Ministry for Ethnic Communities
Te Tari Mātāwaka

2025/2026

Annual Report of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities
Te Pūrongo ā-Tau a Te Tari Mātāwaka

The Ministry for Ethnic Communities is a separate Ministry but operates as a departmental agency with the Department of Internal Affairs – Te Tari Taiwhenua as the host agency

Who we are

Driven by purpose – the why behind our Ministry

Our Ministry was established on 1 July 2021 in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry following the terrorist attack on Christchurch mosques in March 2019.

Since our inception, we have embraced our role of the Government's lead for supporting Ethnic Communities and working to maximise the benefits of diversity and inclusion for all people in New Zealand.

Our values

We lead by example, living the values we champion among the Ethnic Communities we serve. These values are the guiding principles of our work, helping us create a truly inclusive Aotearoa.

We encourage all our employees to embody our core values:

Show Manaakitanga (kindness)



Practice Whakakotahitanga (inclusivity)



Display Whakamanawanui (courage)



Be Ngākau pono (authentic)

Departmental agency

The Ministry for Ethnic Communities (the Ministry) operates as a departmental agency hosted within the Department of Internal Affairs (the Department).

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Statement of Responsibility

I am responsible, as Chief Executive, for:

- the preparation of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (Te Tari Mātāwaka) financial statements, and statements of expenses and capital expenditure, and for the judgements expressed in them;
- having in place a system of internal control designed to provide reasonable assurance as to the integrity and reliability of financial reporting;
- ensuring that end-of-year performance information on each appropriation administered by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities is provided in accordance with Sections 19A to 19C of the Public Finance Act 1989, whether or not that information is included in this Annual Report; and
- the accuracy of any end-of-year performance information prepared by the Ministry for Ethnic Communities, whether or not that information is included in this Annual Report.

In my opinion:

- the Annual Report fairly reflects the operations, progress, and organisational health and capability of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities;
- the financial statements fairly reflect the financial position of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities as at 30 June 2026 and its operations for the year ended on that date; and
- the forecast financial statements fairly reflect the forecast financial position of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities as at 30 June 2027 and its operations for the year ending on that date.



Pratima Namasivayam

Chief Executive
Ministry for Ethnic Communities – Te Tari Mātāwaka

30 September 2026

Section 1

Chief Executive's foreword

It is a privilege to present this Annual Report as Chief Executive of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities.

The work reflected in this report was delivered under the leadership of my predecessor, Mervin Singham. I acknowledge Mervin's contribution to establishing and growing the Ministry, and the strong foundations that have enabled us to continue supporting New Zealand's Ethnic Communities and providing advice to government.

This report comes at a time of significant change for New Zealand.

Over the past decade, Ethnic Communities have grown by 78% and now make up more than 22% of our population. This is not simply a demographic story. It is a story about the pace of change that is reshaping our communities, workplaces, economy and public institutions.

At the same time, New Zealand is navigating increasing geopolitical uncertainty, rapid technological change, growing pressures on social cohesion, and new questions about how communities connect, participate and thrive. These trends are not occurring in isolation. They are influencing one another in ways that will shape the country we become.

As I have travelled across New Zealand and met with community leaders, businesses, faith organisations, researchers and public sector leaders, I have been struck by two things. First, the scale of significant contribution being made by Ethnic Communities across every part of our society, bringing skills, ideas, connections and leadership. Second, the pace of change that is occurring and the opportunity it presents for all communities.

For the Ministry, this year has reinforced an important lesson. Our greatest value lies not in the number of activities we deliver, but in the insights we bring as the Government's chief advisor on ethnic diversity and inclusion. Our role is to ensure the experiences, aspirations and challenges of Ethnic Communities are visible in decision-making, and that New Zealand is well placed to realise the opportunities that diversity creates.

Our contribution is presented in this report.

This year, the Ministry continued to strengthen New Zealand's understanding of Ethnic Communities through data, evidence and research. Our work highlighted an estimated $87 billion economic contribution, while also deepening understanding of issues ranging from business ownership and employment to justice, safety and youth mental health. Together, evidence like this helps government, communities and businesses better understand the pace and impact of demographic change and make informed decisions about the opportunities and challenges ahead.

