

## **Scrapping the Census' Effect on Māori Data Sovereignty and Governance**

The government's decision to scrap the census has immediate short term data quality and consistency losses. This particularly negatively affects the Māori population of New Zealand as data has previously marginalized Māori. It is imperative that Māori retain Mana Raraunga (data sovereignty) and data governance. The government must uphold the Treaty of Waitangi and their Whanaungatanga to treat Māori Data as Taonga. Stats NZ isn't able to accurately measure NZ's Māori population without the census, therefore, Māori must be consulted in smaller, administrative census'. Unfortunately, data regarding whakapapa, iwi and ethnicity was lost when the census was scrapped and will continue to be if these smaller surveys aren't conducted.

A switch from a comprehensive census to administrative data may make data collection simpler but will reduce data usage abilities due to a loss of granularity. Within rural communities, especially Māori rural communities, there are significant data granularity issues in health, employment, education and income data. If Stats NZ upholds their claim to collect this data through targeted surveys then Stats NZ will reduce the current effect of these gaps in data on Māori. These surveys must be conducted promptly in order to fill current, and prevent further, gaps in data.