

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.

2023/24

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

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2023/24 Highlights

Ethnic Research Hui 2023

Key components of the inaugural hui included a panel discussion with distinguished experts, presentations on research and evaluation, and interactive discussions within five essential streams. **The discussions covered the following topics:**



Nothing about us
without us



Networks
and active
collaboration



Results
dissemination
and evidence use
by practitioners
and policy-makers



Existing research
and evaluation
funds and models



Intercultural capability resources

Over **2,000** times people
accessed our eLearning modules

138 people completed a voluntary
survey, **93%** of them said
they were likely or very likely
to **recommend our eLearning
modules to others.**



Second Ministerial Business Roundtable 2024

20 leaders attended, representing businesses
working across trade and investment, the construction
industry and other sectors. Topics included:

- ▶ support for women-led businesses
- ▶ the importance of forming relationships with
mainstream businesses (and associations
support for employers)
- ▶ retail safety.

A common theme was making sure support
for businesses was culturally and linguistically
appropriate.

Connecting communities in the times of conflict

In November 2023, we established a dedicated team to support community-led initiatives promoting stronger social bonds amidst the Israel/Palestine conflict.



Engaging with
impacted communities
and creating safe
spaces for dialogue and
wellbeing support.



Facilitating
discussions between
communities
and government
agencies.



Leveraging the Ethnic
Communities Development
Fund (ECDF) funding and
expediting projects promoting
unity and social cohesion.





Chief Executive's foreword

Kupu Takamua a te tumu whakarae

It's my pleasure to introduce this year's Annual Report for the third year of our Ministry. Our Ministry's aim is to make every New Zealander feel safe and valued for their contributions.

As we reflect on the past year, our Ministry has demonstrated resilience and adaptability amidst significant internal and external changes.

The 2023/24 year has seen a change in government, public service cuts, an increased cost of living and the unfolding humanitarian crisis in the Middle East.

The change of government brought shifts to our priorities and direction. Our ability to realign our strategies and operations ensured that we continued to effectively discharge our role as the Government's chief advisor for ethnic diversity and serve our communities.

We engaged proactively with the new Government, articulating the needs and aspirations of our Ethnic Communities and securing their support for our initiatives.

The impact of public service cuts presented another challenge. Nevertheless, our teams displayed ingenuity and dedication, finding innovative ways to maximise our resources and ensure continuity in our programmes. We streamlined our processes and prioritised key initiatives, supported by the Ministry's culture of collaboration.

Mervin Singham

Chief Executive

Ministry for Ethnic Communities – Te Tari Mātāwaka

We remained focused on continuing our role, brokering dialogue between our communities and government agencies and supporting our communities.

The Middle East conflict has deeply affected many within our Ethnic Communities, especially those with ties to the region. In response, we intensified our efforts to support and nurture social cohesion.

Our initiatives (such as safe spaces for dialogue, community-led projects funded through the Ethnic Communities Development Fund, and wellbeing workshops) have helped our communities navigate these difficult times.

These efforts have also strengthened the bonds of understanding and solidarity across different cultural groups in New Zealand.

Despite the challenges, we achieved several important milestones, including organising the first Ethnic Research Hui and the second Ministerial Business Roundtable and producing valuable resources in different languages for the public service and our communities.

I want to thank our team for their dedication and professionalism. I also thank all our public agency partners and community stakeholders for their ongoing support and collaboration.

With everyone's contribution, we will continue to build an inclusive, cohesive and resilient society for all New Zealanders.

*Ethnic Communities refer to the Ministry's remit, which includes people in New Zealand who identify as African, Asian, Continental European, Latin-American and Middle Eastern. They include former refugees, asylum seekers, new and temporary migrants, long-term settlers and multi-generational New Zealanders.



Who we are

Ko wai mātau

Driven by purpose – the why behind our Ministry

Our journey as a Ministry began in response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission of Inquiry following the terrorist attack on Christchurch mosques in March 2019.

Since our inception on 1 July 2021, we have embraced our role as the Government's lead for supporting Ethnic Communities and working to maximise the benefits of diversity and inclusion for all people in New Zealand.

We are continuously reviewing our plans and work programmes to ensure that they remain responsive to the evolving needs of Ethnic Communities and are still valid in the constantly changing national and local contexts.

Our values

At the Ministry, 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 are dedicated to honouring tāngata whenua by integrating a te ao Māori perspective throughout our mahi.

We encourage all our employees to embody our core values: show Manaakitanga (kindness), practice Whakakotahitanga (inclusivity), display Whakamanawanui (courage), and be Ngākau pono (authentic).



Our people

We are a relatively small agency. Our Ministry has a total headcount of 71 individual employees as at 30 June 2024. As some employees work part-time, our total full-time equivalent (FTE) staff number is 69.2.

