













## *Part 1*

### **Executive summary**

The Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity (RME) began in 2000 and its substantive work was completed in June 2004 with publication of this report. The review re-examined the concept, definition and classification of ethnicity used in official statistics and proposes changes where necessary. A key objective has been to ensure that the measurement of ethnicity is relevant to user needs and acceptable to the public who supply the information.

To inform the work of the review team, a series of background papers were written and a wide range of individuals, groups and organisations were consulted. More than 120 oral and written submissions were received and analysed. Information from the submissions, along with a consideration of the policy uses of ethnicity data and other relevant issues, was used by Statistics New Zealand to develop recommendations.

The main findings of the review process, as signalled in the recommendations, are:

- the continued relevance of ethnic data
- a desire by users and producers of ethnicity data for consistency in the collection of ethnicity data
- a change to the classification and output of 'New Zealander' type responses
- to discontinue prioritised ethnicity data as standard output
- the development of a research programme to underpin potential future changes in the measurement of ethnicity.

The next step will involve development of a plan for implementation of recommendations made in the review. External stakeholders will be consulted on the development of the implementation plan.

## Part 2

### Summary of recommendations

#### 1 Conceptual and definitional recommendations

- 1.1 That ethnicity continues to be collected in official social statistics. (Official statistics are all statistics derived by government departments from statistical surveys or administrative records that are published regularly, or could reasonably be published.)
- 1.2 That the current concept of ethnicity used by Statistics New Zealand be retained but clarified, and the current definition of ethnicity be updated. The concept and updated definition should be used in all official statistics on ethnicity.
- 1.3 That the method of reporting ethnicity in all collections of official statistics be self-identification wherever feasible.

#### 2 Ethnicity measurement recommendations

- 2.1 That a comprehensive programme of research into the measurement of ethnicity in official statistics be completed by the end of 2009.
- 2.2 That the question or questions used to capture ethnicity data in all official statistical collections be designed to obtain accurate data consistent with the concept of ethnicity used in official statistics.
- 2.3 That any collection of ethnicity data in official statistics gather this information in a form that allows comparison with other official statistics on ethnicity.
- 2.4 That the 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings ethnicity question be adopted as the question for capturing ethnicity data in the 2006 Census.

#### 3 Ethnicity classification recommendations

- 3.1 That level 0 of the ethnicity classification be removed from the revised classification and no longer used for output.
- 3.2 That the 'Other' category be renamed to better reflect the groups it represents and that a new 'Miscellaneous' category be introduced at level 1 of the ethnicity classification to contain those ethnic groups which do not fit within the present structure. That level 4 of the classification be updated to reflect the increased diversity of ethnic groups within New Zealand.
- 3.3 That the response 'New Zealander' and like responses be coded to a separate category in the 'Miscellaneous' group at level 4 of the ethnicity classification.
- 3.4 That the descriptor for the largest ethnic group be 'New Zealand European'.

#### 4 Ethnicity data collection recommendations

- 4.1 That Statistics New Zealand continues to educate respondents, users and producers of ethnicity data about the ethnicity concept.
- 4.2 That all collections of official statistics measuring ethnicity should have the capacity to record multiple ethnicity responses.
- 4.3 That all collections of official statistics measuring ethnicity should have the capacity to capture six ethnicity responses per person.
- 4.4 That ethnicity be collected at the most detailed level of the ethnicity classification, level 4.

## **5 Ethnicity data output recommendations**

- 5.1 That prioritisation of multiple ethnic responses to one group is discontinued as the standard output for ethnicity data in official statistics.
- 5.2 That the standard output for ethnicity data be single and combination data or total response data.
- 5.3 That household or family ethnicity is not a standard output.

## Part 3

### Background

#### 3.1 Reasons for the review

The last official review of ethnic statistics was completed in 1988<sup>1</sup>. The ethnicity classification was reviewed in 1996 and drew on responses to the 1991 Census ethnicity question. Since then there have been significant changes in New Zealand society and in the needs of users of ethnicity statistics. These changes include:

- increased emphasis on Māori social and economic development
- the growth of New Zealand-born immigrant populations
- the settlement of new migrant groups from non-traditional source countries
- increased inter-marriage between ethnic groups.

In light of these changes, the purpose of the review was to re-examine the concepts and measurements of ethnicity that have been in use since the 1988 review, which was completed with publication of the *Report of the Review Committee: Ethnic Statistics*.

Along with the purpose identified above, the key drivers of the review were:

##### 3.1.1 Supporting the government's policy framework

Government departments require ethnicity data to help them understand changes in New Zealand's social landscape so that they are able to target policies and programmes effectively. Recent policy initiatives such as the former Closing the Gaps and, more latterly, Reducing Inequalities, Community Capacity Building and Ethnic Perspectives in Policy have been introduced by successive governments. These initiatives have had a specific focus on improving outcomes for Māori, Pacific peoples and the 'ethnic sector'<sup>2</sup>.

To support the government and its departments to monitor progress on initiatives such as these requires reliable, consistent and relevant ethnic statistics across the official statistical system. These statistics play a crucial role in a better understanding of the complexities of contemporary New Zealand society and its multi-ethnic composition. The development of policies must reflect the social, cultural and economic needs of New Zealand society. It must also facilitate the delivery of relevant services to ethnic communities and the equitable distribution of resources.

##### 3.1.2 Māori data issues

There has been ongoing debate over the measurement, analysis and accuracy of Māori statistics from a range of users and commentators. Changes to the ethnicity question in the last four censuses have created discontinuities and made it difficult for users to monitor trends in the Māori population<sup>3,4</sup>.

Monitoring Māori Outcomes (begun in 1995) was a result of the Cabinet noting that data on Māori outcomes was not available across the public sector. It required Statistics New Zealand to report on issues associated with the collection, integration and analysis of consistent and comprehensive data on Māori outcomes. Many of these issues have yet to be adequately resolved.

##### 3.1.3 The classification of 'New Zealander'

A growing number of people feel they do not fit into any of the current ethnic classification categories and want to identify and be counted as 'New Zealanders'. This issue has increased antagonism among people who require an acceptable way of identifying themselves that is distinct from the traditional ethnic categories.

Related to this are strong objections from some people to the term 'European' in the category 'New Zealand European'.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix A provides background information on the previous review.

<sup>2</sup> The 'ethnic sector' includes all people who identify with an ethnic group originating from Asia, Continental Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Latin America, and includes people who may also be identified as refugees or migrants, as well as people born in New Zealand.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix B provides an overview of changes in the collection of race and ethnicity data in New Zealand censuses.

<sup>4</sup> Appendix C shows the ethnicity questions used in the 2001, 1996 and 1991 Censuses.

### **3.1.4 Output — prioritisation, total response, single/combination**

An increasing number of people identify with more than one ethnic group and the use of prioritisation to reduce their responses to one ethnic group has been questioned. Prioritisation of ethnicity data overrides individual's choices and can be perceived to bias data in favour of one or more groups. This approach also departs from the principle of self-identification, as it collapses a multiple response into a single ethnic category.

