information is also available from the two surveys on the health of the Māori language, conducted in 2001 and 2006. These surveys show that the proportion of Māori aged 15 years and over with some level of speaking proficiency increased from 42 percent in 2001 to 51 percent in 2006. The increase was greatest at the higher proficiency levels, particularly among younger people. In 2006, 14 percent of Māori aged 15 years and over could speak Māori “well” or “very well”, up from 9 percent in 2001. The proportion of younger people (those aged 15–24 years and 25–34 years) with a high proficiency in te reo Māori more than doubled. The data is not directly comparable with census data because of differences in the way the information is collected and because the survey is designed to measure proficiency in te reo, rather than simply asking whether people can converse in the language.⁹²

Figure CI2.1 **Proportion of Māori speakers in the Māori population, by age group, 2001 and 2006**



Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2001 and 2006 censuses

Age differences

Older Māori are considerably more likely than younger Māori to be able to converse about everyday things in Māori. In the 2006 Census, almost half (49 percent) of Māori aged 65 years and over and more than one-third (36 percent) of Māori aged 55–64 years reported being able to converse in the Māori language, compared with less than one-fifth (18 percent) of Māori aged under 15 years.

The decline of te reo speakers recorded in the census between 2001 and 2006 occurred among young and older Māori but was most pronounced at ages 55–64 years.

Table CI2.1 **Proportion (%) of Māori speakers in the Māori population, by age group and sex, 2001 and 2006**

	Age group (years)						Total (all ages)
	Under 15	15–24	25–44	45–54	55–64	65+	
Males							
2001	18.9	22.9	24.5	31.7	45.2	55.3	24.6
2006	17.2	21.5	23.7	28.0	37.8	49.6	23.1
Females							
2001	21.2	26.0	23.7	29.2	42.5	53.5	25.7
2006	18.9	24.5	24.0	27.1	34.3	47.9	24.4
Total							
2001	20.0	24.5	24.1	30.4	43.8	54.3	25.2
2006	18.1	23.0	23.9	27.5	36.0	48.7	23.7

Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2001 and 2006 censuses

Sex differences

Sex differences in the proportion of Māori language speakers among Māori were also apparent, with females being slightly more likely to be able to converse in Māori than males. However, the difference varied by age. From age 45 years onwards, Māori males were more likely than Māori females to speak Māori. For those younger than 25 years, a higher proportion of females than males could speak Māori.

Ethnic differences

After Māori, Pacific peoples had the highest proportion who could speak Māori (4 percent), followed by Europeans (1.6 percent), the Other ethnic group (1.1 percent) and Asians (0.5 percent).⁹³ In contrast to Māori, the ability to speak te reo Māori was higher at younger ages than at older ages in these ethnic groups.

Regional differences

Māori who live in areas with a high proportion of Māori residents are the most likely to be Māori language speakers. In 2006, the regions with the highest proportions of people with conversational Māori skills were Gisborne (32 percent), the Bay of Plenty (31 percent), Northland (28 percent) and Waikato and Hawke's Bay (each 26 percent).

Language retention

Definition

The proportion of people who can speak the “first language” (excluding English) of their ethnic group, for ethnic groups (other than Māori) with an established resident population in New Zealand, as recorded in the 2006 Census.

The ability to speak a first language is defined as being able to hold an everyday conversation in that language. First language refers to a language associated with a given ethnicity, as opposed to the first language of a person. Sign language is not treated as a first language for the purposes of this indicator.