Our staff numbers fluctuate from one year to another due to the number of graduates on our Ethnic Communities Graduate Programme.

Our staff (including graduates¹)

Total headcount:

71

Comprised of:

Fixed-term
(including graduates):
30

Permanent: **41**

Total FTE:

69.2

Comprised of:

Fixed-term: **30**

Permanent: **39.2**



Occupation

Chief Executive's office: **1**

Policy and Analytics: **25**

Strategic Engagement and Partnerships: **13**

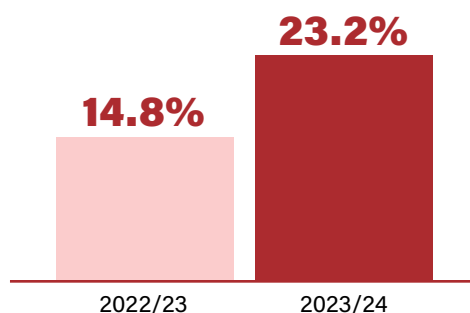
System Capability and Programmes: **16**

Graduates: **16**

1. Graduates here refer to staff employed through our Ethnic Graduate Programme, hosted by other organisations.

Unplanned staff turnover

The Ministry's unplanned turnover (permanent staff lost due to reasons not planned for such as resignations) as at 30 June 2024 was 23.2 percent (compared to 14.8 percent in 2022/23). This figure includes a number of exits as a result of the Ministry's change process.



Papa Pounamu, Kia Toipoto and Whāinga Amorangi

Papa Pounamu is a government-wide, diversity, equity and inclusion programme, led by the chief executives. It has five priority areas: fostering diverse leadership, building inclusive leadership, building cultural competence, addressing bias, and supporting employee-led networks.

Papa Pounamu is part of other separate, but related, work programmes to strengthen public sector capability for Māori-Crown relationships (Whāinga Amorangi) and close public service pay gaps (Kia Toipoto).

The Ministry's role in supporting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives in the public service is both internal and external:

- » Internally, we ensure that we have initiatives in place to deliver our obligations under Papa Pounamu, Kia Toipoto and Whāinga Amorangi, and build positive and safe workplaces for our staff (kaimahi)
- » Externally, given one of the foundational pou is specific to Ethnic Communities, we ensure that the diversity, equity and inclusion work across government includes Ethnic Communities. We also provide advice, tools and resources to help the public sector with intercultural capability and language.

Kia Toipoto: Our progress towards a more inclusive workplace

We have made progress in achieving the milestones outlined in our [Kia Toipoto action plan](#).²

We constantly monitor our recruitment and remuneration processes to balance our gender pay gap as much as possible.

To monitor this, we produce regular reports on staff demographics, salaries and pay gaps. This data plays a crucial role in guiding our Human Resources decisions.

Whāinga Amorangi: Increasing our Māori-Crown capability

We continued meeting our Whāinga Amorangi obligations and building our ability to engage and partner with Māori more effectively.

Te Arawhiti endorsed our Whāinga Amorangi plan on 30 June 2023, which includes commitments to:

- » Te reo Māori
- » New Zealand history/Treaty of Waitangi literacy
- » Tikanga/kawa (customs/marae protocol).

This year, we have provided our people with learning opportunities to help them increase their capability in te reo, tikanga and kawa, te ao Māori concepts, New Zealand history, the Treaty of Waitangi/Te Tiriti o Waitangi, whakawhanaungatanga and racial equity.