On the other hand, total response output can be problematic for users who want and expect the proportions to add to 100 percent (for example, for funding purposes).

Single/combination output, while accommodating those users who may want the proportions to add to 100 percent, presents output in a manner that may be cumbersome to comprehend and difficult to interpret for many other people.

A further output issue relates to the use of aggregated categories such as Asian and Pacific Peoples, which are too broad to be meaningful to some users.

### **3.1.5 Increased ethnic diversity**

The New Zealand population has become more ethnically diverse as immigration from non-traditional source countries, particularly from the Asian continent, has increased.

### **3.1.6 Future changes impacting on the measurement of ethnicity**

It is apparent that there is a need to develop a consistent measure of ethnicity that continues to be relevant to the New Zealand population in the foreseeable future. Factors to be considered are:

- growth of indigenous identification
- growth of populations of immigrants' descendants
- increased assimilation of new migrants
- increased intermarriage of Māori
- increasing ethnic mobility<sup>5</sup>
- changes in collection methods (eg electronic surveying has the potential to ask more detail of respondents, without increasing respondent load).
- increased demands for information more relevant to users
- increased complexity in the measurement of ethnicity.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Ethnic mobility' is the term given to individuals who change their ethnic response. This could be for a variety of reasons including: perception of how ethnicity data is used, context in which ethnicity is asked, changes in feelings of belonging and changing personal response to ethnic identity.

*Part 4***Recommendations with supporting arguments****1 Conceptual and definitional recommendations***1.1 Recommendation: that ethnicity continues to be collected in official social statistics.*

Ethnicity is a vital demographic and social variable. Reliable, consistent and relevant data on ethnicity is required by users of statistics to measure and monitor differences in social well-being, social interaction and social change. Government agencies, local authorities and non-governmental organisations use ethnicity data. Major uses of ethnicity data are:

- to calculate population estimates and projections
- as a basis for monitoring and reporting changes and differences in outcomes among ethnic groups
- to develop government programmes to reduce inequalities and to improve outcomes for Māori
- to monitor the changing ethnic diversity of New Zealand's population at national and regional levels, so that service delivery can be appropriately targeted
- to evaluate the impact of central and local government policies on the economic and social well-being of ethnic groups
- to model the impacts and costs of policy changes, and to forecast expenditure on services for particular groups
- to allocate funding to particular groups on the basis of need
- to assist in the delivery of services in a culturally appropriate way and to plan social services which meet the special needs of ethnic groups.

Submissions were strongly in favour of the continued collection of ethnicity in official statistics. (Official statistics are all statistics derived by government departments from statistical surveys or administrative records that are published regularly, or could reasonably be published.)

*1.2 Recommendation: that the current concept of ethnicity used by Statistics New Zealand be retained but clarified, and the current definition of ethnicity be updated. The concept and updated definition should be used in all official statistics on ethnicity.*

Clarification of the concept and the use of an updated definition will assist producers and users of ethnicity data to better understand what the term 'ethnicity' means.

**Current concept and definition**

The concept of ethnicity adopted by Statistics New Zealand is a social construct of group affiliation and identity. The present statistical standard for ethnicity states that "ethnicity is the ethnic group or groups that people identify with or feel they belong to. Thus, ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group."

The statistical standard for ethnicity defines an ethnic group as "a social group whose members have the following four characteristics:

- share a sense of common origins
- claim a common and distinctive history and destiny
- possess one or more dimensions of collective cultural individuality and
- feel a sense of unique collective solidarity".

This definition was adopted in the *Report of the Review Committee on Ethnic Statistics (1988)* and originated in the work of Smith (1981).

### Clarification of the meaning of the concept of ethnicity

The concept of ethnicity is not well understood by either users or producers of ethnicity data. This was apparent from the submissions received and is also reflected in the academic literature. Hutchinson and Smith note “A major element in the confusion and conflict surrounding the field of ethnic phenomena has been the failure to find any measure of agreement about what the central concepts of ethnicity signify or how they should be used.” (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996, p 15).

The current concept of ethnicity adopted by Statistics New Zealand needs clarification. Clarification of the concept requires noting that ethnicity refers to the possession of specific characteristics that place people in similar groups. These characteristics generally include some or all of the following: ancestry, place of origin, common language, religion, cultural practices and behaviours, and lifestyle. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group. In addition, people can and do change their ethnic affiliation, both over time and depending upon the context in which they are asked to state their ethnicity.

Most users of ethnicity data and submissions have supported this approach by clearly stating that they wish Statistics New Zealand to continue to use the concept that defines ethnicity as a socio-cultural construct.

### Updating the definition of ethnicity

There is little agreement on the definition of ethnicity among academic commentators (Hutchinson and Smith, 1996; Banks, 1996). The diverse range of understandings of the definition of ethnicity was also reflected in the submissions received. These submissions indicated that people associate ethnicity with nationality, ancestry, country of birth, country of residence and socio-cultural affiliation. The exact mix is not visible in the data.

Factors that may contribute to or influence a person’s ethnicity, and that are often interrelated, include:

- **Name:** a common proper name that collectively describes a group of individuals and authenticates the characteristics and the history of its members.
- **Culture:** broadly speaking, a person’s way of life, which may include music, literature, dance, sport, cuisine, style of clothing, values and beliefs, patterns of work, marriage customs, family life, religious ceremonies, traditions, and celebration days/events which have particular cultural significance (Giddens, 1997).
- **Where a person lives and the social context:** geographic concentrations of people with a shared ancestry and culture.
- **Race:** defined as “the descendants of a common ancestor especially those who inherit a common set of characteristics; such a set of descendants, narrower than a species; a breed; ancestry; lineage, stock; a class or group, defined otherwise than by descent” (Chambers, 1991). This often “refers to physical characteristics such as skin colour, treated by members of a community as ethnically significant. ... There are no clear-cut characteristics by means of which human beings can be allocated to different races” (Giddens, 1997).
- **Nationality:** nationality can be defined as “membership of, or the fact or state of belonging to, a particular nation; a group or set having the character of a nation” (Chambers, 1991).
- **Country of birth:** country where a person is born, regardless of ethnic group (can also include regions within a country).
- **Ancestry:** ancestors are described as “people from whom a person is descended; a forefather; a person regarded as the forerunner of another” (Chambers, 1991).
- **Citizenship:** “the state of being or of having rights and duties of a citizen” (Chambers, 1991).
- **Religion and language:** religion can be a key element of an ethnic group, for example Jews, or it may be totally irrelevant, for example in the case of Buddhists or Christians. Language is also frequently a marker of an ethnic group.

It is important to note that while any of the above factors can be important influences on a person’s ethnicity, they do not necessarily determine his or her ethnicity. A person’s perception of his or her ethnicity may be based on one or any combination of these factors.