The year also reinforced something communities have long understood: lasting progress is strongest when communities themselves help shape the solutions. The Harmony Accord, developed by leaders from Jewish and Muslim community organisations, demonstrated what is possible when communities build through dialogue, understanding and shared responsibility. Its success attracted international interest, but its real significance lies closer to home. It showed that social cohesion is not something government can create on behalf of communities. It is built through relationships, trust and leadership between and within communities themselves.

That same principle is reflected across much of our work. Whether supporting emergency preparedness, improving access to information and services, strengthening resilience to foreign interference, or investing through the Ethnic Communities Development Fund, our role is often to help create the conditions for communities to succeed. The strongest and most resilient communities are those equipped with the information, networks and confidence

to respond to challenges and seize opportunities for themselves.

We also continued to support economic opportunity and participation. Initiatives such as Ethnic Xchange brought together ethnic entrepreneurs, business leaders, investors and government to strengthen connections and explore trade opportunities for growth. Combined with our work to support ethnic women entrepreneurs and increase participation in public sector governance, these efforts help ensure Ethnic Communities can contribute fully to New Zealand's economic and civic life. Supporting that contribution is not only important for communities themselves, but for New Zealand's future prosperity and success.

As I reflect on the year, I have become increasingly convinced that sustained focus matters.

For a Ministry of our size, impact comes not from doing more, but from making a distinctive contribution where we are uniquely positioned to add value. This year's work has reinforced the importance of social cohesion and better data and evidence. These are areas where our community relationships, insights and evidence allow us to make a distinctive contribution that extends beyond the Ministry itself.

On behalf of my colleagues across the Ministry, I would like to thank the community leaders, businesses, faith and research organisations, and partners across government whose expertise, commitment and trust make this work possible. The work described in this report reflects their commitment as much as our own.

The opportunity ahead is significant, and it will only be realised through the continued leadership, partnership and contribution of those who work alongside us to help build a more cohesive, resilient and prosperous New Zealand for everyone.

The Ministry is proud to play its part in this important work.



Pratima Namasivayam

Chief Executive
Ministry for Ethnic Communities – Te Tari Mātāwaka

2025/26 Highlights



Harmony Accord – Advancing social cohesion through trust and dialogue

The Harmony Accord brought together Jewish and Muslim community organisations to address the impacts of global conflicts through dialogue, cooperation and shared leadership. In doing so, a platform has been created for practical action for community organisations to reinforce New Zealand's social cohesion and resilience.



Ethnic Xchange 2025 – Driving economic growth through global connections

Ethnic Xchange 2025 connected ethnic businesses with investors, government and global networks to unlock trade, investment, and partnership opportunities, strengthening their contribution to New Zealand's long-term economic growth and prosperity.



Community Resilience to Foreign Interference Hub – Useable resources

Communities were supported to build resilience to foreign interference through trusted information, tools and resources, including 14 resources in 31 languages alongside the delivery of community workshops.



Data and Evidence – Visibility of diversity

We jointly published new research showing Ethnic Communities contributed $87 billion to New Zealand's GDP (22%), providing compelling evidence of their growing contribution to New Zealand's economy.



Investment in Community-Led Initiatives – Funding for communities

Through the Ethnic Communities Development Fund, we processed a record 718 funding applications, distributing $4.2 million to 484 community projects that will strengthen participation, leadership, inclusion and community capability.



Emergency Management Bill – Strengthening community preparedness

We provided community perspectives and insights to inform the development of the Emergency Management Bill, helping strengthen government emergency management responses and enhancing preparedness across Ethnic Communities.



Faith Leaders Forums – Strengthening social cohesion across faith communities

The Faith Leaders Forum fostered trusted relationships and collaboration between government agencies and faith leaders on issues affecting their communities.

Section 2
Progress on Strategic Intentions

Strategic Intentions 2024–2028

The Ministry's strategic priorities reflect the areas where we believe we can make the greatest contribution to New Zealand. Together, they support our two strategic impact areas of strengthening social cohesion and building better evidence and data to inform decision-making. Through these priorities, we help ensure that Ethnic Communities are connected, included and able to contribute fully to New Zealand society. This has been done while improving the evidence, insights and advice that enable the Government to respond effectively to their needs and aspirations.