Note

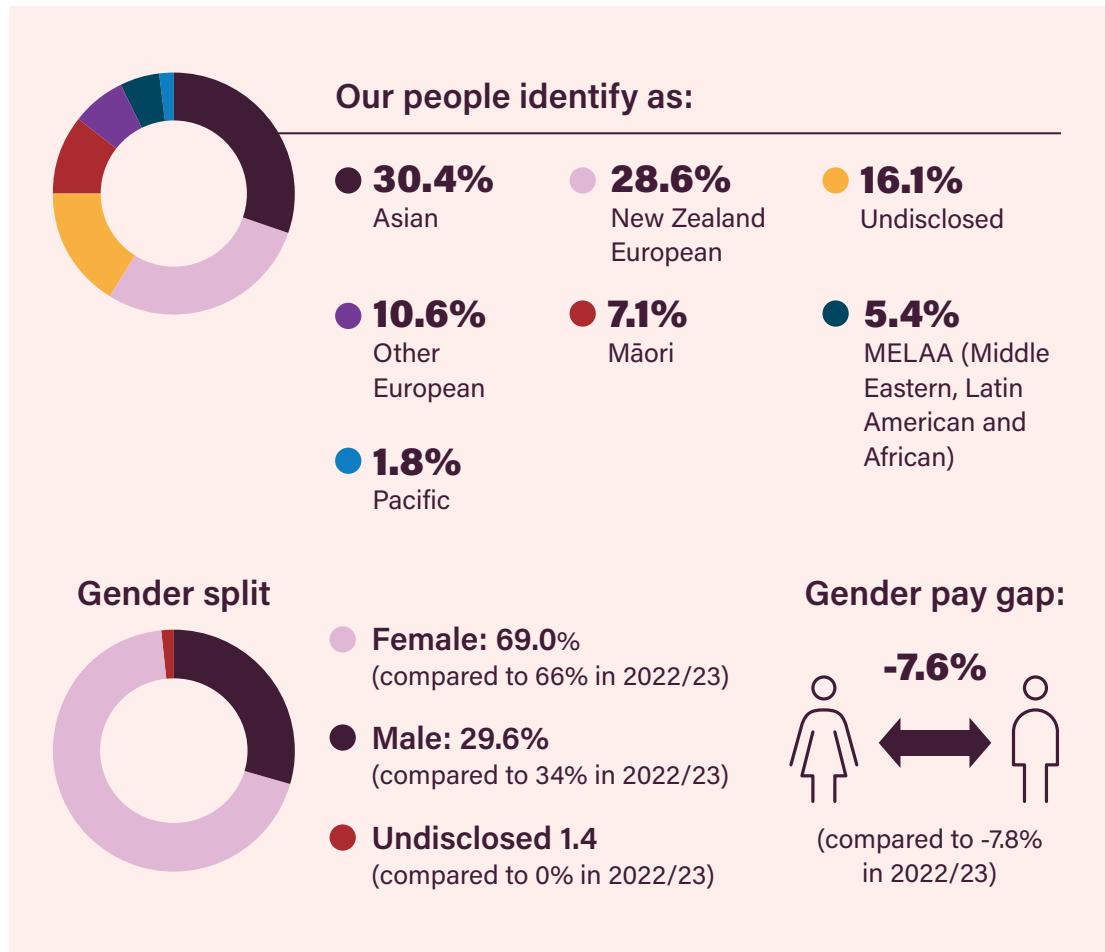
2. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/assets/AboutUs/Kia-Toipoto-Action-Plan.pdf



Our diverse team

Our diverse mix of ethnicities reflects our role and the communities we support.

Our people may identify with multiple ethnicities and the figures below reflect their primary identity (excluding graduates).



In our Ministry, we are committed to gender equality. Currently, female employees have higher average pay than male employees. This is influenced by our size, the higher proportion of females compared to males, and having more females in higher paying roles.

Working in a constrained fiscal environment

The second half of the year has seen a tighter fiscal environment. This was reinforced by the new Government's directive to the Ministry to achieve a 6.5 percent baseline saving, which necessitated change. We embarked on a review of our delivery approach and an organisational change process, resulting in a reduction in our overall headcount by 30 June 2024.



What we do

Ā mātou mahi

Our functions

This year, we have continued our work raising the visibility of issues that impact Ethnic Communities. We have used our convening power to bring communities together to discuss complex and sensitive issues. We have also supported communities with funding via the Ethnic Communities Development Fund (ECDF).

We have provided advice to support the Minister for Ethnic Communities and the wider public sector. We have continued developing foundational tools and resources to help employers improve organisational intercultural capability, with an initial focus on public service.

We have further developed our data and analytics capabilities to provide insights into the needs of Ethnic Communities and visibility about diverse communities' contributions.

This year, we fully assumed the administration of the ECDF from the Department of Internal Affairs. The ECDF has \$4.2 million a year available to support Ethnic Communities in growing their skills, celebrating their culture and participating in society.

We have also established a Security and Resilience team. This team will engage with Ethnic Communities to confidentially learn about their experiences of foreign interference, how it impacts them, and what support they may need. By understanding their experiences, agencies will also be better placed to support those affected, and to build resilience to foreign interference and its impact together.

The communities we serve

Ethnic Communities in New Zealand are the fastest-growing populations and are becoming more diverse, tripling in size since 1996.

Within the next decade, Ethnic Communities will make up more than 25 percent of the population, as New Zealand's Asian population reaches one million people.

Our remit includes people who identify as African, Asian, Continental European, Latin American or Middle Eastern. They include former refugees, asylum seekers, new and temporary migrants, long-term settlers and multi-generational New Zealanders.

The workforce of the Ethnic Communities is highly skilled and has a high labour market participation rate. However, they face lower income levels despite their qualifications. Ethnic Communities also contribute to New Zealand's economy by increasing business ownership. Ethnic businesses are uniquely placed to positively contribute to international trade by fostering relationships and opportunities between New Zealand and the countries they have migrated from.