Some submissions suggested that Statistics New Zealand's current definition should be updated to cover more relevant and up to date concepts and issues. In light of these comments, it is proposed that the definition be amended to read as follows:

'An ethnic group is made up of people who have **some or all** of the following characteristics:

- a common proper name
- one or more elements of common culture which need not be specified, but may include religion, customs, or language
- unique community of interests, feelings and actions
- a shared sense of common origins or ancestry, and
- a common geographic origin.'

This definition is based on the work of Smith (1986).

- 1.3 *Recommendation:* that the method of reporting ethnicity in all collections of official statistics be self identification wherever feasible.

The concept of ethnicity mentioned in the recommendation above, is complex and multidimensional. Because it is self-perceived, and individuals may identify differently over time and in different contexts, ethnicity data should be collected by means of self identification. There may be some situations in which this is not possible. For example, in the case of birth or death, or incapacity because of injury or sickness, the person's spouse or partner, a parent or other close family member should provide a response on their behalf. Secondly, parents, caregivers or guardians of a child may complete an ethnicity question on a form on behalf of their child. The ethnicity response(s) they choose for their child may be different from the response(s) the child may have chosen themselves.

Whenever possible in Statistics New Zealand collections, ethnicity is collected by means of self identification. There are exceptions to this, such as the reporting of a child's ethnicity by the parents in the Census of Population and Dwellings and proxy reporting of ethnicity in some other surveys, such as the Household Labour Force Survey.

Not all official collections of ethnicity data record self-reported ethnicity, particularly in the case of administrative data collections. In these collections, self reporting of ethnicity should be introduced wherever possible.

## 2. Ethnicity measurement recommendations

- 2.1 *Recommendation:* that a comprehensive programme of research into the measurement of ethnicity in official statistics be completed by the end of 2009.

Some of the issues identified during the review will be addressed through a research and development programme. These issues include:

- the impact of the change in the treatment of 'New Zealander' type responses (see Recommendation 3.3)
- the impact of updating the question's tick boxes on the consistency of data
- an examination of other potential questions to be used in the collection of ethnicity data.

The exact content of this programme will be determined by Statistics New Zealand in consultation with key users of ethnicity data. This research will be completed by 2009 or sooner. This will allow the results to be incorporated into the development of the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

The timeframe specified will allow time to:

- consult on the content of a research programme
- undertake the specified research
- incorporate research results into official statistical collections.

- 2.2 *Recommendation:* that the question or questions used to capture ethnicity data in official statistical collections be designed to obtain accurate data consistent with the concept of ethnicity used in official statistics.

The concept of ethnicity adopted by Statistics New Zealand is a social construct of group affiliation and identity. Ethnicity refers to the possession of specific characteristics that place people in similar groups. These characteristics include some or all of the following: ancestry, place of origin, common language, religion, cultural practices and behaviours, and lifestyle. Ethnicity is self-perceived and people can belong to more than one ethnic group. In addition, people can and do change their ethnic affiliation, both over time and depending upon the context in which they are asked to state their ethnicity.

As well as capturing data that is consistent with the concept, the question must provide data that meets the needs of users, ie it must capture accurate, consistent and detailed information on ethnic groups of interest.

Thus the question used to collect ethnicity data must:

- capture information on key groups for which information is needed
- be acceptable and relevant to respondents
- be easily understood by respondents
- allow multiple ethnic identities to be recorded, and be capable of capturing the ethnic identity or identities chosen by the respondent
- be able to collect ethnicity information by self identification wherever feasible.

- 2.3 *Recommendation:* that any collection of ethnicity data in official statistics gather this information in a form that allows comparison with other official statistics on ethnicity.

One of the biggest challenges for official statistical collections has been implementing an approach which facilitates comparison of ethnicity data in all surveys and collections, particularly across government agencies. Data from different collections are often combined to produce official measures used to monitor ethnic trends and disparities in a range of policy areas. In order for this to be possible, standard questions must be used across collections. Where this is not done, comparisons are questionable.

Producers of official statistics may need to make changes to ensure consistency across collections.

- 2.4 *Recommendation:* that the 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings ethnicity question be adopted as the question for capturing ethnicity data in the 2006 Census.

Submissions to the ethnicity review, and users and producers of ethnicity data, strongly emphasised the need for consistency over time for ethnic group statistics.

Consistency is required in order that data time series are available to allow inter-temporal comparisons to be made. Such comparisons are needed to monitor the well-being of different ethnic groups and disparities between groups.

Changes to the ethnicity question used in the last four population censuses have made comparisons over time difficult. The changes have meant that it is difficult to separate question effect changes from real world changes.

Given the similarity between the ethnicity questions used in the 1991 and 2001 Censuses of Population and Dwellings, use of the 2001 question in the 2006 Census will allow a consistent time series covering three census periods to be constructed.

### 3 Ethnicity classification recommendations

- 3.1 *Recommendation:* that level 0 of the ethnicity classification be removed from the revised classification and no longer used for output.

The level 0 output category groups are 'European', 'Māori', 'Pacific Peoples' and 'Other Ethnic Groups'. As the count for the 'Asian' group now exceeds 'Pacific Peoples' and users have an

increasing interest in 'Asian' population, there is a need to reflect this in official statistics. It would, therefore, be timely and appropriate to reflect this increase in the Asian count and the growing interest in this population, by including it at the highest level of the classification, level 1. This would make level 0 obsolete.

Using a standard level of minimum output will increase output consistency across collections, thereby enhancing comparability between collections.

- 3.2 *Recommendation:* that the 'Other' category be renamed to better reflect the groups it represents and that a new 'Miscellaneous' category be introduced at level 1 of the ethnicity classification to contain those ethnic groups which do not fit within the present structure. That level 4 of the classification be updated to reflect the increased diversity of ethnic groups within New Zealand.

Submissions asked for greater recognition of the groups represented within 'Other'. This will be achieved by renaming the group 'MELAA', to more clearly identify the Middle Eastern, Latin American and African ethnic groups it contains. This change to the name of the category at the highest level will also assist the Office of Ethnic Affairs to identify the ethnic groups of interest to its portfolio. A small number of groups which are not Middle Eastern, Latin American and African ethnic groups will join a new 'Miscellaneous' category.

Level 4 is the most detailed level of the ethnicity classification. With the arrival of new settlers from different ethnic groups to New Zealand, such as Eritrean and Afrikaans, the classification needs to be updated to include new groups.

#### **Impact of the suggested changes to ethnicity classification**

Implementation of Recommendations 3.1 and 3.2 will impact on data output by Statistics New Zealand and other agencies, through the introduction of the new Level 1 group. Statistics New Zealand surveys, particularly the Household Labour Force Survey, will need to change both input and output levels. Administrative data sets will not need to make changes to the way they collect ethnicity if they are collecting all ethnic groups at Level 2 or 3 of the classification. Classifications used to record data will need to be updated to include the new miscellaneous category and to include the new ethnic groups at Level 4.