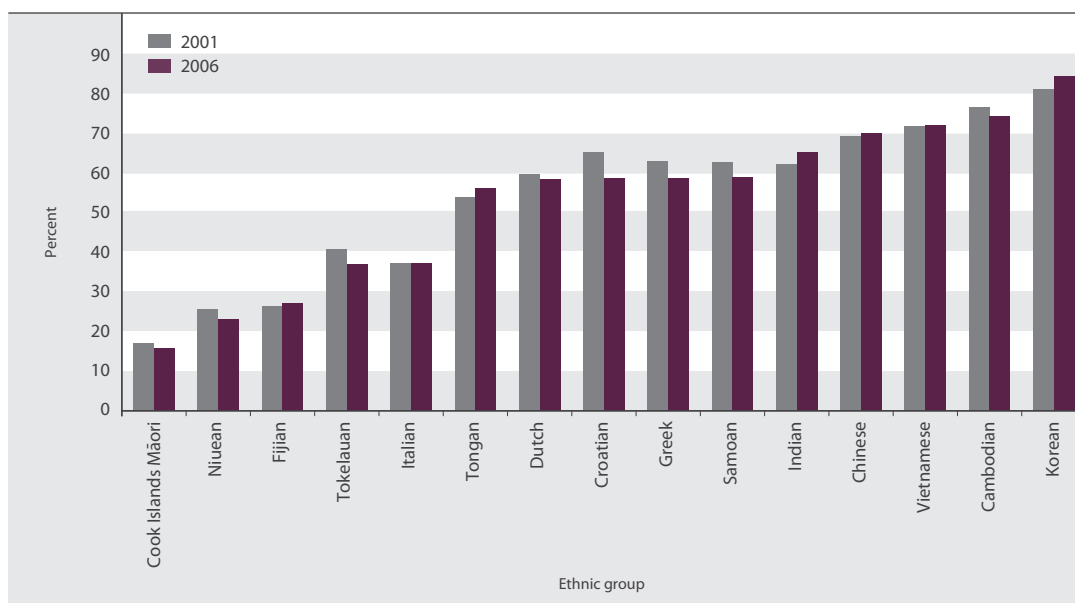
Relevance

The ability of people to speak the language of their identified ethnicity is an indicator of the ability of ethnic groups to retain and pass on their culture and traditions to future generations. Language is a central component of cultural identity.

Current level and trends

In 2006, the proportion of people who could hold an everyday conversation in the first language of their ethnic group varied widely between ethnic groups, from 16 percent of Cook Islands Māori to 84 percent of Koreans. Between 2001 and 2006, most ethnic groups experienced little change in the proportion of people who could speak their first language, although there were slight increases for the Tongan, Indian and Korean ethnic groups and slight decreases for most Pacific and European ethnic groups.

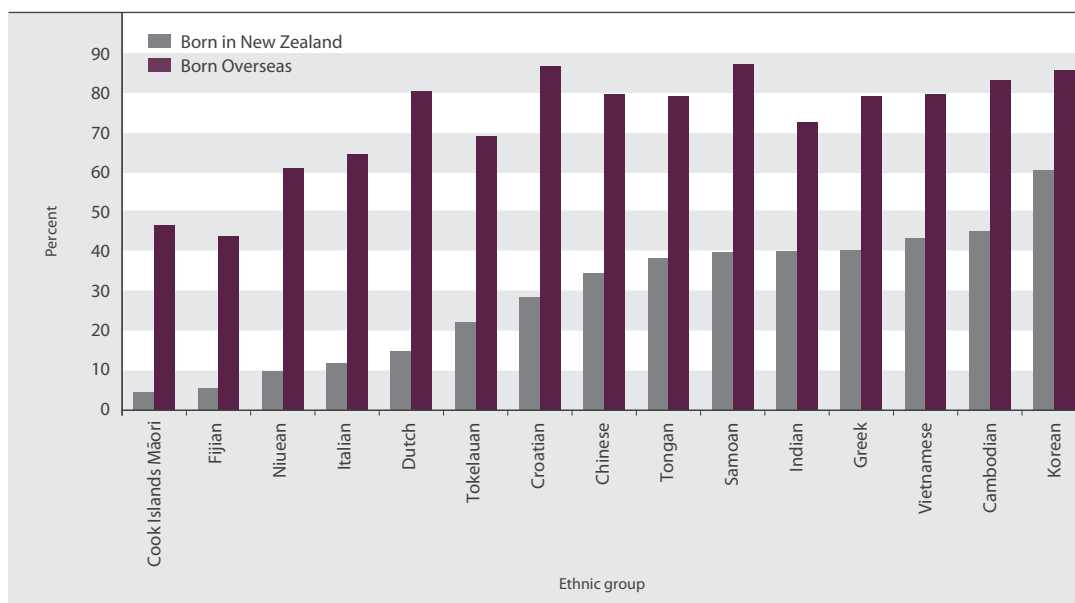
Figure CI3.1 **Proportion of people who could speak the first language of their ethnic group, 2001 and 2006**



Source: Statistics New Zealand, *Census of Population and Dwellings*, unpublished data

For all ethnic groups, those who were born in New Zealand were considerably less likely to be able to speak the first language of their ethnic group than those who were born overseas.

Figure CI3.2 **Proportion of people who could speak the first language of their ethnic group, by birthplace, 2006**



Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings, unpublished data

Age and sex differences

In all ethnic groups, younger people were less likely than older people to be able to hold an everyday conversation in the first language of their ethnic group.

In Pacific and Asian ethnic groups, females tended to be slightly more likely than males to speak the first language of their ethnic group, but the reverse was true in most European ethnic groups.

Table CI3.1 **Proportion (%) of people in selected ethnic groups who can speak the first language of their ethnic group, by age group and sex, 2006**

Ethnic group	Age group (years)			Sex		Total
	0–24	25–49	50+	Male	Female	
Pacific						
Samoan	46	71	88	58	60	59
Cook Islands Māori	6	23	50	15	17	16
Tongan	45	69	79	55	57	56
Niuean	10	34	61	22	24	23
Tokelauan	22	53	77	35	38	37
Fijian	16	35	48	27	27	27
Asian						
Chinese	60	75	83	68	72	70
Indian	53	71	79	63	67	65
Cambodian	63	84	87	71	77	74
Vietnamese	62	80	84	68	75	72
Korean	81	87	89	83	85	84
European						
Dutch	20	62	80	58	58	58
Greek	23	66	86	59	58	58
Croatian	30	62	80	61	56	58
Italian	13	46	67	38	36	37

Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings, unpublished data