Our Ethnic Communities are incredibly diverse, and based on the 2018 Census they speak more than 160 languages. The most spoken languages among these communities are English, Northern Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Yue (Cantonese), Sinitic (other Chinese dialects), Tagalog, Punjabi, Korean, Fijian Hindi and Afrikaans. We are looking forward to more updated ethnic data about our Ethnic Communities as part of the 2023 Census being released in the future.



A year in review

He arotake i te tau

Delivering on the Ministry's priorities

Our Strategy 2022–2025 has been developed with input from our Ethnic Communities. Each priority outlined in the Strategy is accompanied by a set of actions, which together form the Ministry's work programme.

From 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024, we designed and delivered several key initiatives addressing each priority.

PRIORITY

2023/24 INITIATIVES

<p>1. Promoting the value of diversity and improving inclusion of Ethnic Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Supporting ethnic representation on public sector boards and committees » Case study one: Inaugural Ethnic Research Hui Aotearoa 2023 » Celebrating youth voices
<p>2. Ensuring equitable provision of, and access to, government services for Ethnic Communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Intercultural capability and language work programme » Improving access to data and insights about Ethnic Communities » Emergency preparedness videos » Ongoing collaboration with agencies to improve the accessibility and consistency of ethnicity data in the system » Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) videos » Case study two: Language support resources
<p>3. Improving economic outcomes, including addressing barriers to employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Addressing barriers to migrant employment » Highlighting inspiring stories of successful Kiwi-ethnic professionals » Case study three: The second Ministerial Business Roundtable » Ethnic Communities Graduate Programme
<p>4. Connecting and empowering Ethnic Community groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Empowered Ethnic Communities via funding support » Celebrating community events at Parliament » The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra's 'Beyond Words' concert series » Case study four: Promoting social cohesion and wellbeing amidst the Israel/Palestine conflict » Faith Leaders Hui



Priority 1. Promoting the value of diversity and improving inclusion of Ethnic Communities

Supporting ethnic representation on public sector boards and committees

We manage a nominations database of 272 individuals who identify with ethnic heritage and are interested in serving on public sector boards/committees.

This year, we continued to promote and upskill people on our nominations database.

From January to June 2024, we started emailing the database contacts fortnightly to inform them about public sector board/committee vacancies.

Feedback received about the fortnightly emails has been positive. The feedback also confirmed that this approach increased awareness about the range of available public sector board/committee vacancies. It has prompted individuals to self-nominate for roles that are of interest rather than relying on the Ministry's nominations.

To help people on the database build their governance knowledge and capability, we collaborated with other nominating agencies to deliver six online learning sessions: the Ministry for Women, Whaikaha – the Ministry of Disabled People, Te Puni Kōkiri – the Ministry of Māori Development and the Ministry for Pacific Peoples.

These learning sessions were delivered with the support of a range of guest speakers who shared their knowledge and advice.



Recordings of the online training sessions are made available at [Leadership Learning Hub | Ministry for Women](#).³

The learning sessions covered:

- » LinkedIn presence
- » Learning about the Crown boards that the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment administers
- » Learning about the portfolio of the Ministry of Health administered boards/committees
- » Introduction to governance – how to write a governance curriculum vitae (CV) and craft a compelling cover letter.

In August 2023, we supported another initiative aiming to increase ethnic representation on boards. We sponsored the Women in Governance Summit and our Chief Executive participated in the main panel session.

Note

3. www.women.govt.nz/women-and-leadership/leadership-learning-hub



The summit aimed to support those new to governance or with experience in board directorship looking to increase their skills and knowledge. It also aimed to support executives seeking career transition to governance and boards wanting to diversify their board membership.

Celebrating youth voices

Over 100 youth participated in the Race Unity Aotearoa Speech Awards, including finalists who gave speeches at the May 2024 finals. We are proud to have sponsored these awards since 2009. This programme, a nearly two-decade-long tradition, has become a nationwide cornerstone event for schools and students.

The seven finalists, a diverse group representing high schools across New Zealand, shared their visions for a racist-free Aotearoa. Year 13 Otago Girls' High School student Tanya Moeono was honoured with the Tohu Whetumatarau – Ministry for Ethnic Communities Award for Vision for her inspiring vision of a multicultural society founded on Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The Award's Founding Partners include the New Zealand Baha'i Community and the New Zealand Police. These Awards highlight the initiatives we support for youth development, race unity and a socially cohesive and inclusive Aotearoa New Zealand.



Photo of the Race Unity Awards seven finalists.

Case study one

Inaugural Ethnic Research Hui Aotearoa 2023

Our objective

To explore how to better integrate ethnic voices and evidence into public policy, enhancing the visibility and impact of New Zealand's diverse communities.