There will be a cost to both producers and users with implementation of these recommendations.

- 3.3 *Recommendation:* that the response 'New Zealander' and like responses be coded to a separate category in the 'Miscellaneous' group at level 4 of the ethnicity classification.

People base their responses to questions asking their ethnicity on a range of factors. For some people, ethnicity is equivalent to a language or religion, while for others it is a mix of factors including nationality and ancestry. The central principle of the concept of ethnicity adopted is self identification with the ethnic group or groups that one wishes to identify with.

In light of the principle of self identification and definition, it can be argued that 'New Zealander' type responses, which increased from around 50,000 in the 1996 Census to around 80,000 in the 2001 Census, make up a valid ethnic group. This approach is supported by overseas experience. 'Canadian' is an accepted ethnic group response in Canada, and Statistics New Zealand also accepts other ethnic-nationality group responses such as American, Zimbabwean and South African.

In addition, there is a growing number of people who are from families where five or more generations have been born and bred in New Zealand, and who do not have a close affiliation or identification with, for example, Europeans or Chinese. Increasingly, they wish to identify as New Zealanders.

'New Zealander' and like responses will be placed in the new 'Miscellaneous' category at level 4 of the classification. This most reflects the self determined nature of the responses and does not artificially align them with major ethnic groupings. They will be grouped with a small number of ethnic groups which do not fit the present classification structure, and will be output at levels 1, 2 and 3 in the 'Miscellaneous' group.

'New Zealander' type responses include New Zealander, Kiwi and other similar responses. Previously such responses have been combined into the 'New Zealand European' category in the classification.

The inclusion of a separate category for 'New Zealander' type responses at level 4 of the classification will allow Statistics New Zealand and other interested parties to monitor the characteristics and size of this group. This monitoring may provide the basis for the allocation of 'New Zealander' responses to a more appropriate category of the classification in the future.

### **Impact of the recommendation**

Implementing this recommendation will require a change to the classification and output of ethnicity data for collections of official statistics. It will not require any change to the questions used to collect ethnicity data as it is not proposed to add a 'New Zealander' category to any ethnicity questions.

#### **3.4 Recommendation:** that the descriptor for the largest ethnic group be 'New Zealand European'.

Statistics New Zealand has decided to continue to use the descriptor 'New Zealand European' for the largest ethnic group for the following reasons. Firstly, given the focus of the recommendations is to retain consistency, Statistics New Zealand is planning to retain the 2001 Census ethnicity question to capture ethnicity data in the 2006 Census. In order to retain consistency in ethnicity data across time, the wording of the question must remain the same, as even minor changes can have a significant impact on the data. The 2001 Census question used the term 'New Zealand European' and this will be retained for 2006.

Secondly, the use of the term 'New Zealand European or Pākehā' was considered but rejected. There is objection to use of the term 'Pākehā', noted during the 1996 Census, in some submissions and in the media. In addition, use of this term would require a change in the question wording, which has been ruled out with the decision to retain the 2001 Census question.

Thirdly, no other suitable term that would be universally acceptable to replace this descriptor was identified from the consultation process or from research.

There will remain a number of respondents who will object to the term 'New Zealand European' for a variety of reasons. This may impact negatively on the way they answer the ethnicity question in subsequent surveys and censuses. If future research arrives at a more suitable descriptor for this group, consideration should be given to its use.

## **4 Ethnicity data collection recommendations**

### **4.1 Recommendation:** that Statistics New Zealand continues to educate respondents, users and producers of ethnicity data about the ethnicity concept.

Submissions reported that the ethnicity concept is not understood, or is misunderstood, by many people – respondents, users and producers of ethnicity data. Many submissions suggested that Statistics New Zealand should play a more active role in educating respondents, users and producers of ethnicity data.

Educating the general public about the meaning of ethnicity and the importance of ethnicity data is not an easy task and should be carried out only where feasible. There are some existing avenues which can be used, such as the Statistics New Zealand website, community networks and the material provided to schools and other users of data.

Statistics New Zealand will improve users' understanding of ethnicity data by providing more information on what the concept measures, the relative strengths and weaknesses of the data, and its appropriate use.

Statistics New Zealand will provide ongoing support to collectors and producers of ethnicity data in the form of standard question and response categories for data collection and data classification systems. In addition, Statistics New Zealand will provide information on why ethnicity data is collected, how it is used and guidance on how to answer the ethnicity question.

These educational measures should improve the quality and consistency of ethnicity data.

- 4.2 *Recommendation:* that all collections of official statistics measuring ethnicity should have the capacity to record multiple ethnicity responses.

There has been a rise in the number of people reporting multiple ethnicity in the population census, with approximately 9 percent of all respondents to the ethnicity question identifying with more than one ethnic group in 2001, compared with 5 percent in 1991. The collection of multiple responses is needed to reflect the growth in intermarriage and the increasing number of people who identify with more than one ethnic group.

Many official collections collect one ethnicity only. This practice is contrary to the concept of ethnicity, because a person should be able to identify with the ethnic group or groups they belong to. Collecting one ethnicity also creates inconsistency between collections, as some record multiple responses, while others record a single response.

Implementing this recommendation will have little impact on Statistics New Zealand collections, as multiple responses are already recorded in the population census and sample surveys. It is recognised, however, that the wider implementation of this recommendation will have cost and procedural impacts – such as changes to processing or collection input systems. Statistics New Zealand is committed to working alongside organisations to assist them to implement the changes.

- 4.3 *Recommendation:* that all collections of official statistics measuring ethnicity should have the capacity to capture six ethnicity responses per person.

The recommendation that up to six ethnicity responses should be captured is in response to the rising proportion of the population reporting multiple ethnicities. The proportion recording more than one ethnic group response is expected to continue to rise as the ethnic diversity of the population increases and intermarriage becomes more common.

The capacity to capture six ethnic group responses will enable other collections to be comparable with census. Where this recommendation cannot be implemented immediately, it is recommended that a minimum of three ethnicity responses be captured.

- 4.4 *Recommendation:* that ethnicity be collected at the most detailed level of the ethnicity classification, level 4.

The ethnicity classification at level 4 contains the greatest number of ethnic groups, and therefore is the most detailed. (For purposes of clarification, it should be noted that the information collected at level 4 is recorded by five digits, eg 31111 Samoan).

Submissions noted that official statistics need to collect more detailed information to capture the ethnic diversity that exists in New Zealand society. The aggregated categories at the higher levels of the classification mask important differences between ethnic groups. For example, within the 'Asian' group there are marked differences between single ethnic groups. The median age for Koreans is 24.6 years, while for Sri Lankans it is 33.3 years. Whereas 97 percent of Sri Lankans have formal qualifications, the corresponding figure for Cambodians is 47 percent.

