

QUICK GUIDE

Unlocking Language Barriers

Te Whakamahea Tauārai Reo

This quick guide summarises the content of the
Ministry for Ethnic Communities translation guidance
Unlocking Language Barriers.



Ministry for
**Ethnic
Communities**
Te Tari Mātāwaka

**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

Aotearoa New Zealand is incredibly diverse - ethnic communities comprise 20% of our population. This includes migrants, former refugees, long-term settlers and those born in New Zealand who identify their ethnicity as Asian, Middle Eastern, Latin American, African or Continental European. Collectively ethnic communities speak over 160 different languages.

While many of our communities are proficient in English, we know from feedback from ethnic communities that many experience language barriers when accessing government services and information. Given this, language translation needs to be an integral part of the delivery of government services and information.

The Unlocking Language Barriers translation guide provides guidance on the translation process, how to determine which languages you may want to translate information into, and how best to share your information through some of New Zealand's ethnic communities.

[**DOWNLOAD FULL GUIDANCE**](#)

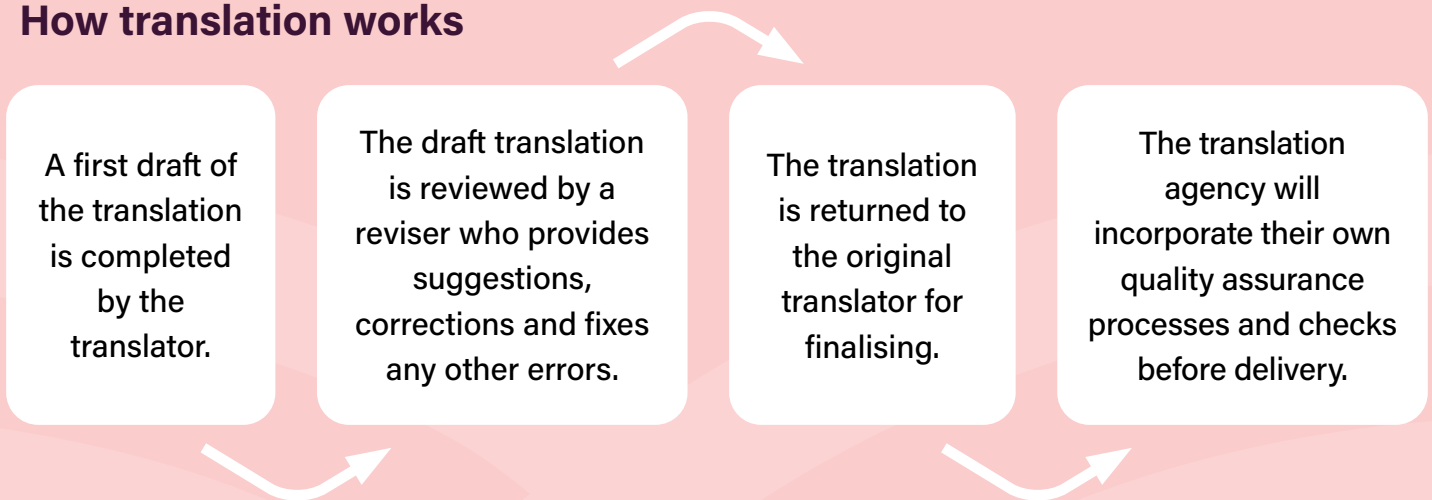


Part 1: Understanding Translation

What is translation?

Translation usually focuses on written text. It is the process of accurately and objectively transferring text from one language to another. Translators convey meaning across languages, they do not just translate word-for-word as some languages do not share the same structure or may not have words to express the same concept as other languages.

How translation works



Key tips about translation

For more information about the following points, **download the full guidance.**

- Translation takes time
- Quality translation requires budget
- Know how your audience access and consume information
- Not everyone who speaks another language is a translator
- Don't rely on Google translate
- Translation providers use technology to help
- Provide the translation agency with as much context as you can
- Provide the translation agency with the final edited and proofread text
- Translation agencies can work with any files e.g., Word, InDesign, SRT, etc.
- You do not always need to translate all your content, sometimes focusing on the key information is enough
- Know when to use a translation versus an interpreter
- Prepare as much translated material as you can in advance for emergency situations.

Commissioning translations

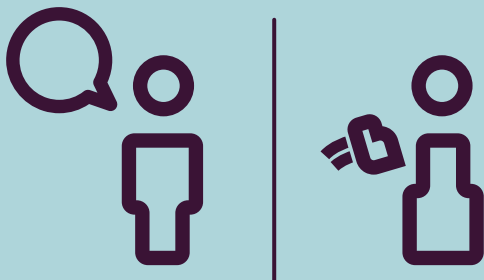
Download our flowchart to ensure the translation process is as smooth as possible and you are getting the most out of your information.



Part 2: Choosing your languages

Key factors you should consider when choosing languages for translation are set out below. For more information [download the full guidance](#).

Language selection factors to consider



Official languages of NZ

(te reo Māori and New Zealand Sign Language)

**Kia ora, Talofa, Kia Orana,
Mauri, Fakalofa Atu, Bula,
Mālō e lelei, Mālō ni**

Language revitalisation and maintenance efforts

(e.g. Pacific languages and te reo Māori)



National language data

(Most commonly spoken languages across the country)



Regional language data

(Most commonly spoken languages in particular regions)



English proficiency levels

(Some communities will have higher English literacy than others)



Languages specific to the communities you are trying to reach

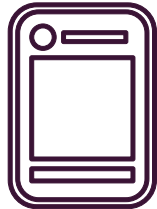
(Know what languages our different communities speak)

Part 3: Reaching your audience

Make sure you have a plan to get translated information out to your audiences. Different audiences consume their information in different ways, whether that's through community leaders, family and friends, ethnic media or mainstream media.

Think about how you can make the most of different ethnic channels and media, including:

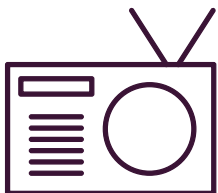
SOCIAL MEDIA



WEBSITES



RADIO



PRINT MEDIA



TELEVISION



Ethnic media

Download a list of ethnic media outlets available in New Zealand so you can ensure your information is reaching your audiences.

This list was provided to the Ministry for Ethnic Communities by Niche Media in April 2023.