What we did

The Ministry, in collaboration with Ethnic Research Aotearoa, hosted the Ethnic Research Hui Aotearoa 2023⁴ at the National Library. The hui drew over 100 participants, including researchers, policy analysts and community leaders.

Key components included a panel discussion with distinguished experts, presentations on research and evaluation, and interactive discussions. The discussions covered the following topics:

- » Nothing about us without us
- » Networks and active collaboration
- » Results dissemination and evidence use by practitioners and policy-makers
- » Existing research and evaluation funds and models.

What was the result

The event successfully facilitated meaningful dialogue, the sharing of insights and the formation of networks among participants.

The hui also highlighted the importance of capturing ethnic voices and building an evidence base to inform effective policies.

The discussions provided knowledge and offered valuable insights on available funding opportunities and research models tailored to the needs of Ethnic Communities.

What this means for all New Zealanders, including our Ethnic Communities

The hui represented a significant step towards long-term change rather than a one-time event. It aimed at bridging the gap between Ethnic Communities and public policy, fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment.

The initiative supports the development of more equitable and effective public services for all New Zealanders by emphasising the inclusion of ethnic perspectives in policy-making.



Photo from one of the stream's working groups.

Note

4. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/news/inaugural-ethnic-research-hui-aotearoa-2023-bridging-ethnic-voices-and-public-policy/

Priority 2. Ensuring equitable provision of, and access to, government services for Ethnic Communities

Intercultural capability and language work

Intercultural capability is the ability to communicate and work across cultural boundaries. Our intercultural capability and language work is to help improve the design and delivery of, and Ethnic Communities access to, government services.

Key resources produced during the 2023/24 financial year include:

- » eLearning for public servants on accessing and using interpreting services
- » [Resources for communities on accessing interpreters](#)⁵
- » [Multilingual greetings](#)⁶
- » Support materials for agencies to identify language needs.

Our eLearning modules were accessed over 2,000 times. We ask users to participate in a voluntary survey. The survey was completed by 138 people, with 93 percent saying they were likely or very likely to recommend the course to others.

**eLearning
modules
accessed over
2,000
times**

Emergency preparedness and response videos

Data shows that Ethnic Community members are among the least prepared for disasters and emergencies.

We therefore worked with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to create a series of videos. The videos help communities understand how to prepare for different disasters and emergencies, what to do when they happen, and what to do after they occur.

There are eight videos, each focusing on a different aspect of disaster and emergency preparedness and response. The videos include:

1	How to make an emergency plan	5	What to do in a flood
2	What you will need in an emergency	6	What to do in a storm
3	What to do in an earthquake	7	What to do in a fire
4	What to do in a tsunami	8	What to do during volcanic activity.

The videos are available in English and have also been translated and voiced into 20 languages.

Ongoing collaboration with agencies to improve the accessibility and consistency of ethnicity data in the system

We have worked with the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to start publishing regular [Asian](#)⁷ and [Ethnic Communities](#)⁸ Labour Market Statistics Snapshots, which show employment data trends. This provides visibility of the contributions by Ethnic Communities to New Zealand's labour market.

Notes

5. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/resources/language-resource-hub/government-interpreting-services/

6. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/resources/language-resource-hub/greetings-in-different-languages/

7. www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/28306-asian-labour-market-statistics-snapshot-march-2024-pdf

8. www.mbie.govt.nz/dmsdocument/28305-ethnic-communities-labour-market-statistics-snapshot-march-2024-pdf



Improving access to data and insights about Ethnic Communities

In 2024, we started developing an Indicators Report to improve access to data and insights about Ethnic Communities. Our aim is to strengthen the evidence base across the public sector by providing baseline data on the needs and contributions of Ethnic Communities in New Zealand.

This report will be the first of its kind. This work will improve the visibility of Ethnic Communities in existing data and improve the collection and reporting of ethnicity data at more disaggregated levels.

Policy-makers will be able to draw on robust evidence and insights into Ethnic Communities.



Indicator Report engagement session in Wellington, moderated by Professor Dr Edwina Pio.

Key milestones completed by 30 June 2024 were:

- » A stocktake of available data
- » New methods, in collaboration with agencies, to make more data available about Ethnic Communities
- » Use of research evidence to address data gaps
- » Engagement with researchers and community peak bodies to provide context to the data.

The report is expected to be published in late 2024.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) videos

Vaccination rates have dropped in New Zealand, putting the community at a high risk of a measles outbreak. We needed to raise awareness about measles and make the information available to as many people as possible.

We worked with Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora to produce a video series on the MMR vaccine. The videos explain what measles is, how to protect ourselves and our families and where to access reliable health information.