Collection at level 4 of the classification allows people to state their specific ethnic groups (eg Samoan or Niuean), without being forced to identify themselves in a more general category (eg 'Pacific Peoples').

If data is collected at the most detailed level, it is able to be aggregated into a smaller number of categories as users require. The amount of detail differs for various groups and Statistics New Zealand needs to supply what is appropriate for the needs of users.

It is recognised that some collections of ethnicity data, in particular administrative data collections, may be unable to collect information at this level of detail. In these cases, collection should be at level 2 of the classification. This level of the classification is more detailed than level 1. Level 1 was not considered to be an appropriate minimum level of collection because of objections voiced during the consultation process and raised by respondents participating in surveys.

Implementation of this recommendation will require some agencies to change their practices, as collection of ethnicity data at level 2 will be the minimum required to meet the standards of official statistics.

## 5 Ethnicity data output recommendations

### 5.1 Recommendation: that prioritisation of multiple ethnic responses to one group is discontinued as the standard output for ethnicity data in official statistics.

Prioritised ethnicity output reduces multiple ethnic responses to a single ethnic response so that the count of ethnic groups equals the population count. The current system of prioritisation gives precedence to responses in the following order: first 'Māori', then 'Pacific Peoples', followed by 'Asian', 'Other' and 'European'.

There are a range of reasons why prioritisation of data for output is no longer considered appropriate. The reasons include the following:

- Increasing multiple ethnicity responses mean that prioritised data sets are becoming less useful as a way of presenting the ethnic make up of New Zealand.
- By simplifying the data to one response per person, prioritisation biases statistics. For example, if the ethnic groups reported are Māori and Rarotongan, the response is placed in the 'Māori' group. There is a 14.7 percent decrease for the 'Pacific Peoples' population after prioritisation of ethnic groups for 2001 data.
- The question uses a self-perceived definition of ethnicity – ie the person chooses what group(s) they identify with, and prioritisation contradicts this definition.
- Respondents are not asked to rank the ethnic groups they identify with and are unaware that prioritisation makes this choice for them.
- Output based on prioritisation uses only part of the information supplied.
- Other international agencies do not produce prioritised data (United States, Canada, Australia).

An alternative to prioritisation is to let respondents identify their main ethnic group. This was not considered appropriate because a system (self-prioritised or imposed) that places people with multiple ethnicities into one group contradicts the concept and definition of ethnicity. It also increases the burden on people answering questions.

Discontinuing the practice of output prioritisation has significant implications for many agencies. Most over-sampling and funding models use prioritised ethnicity data. Investigation of alternative models and systems will be necessary. Although it is not considered appropriate for Statistics New Zealand to continue to have a statistical standard that includes prioritisation, it may be useful for agencies to consider whether there is a viable and agreed prioritisation system that could be maintained by one agency on behalf of others for their use. Data could then be supplied as customised purpose-specific output.

### 5.2 Recommendation: that the standard output for ethnicity data be single and combination data or total response data.

#### Single/combination output

Single/combination output places each person in a mutually exclusive category, that is, each person is allocated to a single category, based on whether the person has given one or more ethnicities. For example, a person who gave only 'Māori' as their ethnic group would be included in the 'Māori only' category. A person who gave 'Māori' and a 'Pacific Peoples' ethnic group would be included in the 'Māori/Pacific Peoples' category.

Level 1 single/combination output, comprising a wide range of groups, can be used where there is sufficient data, such as in the five-yearly Census of Population and Dwellings and in large scale administrative data sets.

For sample surveys and other forms of data collection, the number of categories and the category combinations used for single and combination output will depend upon the survey design and sample size. It is recommended that the following single and combination groups be used where data permits. The groups are:

Single ethnic group: European, Māori, Pacific Peoples, Asian, MELAA, Miscellaneous.

Two ethnic groups: Māori/European, Pacific Peoples/European, Māori/Pacific Peoples, Asian/European, Two groups not elsewhere included.

Three ethnic groups: Māori/Pacific Peoples/European, three groups not elsewhere included.

For single/combination output at level 1 (European, Māori, Pacific Peoples, Asian, MELAA<sup>6</sup>, Miscellaneous), a person who gives two or more responses that fall into the same level 1 category are counted only once. For example, English and Scottish will be counted in the 'European only'; Samoan and Tongan will be counted in the 'Pacific Peoples only'; and Filipino and Khmer will be counted in the 'Asian only' category.

#### **Total response output**

Total response ethnicity output will also be available as standard output. Total response output shows all responses given for each ethnic group. This means that the total of the ethnic group counts is greater than the number of people who gave them because some people have multiple ethnicities. Total response output has the advantage of identifying all those people who affiliate with a particular ethnic group.

#### **Impact**

Nearly all Statistics New Zealand collections and those of other agencies will need to change the way they output data. This will take some time to implement, as collection and/or processing systems will need updating.

Users and producers of ethnicity data will require guidance to choose between using single/combination output and total response output. Time series using single/combination output may need to be made available for series previously outputting prioritised data.

As part of the review implementation process, Statistics New Zealand will produce documentation to guide users of ethnicity data. The documentation will provide information on the different types of ethnicity output available and the appropriate use of each of these types of output.

#### **5.3 Recommendation:** that household or family ethnicity is not a standard output.

The concept of ethnicity is an attribute of a person. It is not an attribute of a household or family. Statistics New Zealand does not produce standard household or family ethnicity data. In New Zealand there is a high rate of intermarriage between ethnic groups and therefore assigning an ethnic group to a household or family is problematic.

In the past, standard output tables for the ethnicity of a household, dwelling and family have been derived. The ethnic group of the occupier, or when it was not known, the spouse of the occupier, determined the ethnicity of a household. Likewise, the ethnic group of the parents or parent determined the ethnicity of a family. Another method was to output data on the basis that at least one of the household or family members belonged to a particular ethnic group.

Although some submissions said that family and household ethnicity output would be of interest, they were also aware of the problems of associating an individual response variable to a group, such as a family or household. It was acknowledged that both family and household ethnicity were likely to be extremely difficult to define and measure.

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<sup>6</sup> MELAA is the abbreviation for the Level 1 group Middle Eastern, Latin American and African.

## *Part 5*

### **Future research**

Some of the issues identified by the review will be addressed by a research and development programme. Statistics New Zealand, in consultation with key users of ethnicity data, will determine the content of this programme. The Māori Statistics Unit is undertaking wider investigation of the measurement of Māori beyond the concept of ethnicity, for example, in the Māori Statistics Framework. This work will contribute to the direction of the research programme. The planned research will be completed by 2009 or sooner and implemented in all official statistics no later than 2010. This will allow the results to be incorporated into development of the 2011 Census of Population and Dwellings.

The timeframe specified will allow time to:

- consult with regard to the content of a research programme
- undertake the specified research
- incorporate the research results into official statistical collections.