We work with communities, other government agencies, and a range of organisations to help increase social cohesion and to ensure that New Zealand is a place where everyone feels welcome, valued and empowered.

Our mandate comes from the communities we engage with and their priorities are ours:

1. **Promoting the value of diversity and improving the inclusion of Ethnic Communities in wider society.**
2. **Ensuring government services are accessible for Ethnic Communities.**
3. **Improving economic outcomes for Ethnic Communities, including addressing barriers to employment.**
4. **Connecting and empowering Ethnic Community groups.**

Priority 1:

Promoting the value of diversity and improving the inclusion of Ethnic Communities in wider society

The Ministry is operating in a challenging and evolving environment with rapid technological, geopolitical and social change, creating new opportunities and challenges for communities, institutions and society.

Strong social cohesion helps build trust, belonging and participation, which are essential for thriving communities and a well-functioning society. The Ministry supports communities to strengthen relationships, leadership and capability, so communities can lead their own progress and build resilience. The initiatives outlined below are examples of how we have contributed to that work over the past year.

Harmony Accord

On 22 July 2025, the Ministry facilitated the signing of the Harmony Accord at Government House by leaders of the New Zealand Jewish Council, the New Zealand Jewish Community Security Group Charitable Trust, the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand, Dayenu: New Zealand Jews Against Occupation, the Federation of Islamic Associations of New Zealand, and His Highness the Aga Khan Council for Australia and New Zealand.

The Accord was developed in response to global conflicts and their impact on Jewish and Muslim communities in New Zealand. It established a shared commitment to promote understanding, reject all forms of hate and extremism, and strengthen social cohesion through ongoing dialogue and cooperation.

As a voluntary, community-led agreement, the Ministry has played a deliberate facilitative role, creating the conditions for signatories to build relationships and identify opportunities for collaboration at a pace determined by them. This approach has supported steady progress in maintaining dialogue, strengthening mutual understanding, and building connections between participating organisations.

A significant early outcome emerged in February 2026 when signatories identified youth engagement as a practical opportunity to foster trust and reduce social distance between their communities. Building on this shared priority, the Ministry supported a Youth Innovation Lab in June 2026, bringing together 12 Jewish and Muslim youth.

Faith Leaders Forum

During the year, government agencies used the Faith Leaders Forum to engage directly with faith leaders and gain insights into community concerns. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) discussed visa settings affecting faith communities, including the Culturally Arranged Marriage Visitor Visa and Religious Worker Work Visa. Feedback raised through the Forum was provided to MBIE, helping ensure community perspectives informed government agency consideration of these issues.

The New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) also engaged with the Forum, providing an overview of the 2025 Security Threat Environment report and discussing issues such as foreign interference, extremism and community safety. This enabled faith leaders to better understand emerging risks, share accurate information with their communities, and strengthen community awareness and resilience.

By fostering mutual understanding, strengthening relationships, and enabling constructive engagement on matters of community importance, the Forum contributed to greater social cohesion, inclusion and community resilience across New Zealand.

Ethnic Communities' contribution to public sector governance and board appointments

The Ministry has identified gaps in the contribution and participation of Ethnic Communities in the governance and leadership spheres of the public service.

Between March and May 2026, the Ministry delivered a series of governance information sessions that were at no cost to participants, to support greater representation of people from Ethnic Communities on public sector boards. The sessions increased awareness of governance pathways, board appointment processes, and opportunities to contribute to public sector decision-making.

Through practical insights and lived experience shared by seasoned ethnic directors, participants gained greater confidence and understanding of governance roles. This Ministry-facilitated process has highlighted the under-representation of Ethnic Communities within governance structures and improved the visibility of Ethnic Communities in public sector leadership.

By strengthening the pipeline of qualified candidates from Ethnic Communities, the initiative supported government efforts to broaden the diversity of perspectives informing public sector governance, policy development and strategic decision-making. Increased representation helps ensure policies and services are better informed by the experiences and needs of New Zealand's diverse communities.