We have removed language barriers by producing the videos in English and 20 languages so more people, particularly those from Ethnic Communities, can access this information.

The videos were shared widely with community leaders and organisations across the government sector and the health sector. They were featured on social media, in various newsletters, and played on screens in hospital waiting rooms.

The videos were released on 29 May 2024 and had been viewed more than 74,500 times by the end of June 2024.

[Our health videos are available on our website.](https://www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/resources/videos/health-videos/)⁹

Note

9. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/resources/videos/health-videos/



Case study two

Language support resources

Our objective

To empower Ethnic Communities and ensure that language is not a barrier to accessing government support by raising awareness of government interpreting services.

Improve access to government services by:

- » lifting the public sector's intercultural capability skills
- » meeting diverse language needs of New Zealand's population.

What we did

Resources for both the public sector and the general public include:

- » Interactive guides in 21 languages outlining the process of requesting interpreters
- » Flyers with instructions on accessing interpreting services when calling government agencies in 26 languages (interpreting services are not limited to these languages)
- » Social media to promote interpreting services in 26 languages
- » Posters and flyers to help government services (for example, Civil Defence centres) identify language needs
- » eLearning for public servants to improve understanding of the role of interpreters and how to access and use them when helping members of the public.

What was the result

The resources were produced and promoted shortly before this report. It was too early to determine their impact.

We will continue promoting them to reduce barriers to accessing government services.

What this means for all New Zealanders, including our Ethnic Communities

These resources aim to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of government services for all New Zealanders. They provide crucial language support for Ethnic Communities, a significant and growing segment of our society.

Figures

Since 1 January 2024, hundreds of people have viewed our 'Language support' pages. The most popular languages are English, Simplified Chinese and Japanese.

Many agencies requested the public-facing eLearning modules for their in-house online training. We will continue to promote these resources and monitor use.



Priority 3. Improving economic outcomes, including addressing barriers to employment

Case study three

The second Ministerial Business Roundtable

Our objective

To improve economic outcomes for Ethnic Communities and support ethnic businesses in unlocking their potential to contribute to New Zealand's economic performance.

To explore and identify how to make ethnic businesses faster-growing and more successful and to identify the impediments to success.

What we did

We organised the second Ministerial Roundtable¹⁰ in March 2024. This initiative builds on the success of the first Ministerial Roundtable with ethnic business leaders and organisations in April 2023 and the first EthnicBiz Forum in May 2023.

This meeting, hosted by Chief Executive Mervin Singham, was an opportunity for business leaders and representatives to connect with the Hon Melissa Lee, the Minister for Ethnic Communities and the Minister of Economic Development.

What was the result

About 20 leaders attended, representing businesses working across trade and investment, the construction industry and other sectors.

Topics included support for women-led businesses, the importance of forming relationships with mainstream businesses and associations, support for employers and retail safety. A common theme was making sure support for businesses was culturally and linguistically appropriate. The Ministry received positive feedback from attendees.

What this means for all New Zealanders, including our Ethnic Communities

By supporting ethnic business, they can better contribute to the economy for the benefit of New Zealand's economy. We will continue prioritising economic development initiatives, including the Business Symposium (Ethnic Xchange) in late 2024.



Photo from the discussions during the second Ministerial Business Roundtable.

Note

10. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/news/business-roundtable/

Addressing barriers to migrant employment

In 2023/24, the ECDF provided \$10,000 to the Migrant Careers Support Trust based in Auckland to fund jobseeker 'boot camps.' These are intensive one to two-day workshops for about 30 people seeking employment.

The camps covered CV writing, interview preparation and an induction into business in New Zealand. Funding also covered two workshops on governance skills for people who want to contribute their skills and experience at that level.

The ECDF funding of the Trust's work directly contributes to addressing barriers to employment for Ethnic Communities.

Highlighting inspiring stories of successful Kiwi-ethnic professionals

In collaboration with the New Zealand Centre for Digital Connections with India, the Ministry organised the 'Inspiring Stories – from COBOL to Cloud and CleanTech' event as part of the New Zealand TechWeek 2024.

The event aimed to celebrate the contributions and potential of Ethnic Communities, especially women, in New Zealand's technology and business sectors.

The event featured a line up of six speakers in two engaging panel discussions. The audience included professionals, students and government representatives.

This initiative highlighted the importance of diversity and inclusion in the technology industry. It also promoted equitable opportunities, empowering Ethnic Communities to contribute meaningfully to New Zealand's economic growth.

Ethnic Communities Graduate Programme

The Ethnic Communities Graduate Programme¹¹ provides skilled graduates from Ethnic Communities with a meaningful first employment opportunity in the public sector.