Among the specific issues to be examined are:

- analysis of 'New Zealander' type responses to understand why people give such a response and to examine alternative ways of treating such responses
- exploration of the appropriateness of the name for the majority ethnic group – currently 'New Zealand European'
- possible changes to the ethnicity question used to collect ethnicity data in official statistics
- the potential to ask people to identify their main ethnic identity where they select more than one ethnic identity.

## Part 6

### Implementation

Statistics New Zealand has done some preliminary work toward an implementation plan for the recommendations. This plan will cover such issues as:

- review of the ethnicity classification
- dissemination of the ethnicity standard to standardise the collection of ethnicity data in all official statistics
- output
- the future research programme.

#### 6.1 Immediate tasks

- The Office of Ethnic Affairs (OEA) has recently had a directive from cabinet regarding the collection of more accurate data on other ethnic groups. Statistics New Zealand will work with the OEA to assist with this work.
- Statistics New Zealand will work with collectors of ethnicity data to ensure that the 2001 Census ethnicity question or a question which meets the standard is used for collection of this data.
- Statistics New Zealand will produce a guide to the use of ethnicity data. This will provide information on the use of single/combination and total responses data.
- Statistics New Zealand will review the ethnicity classification to take into account increased ethnic diversity in New Zealand.
- Statistics New Zealand will begin discussions with key users to scope the work to be undertaken as part of the research programme.

## Part 7

### Review process

#### 7.1 Timing

The current Review of the Measurement of Ethnicity began in 2000 with drafting of the terms of reference and concluded with publication of this report. However, there will be ongoing work with implementation of the recommendations and the identified research programme.

#### 7.2 Terms of reference

The terms of reference for the review were agreed in December 2000 after consultation within Statistics New Zealand, with the Social Statistics Advisory Committee and the Māori Statistics Forum<sup>7</sup>. The terms were:

- to evaluate the concepts of ethnicity used in official social statistics
- to define and categorise 'ethnicity', after exploring its association with variables such as nationality, race, ancestry, identity and citizenship
- to produce a revised statistical standard for ethnicity, and for any applications of it, such as prioritisation and measuring strength of identity
- to take account of the need for the standard to measure all ethnic groups currently in New Zealand, and be robust enough to measure new groups arriving in the next 10 years
- to obtain a balance between the need for contemporary relevance and historical continuity
- to produce a report for the Government Statistician, which contains recommendations on the measurement of ethnicity for at least the next 10 years
- to produce a plan for implementing, across all official social statistics, the review's recommendations
- to carry out the project with regard to Statistics New Zealand's commitment to the Crown's obligation to Māori under the Treaty of Waitangi
- to complete the review by mid-2002, so as to contribute to the development of the 2006 Census of Population and Dwellings.

#### 7.3 Preparation of perspectives papers

In order to provide background information for discussions and submissions, eight perspectives papers were commissioned by Statistics New Zealand to highlight specific topics. These topics included Māori, Pacific and other ethnic groups' perspectives on ethnicity, and policy and classification issues. Stakeholders were also provided with preliminary analysis of data from the 2001 Census ethnicity question prior to completing the consultation process.

Statistics New Zealand staff and external people with expertise in the area wrote the papers. The titles and authors of these papers are:

- Background paper – Kate Lang
- *Ethnicity matters: Māori perspectives* – Bridget Robson and Papaarangi Reid
- *The definition and measurement of ethnicity: A Pacific Perspective* – Alison Gray
- *A question of ethnicity – one word, different people, many perceptions: the perspectives of groups other than Māori, Pacific Peoples and New Zealand Europeans* – Ute Walker
- Policy perspectives paper – Kate Lang
- *International Concepts and Classifications* – Jo-anne Allan
- *Comparison of the Measurement of Ethnicity in Australia and New Zealand* – Victoria Treliving
- *Classification and Issues* – Jo-anne Allan

The papers are available on the Statistics New Zealand website [www.stats.govt.nz](http://www.stats.govt.nz).

## 7.4 Consultation

The review team consulted widely across many government, Māori and community groups and individuals. Users and producers of ethnicity data, along with community groups, were invited to provide feedback on issues relating to the measurement of ethnicity in official statistics.<sup>8</sup>

To ensure consultation took place with as wide a range of groups and individuals as possible, 10 stakeholder clusters were identified and approached. The stakeholder clusters comprised Statistics New Zealand; central government; Māori; Pacific peoples; health; community ethnic groups; local government; academics; business; and community groups. Around 700 individuals, groups and organisations were on the preliminary contact list.

The consultation method used depended on the stakeholders and their requirements. For example, Māori, Pacific peoples, central government and community ethnic group clusters were involved in face to face discussions or hui. Other clusters were contacted by e-mail and post. At intervals during the review, newsletters were produced to keep stakeholders informed of progress of the review. (The consultation process followed for Māori submissions is detailed in section 8.01.)

After analysis of the submissions (outlined below) the final phase of the consultation process was to inform stakeholders of the draft recommendations. The draft recommendations were released in December 2002 and were sent to stakeholders for comment. They were also made available for wider consultation on the Statistics New Zealand website. Where appropriate, feedback received on the draft recommendations was incorporated into final recommendations contained in this report.

## 7.5 Analysis

More than 120 verbal and written submissions were received and analysed by the review team. The analysis was carried out in a qualitative fashion. It consisted of a close reading of each of the submissions, during which the key themes and issues were identified and noted. Each cluster from which submissions were received was analysed separately and the resulting analysis peer-reviewed.

The summaries compiled from each cluster were brought together into an overall summary.

Submissions from Pacific peoples interest groups and individuals were analysed in consultation with Statistics New Zealand's Pacific liaison officer, who also peer-reviewed analysis of all other clusters.

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<sup>7</sup> These committees advise the Government Statistician on shortcomings and gaps in official statistics and on priorities for their development. The committees have an independent chair and draw their membership from leading social researchers, academics and senior officials of social researchers, academics and senior officials of social sector agencies.

## *Part 8*

### **Māori and the review of the measurement of ethnicity**

#### **8.1 Consultation with Māori**

As part of Statistics New Zealand's ongoing work to identify and progressively meet Māori statistical needs, a separate process for consultation with Māori was followed during the review.

To ensure sound consultation with Māori, Statistics New Zealand's Māori Statistics Forum was approached for advice about how to conduct the necessary consultation. As a result of that advice, a sub-committee of the Māori Statistics Forum was set up to help co-ordinate the consultation process with Māori.

A list of 150 Māori individuals, iwi and groups thought to be interested in the issues raised by the review was drawn up and approached.

#### **8.2 Analysis of submissions from Māori**

Initially it was planned that the analysis of the review submissions would be carried out by a single analysis team. However, concerns raised in the early stage of the analysis resulted in a change to this process. Three specific concerns were raised. Firstly, that the issues raised in the Māori submissions would be 'swamped' by the number of submissions received from other groups. This would be especially likely if the analysis was carried out in a quantitative manner, given that a much larger number of submissions were likely to be received from non-Māori than from Māori. Secondly, that submissions from other than Māori sources would suggest changes that would be detrimental to the collection of accurate and comprehensive data on Māori. Thirdly, that the analysis of Māori submissions by non-Māori staff may result in some issues important to Māori being misinterpreted or overlooked.

