

DESIRED OUTCOMES

New Zealanders share a strong national identity, have a sense of belonging and value cultural diversity. All people are 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 – Māori, Chinese or Scottish, for example – in other circumstances. They may also identify with more than one culture.

The desired outcomes recognise it is important for people to feel a sense of national identity and also to be able to belong to particular social or ethnic groups. They recognise New Zealand as a multicultural society, while also acknowledging that Māori culture has a unique place. Under the Treaty of Waitangi, the Crown has an obligation to protect the Māori language.

Defining a national identity is not a simple matter. 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" may vary from person to person. For example, they might see a New Zealand identity in aspects of New Zealand history, in New Zealand achievements in sporting, artistic or other endeavours, 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 unique to New Zealand and is part of our identity in the outside world.

Cultural identity is an important contributor to people's wellbeing. Identifying with a particular culture gives people feelings of belonging and security. It also provides people with access to social networks which provide support and shared values and aspirations. These can help break down barriers and build a sense of trust between people – a phenomenon sometimes referred to as social capital – although excessively strong cultural identity can also contribute to barriers between groups. An established cultural identity has also been linked with positive outcomes in areas such as health and education.⁶⁹

Conversely, members of minority cultures can feel excluded from society if the majority of those in authority obstruct, or are intolerant of, their cultural practices, as happened to the Māori language and culture through much of New Zealand's history.

Culture can also play a part in promoting social wellbeing in other ways. A strong national culture or identity, and strength in artistic endeavours, can be a source of economic strength and higher material standards of living.

INDICATORS

Three indicators are used in this report. They are local content programming on New Zealand television, Māori language speakers who identify as Māori and the language retention of first languages (other than English and Māori) from identified ethnic groups.

While these indicators cannot provide an exhaustive picture of New Zealand's cultural identity, they do provide snapshots of the health of particular aspects of it. There is a strong focus on the health of Māori culture.

The first indicator, the amount of New Zealand content programming on television, provides one way of measuring the strength of New Zealanders' sense of national identity.

The second indicator measures the current 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, between 1988 and 2004. Local content is generally defined as material that is both predominantly made in New Zealand and reflective of New Zealand identity and culture.

RELEVANCE

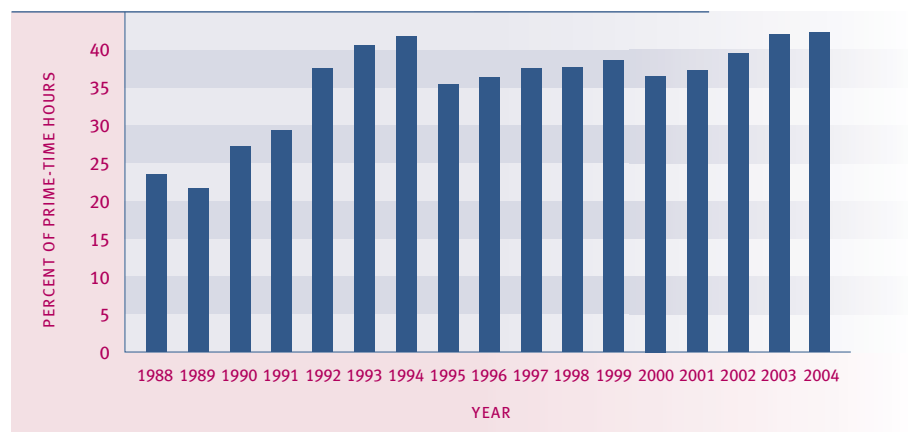
Television is the dominant cultural medium for most New Zealanders. The *1998/1999 Time Use Survey* indicated that New Zealanders spend almost two hours per day watching television or videos.⁷⁰ Ninety-eight percent of New Zealand households have at least one television set.⁷¹ For many people, television is a major source of news, information and entertainment and 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 2004, local content on the three main television channels comprised 42 percent of the prime-time schedule, the same level that was reported in 2003. The proportion of local content rose from 24 percent in 1988 to a peak of 42 percent in 1994, before dropping to 35 percent in 1995.

The percentage of local content in prime-time transmission hours differs across the three main channels: TV One: 59 percent (60 percent in 2003), TV2: 30 percent (25 percent in 2003), and TV3: 39 percent (41 percent in 2003).

Figure CI1.1 **Proportion of local content on prime-time television, 1988–2004**



Source: NZ On Air (2005)

Note: These figures are for prime-time (6pm–10pm) local content on TV One, TV2 and TV3 only

Since 1988, other free-to-air broadcasters (including Prime, a number of regional channels and the Māori Television Service) as well as pay-television channels, Sky (satellite) and Saturn (cable), have joined the three national television channels.