Priority 2:

Ensuring government services are accessible for Ethnic Communities

Better evidence, data and insights help New Zealand understand its changing population. This year we worked to strengthen the breadth and depth of information available about Ethnic Communities, ensuring their needs, aspirations and potential are reflected in the decisions, services and investments that shape New Zealand.

Deeper dives into data and evidence

Since the launch of the Ethnic Evidence report in 2024, the Ministry has continued to expand the evidence base on Ethnic Communities, providing more detailed insights into areas that are important to communities, government agencies and decision-makers.

This has included producing more detail on Ethnic Community business ownership, pay gaps for Ethnic Communities, insights on ethnic women entrepreneurs, and updated information on justice and safety. The Ministry has also built on concerns raised through Ethnic Evidence and by communities themselves. A key example being a project looking at youth mental health for Middle Eastern, Latin American, and African (MELAA)[36]. The topic was approached from both a data and an experiential perspective to build a richer understanding of community experiences and needs.

The Ministry has also partnered with others to address important evidence gaps. For example, it jointly commissioned a report on the economic contribution of ethnic minority communities with the Waitakere Ethnic Board and the MBIE Auckland Policy Office. Significantly, this report revealed that these communities contributed $87 billion to New Zealand's GDP in 2023. Other insights included that in comparison with the New Zealand European population, these communities also tend to be younger, with a higher proportion aged 25 to 54 (prime working years), and are more likely to hold tertiary-level qualifications.

To improve access to information and increase the visibility of Ethnic Communities in decision-making, the Ministry has developed a dashboard based on Census 2023 data.

Improving the information and evidence base for Ethnic Communities remains one of the core priorities for the Ministry, with updates to ethnic evidence and further deep dives into topics such as business, employment, justice and safety, and emergency management underway.

Emergency preparedness

Ethnic evidence data and experience from past emergencies show that emergency preparedness is lower for some Ethnic Communities compared to the wider population. Preparedness is a result of a range of factors, including how well systems (such as emergency planning) are engaging with increasingly diverse communities.

A key role for the Ministry is to support improvements at a systems level. The Ministry has supported work led by the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) on the Emergency Management Bill. The Bill provides significant opportunities for the skills, expertise and specific needs of Ethnic Communities to be reflected in emergency management.

As a result of this work, the Ministry has provided insights from Ethnic Communities about barriers to emergency preparedness and ensured those perspectives informed emergency management decision-making within New Zealand.

Language Assistance Service

Interpreting services are essential to ensuring equitable access to government services for all New Zealanders. After transitioning the Language Assistance Service from MBIE to the Ministry in April 2025, the Ministry has been the lead agency for the Service, strengthening system leadership and coordination, as well as reviewing the programme for future improvements and longer-term sustainability.

Priority 3:

Improving economic outcomes, including addressing barriers to employment

While the Ministry continues with community engagement and convening of discussions, it is now also working on initiatives and network development supported by data and evidence.

[36] The Ministry's remit includes people who identify their ethnicity as Middle Eastern, Latin American, Continental European, Asian or African, and that this includes new and temporary migrants, former refugees, asylum-seekers, long-term settlers and those born in New Zealand.

In particular, the second business symposium reached a significantly greater audience and produced two key reports, supported by a specific workstream focused on ethnic women entrepreneurs.

Ethnic Xchange 2025

The Ministry hosted the second iteration of its business symposium, Ethnic Xchange 2025: Going for Growth – Expanding Ethnic Enterprises. The symposium brought together more than 460 participants from across New Zealand and overseas, including 17 ethnic business organisations, entrepreneurs, innovators, researchers, government ministers, high commissioners and ambassadors. The event provided a platform to share evidence, exchange ideas and strengthen connections across the business ecosystem.

The growing scale and support for Ethnic Xchange is reflected in the increasing recognition of its value to the ethnic business community, with attendance rising from over 300 in 2024 to more than 460 in 2025, alongside strong backing from public and private sector sponsors.

Ethnic Xchange 2025 reinforced the Ministry's focus on economic development as a key foundation for social cohesion. Two major reports were released at the symposium, highlighting the significant contribution of Ethnic Communities to New Zealand's economy, estimated at $87 billion, and underscoring the growing impact of ethnic women entrepreneurs.