In an attempt to redress these issues, an analysis team made up of Māori staff was set up to conduct the analysis of Māori submissions and to examine other submissions which raised issues of interest to Māori. This team drew up a summary of the Māori submissions and of references in other submissions to issues of concern to Māori. This summary was used in the drafting of the recommendations.

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<sup>8</sup> Appendix D summarises key issues emerging from submissions.

## Appendix A:

### **Report of the Review Committee on Ethnic Statistics 1988**

In December 1983, the then Department of Statistics published a report, *An Investigation of Official Ethnic Statistics*, which identified the range, nature, use and relevance of current official ethnic statistics, and proposed changes to improve quality. The report provided the background to an official Review of Ethnic Statistics, which was completed in 1988 with publication of the *Report of the Review Committee on Ethnic Statistics*.

The review stemmed in part from concern about the relevance of basing the current ethnic classification on fractions of descent. Concern about official ethnic statistics extended beyond the population census to other areas, such as health, migration and justice statistics, and related not only to issues of relevance and reliability, but also to the very justification for producing these statistics.

As part of the review process, submissions from users of ethnicity data were called for, and a range of public agencies was represented on the committee set up to oversee the review. The committee considered that the relatively high rate of intermarriage and degree of interaction between population groups in New Zealand had weakened the relevance of biological concepts of ethnicity. The official definition it preferred emphasised features such as consciousness of a shared history, using a common language, having a distinctive cultural tradition, or functioning within a distinctive social structure.

The committee recommended that self-identified cultural affiliation be the method of reporting ethnicity in official statistical surveys. It also recommended that information on the number of people of Māori descent should be collected to meet the statutory requirements of the Māori Affairs Amendment Act 1974 and the Electoral Amendment Act 1980.

*Appendix B:***Collecting race and ethnicity data in the New Zealand population census****Collection of data before 1981**

Throughout the history of official statistics in New Zealand, the population census has been the principal source of comprehensive social statistics. Biological criteria have commonly been used to measure the race or ethnic characteristics of the population. The first census in 1851 counted only the European population, although there was a partial census of the Māori population in 1857–58. After the 1867 Franchise Act, which gave Māori separate representation, censuses of the Māori population became regular, although the Māori and non-Māori populations were enumerated separately until 1951. The only other ethnic group present in New Zealand in any large number during the 19th century was the Chinese, who were counted separately from 1874.

From 1916, data on 'race' was systematically collected in the census and respondents were asked to state fractions of racial origin. All races apart from Māori and European were classified as 'race aliens'. People of mixed Māori-European blood were counted with the race they were nearer to in 'degrees of blood', while 'mode of living' was used to classify 'half-castes'. For example, those living in European fashion were classed as European and vice versa. From 1926 onwards, the definition of Māori was changed to half or more Māori blood (or descent).

The collection of ethnic data between 1926 and 1971 was based on the concept of race, with little change to the census 'fractions of blood' question. By the 1970s, there was growing hostility towards this method of determining ethnicity. Also, as many people of mixed ancestry could not calculate their blood fractions with precision, they tended to respond to the census question by guessing their blood percentages.

The Māori Affairs Amendment Act defined Māori for the purposes of the 1974 Act as any person with Māori ancestry, rather than the census definition of half or more Māori descent. An attempt was made to accommodate this legislative change in the 1976 Census by including a two-part question, first asking for fractions of blood, then Māori ancestry. However, the two-part question caused some confusion among respondents, with a significant portion giving inconsistent answers to Part 1 and Part 2, or answering only one part of the question. As a result, the reported figures understated the Māori population and were adjusted at an aggregate level to reflect historical trends.

The 1981 Census saw a return to the traditional race-based question and the 1976 Māori descent question was dropped. This change avoided repetition of the confusion that occurred in 1976, but did not address the fact that the degrees-of-blood question had become increasingly inconsistent with the views of Māori.

**The 1986 Census**

In 1986, following public criticism of the 1981 Census ethnic question, the then Department of Statistics attempted to meet the needs of users who wanted information on both cultural affiliation and Māori descent through a single census question. The 1986 Census asked respondents their ethnic origin(s), but gave no information about whether responses should be based on ancestry or on cultural affiliation.

Ethnic communities throughout New Zealand welcomed the removal of the need to report degrees of descent. However, this change created problems for comparability of Māori data over time. Analysis of the results showed a high degree of concordance between the 'all persons of Māori descent' category of previous censuses and the category of people in 1986 who ticked the 'Māori' box, either on its own or with one or more other boxes. There was also a high degree of concordance between the 'half-or-more Māori descent' category of the previous censuses and the 'sole Māori' category of the 1986 Census (ie people who ticked the 'Māori' box only).

As the births, deaths and hospital data collections used a 'fractions of blood' question until 1995, the 'sole Māori' population was used as a denominator in the calculation of health rates such as fertility and mortality between 1986 and 1995.

### **The 1991 Census**

The Review Committee on Ethnic Statistics, which reported in 1988, felt that the 1986 Census question was not a good statistical measure of ethnicity as it was not clear whether it was measuring ancestry or cultural affiliation. Recognising that information on two conceptually different characteristics such as self-determined ethnicity and biological ancestry could not be obtained in a single question, the 1991 Census asked two questions:

- Which ethnic group do you belong to?
- Have you any New Zealand Māori ancestry?

Three outputs were produced from these questions: sole Māori, Māori ethnic group and Māori descent. The three populations are not mutually exclusive. A high proportion of those with Māori descent also identify with the Māori ethnic group, while the sole Māori group is a sub-set of the total Māori ethnic group.

### **The 1996 Census**

While the concepts and definitions remained the same for the 1996 Census, the ethnic question differed from 1991 in the following ways:

- 'NZ Māori' ethnic group was moved to the top of the list of categories
- the wording of the 1996 question made it more explicit that respondents could tick more than one ethnic group
- there was a new tick box category 'Other European', which included six sub-groups (English, Dutch, Australian, Scottish, Irish, Other).

A comparison of 1991 and 1996 ethnicity data showed there was a large increase in multiple responses to the question. In particular, there was a greater-than-expected increase in the Māori ethnic group population and an unexpected drop in the sole Māori population.

The decrease in the numbers of people who reported as sole Māori in 1996 created difficulties for analysts who use the sole Māori population in the calculation of health indicators. Research carried out by Statistics New Zealand to date has shown that differences between the wording of the census questions on ethnicity in 1991 and 1996 may have led to differences in the way people answered the question.