Three programme types accounted for two-thirds of the local content hours in 2004: news and current affairs (34 percent), information programmes (17 percent), and sports (14 percent). The hours of children's content fell by 21 percent and information programmes by 13 percent between 2003 and 2004. Over the same period the hours of documentaries rose by 17 percent.

Table CI1.1

Percentage share of total hours of local content by programme type, selected years, 1988–2004

Programme type	1988	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
News, current affairs	26	23	21	30	33	29	32	34
Information	10	5	8	17	21	18	19	17
Sports	24	39	31	20	13	18	14	14
Entertainment	14	12	9	7	9	10	8	9
Children's	15	13	15	10	8	8	10	8
Drama/comedy	2	1	7	6	6	6	6	6
Māori	6	3	3	6	6	5	6	6
Documentaries	2	3	5	4	4	5	5	6
Children's drama	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total New Zealand content hours	2,112	4,249	5,018	6,185	6,190	7,201	6,526	6,423

Source: NZ On Air (2000) Appendix 3, p29; NZ On Air (2005) Figure 2, p8

Note: Information on types of local programmes in prime-time hours is not published. These figures relate to a 24-hour period up to 2002. From 2003 onwards, figures relate to 18 hours (6am to midnight)

INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON

International comparisons are difficult due to inconsistencies in measurement approaches by different countries. In 1999, local content accounted for 24 percent of total transmission time in surveyed countries, and New Zealand had the smallest proportion of local content. 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).⁷² Note that this is a measure of total air-time programming, rather than prime-time programming, which is the measure the indicator in this report is based on.

Māori language speakers

DEFINITION

The number of Māori who reported in the census they could hold a conversation about everyday things in Māori, as a proportion of the Māori population.

RELEVANCE

As a central component of Māori culture, Māori language is an important aspect of participation and identity. Māori language forms part of the broader cultural identity and heritage of New Zealand and in 1987 was recognised as an official language of New Zealand.⁷³

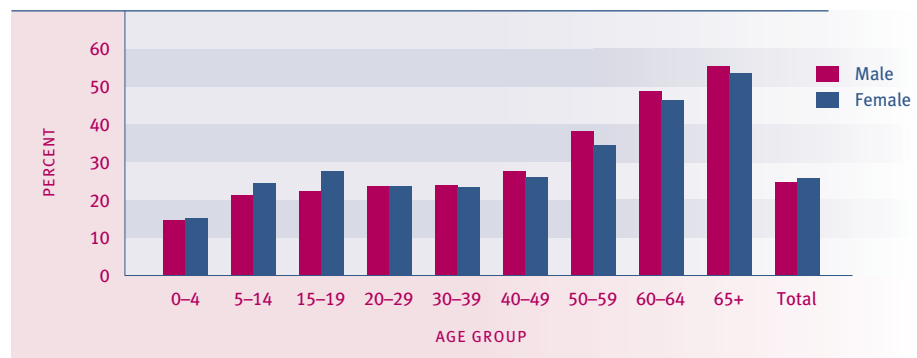
CURRENT LEVEL AND TRENDS

The 2001 Census showed that one-quarter of all Māori (25 percent or 130,482) and 28 percent of Māori aged 15 and over (91,809) stated they could hold a conversation in Māori about everyday things. Māori accounted for 81 percent of the total number of Māori language speakers (160,500). The 1996 Census also showed that the proportion of Māori who spoke te reo was around 25 percent.

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 that the proportion of fluent speakers had fallen to 18 percent.

Information on the fluency of Māori speakers is available from the survey of the health of the Māori language, conducted in 2001. The survey showed that more people could understand Māori (59 percent of Māori aged 15 years and over, or 190,209) than speak it (42 percent, or 136,600). In terms of proficiency, while 42 percent of Māori could speak some Māori, only 9 percent could speak Māori “well” or “very well”, 11 percent could speak Māori “fairly well”, and 22 percent could speak Māori but “not very well”. Similarly, while 59 percent of Māori could understand Māori, only 15 percent could understand Māori “well” or “very well”, 18 percent could understand Māori “fairly well”, and 25 percent could understand Māori but “not very well”.⁷⁴

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



Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2001 Census

AGE AND SEX DIFFERENCES

Older Māori are considerably more likely than younger Māori to be able to converse about everyday things in Māori. In the 2001 Census, more than half of Māori aged 65 and over (54 percent) reported having conversational fluency in the Māori language, compared with less than one-quarter (22 percent) of Māori under 40.