Raising visibility and influence of ethnic women entrepreneurs

The Ministry has identified gaps and opportunities for ethnic women entrepreneurs within the wider ethnic business communities in New Zealand.

An inaugural gathering of ethnic women entrepreneurs was held in Auckland in August 2025, leading to the establishment of the NZ Ethnic Women Entrepreneurs Network. The network has continued to grow, with more than 160 members sharing information, building connections and providing peer support.

In November 2025, the Ministry launched the Ethnic Women Entrepreneurs: Amplifying Impact for New Zealand report at Ethnic Xchange 2025 (Breaking Barriers Report). Drawing on in-depth research and interviews with 16 entrepreneurs, the report highlighted the significant contribution of ethnic women to innovation, job creation and export growth. It also identified systemic barriers to business success, including limited access to capital, investment bias, and challenges accessing networks and mentorship.

The report provided an evidence base to inform policy and stakeholder discussions on improving economic inclusion, and included recommendations for government, business support organisations, ethnic businesses, community organisations and philanthropies. Together, these initiatives increased the visibility of ethnic women entrepreneurs and supported the Ministry's priority to promote diversity and strengthen the participation of Ethnic Communities in New Zealand's economic development.

Priority 4:

Connecting and empowering Ethnic Community groups

Security and resilience

Foreign interference remains a complex and evolving challenge for New Zealand. Some Ethnic Communities experience pressure, intimidation, and attempts by foreign states to silence their voices. Everyone in New Zealand has the right to feel safe and express their views freely. When those rights are undermined, it affects us all.

Through sustained engagement with Ethnic Communities, the Ministry learned about their experiences of foreign interference, how it impacts them and what support they need.

In the past year, the Ministry developed the Community Resilience to Foreign Interference Hub (www.crfi.govt.nz), creating New Zealand's first dedicated national platform for building community

resilience to foreign interference. The launch of the Hub in July 2026 represents a significant step forward in New Zealand's ability to support communities to identify risks, access support and strengthen their resilience.

The Hub provides a central and accessible source of trusted information, practical tools and guidance, strengthening communities' ability to recognise foreign interference, and respond in ways that work for them. It has been developed with communities in mind and directly informed by their experiences. The Hub will continue to evolve alongside community needs and the changing nature of foreign interference.

Historically, the Ministry's role has often been to share information and connect communities with the Government. The Hub reflects an evolution of that role, helping to build the foundations that enable communities to respond to complex challenges themselves.

Throughout the year, the Ministry published six new resources to help communities understand foreign interference and the roles of government agencies, and to provide them with practical support and guidance. These resources, developed using community insights, are available in 31 languages to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of communities across New Zealand (see link above).

A further eight resources were developed in 2025 for release through the Hub in July 2026, including a comprehensive toolkit for community organisations and leaders, and resources on how to seek support and advice.

Ethnic Communities Development Fund (ECDF)

The Ethnic Communities Development Fund (ECDF) provides $4.2 million a year for one-off projects that support Ethnic Communities to develop skills, celebrate their culture and participate in society.

In 2025/26, a total of 718 applications were processed (up from 615 in 2024/25) and 484 grants were awarded (up from 408 in 2024/25) to the total value of $4.2 million.

The Fund is highly valued by Ethnic Communities, with demand consistently exceeding available funding.



2025/26 –
484 grants awarded

The table below shows how the 2025/2026 grants align with the Ministry's four strategic priorities:

Ministry priorities		Number of grants awarded
1.	Take action to promote the value of diversity and improve inclusion of Ethnic Communities.	231
2.	Ensure equitable provision of, and access to, government services for Ethnic Communities.	18
3.	Develop and support initiatives to improve economic outcomes, including addressing barriers to employment.	33
4.	Work to connect and empower Ethnic Community groups.	202
	Total grants	**484**

Celebrating diversity and inclusion at Parliament

Celebrating community events at Parliament reaffirms our commitment to fostering understanding, respect and unity in New Zealand. Hosted by the Minister for Ethnic Communities, over 400 Ethnic Community and business stakeholders attended one of the events held in celebration of Diwali in November 2025, the Lunar New Year 2026 and Eid in April 2026. These events showcase New Zealand's rich multicultural heritage and provide opportunities for collective celebration of culture and social cohesion.

