

# **Advice on Māori Data Governance and Sovereignty**

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Using administrative datasets from Stats NZ's Integrated Data Infrastructure (IDI) instead of a traditional national survey has a critical risk to Māori Data Sovereignty and Governance (MDS/G) for accurate representation and visibility.

Without a full Census, Māori populations may not be collected correctly because administrative datasets usually lack of iwi, relationship, and cultural information. This reduces Māori authority and oversight over their representation in national data.

Without strong community-specific data, Māori cannot effectively plan for their social, economic, and cultural wellness. Without consultation, participation in the new Census design, and consent for data usage, the Whakapapa (relationships) and Manaakitanga (Reciprocity), which require respect and accountability, are compromised. Lack of data could block Māori communities' ability to decide their Kaitiakitanga (guardianship) over their information and future development.

To mitigate these risks, Stats NZ should co-design the new Census model with Māori organizations and iwi to determine how their people are identified and how data shows Māori priorities. It ensures that Māori data is protected as a taonga for future generations. Moreover, having Māori data stewards ensures their representation is under control. By offering this role, Stats NZ can maintain MDS/G principles and build trust with Māori communities while transitioning to IDI.