### **The 2001 Census**

The 2001 Census contained a question on ethnicity and one on Māori descent. Both questions used the term 'Māori', rather than 'New Zealand Māori'. The ethnicity question was the same as the 1991 Census ethnic question, apart from dropping the 'New Zealand' in front of 'Māori'.

Statistics New Zealand decided to revert to the 1991 format after research and evaluation showed that the 1991 question provided a better measure of ethnicity based on the current statistical standard. The main effects of this change were removal of the word 'Pakeha' from the category 'NZ European or Pakeha', and dropping the six sub-categories of 'Other European' (English, Dutch, Australian, Scottish, Irish, Other).

Appendix C:

Ethnicity questions in the New Zealand Census of Population and Dwellings, 2001, 1996, 1991

2001

**11** Which ethnic group do you belong to?  
Mark the space or spaces which apply to you.

New Zealand European

Māori

Samoan

Cook Island Maori

Tongan

Niuean

Chinese

Indian

other (such as DUTCH, JAPANESE, TOKELAUAN). Please state:

1996

**10** Tick as many circles as you need to show which ethnic group(s) you belong to.

NZ Maori

NZ European or Pakeha

other European → Which of these groups?

Samoan       English

Cook Island Maori       Dutch

Tongan       Australian

Niuean       Scottish

Chinese       Irish

Indian       other

other (such as FILIPINO, KOREAN) → Print your ethnic group(s)

1991

What ethnic group do you belong to?

Tick the box or boxes which apply to you.

- New Zealand European
- New Zealand Maori
- Samoan
- Cook Island Maori
- Tongan
- Niuean
- Chinese
- Indian
- Other (such as Dutch, Japanese, Tokelauan)

Please State

*Appendix D:***Key issues arising from the submissions****Issues emerging from general submissions**

The analysis of the submissions (excluding those from Māori individuals and organisations) identified a number of key issues, some of which had been already identified as important, for attention. These key issues are listed below.

**Consistency**

- Submissions were strongly in favour of collecting ethnicity data consistently (including definition, questions, coding and classification) across different agencies and different collection methods.

**Definition and concept of ethnicity**

- Ethnicity is a multidimensional concept which Statistics New Zealand attempts to measure with one question.
- Research shows that people may associate ethnicity with nationality, ancestry, country of birth, country of residence, and socio-cultural affiliation. The exact mix is not visible in the data.
- The submissions revealed a very wide range of ethnicity related definitions, from those based around more concrete concepts such as race, ancestry and nationality, to those based on socio-cultural affiliation.
- There was strong support for retaining self-identification of ethnicity.
- There are generational issues in understanding and responding to questions on ethnic identification.

**Collection of ethnicity data**

- There was a very strong call in submissions for Statistics New Zealand to educate the public, users and producers of ethnicity data about the meaning and the use of the concept.
- All collections should be able to record multiple ethnicity responses in order to accurately reflect New Zealand's ethnic diversity.
- There was a very strong view that the ethnicity concept is not well understood. People answer the question based on their perception of what the question and tick boxes mean.
- It was acknowledged that the wording of the ethnicity question, the selection and provision of tick boxes, and the question's placement in a questionnaire, affect response.
- Suggestions to improve the robustness of the concept included additional questions and providing a definition of ethnicity with the question.

**Classifying ethnicity responses**

- Many ethnic groups, other than 'NZ European' and 'Māori', would like an opportunity to affiliate with 'New Zealand' in the ethnicity question for example to respond 'NZ Chinese' rather than 'Chinese'.
- There was divided opinion as to whether 'New Zealander' and/or 'Kiwi' should become classification categories or tick boxes. Those who were in favour of this argued either that New Zealander was a valid ethnic group, or that the ethnicity question is based on self-identification and that these responses should therefore be accepted. Those who were against including these responses believed that they were nationality, not ethnicity, responses. Some submissions noted that 'New Zealander'/'Kiwi' is not a useful indicator of ethnicity, because Māori, Pacific and Asian groups can be included in these categories.
- No single term to replace the descriptor for the majority group emerged from submissions.
- There was strong objection to the term 'European' (in 'New Zealand European') as many people don't see themselves as European.
- Opinion was divided on the term 'Pākehā'. Some were in favour of its use, and others objected to it.

**Outputting ethnicity data**

- Submissions were generally against prioritised output on the grounds that it may misrepresent individuals' choices. It is inconsistent with the way ethnicity is collected as a multiple response variable. Submissions noted that prioritisation also biases the data in favour of some groups.
- The submissions that were in favour of prioritisation as a way of producing data preferred it because it allocated each person to a mutually exclusive group.

**Key issues arising from Māori submissions**

Analysis of submissions from Māori individuals, groups and organisations, and those containing references pertinent to Māori issues in other submissions, identified the following key issues.

**Obligations to Māori**

- Māori status as tangata whenua is affirmed by the Treaty of Waitangi.
- The right of Māori as tangata whenua to determine Māori individual and collective identities is enshrined in the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1993).
- The indigenous rights of Māori are distinct from the rights of other ethnic groups. In addition, these indigenous rights are not dependent on the size of the Māori population.

**Consistency**

- There was support for all agencies to collect data on sole-Māori, the Māori ethnic group and Māori ancestry.
- Submissions were in favour of the collection of consistent ethnicity data across different agencies and in different collection methods.

**Definition and concept of ethnicity**

- The concept of ethnicity is confusing and requires clarification.
- Ethnicity means different things to different Māori. For some Māori, ethnicity requires Māori ancestry, while this is not the case for others.
- The concept of ethnicity is fluid and can be situation specific.

**Collection of ethnicity data**

- There was strong support for the continued collection of Māori ancestry and iwi data in the population census. (These topics were outside the scope of the ethnicity review and there is no intention to remove these questions).
- There was support for the retention of the 2001 Census question in the 2006 Census.
- Support for the retention of self identification of ethnic identity was expressed.
- There was considerable support for Statistics New Zealand promoting public understanding of the concept of ethnicity and the importance of collecting accurate ethnicity data.
- There were calls to improve the quality of Māori data collected.

**Classifying ethnicity responses**

- Māori have a right as the indigenous people of Aotearoa/New Zealand to define and name themselves.
- There was opposition to the use of the term 'New Zealander' either as a tick box category in any question or as an output category, as it was seen as a nationality response.
- There was support for calling the majority group 'New Zealand European/Pākehā'.
- There was a call to discontinue the practice of coding 'New Zealander' responses to the 'New Zealand European' category.

### **Outputting ethnicity data**

Accurate data on the following groupings was requested:

- Māori ancestry
- Sole Māori
- Mixed Māori
- Iwi and hapū
- Māori/non-Māori

### **Other issues**

- There were requests for Statistics New Zealand to collect ethnicity data on migration forms.
- There was support for the continued classification of data into sole-Māori and Māori ethnic group, as these are both important.
- Many submissions noted that the review process must ensure that rights of Māori as tangata whenua are not contravened.
- Increased access to Māori data at little or no cost was requested.

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