Section 3
Assessment of operations

Overview of delivery

As the Government's chief advisor on Ethnic Communities, we have undertaken a range of activities and work programmes to deliver outcomes within the following key areas in 2025/26.

Economic growth

We engaged with ethnic business leaders, ethnic business councils, private sector organisations and government agencies to identify the critical economic priorities for Ethnic Communities. In particular, the hosting of the second Ethnic Xchange conference (refer to page 242) built on the first conference. The second conference had significantly increased participation, and it produced key reports which generated ideas and interactions that will contribute strongly to economic development within our Ethnic Communities and the New Zealand economy.

Security and resilience

Our work on foreign interference takes a non-securitised approach building on the trusted relationships the Ministry has with communities to strengthen community resilience. After previously engaging with communities to learn from their experiences, the focus has shifted to the provision of resources for communities to build their knowledge and capabilities as the groups which are often the first to encounter foreign interference (refer to page 242).

Social cohesion

Through targeted programmes and events, stakeholder engagement, and support via the Ethnic Communities Development Fund, we have strengthened Ethnic Communities' sense of participation and belonging in New Zealand society (refer to page 243).

Data and evidence

In 2025/26, the Ministry followed the extensive Ethnic Evidence Report with a joint report with the Waitakere Ethnic Board, and the MBIE Auckland Policy Office, which highlighted the major contribution that Ethnic Communities make to New Zealand's economy. The Ministry has delivered a range of subsequent work providing in-depth insights into topics such as business, employment and emergency management, informing advice provided across government and other organisations (refer to page 240).

Implementing the Government's priorities

Ministerial priorities

In 2025/26, Mark Mitchell, the Minister for Ethnic Communities, outlined his key priorities for the Ethnic Communities portfolio:

- Economic growth – improving the quality of life and unlocking opportunities for all New Zealanders, including Ethnic Communities.
- Security and resilience – strengthening the resilience of Ethnic Communities to recognise and manage foreign interference risks.
- Emergency management – ensuring that Ethnic Communities do not have gaps in their abilities to respond to emergencies, and these communities are on an equal footing with other communities.
- Social cohesion – continuing to build an inclusive and unified society as New Zealand becomes increasingly diverse.

The Ministry has progressed the priorities of the Minister in 2025/26. Refer to Section 2 – *Progress on Strategic Intentions* for more information.

Year-end performance information on Appropriations

We use performance measures to demonstrate the contribution our work makes toward improving outcomes for Ethnic Communities and New Zealand as a whole.

Our performance measures (refer to pages 88 to 90) assess the impact we have made across key functions, including the provision of:

- information, advisory and support services to Ethnic Communities
- policy advice and services to support Ministers in discharging their portfolio responsibilities relating to Ethnic Communities.

In the past year the Ministry has reviewed its performance framework to ensure our measures remain relevant and meaningful. We see an opportunity to strengthen our performance measures to better reflect the value of the Ministry's contribution in two strategic impact areas: strengthening social cohesion and building better evidence and data to inform government decision-making.

Following this review, the Ministry developed a set of measures that will be monitored over the coming year, alongside the existing performance measures, to provide better insight into progress against these impact areas. This period will allow the Ministry to test these shadow measures, establish baselines and assess their usefulness before incorporating them into a broader performance framework. An integrated set of indicators is expected to be used from the 2027/28 Annual Report onwards.

Shadow measures

- The number of evidence products that are either published by, or enhanced by, the Ministry.
  Standard At least 6.
- The number of unique users accessing each new evidence product meets or exceeds the number of new users expected.
  Standard At least 200 unique users combined across new evidence products.
- The % of participants who found the platforms developed by the Ministry effective in enabling participation to progress shared understanding and ownership.
  Standard 60% or higher.

Section 4
Organisational health and capability

As a departmental agency, the Ministry manages its own resources but receives corporate support from its host agency, the Department of Internal Affairs. In 2025/26 the Ministry ensured it maximised the opportunities available through this arrangement to support continued organisational health and capability build.

