

41497475 - DATA201 - Written Critique

Moving from a traditional Census to relying mainly on administrative data in the Integrated Data Infrastructure creates risks for Maori Data Sovereignty. The Census has always been a way for Maori to record their own iwi, descent, and ethnicity. Administrative records often do not collect this information in a consistent way and sometimes not at all. This makes it harder to reflect whakapapa and limits the ability to break down data properly for Maori use. If Maori identities are left out or misclassified it could weaken Maori self determination (Rangatiratanga), reduce the collective benefit of data (Kotahitanga), and damage trust in official statistics. In practical terms this means Maori communities may not have reliable data to guide decisions about resources and wellbeing.

To address this, Stats NZ should work in partnership with Maori when designing an administrative Census for the country. This means making sure iwi, ethnicity, and descent are always included and ensuring that Maori have a role in governing how these categories are collected and applied (Kaitiakitanga). Doing so would help protect Maori authority over data while keeping the statistics system accurate and trusted by New Zealand.

Word count: 189