The programme was originally designed to address the low representation of ethnically diverse employees and the barriers they face accessing employment in the public sector.

However, the percentage of ethnic graduates in the public service has improved over the last five years to be more representative of New Zealand's population.¹²

During the 2023/24 financial year, the second intake of graduates completed the programme and the third intake began.

Intake two, which ran from February 2022 to August 2023, consisted of 14 graduates across 10 public sector agencies.

The third intake consists of 16 graduates across six public sector agencies. These agencies include Inland Revenue, the Ministry of Transport, the New Zealand Customs Service, the New Zealand Intelligence Community, the New Zealand Police and the Public Service Commission.

Graduates are working in a variety of fields, such as policy, intelligence, data and analytics, people and capability, and communications.

Intake three began in August 2023 and will finish by February 2025.



From right to left: the Ministry's Programme Lead with intake three graduates, 2024

Notes

11. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/programmes/ethnic-communitiesgraduate-programme/

12. www.publicservice.govt.nz/research-and-data/workforce-data-diversity-and-inclusion/workforce-data-ethnicity-in-the-public-service

Priority 4. Connecting and empowering Ethnic Community groups

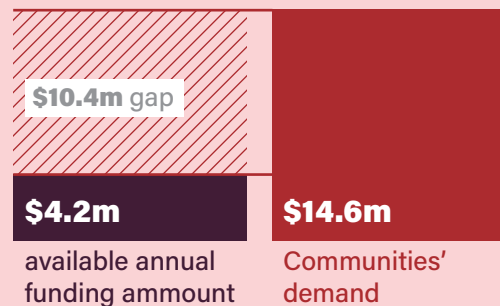
Empowered Ethnic Communities via funding support

The Ethnic Communities Development Fund¹³ has \$4.2 million a year available to support Ethnic Communities in growing their skills, celebrating their culture and participating in society.

The Fund provides accessible, quick funding for one-off projects and initiatives. To be eligible for funding, projects must align with at least one of the Ministry's strategic priorities, which are:

- » Promoting the value of diversity and improving the inclusion of Ethnic Communities in wider society
- » Ensuring government services are provided fairly and are easily accessible for Ethnic Communities
- » Improving economic outcomes for Ethnic Communities and looking at the barriers to employment
- » Connecting and uplifting Ethnic Community groups.

ECDF funded 306 projects in 2023/24



During the 2023/24 financial year, the ECDF received 583 applications totalling \$14.6 million. The \$4.2 million of funding was distributed across over 306 projects.

Celebrating community events at Parliament

We delivered the Lunar New Year¹⁴ and Eid¹⁵ Parliamentary events in February and April 2024, hosted by the Hon Melissa Lee, the Minister for Ethnic Communities.

The February event marked the name change to Lunar New Year in recognition of the diverse Asian populations celebrating this significant cultural festival.

The Lunar New Year festivities expanded to embrace several East and Far East Asian traditions, including Chinese, Korean and Vietnamese. Other communities also joined us to learn more about the richness of different cultures. One participant commented, "Thanks for a beautiful event. I loved Pokarekare Ana played soulfully on the traditional Chinese musical instrument."



Lunar New Year celebration at Parliament, February 2024.

Notes

13. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/funding/ethnic-communitiesdevelopment-fund/

14. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/news/parliaments-first-lunar-new-year-celebration-spotlights-cultural-harmony-and-diversity/

15. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/news/eid-al-fitr-celebrated-at-parliament-2024-a-festive-evening-of-unity-and-inclusivity/



At Eid in Parliament, guests from diverse communities mingled and shared stories. From recitations of the Quran to poetry to children enchanting Nasheed and inspiring speeches by faith leaders, the event was a true celebration of culture and faith.

Organising these community events at Parliament reaffirms our commitment to fostering understanding, respect and unity in New Zealand.



Group photo of the children 'Nasheed' at the Eid at Parliament event.

'Beyond Words' concert series marking the fifth remembrance of March 15

Marking the fifth remembrance of the Christchurch Mosque terrorist attacks of 15 March 2019, we partnered with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra Te Tira Pūoro o Aotearoa, the Central Iqra Trust and Muslim communities nationwide to present the 'Beyond Words' concert series.¹⁶

With support from our ECDF, the concerts and community engagement events attracted thousands of participants across Christchurch, Wellington and Auckland.

The concerts garnered significant attendance, with over 90 percent occupancy in Christchurch, 79 percent in Wellington, and 53 percent in Auckland, totalling an audience of 3,905. Also, community engagement events attracted over a thousand participants across the three cities.

'Beyond Words' is an example of the transformative power of art in creating understanding, healing wounds and uniting communities in the face of adversity. The feedback from organisers, participants and audience members alike has been positive, with praise for the concert's emotional resonance, cultural significance and message of unity.