Our people

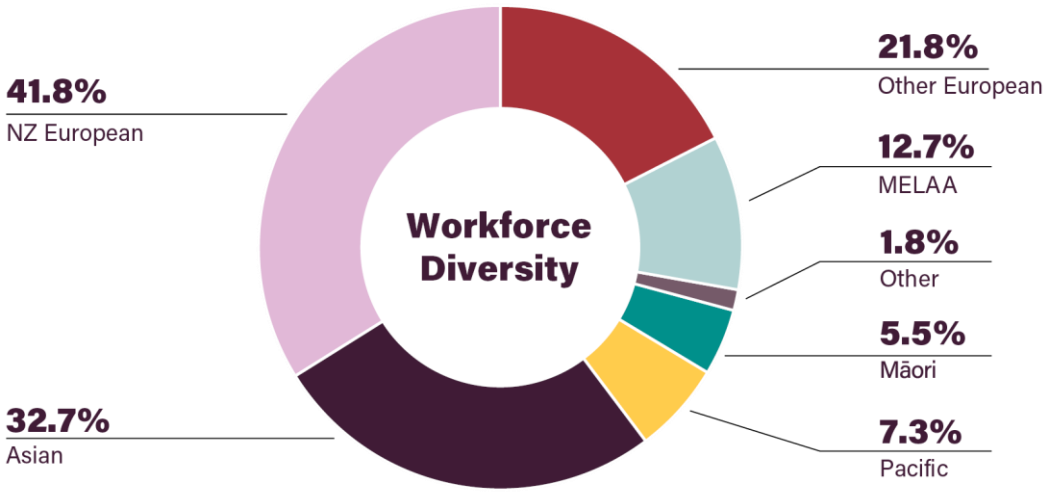
Our people bring a diverse range of skills, experiences and perspectives that support the Ministry to deliver its strategic priorities, provide high-quality advice and engage effectively with Ethnic Communities. As at 30 June 2026, the Ministry employed 55 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff.

Workforce diversity and inclusion

The Ministry is committed to maintain a workforce that reflects a broad range of backgrounds, skills and experiences. Workforce diversity contributes to an inclusive workplace culture and supports the Ministry's capability to engage effectively across a diverse operating environment.

As at 30 June 2026 the Ministry workforce was made up as follows:

NZ European 41.8%, Māori 5.5%, Pacific Peoples 7.3%, Asian 32.7%, MELAA (Middle Eastern, Latin American and African) 12.7%, Other European 21.8%, Other Ethnicity 1.8%.



Equal employment opportunity

The Ministry is committed to creating an inclusive workplace, where people feel supported, connected and empowered to be themselves and deliver for New Zealanders. The gender pay gap on 30 June was 3.2%. The Asian pay gap was -7.8%, with further ethnicity breakdowns unavailable due to the small number of employees.

Unplanned turnover

Unplanned turnover as of 30 June 2026 was 27.9%, compared with 20.9% in 2024/25.

Workforce movement during the year reflected a range of factors, including redundancies, retirement, relocation and employees pursuing career development opportunities. As a small Ministry, we recognise that career pathways will often extend beyond our organisation, and we continue to support the development of talent that contributes to the wider public sector.

We continue to invest in developing talent and capability that contributes both to the Ministry and the wider public service.

Building organisational capability

During 2025/26, the Ministry focused on developing leadership capability through a series of workshops and facilitated sessions which focused on performance management, strategic thinking, planning and prioritisation.

Implementation of the Code of Conduct for the Public Sector was a key focus for the Ministry. In April 2026, all staff completed the Navigating the Code modules and participated in leader-led interactive sessions focused on the Code and its application.

Our people also had access to learning opportunities for building capability in artificial intelligence (AI), through programmes delivered in partnership with our host agency, the Department of Internal Affairs.

Systems and processes

The Ministry undertook a comprehensive review of its website accessibility. The required remediation work was subsequently completed before the latest Centralised Web Accessibility Checker (CWAC) scan conducted by the Digital Government function in June 2026.

The Ministry's CWAC score improved from 100 to 4. This represents a substantial improvement in the accessibility performance of our websites, with lower CWAC scores indicating better performance and 0 being the best possible result.