Sex differences in the proportion of Māori language speakers were also apparent. From age 40 years onwards, males were more likely than females to be Māori language speakers, while at younger ages (below 20 years) a higher proportion of females than males could speak Māori.

Among non-Māori, the proportion of Māori language speakers was higher in the younger ages. Females were also more likely to be Māori language speakers than males.

ETHNIC DIFFERENCES

The 2001 Census showed that 4.5 percent of the total population could hold a conversation in Māori. After Māori, Pacific peoples had the highest proportion who could speak Māori (5.8 percent), followed by Europeans (1.7 percent) and Asians (0.8 percent).⁷⁵

REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

Māori who live in areas with a high proportion of Māori residents are the most likely to be Māori language speakers. Regions with the highest proportion of people with conversational Māori skills were Gisborne (35 percent), Bay of Plenty (32 percent), Northland (30 percent), Waikato (28 percent) and Hawke's Bay (27 percent).

Language retention

DEFINITION

The proportion of people who can speak a “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 2001 Census. The ability to speak a language is defined as being able to hold an everyday conversation in that language. “First language” refers to an indigenous 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.

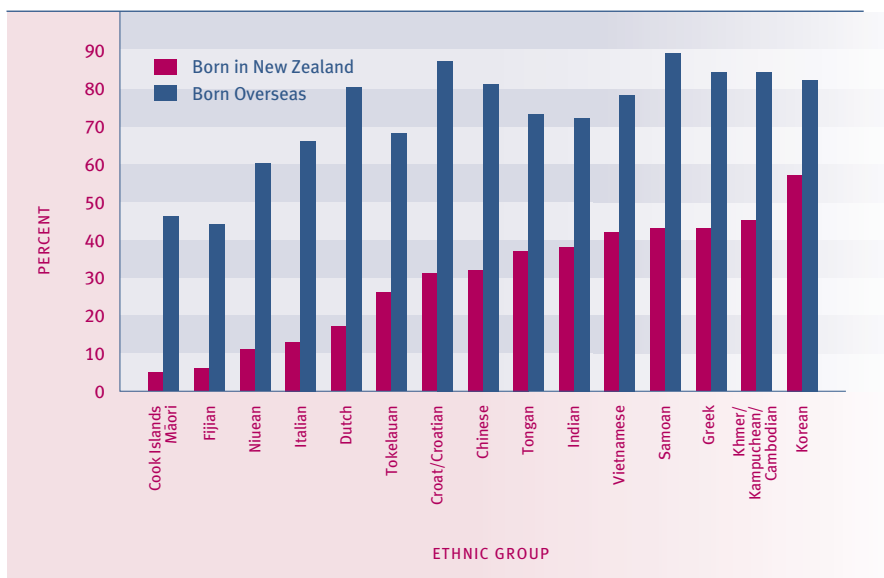
RELEVANCE

The ability to speak the language of one’s identified ethnicity is an indicator of the ability to retain and pass on one’s culture and traditions to future generations. Language is a central component of cultural identity.

CURRENT LEVEL

In 2001, the proportion of people who could hold an everyday conversation in the “first language” of their ethnic group varied widely between ethnic groups, from 17 percent of Cook Islands Māori to 81 percent of Koreans. In all ethnic groups, those who were born in New Zealand were less likely to be able to speak the “first language” than those who were born overseas.

Figure CI3.1 **Proportion of people who could speak the “first language” of their ethnic group, by birthplace, 2001**



Source: Statistics New Zealand (2004g)

AGE AND SEX DIFFERENCES

In all ethnic groups, young people were less likely than older people to be able to hold an everyday conversation in the “first language” of their ethnic group. The proportions were similar for males and females.

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, 2001

	Age (years)			Sex		Total
	0–24	25–49	50+	Males	Females	
Pacific peoples						
Samoa	50	75	89	61	64	62
Cook Islands Māori	7	26	53	16	18	17
Tongan	44	66	73	53	54	54
Tokelauan	27	57	76	38	43	40
Niuean	13	38	61	24	27	26
Fijian (except Fiji Indian/ Indo-Fijian)	14	36	50	26	26	26
Asian						
Indian	50	70	74	61	63	62
Chinese	59	75	82	67	71	69
Khmer/Kampuchean/ Cambodian	67	85	87	73	79	76
Vietnamese	60	82	84	69	74	72
Korean	78	84	84	80	82	81
European						
Dutch/Netherlands	21	63	81	59	60	59
Greek (incl. Greek Cypriot)	27	73	89	64	61	63
Croat/Croatian	41	70	81	66	63	65
Italian	13	44	70	39	35	37

Source: Statistics New Zealand, 2001 Census, unpublished data