Beyond Words concert occupancy

Christchurch
90%

Wellington
79%

Auckland
53%

Total audience of
3,905



The New Zealand Symphony Orchestra's 'Beyond Words' concert in Wellington.

Note

16. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/news/unity-through-music-nzsos-beyond-words-concert-series-pays-tribute-to-christchurch-victims/



Case study four

Promoting social cohesion and wellbeing amidst the Israel/Palestine conflict

Our objective

To support affected Ethnic Communities in New Zealand by fostering social cohesion, understanding and wellbeing in response to the humanitarian crisis resulting from the Israel/Palestine conflict.

What we did

In November 2023, we established a dedicated team, as a one-off initiative, to support community-led initiatives promoting stronger social bonds for affected Ethnic Communities in New Zealand. This programme was not to discuss the conflict happening in Israel and Palestine but was about encouraging social co-hesion for these ethnic communities within New Zealand. Our efforts included:

1. Engaging with impacted communities:
 - Created safe spaces for dialogue and support among Muslim and Jewish communities.
 - Hosted wellbeing workshops tailored to Kiwi-Muslim women.
 - Held an interfaith meeting with faith leaders, including Muslim and Jewish, in collaboration with the Religious Diversity Centre.
2. Facilitating discussions:
 - Brokered and attended discussions between the Kiwi-Jewish and Palestinian communities and respective government agencies, such as the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, to address specific needs related to the Gaza situation.
3. Leveraging the ECDF:
 - Expedited funding for projects aimed at promoting unity and understanding.

What was the result

The positive feedback and tangible outcomes of our initiatives underscore the importance of our continued support to ensure a cohesive and harmonious New Zealand for all.

Key ECDF-supported initiatives included:¹⁷

Awareness campaigns:

Funded the Asturlab Cultural Centre's three-month digital campaign to raise awareness about the humanitarian situation in Gaza, engaging 5,000 to 10,000 New Zealanders.

Note

17. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/funding/ethnic-communities-development-fund/stories/from-conflict-to-connection-community-led-initiatives-amidst-the-middle-east-conflict/



Wellbeing workshops:

Conducted workshops, particularly for women, providing crucial support and connection, with participants expressing gratitude for the safe spaces created.

Educational content creation:

Supported the Jewish Museum of New Zealand in developing online content about Jewish culture and history, reaching thousands and raising awareness to combat antisemitism.

What this means for all New Zealanders, including our Ethnic Communities

Strengthening social cohesion in New Zealand through community-led efforts promotes peace, understanding, and a more resilient, united society.

In times of conflict, creating counter-hate narratives and establishing safe spaces for our New Zealand communities to voice their concerns is crucial. The Ministry's initiatives ensure all New Zealanders feel included, valued and heard.

Faith Leaders Hui

In line with our commitment to promoting unity, inclusion and social cohesion among Ethnic and Faith-based Communities, we convened two Faith Leaders Forums¹⁸ in Auckland in August 2023 and February 2024.

The forums aimed to establish a space where all involved parties could work collectively and to form a sustainable relationship among leaders, based on transparency, trust and mutual respect.

These forums built on previous work the Ministry, and former Office, have done to connect faith leaders, such as the Connecting Faith | Interfaith Communities Hui in 2020.

The inaugural forum featured a Lecture by Professor Paul Morris from Victoria University of Wellington on Diversities and Religions: Aotearoa in the Past Decade.

At the second forum, faith leaders met the Hon Melissa Lee, the Minister for Ethnic Communities. They also heard from John Price ONZM, Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management, NEMA.

Note

18. www.ethniccommunities.govt.nz/news/bringing-faith-leaders-together/



The way forward

Te ara whakamua

As we look ahead to the upcoming year, we will focus on building the advocacy and resilience capabilities of ethnic New Zealanders, empowering them to participate actively in society.

We will also prioritise supporting improved economic outcomes for our Ethnic Communities and businesses and boosting their contributions to New Zealand's social and economic fabric.

We will continue with our Security and Resilience work programme, which aims to enhance the wellbeing and resilience of our Ethnic Communities in an ever-changing world.

We are excited about the positive changes we can collectively make and look forward to a truly inclusive future.

Statement of Responsibility

Te tauākī noho haepapa

I am responsible as Chief Executive of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities (Te Tari Mātāwaka) for the accuracy of any end-of-year performance information prepared by the Ministry, whether or not that information is included in the Annual Report.

In my opinion, the Annual Report fairly reflects the operations, progress and organisational health and capability of the Ministry for Ethnic Communities.



Mervin Singham

Chief Executive

Ministry for Ethnic Communities – Te Tari Mātāwaka

30 September 2024